POLITECNICO DI TORINO

Master of Science in Architecture Construction City

MASTER'S DEGREE THESIS

Reconceptualizing the Right to Housing Through Assemblage Theory – Activisms and Social Movements in Turin

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September 2025

Acknowledgments

This thesis is the result of many drafts, revisions, and small steps forward. Along this path, I was never alone.

I am very grateful to Professor Francesca Governa for being a thoughtful guide throughout the challenges of this work. Her advice and encouragement helped me approach the research with clarity and confidence. She showed me that research is not only about finding answers, but also about learning how to ask better questions. Her support has not only improved this thesis, but has also influenced the way I think and approach research.

I am also deeply thankful to my family, whose support has been the foundation of my entire academic journey. Every achievement I have reached comes from the patience, care, and strength they have given me along the way. Their trust in me was always there, even when I doubted myself, and that belief gave me the courage to move forward. The values they have taught me will always guide me in whatever I do next.

Abstract

This thesis is an attempt to rethink the idea of the right to housing by moving beyond traditional and structuralist frameworks. Housing isn't only about walls, roofs, or a matter of ownership, but it is more a site where life takes shape, the idea of belonging is negotiated continuously, and justice or exclusion can emerge and be experienced. Having said that, the "right to housing" is often framed through narrow perspectives merely as a moral claim, or a legal entitlement that must be granted only by the state, or as a technical matter which is reduced to supply, demand, and distribution. It's undeniable that traditional Marxist frameworks provide valuable insights about the power of commodification and capitalist accumulation, but their tendency to reduce housing struggles to fixed categories of class and capital neglects the messy, relational, and affective aspects of urban life. This thesis follows a different approach then. Drawing on Assemblage Theory, the idea of the right to housing is reframed as an open-ended process which is emergent rather than predetermined, collective rather than individual, and situated rather than universal. Through this framework fixed categories are rejected in favor of multiplicity, process, and emergence. Moreover, Housing is no longer a finished product, but instead, it is a continuous process of becoming that is always open to change. In this thesis, it is examined how the city can be shaped through different logics: territorial assemblages divide and exclude, state assemblages are based on standardizing and controlling, capitalist assemblages mainly prioritize commodifying and financializing, and finally nomadic assemblages tend to experiment with fluid, just, collective, and radical forms of living. However, it is important to remember that none of them exist in isolation, but each housing struggle can be composed of all these forces that interact and can bring both conflict and creativity. Through this approach, what emerges is a new understanding of the right to housing which is not a static entitlement but a constructive political project, one that is always uncertain and unstable and is continuously recomposed through contestation, solidarity, and care. Housing movements thus, shouldn't be considered only as defensive reactions to crisis, but they need to be regarded more as generative spaces where new forms of belonging, cooperation, and urban futures are practiced in an active way. Rather than seeking the essence of the right to housing or considering it in a fixed state of being, this reconceptualization regards this right as a process of becoming. In fact, rather than manifesting a stable ideal, Housing struggles are more like spaces where right to housing is endlessly reassembled through the contingent encounter of different forces. This reconceptualization also reminds us that city is not only a site of lack, control, and regulation, but rather it is a site where new possibilities for living are constantly taking shape. Seen this way, housing struggles open the city to potential futures that are unknown yet, but already in the process of becoming. In this sense it can be argued that the right to housing isn't anymore a finished demand, but an open-ended horizon.

"An assemblage has neither base nor superstructure, neither deep structure nor superficial structure; it flattens all of its dimensions onto a single plane of consistency upon which reciprocal presuppositions and mutual insertions play themselves out."

— Deleuze & Guattari, A Thousand Plateaus

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Introduction

In contemporary urban contexts, we need to stop thinking of housing as only a physical structure or a tradable commodity, and instead it should be seen as an intense socio-political battleground in which multiple fundamental struggles emerge that are mainly about claiming possession rights and public access. Housing structures not only determine where people live, but how they live, how they are seen, and what claims they can make on the city. Housing polices together with eviction orders, mortgage laws, zoning regulations and public housing cuts convert abstract ideals of citizenship and justice principles into tangible experiences of either security or displacement.

The topic of "the right to housing" as one of today's defining societal struggles remains as a crucial issue which requires to be carefully studied. The city functions as the main stage for this worldwide issue. The governance of urban space is based on use or value extraction and market logic, rather than social need which results in emergence of mass evictions, gentrification, criminalization of squatting and informal settlements. The urban environment is also a site for resistance where migrants, tenants, students and activists come together to fight against commodification of life and demand dignity through building new collective rights claims. Beyond their functional purpose, cities have evolved into battlegrounds over who has the right to exist, to stay and to build a life.

The decision to focus on the right to housing was not purely academic. It came from a discomfort with the way housing is so often discussed in both policy and scholarly discourse which portray housing as a technical matter of supply versus demand and as an inferior matter compared to genuine political issues. People who have experienced eviction or squatting, or waited for public housing or dealt with precarious rental insecurity, understand that housing goes beyond simple walls. It is about who matters and who has the right to stay or to belong to space.

The topic emerged also from a deeper intellectual curiosity. What explains the lack of effectiveness of specific frameworks particularly those based on abstract class categories or juridical rights when it comes to theorizing what occurs on the ground? What causes some housing movements to disintegrate while other movements persist? What keeps a struggle together when it involves both legal appeals and illegal tactics, both citizens and undocumented migrants and both institutional negotiation and street-level resistance? I was drawn to the ways in which housing struggles constantly exceed the "categories" we assign to them. I aim to understand housing not only as a right, but as an active process that keeps evolving through constant assembly and contestation and reshaping. This thesis is driven by the belief that existing interpretations of the right to housing within traditional structuralist paradigms do not properly convey the complex nature of contemporary housing struggles. Although Traditional Marxist approaches offer important insights about class struggles, capital systems and

commodification, they tend to simplify housing matters to economic exploitation missing the relational, affective and emergent aspects of urban life.

I chose case studies from Turin not only because I live here, but because the city itself seemed to hold an archive of struggles including stories that are often silenced or domesticated in official urban histories. Case studies are “Falchera occupation” led by workers, “Ex-MOI squat” driven by migrants and the Vuoti a Rendere campaign which operates through institutional means yet maintains ambitious goals. These examples show how housing movements are always more than they seem. They are experiments in life, in community, and in justice.

For me, this topic was not only an academic challenge to be addressed, but it was also a reflection of the contradictions we live in, of the cities we inherit, and of the potential futures we can imagine together. Writing this research became a way to hold space for that complexity. To stay with the mess, rather than reduce it. To learn from the movements and analyze them which extends beyond knowing their demands to studying their actual practices which include resistance, assembly, fracture, adaptation and persistence. This study required me to encounter the complex nature of urban life which led me to explore concepts that have the capacity for engaging effectively with this complexity rather than reducing it or simplifying it. This fact led me to “Assemblage Theory” not as final and definitive solution or a perfect answer, but as an alternative approach to think differently and relationally. This framework helps us to reject categories in favor of processes and to regard the idea of right to housing as something that we shape collectively through struggle, not as something that we only receive.

The main aim of this thesis thus is to reconceptualize the idea of “the right to housing” through the lens of “Assemblage Theory”. Assemblage Theory draws its philosophical basis from Deleuze and Guattari to provide a non-reductionist relational ontology which describes urban life as a dynamic arrangement of human and non-human elements including practices, affects, legal codes and infrastructures. This framework doesn’t see rights like right to housing as fixed subjects and doesn’t focus only on universal mechanisms of oppression, but instead what matters in this theory is considering ideas of multiplicity, contingency and fluidity in urban assemblages. It can be said that this fact makes assemblage theory an ideal alternative for studying complexity of social issues like housing struggle. The adoption of “Assemblage Theory” is not merely a theoretical preference, but it also represents a political and methodological approach. This framework enables us to move beyond dual oppositions that include state versus people, legal versus illegal, housing versus homelessness, and to instead focus on the fact that how housing rights are assembled and develop through negotiation and fragmentation within specific spatial-social environments. Through this approach we can develop a new perspective about housing justice as a dynamic collective transformation and becoming rather than a fixed entitlement. This research employs a theoretical and interpretive methodology through a critical analysis of books and academic articles

and engagement with existing literature to study key concepts for developing a new understanding of the idea of “the right to housing”.

Instead of starting from a pre-given theoretical position, the thesis initiates its analysis through practice in Chapter One by examining the lived experiences of housing struggles within Turin. In fact, I avoided using theory as a superior framework at the beginning and allowed the movements themselves, that is to say, their dynamics, tensions, failures, and possibilities to speak and to unsettle existing conceptual frameworks before theoretical analysis. The study centers on three housing struggle episodes: Falchera housing occupation, Ex-MOI refugee squat alongside the recent Vuoti a Rendere campaign, to investigate material, political and affective aspects of these movements. These different historical and social settings demonstrate how the idea of the right to housing is constructed, negotiated and reshaped through daily practices, institutional responses, legal ambiguities, spatial tactics and collective imaginings.

The Second Chapter focuses on a detailed analysis of fundamental theoretical frameworks which provide critical insights about urban struggles, power dynamic and the society. The theories which are examined in this chapter are traditional Marxism, Frankfurt School and Critical Theory, Marxist Urban Theories and Foucault's Post Structuralist Perspective. Each intellectual framework receives a comprehensive evaluation covering its fundamental principles and concepts. Although these theories provide useful insights about society and urban struggles, they are not without limitations. Those traditional and structuralist approaches that tend to impose predetermined categories or ignore situated agency entail specific limitations when used to develop theoretical frameworks for analysis of social issues including right to housing. These limitations will be fully explored in the final chapter. Chapter Two builds the theoretical foundation necessary for the conceptual work developed in the later parts of the thesis.

Chapter Three introduces Assemblage Theory as an alternative analytical framework and a conceptual approach to rethink urban issues from a different perspective. Drawing on the philosophical work of Deleuze and Guattari, and developed by theorists such as Manuel DeLanda, Nail, and urban scholars like McFarlane and Farías, Assemblage Theory establishes a relational ontology that rejects essentialism and reductionism. Assemblage thinking promotes the concepts of multiplicity and emergence and emphasizes the idea of relational constitution of different elements including human and non-human, legal and spatial, affective and material. This section establishes the theoretical base of Assemblage thinking and explains how this concept has been used in urban studies for redefining space, governance, agency and rethinking urban life.

The Last Chapter unites all conceptual findings and insights developed throughout the thesis to reconceptualize the right to housing through the lens of assemblage theory. The chapter initially revisits and examines Marxist urban theory as a framework for studying the idea of the right to housing with a critical perspective to explore its constraints in engaging with the

complexity of housing issue and its dynamic and evolving nature. And after that, through analyzing post-structuralist perspective of Foucault and his relational understanding of power dynamics, the chapter establishes a conceptual connection that leads to decentralized and fluid analytical methods opening the path toward assemblage theory. And finally, in this the chapter I discuss a new theoretical framework based on assemblage thinking through which we can stop viewing housing as a static right or institutional guarantee, and instead it can be regarded as an emergent relational process which is created by multiple forces and actors and their interactions. In this framework, the main emphasis is on the concepts of multiplicity and collective agency and exploring the dynamic nature of urban space. While assemblage thinking critiques the limitations of traditional critical theories, it also uses their insights to create a more flexible and process-oriented approach to reconceptualize the idea of right to housing. The assemblage-based framework transforms right to housing into an open-ended collective political practice which forms differently across spaces to imagine new ways of living, inclusive forms of dwelling and situated forms of justice.

This research adopts an approach based on ideas of process, multiplicity, and situated emergence, which makes it completely different from structuralist and normative theories. The theoretical framework discussed in this thesis can be an effective approach for all discussions that are being carried out in urban studies, housing justice, and political theory, through providing new understandings about the idea of the right to housing and showing the fact that housing rights are not either given or denied by law or policy, but they are always in the state of becoming as assemblages that are continuously shaped and reshaped through contested practices like infrastructure, law, affect, spatial relations and collective struggle. It can be said that, reconceptualizing the right to housing through assemblage theory brings new conceptual and political possibilities. This research invites urban theorists, policymakers, architects and activists to avoid essentialist perspectives and stop thinking of housing as a static product or moral right, but to instead rethink housing as a process which transforms and forms continuously through everyday experiences, collective experimentation and material struggle. And finally, the proposed approach in this research reminds a fact that is often overlooked by dominant policy discourses, which is housing outcomes can be influenced by different elements including non-state actors together with informal practices and affective relations.

Chapter 1 | Right to Housing Movements and Activisms in Turin

The research begins with actual struggles and voices of urban life, because of the fact that these are what animate the urban environment. Turin's housing movements such as Falchera occupation, Ex-MOI refugee squat and Vuoti a Rendere civic campaign show how urban areas can turn into sites of resistance, negotiation, and collective action, a fact that connects the right to housing to broader struggles over belonging, visibility, and having access to urban resources. These historical events show how deep conflicts and problems in the urban system have affected and harmed marginalized groups in different ways, times and locations. They also show different processes of exclusion and the ways through which people resist them. These movements function as conceptual entries which are situated struggles that require further theoretical examination like all other urban social struggles. They create a foundation for the next chapter which aims to examine the dominant social theories that have tried or are still trying to understand the complex nature of urban struggles.

1.1 | Housing Activism in Falchera Neighborhood

Falchera as a neighborhood located in northern part of the Turin saw one of the most organized housing protests and occupations in Italy during the 1970s. In 1974 Fabrizio Ceruso was a young activist who got killed by the police during a housing protest in Rome. This tragedy brought a wave of occupations in Turin among which Falchera could be considered the most significant one. Falchera included 1,500 families who were both squatters and also families who were assigned homes officially. Falchera had a poor condition lacking even basic services including electricity, water and elevators. People had only one grocery store and were deprived from sufficient public transportation. People living there were largely marginalized and neglected and suffered from Housing shortage or poor and precarious living conditions considerably. Many residents had migrated from south in search of work and housing and a better life. Nearly half of the men were workers of factory, and most of them were working in Fiat, while others had unstable working condition or did not have any job at all. Many women who were living there were housewives but they played an important role in the movement. Comparing to the earlier occupations, this movement included higher number of working families which brought more stability in organization of the occupation. (Quirico, 2021)

Leadership in Falchera came from members of left-wing organizations and revolutionary groups like Lotta Continua. Tonino Micciché a young Sicilian-born worker who had moved to Turin in 1968 was the main leader. He was the former worker of Fiat who lost his job after he had been arrested in a protest. He was among the first activists from Lotta Continua to be assigned to

Falchera to manage the occupation and he became a dominant figure who was called the mayor of Falchera because of his constant support in dealing with problems of residents and talking about their issues with authorities on behalf of the people. Another figure in the movement was Gilberto Angeloro who was a member of the Communist Party and a representative on the council of the public electricity company ENEL. Carmela Selvaggio as one of the residents of neighborhood contributed to the community through making her apartment a daycare to help the people in occupation. Legally assigned residents and squatters managed to organize themselves by creating a Struggle Committee (Comitato di lotta) with two representatives for each apartment building in a way to live in peace and address potential problems and avoid any kind of internal conflicts under the slogan of "We all want a house, both assignees and occupants." (Quirico, 2021)

Their strategy in managing the occupation was sorting people into different groups considering the fact which families were in priority for getting a house to live in. This method became an example for other housing occupations in Italy. Some political groups were not in favor of this strategy. One group called Lotta Comunista, believed that all demands should be addressed at once without grouping people according to their need. (Quirico, 2021)

In November 1974 the protests intensified through occupation of the town hall and the offices of the Public Housing Institute as a result of failure of city council in keeping their promises which was providing apartments for all squatters and getting below 12% of their income as the rent. In this situation the occupants and activists maintained their unity and showed a strong solidarity in facing the repression and violence of the police. (Quirico, 2021)

During the occupation women were an important part of the activism and played a significant role in managing protests and securing apartments when the men went to work. Feminist activists from Lotta Continua and other groups with cooperation of the local women contributed significantly to feminism in working-class neighborhoods through shaping a Women's Struggle Committee or opening a self-run health clinic in an abandoned building to help community specially women and to raise their awareness. (Quirico, 2021)

On April 17, 1975 Tonino Micciché was tragically shot and killed by Paolo Fiocco who was a member of fascist groups and a former security guard. This event was a real shock to everyone and although the occupation was peaceful, this act of violence made people and other leaders worried about any potential threats. However, presence of over 10,000 people including many factory workers and even union members in Micciché's funeral showed unity of people again. After the local elections of 1975 a new left-wing city council took the power which was led by Diego Novelli as communist mayor. Novelli met with the Struggle Committee and provided homes for all families in occupation. Revolutionary groups including Lotta Continua and Avanguardia Operaia chose to cooperate with local government, while other groups rejected this and refused to do it and continued

their own protests which ended with failure. Davide Lovisolo as another important person in occupation believed that the main success was not just about getting houses, but the main legacy of occupation was assisting people in many ways like involving people in political actions and making them aware and socially active. Even some of these people were elected as worker representatives in the factories they were working. (Quirico, 2021)

Falchera occupation or housing activism was deeply based on workerism (operaismo) and ideas of Marxist-Leninism with support of Lotta Continua as a far-left extra-parliamentary organization in Italy which believed that real social change does not happen through reformation or by official institutions but it needs self-organization of the working class and those who are largely oppressed. The movement was about bringing autonomy for residents and enabling them to organize themselves for claiming their basic needs including housing, food and healthcare. The main aim was to define housing as a collective right rather than an individual commodity through occupying abandoned building and using them as social centers or as other communal services. The movement promoted collective decision-making in every aspect of everyday life. The occupation not only provided housing for people, but it also served as a school of communism teaching the working-class different ways of resistance and self-management, and it was also a school of feminism helping women to pursue and defend their own rights and to challenge ideology of patriarchy. (Quirico, 2021)

The occupation of Falchera revealed this fact that how the housing struggles were linked deeply with broader political and social issues in Italy during that period. Housing struggle in Falchera was not only about securing a shelter but it was also about creating a democratic public participation, seeking justice and freedom and organizing a community-based neighborhood for a better living condition. According to Lotta Continua housing struggles acted like schools through teaching people how to create better ways of living based on equality and democracy. Moreover, it was an important moment for women to pursue their rights and their significant roles in society. Although the occupation ended eventually, its legacy which was maintaining solidarity and unity to fight for human rights through collective actions has not been forgotten. (Quirico, 2021)

Gaps and Limitations

First of all, the movement was based on collective organization of residents and creating self-management capabilities in people living there, however people were still largely dependent on leadership of Tonino Micciché and their strength and efficiency to achieve their goals were deeply tied to his presence. This fact caused declination of movement rapidly after death of Micciché. This overreliance on one figure or leader made the resistance become disappeared in absence of Micciché and showed this fact that movement could be hardly sustained by people independently. Moreover, although the occupation brought housing for people finally, it was limited only on

exemplary struggles by Lotta Continua instead of building a larger campaign. The success was more symbolic and remained at local scale without going further to challenge broader social struggles and fix wider housing crisis and to question the national housing strategies. (Quirico, 2021)

In addition, occupants maintained the solidarity and unity among themselves till the end, but there were internal conflicts between the leftist groups. While, some reformist groups tended to negotiate with the government, more radical leftist groups like Lotta Comunista opposed this approach strongly. The internal disagreements and absence of coalition and shared strategies in the Left was a weakness preventing the movement from going any further to develop broader housing movements. (Quirico, 2021)

According to Monica Quirico (2021), it is true that the movement ended well with provision of housing for the occupants but the fact that people became satisfied immediately after their demands were met, made underlying structural exclusion of the neighborhood remain unsolved as Monica Quirico (2021) argued:

> "Between 1972 and 1974, the housing movement actually increased in intensity. The two main events in this escalation were the continuation of the struggle in San Basilio, Rome and a new occupation in Falchera, a neighbourhood in Turin. Both ended well for the inhabitants in the short-term—they were able to obtain the houses they had been fighting for, although almost half a century later these districts can still be considered ghettos—but both entailed a heavy price in terms of repression" (p. 158).

In fact, the success was partial and temporary as the neighborhood still suffered from neglects even after assigning houses to the people.

And finally, although the role of the women in the occupation was significant through running healthcare clinics and shaping feminist groups, they still did not have complete support of all the male members of the community which shows the fact that there was still deep contradiction between radical objectives of feminist organizations and traditional gender norms and it can be argued that gender emancipation was not uniformly embraced and supported. (Quirico, 2021)

1.2 | Ex-Moi Occupation

The story of Ex-Moi in Turin was about a group of refugees occupying abandoned buildings and making a home out of them. The buildings of Ex-Moi were constructed to accommodate athletes during the games of Winter Olympics in 2006. Over 140 million euros was spent for this Olympic Village by the government, though most of the buildings were left empty with poor condition after

the games. Some of the buildings were sold or were used for student accommodations, while others became abandoned and unused. (Struggles in Italy, 2015)

By 2013 many refugees from different places including North Africa and Libya came to Italy and were searching for a place to live. While ENA and SPRAR as government programs aimed to help these people regarding housing, the result was a failure and caused many refugees to become homeless. In response to this issue, refugees with the help of local squatters and activists took over the abandoned Olympic buildings and shaped the Ex Moi-Occupation on 30 March 2013. (Struggles in Italy, 2015)

The occupation of the unused buildings by over 1,000 migrants by March 2013 made this movement one of the biggest squats in Europe. This occupation was not only a response to housing crisis of undocumented migrants but it also acted as a protest against the way that city was being managed. This squat could be considered a political act challenging the idea of who has the right to use space in a city. (Teixeira, 2022)

The volunteer group of Refugees and Migrants Solidarity Committee which included students, migrants, social activists was so effective in assisting the residents through providing them medical help, legal support, language lessons, food, and supplies. This group also created a school inside the buildings. (Struggles in Italy, 2015)

Refugees and Migrants Solidarity Committee not only supported squatters regarding their daily needs, but also tried to raise their awareness about how the old Olympic Village was left abandoned. There was a contradiction in existing unused buildings that were left empty and existing many people that needed house for living. The fact that these building were abandoned while many refugees became homeless raised important questions about the right to housing. Instead of asking for ownership, the squatters simply wanted to use these building as a place for living and to manage these buildings commonly and fairly. The occupation was not only about opposing private property, but it was also about fighting their exclusion from it. However, because of poor construction of these buildings reusing them was a challenging job. (Teixeira, 2022)

After struggling and fighting for 8 months to get legal residency which was necessary for having access to healthcare, schools, jobs and for renewing visas, eventually the Committee and the refugees succeeded and city gave legal residency to people who were living there, but they were still deprived from some other social services. (Struggles in Italy, 2015)

In fact, city gave them a type of limited residency called artificial residence that did not provide full benefits which could be regarded as a kind of discrimination. This fact made some supporting groups oppose the compromise. The city expected that registration of refugees would make relocation of people possible with support from the national government, but as many refugees did not register the national government blocked the city’s plans through refusing to give needed

resources or rules. There were also requests for eviction from right-wing parties in the city council. In winter 2014 they attempted to get in the occupied buildings but activists stopped them. (Pogliano & Ponzo, 2020)

The process of occupation was not an easy job for refugees when they were attacked by racist political parties including Lega Nord, Fratelli d'Italia, and Forza Italia who called the refugees illegal or criminals and their main demand was eviction. For instance, in December 2013 a small racist protest was held by far-right groups near Ex Moi. (Struggles in Italy, 2015)

The Ex-Moi occupation lasted till August 2019 when the urban authorities evicted the residents. This squat was not only about finding and demanding shelter for living, but it showed that solidarity of refugees could question unjust systems through coming together and shaping support groups. The Ex-Moi squat proved that through collective action it is possible to challenge both public and private property systems and reimagine new alternative ways to share space for supporting each other. (Teixeira, 2022)

Gaps and Limitations

Pogliano and Ponzo (2020) believe that one of the main gaps in Ex-Moi occupation was the conflict and disagreement between support groups about negotiation strategies with authorities, which made the unity and strength of the movement weak. While some groups tended to compromise with the city and were satisfied to get artificial residence, others were against this approach. Pogliano and Ponzo (2020) noted that:

> "This event marked the breakup of the alliance between the extra-left movements and the Migrant and Refugee Movement since the first were less keen to accept the compromise on artificial residence than the second, and more oriented towards highly participatory approaches and refugees' direct engagement in the negotiation with the City" (p. 119).

Furthermore, although Ex-Moi occupation portrayed a significant social issue, it could not receive enough media attention, and even when the media covered the news related to this occupation its perspective was not humanitarian and it framed the refugees as threats rather victims. In fact, Right-wing politicians and the media tried to link the people living there to crime and to introduce this occupation as a negative issue through focusing only on some isolated incidents happening there. This fact that all attempts were about presenting this squat as a threat to society made housing struggles of the refugees get neglected by public attention. (Pogliano & Ponzo, 2020)

Although community backing and involvement of the local people in helping refugees was effective, it was not strong enough to reinforce the movement for making real changes. In addition, instead of focusing on real stories told by refugees and instead of being among them to fully realize the struggles they were going through, it was only official sources that journalists relied on when

they wanted to report about occupation which created a narrow and incomplete picture of real issues of the residents. (Pogliano & Ponzo, 2020)

Another gap was the fact that refugees tended to be invisible through rejecting any involvement in media or research as a kind of resistance or a political act against being constantly observed or represented on others' terms. This was a barrier to political strategy of activists and challenged academic aim which was making those people visible. However, such tendency to be unrepresented and silent was a risk for them as their issues and struggles could be ignored by broader society and policy-makers. (Giudici, 2023)

According to Pogliano and Ponzo (2020), lacking coordination and communication among local institutions which was a deliberate strategy created a fragmented policy network that could not be effective as it resulted in confusion among journalists and absence of clear public information as Pogliano and Ponzo (2020) mentioned that:

> "The communication strategy of the City of Turin was explicitly aimed at limiting outward communication and relations with local media according to a strategy that we can define as "non-communication". As a result, journalists all complained of a lack of information despite attempts to contact the policy representatives. In this vacuum of political communication on the occupation, the police headquarters and especially the Prefecture were the main institutional sources" (p. 131).

Consequently, this silence made the media rely on other sources including protest committees and political opposition to collect information, even though these sources did not represent the whole movement. Moreover, there was not any agreement between the government and institutions about the ways of controlling the situation. Since they could not agree on a clear definition of the issue and on presenting the needed solutions, they preferred not to make any public statements in order to prevent arguments. (Pogliano & Ponzo, 2020)

Another reason that voices of refugees were not heard completely in the news was the fact that occupation site could not be easily visited by journalists and this restriction for access made it hard for journalists to talk to people in person. Another problem related to journalists was the fact that many of them did not have enough knowledge regarding refugee and migrant issues or they lacked commitment to the case, as a result of which their reports could not be completely accurate and effective. (Pogliano & Ponzo, 2020)

Refugees of Ex-Moi experienced an unstable and precarious living condition. They were deprived from any institutional support and were only dependent on volunteer groups for doing their basic bureaucratic processes. Another gap was the fact that the movement did not have any intention for challenging the idea of ownership of the buildings, but the only demand of the refugees and people involved was merely living in unused and empty building. This fact limited their power for

questioning broader fundamental inequalities and for demanding deeper structural transformation. (Teixeira, 2022)

As refugees only focused on short term solutions, the result was vulnerability of the squatters and lacking guarantee of future housing stability. The movement could not challenge the housing system, structural property laws and legal structures which protect owners and enable them to evict people without any attention to marginalized and displaced population. The occupation failed to pursue deeper and more fundamental goals like the idea of shared city spaces, so it can be argued that the main gap in the movement was the fact that the political goal was not questioning the whole system of ownership, but the main focus was only on having access to a place for living. (Teixeira, 2022)

1.3 | Vuoti a Rendere Campaign

Reclaiming Empty Houses

Vuoti a Rendere is a civic campaign seeking right to housing and aims to challenge market-driven housing policies and question slow responses of the institutions in the city of Turin. Their main goal is framing housing based on constitutional rights, social justice and empowering people who are facing housing issue and need a place to live while thousands of houses are left empty and unused. To reach this objective, Vuoti a Rendere introduced a citizen-led plan named “New Protections for the Right to Housing – Census and Return to the City of Unused Housing Units” with more than 1,500 supporters. The proposal requests City Council to address housing issue and the problem of exclusion of many people. (Vuoti a Rendere, 2024)

Based on Italian and international laws, this plan calls for the recognition of social purpose of property through referring to Article 42 of the Italian Constitution and also EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The campaign of Vuoti a Rendere is driven by a strong opposition against neoliberal policies regarding housing including commodification and mass privatization and all past policies which made rental protections like Law 431/1998 weak and brought inequality and unjust treatment in private rental market. In city of Turin these issues have become much worse because of rise in tourist rentals and also because of the fact that many houses including over 21,000 apartments have been abandoned and have been remained unused while a large portion of the society are struggling with eviction and homelessness or cannot afford rent of their houses. (Vuoti a Rendere, 2024)

One of the main aims in the plan of this group is recognizing the fact that abandoned and empty houses owned by government or private people should not be considered as mere wasted spaces,

but they need to be regarded as a part of a broader structural problem that has serious social, economic, and environmental effects. Vuoti a Rendere discusses the terms like “unjustified abandonment” referring to the idea of leaving houses vacant for over two years without a justified reason and the term of “large property owners” which is about people or companies that possess many properties including five or more houses. The aim is making these owners explain their reason of leaving their properties empty or force them to pay more taxes like higher IMU and TARI bills. According to Article 835 of the Civil Code and decisions of the court that are made recently, the owners are not allowed to leave their houses vacant and keep them this way without any reason and in necessary cases unused houses could be taken over temporarily by the city. (Vuoti a Rendere, 2024)

Rather than being only critical, the campaign of Vuoti a Rendere tries to find needed solutions including carrying out a detailed survey of all housing in the city withing nine months and introducing strategies involving different actors like city departments, housing agencies, utility companies, and community groups. An important aspect of the plan is reinforcing Lo.C.A.Re., the city’s Social Rental Agency, with the purpose of effectively linking unused houses with people who need these houses. Abandoned houses could be rented out to people especially vulnerable part of the society who are in need of a place to live through fair and affordable leases by Lo.C.A.Re. with sufficient funding and authority. (Vuoti a Rendere, 2024)

Housing in not limited to a space of living for Vuoti a Rendere, but it is regarded as a political struggle over ownership systems and the ways through which city is managed and people who have the power control. The group calls for public policies advocating right to housing and stand against selling out public housing stock and aim to ensure that using abandoned houses are only for public benefit not for market-driven purposes. The main aim of the campaign which is inspired by effective housing policies in France and Scotland is making city pursue long lasting plans regarding housing as a shared public infrastructure instead of focusing only on emergency-driven strategies. (Vuoti a Rendere, 2024)

The approach of Vuoti a Rendere in dealing with housing issue is following critical political ideas and relying on strong legal arguments at the same time. This group tends to pursue grassroots mobilization while attempts to keep engagement with city institutions. Vuoti a Rendere aims to reimagine the city of Turin as a place in which caring each other, solidarity and shared responsibility are prioritized rather than profit-gaining goals and speculation. This group tries to make a housing policy model treating housing as human right rather than a commodity in the city of Turin, so that this model could be seen as a good example in Italy and across Europe. (Vuoti a Rendere, 2024)

Gaps and Limitations

One of the possible gaps is the fact that Vuoti a Rendere puts a lot of faith in municipal institutions and relies significantly on them. In fact, their proposal is based on expectations from the city government which are carrying out a housing census, enforcing sanctions and tax penalties and using legal tools including requisition. However, in reality city government might lack enough resources or might be unable politically or legally to stand against those property owners who possess considerable control power. It can be argued that refusal of the city to help would make the proposal weak and then it would be so hard for the group to decide what the next steps would be.

The campaign functions mainly based on official top-down strategies and although they talk about collective action, they neglect significance of bottom-up practices including squatting and cooperative and collective self-managed housing movements which historically existed in Turin. Vuoti a Rendere lacks these informal housing justice movements and self-organized activism which have been so effective in the process of fighting for justice and helping vulnerable people.

The main focus of the group is increasing housing availability for the people in need through reclaiming empty and unused houses; however, their plan does not challenge broader political and structural issues that caused housing struggles and instability in the first place like low income of the working class, job insecurity, discrimination and unfair migration policies. Although all attempts of the group to provide a living place for the vulnerable people is significant, there is not much desire to deal with the reasons which cause many people to struggle for finding a decent living condition.

The goal of the group is more about fighting against big property owners or investors, and less about challenging urban and global financial markets that treat housing as a tool for wealth gaining and speculation rather than a social right. In fact, the approach of the group in their proposal does not fully question fundamental systems of financialization. Vuoti a Rendere focuses only on providing houses, however as argued by Michele Lancione (2023), this goal makes one wonder if increasing housing availability would be enough as only solution or not, as Lancione (2023) puts it “Would Housing All the Homeless in the World Be Enough to End Homelessness?” (p. 7).

While it might be a clear solution to give houses to people who need a place to live, Lancione (2023) believes that the issue is much more complex and deeper. As he argues, housing struggle is getting worse across the world and the number of people who are homeless or facing poor and insecure living conditions is increasing due to rise of world population and expansion of cities over time. Housing inequality in urban spaces is growing considerably and this trend is possible to continue. As a result, he believes that fighting for housing should not be limited to mere provision of housing and it must go beyond this solution. (Lancione, 2023)

Lancione (2023) claims that it is needed to engage with deeper questions like what kind of housing the fight is for and what is true meaning of having a home. He rejects binary opposition between housed and being homeless, since people who are facing precarious and poor living spaces might

be struggling with many of the same difficulties as those people who do not have any place for living. Questioning the boundary between home and homelessness might be regarded too much abstract or unrealistic but according to Lancione (2023), it is effective to study this “grey area” where people’s experiences of home and homelessness might overlap. This approach would be more helpful to understand housing inequality and subsequently to reach much more meaningful responses. Although defining these spaces might seem hard, they bring possibilities for new ways of thinking and acting. (Lancione, 2023)

1.4 | Comparative Analysis

All the cases and housing justice movements of Falchera, Ex-Moi and Vuoti a Rendere which are related to different historical periods provide useful understanding about how different urban housing struggles and activism happened in response to diverse social, political, and economic situations and events. Although they reflect different ideological frameworks, political views and tactical orientations, all of them are about questioning exclusionary practices of housing policy systems, opposing commodification of housing and seeking the right to inhabit the city with dignity.

It can be argued that Falchera as a collective occupation in the context of working-class mobilization was more a political struggle coming from broader leftist critiques and oppositions against capitalist speculative urbanism and state dominance. Falchera movement emerged in a historical period when there was a violent tension between Left and Right political parties and the occupation was not only about survival, but it was a political action for reclaiming urban spaces and fighting against bureaucratic control through shaping collective power and self-management and refusing to rely only on institutional support.

On the other hand, in Ex-Moi migrants led the occupation outside formal institutional frameworks and the movement was about pursuing civil rights, racial justice, and questioning unfair migration policies and the movement was driven by necessity and survival in a city where presence of migrants and refugees were considerably criminalized and racialized. In Ex-Moi the demand of migrants was not only about having access to shelter for living, but it was also about being seen and respected in the city rather than being treated as invisible or dangerous.

Comparing to these two cases, Vuoti a Rendere is the most recent movement in which instead of informal occupations, the group follows a more institutional and legal path and the main approach is based on management strategies aiming to reclaim abandoned houses in the city through civic mobilization, policy proposals and reformation, constitutional arguments and municipal engagement and legal tools. The struggle is citizen-led without any an insurgent nature and

tendency towards informal practices like squatting or occupying buildings in contrast to Falchera and Ex-Moi movements, it focuses mainly on calling for censuses, taxation, and city-led requisitions, in fact it is more based on asking rather than taking.

All movements raised critical questions regarding ideas of right to the city and right to housing and followed different strategies to reach their goals. Although Falchera and Ex-Moi could achieve temporary wins, they both faced repression eventually. Falchera could bring housing security for many residents, however the legalization process showed the limits of autonomous struggle when absorbed into institutional frameworks. In Ex-Moi also collective action resulted in temporary housing stability for migrants but the occupation was ultimately dismantled through state eviction. And Vuoti a Rendere as an ongoing social movement continues advocating reformation of urban policies through relying on institutional action and legalistic strategies with the purpose of redefining housing as a social right rather than a commodity. Falchera, Ex-Moi and Vuoti a Rendere movements are representation of seeking justice for housing through different strategies and actors and each movement is shaped by its time, its subjects and its political vision.

Chapter 2 | Dominant Social Theories: Foundations of Urban Struggles

The discussion about different housing movements in the previous chapter helped us to know better the deep structural issues of the urban life which need to be analyzed carefully through advanced theoretical frameworks in order to understand their nature, root causes, contradictions and ways of addressing them. This analysis is what chapter two focuses on through studying four dominant social and intellectual theories that have shaped different interpretations of social issues. The theories that are explored in this section are Traditional Marxism, Frankfurt School, Marxist urban theory evolution and Foucault's post-structuralist power analysis. These theoretical frameworks provide different but helpful perspectives for understanding social inequalities, how systems of power operate, and how social opposition emerges in different forms in contemporary societies. These theories are different attempts to respond to questions like why social struggles including those in Turin occur and what they represent. Starting with practical study and then moving to theoretical analysis enables an epistemological investigation to understand how real-life struggles have been framed by critical social theories and to evaluate their analytical strengths and boundaries.

2.1 | Marxism: A Central Position

There have been various theoretical frameworks that have studied the term of the right to housing through different perspectives, among which the main starting point to delve into the housing issue would remain Marxism theory. Driving from young Hegelians, Marxism emerged as a response to Capitalism and Social Class Struggles through revolutionary ideas that young Hegelians tried to find in philosophy of Hegel who believed that every concept or structure inevitably faces alteration, failure and eventually disappears. A Marxian approach toward the right to housing is tied up to criticizing Capitalist systems in which housing is produced, distributed and controlled. In addition, a Marxian theory considers housing not just a space for living but a site for class struggle. In Marx’s philosophy criticism is considered the most important instrument to change the world. He believed that mere theoretical criticism is not enough, and instead he saw the Proletarian as an exploited class who are the ultimate weapon for changing the status quo. To reach a fully Marxist framework for the idea of the right to housing, it is needed to start with studying the chain of thoughts of Karl Marx and his main philosophy. It can be said that “economic and philosophic manuscripts of 1844” prepares the foundation for many of Marx's later ideas and thoughts, especially his critique of capitalism, his concept of human self-alienation, and his understanding of human nature and labor. In his first manuscript, Marx (1844/1959) discussed the struggles of the labor class in the Capitalist

society in which wages are determined in a way benefiting Capitalist system. He argued that the condition of workers is precarious not only in economic downturn but also in a growing economic situation. The main argument would be related to the process in which the labor turns into a commodity himself in a capitalist system. As Marx (1844/1959) mentioned:

> "The demand for men necessarily governs the production of men, as of every other commodity. Should supply greatly exceed demand, a section of the workers sinks into beggary or starvation. The worker's existence is thus brought under the same condition as the existence of every other commodity. The worker has become a commodity, and it is a bit of luck for him if he can find a buyer. And the demand on which the life of the worker depends, depends on the whim of the rich and the capitalists" (p. 3).

According to Marx (1844/1959), the labor earnings are not connected to that of the capitalist system which means that the worker doesn't necessarily benefit from profits of the capitalism. However, when the capitalist systems face economic problems, the worker suffers subsequently. Marx highlights that capital is accumulated labor and considers workers as source of all value. They must sell not only their labor, but also their humanity to survive and to satisfy capitalists. The worker never has stable wages and always experiences insecurity. Marx opens up the debate regarding alienation in first manuscript arguing that labor division along with reducing the worker to mechanical roles result in alienation instead of improving the labor lives. (Marx, 1844/1959)

Marx (1844/1959, p. 6) argued that large portion of agricultural products belongs to landowner regardless of the fact that they are not involved in the working process and while capitalists gain high amounts of profit, the workers end up struggling to survive with their strongly low wages. Although the value is created by labor and effort of the worker, the position of the landowners and capitalists would remain higher than the workers. In this system according to Marx, worker is regarded as a tool and is treated like a horse that is fed only enough to keep working. Even outside of the working place they are not treated humanely enough and they remain the concern of the social institutions including legal system, medicine, religion, statistics, politics, or charity organizations. (Marx, 1844/1959, p. 6)

Marx (1844/1959) regards capital a system of power dominating and exploiting labor and this system is driven by social structures favoring private ownership of means of production. According to Marx Capitalism is potentially unstable because of its dependence on steady accumulation and exploitation. This system might bring economic growth but only through making the workers dependent on capitalism and paying them low wages less than the value they create. He saw the failure and collapse of the capital system in this evident inequality and instability that this system possesses. Marx considers rent as a form of exploitation which favors landlords and brings profits for them without necessity of having labor, charging for land, natural resources, and tenant improvements. Rent is regarded as monopoly price which is determined by tenants that can afford.

He believed that concentration of land in fewer hands is resulted from the competition among landlords, which causes land to fall increasingly into the hands of capitalists who treat it as another commodity. The difference between landlord and capitalist would disappear remaining only two classes: Capitalist owning the land and industry, and the workers selling their labor. For capitalist landlord the property is just a commodity and tool to gain profit. Marx advocates for removal of private landownership in favor of the collective ownership serving needs of the community. (Marx, 1844/1959)

As Marx (1844/1959) maintained:

> "We have proceeded from the premises of political economy. We have accepted its language and its laws. We presupposed private property, the separation of labor, capital and land, and of wages, profit of capital and rent of land – likewise division of labor, competition, the concept of exchange value, etc. On the basis of political economy itself, in its own words, we have shown that the worker sinks to the level of a commodity and becomes indeed the most wretched of commodities; that the wretchedness of the worker is in inverse proportion to the power and magnitude of his production; that the necessary result of competition is the accumulation of capital in a few hands, and thus the restoration of monopoly in a more terrible form; and that finally the distinction between capitalist and land rentier, like that between the tiller of the soil and the factory worker, disappears and that the whole of society must fall apart into the two classes – property owners and propertyless workers. Political economy starts with the fact of private property; it does not explain it to us. It expresses in general, abstract formulas the material process through which private property actually passes, and these formulas it then takes for laws. It does not comprehend these laws – i.e., it does not demonstrate how they arise from the very nature of private property. Political economy throws no light on the cause of the division between labor and capital, and between capital and land. When, for example, it defines the relationship of wages to profit, it takes the interest of the capitalists to be the ultimate cause, i.e., it takes for granted what it is supposed to explain. Similarly, competition comes in everywhere. It is explained from external circumstances. As to how far these external and apparently accidental circumstances are but the expression of a necessary course of development, political economy teaches us nothing. We have seen how exchange itself appears to it as an accidental fact. The only wheels which political economy sets in motion are greed, and the war amongst the greedy – competition" (p. 28).

The concept of alienation or estranged labor is the most important consequence in a capitalist system according to Marx. This self-alienation appears in four different forms. First, the worker in an industrialized capitalist system is alienated from product that he created which becomes his own enemy. His product does not belong to him, but is owned and used by others. The more the worker

produces, the more he becomes invaluable. The second form of alienation is that capitalism alienates the worker from his work and job. His job is not determined by his personal interest or talent, but it is what he needs to do to survive. The labor of worker belongs to others as an external activity and worker is considered just a tool for production. Third form is alienating workers from their human nature and reducing the creative labor a survival mechanism. And final form is alienation from other human beings. The relationships are based on domination, exploitation and competition. (Marx, 1844/1959)

Marx (1844/1959, p33) claims that alienated labor results in disconnection of the worker with his own work which is controlled eventually by the capitalist who does not have any share in the labor of the worker. Moreover, private property is not the reason of the alienated labor, but the result of this self-alienation and estrangement of the workers with their labor, environment, themselves and others. He considers this process of alienation and creation of private property as a cycle in which private property is emerged by self-alienation of the worker and the private property itself reinforces the exploitation and estrangement of the worker. (Marx, 1844/1959, p33)

According to Marx (1844/1959), it can be said that wages and private property cannot be separated. The role of wages is just hiding labor 's alienation and making the worker serve property owners. Raising wages or equalizing them is not the solution for making the worker free, it just makes the exploitation more uniform. The capital, trade and money are products of estrangement, reinforcing the private property. And worker liberation is human liberation as labor is the root of all oppression. Marx calls for ending the alienated labor and exploitation of workers. (Marx, 1844/1959)

Marx (1844/1959) reaches the final question which is how this human self-alienation could be overcome truly. This alienation could be seen in every aspect of life like policy, family, morality, religion. He regards the self-alienation an essence determining the human history. Unlike the Hegelian human being or limited spirit which constantly develops towards freedom consciously throughout the history, the Marxian human being or natural producer human in not in a path towards freedom but slavery. Marx introduces two stages of communism: The crude communism, which is the transitional phase through the ultimate communism. In crude communism private property is truly ended and distributed to everyone but labor remains estranged since state or community controls property instead of individuals. He regarded this stage as an alienation and inequality in another form. He believes crude communism takes back the ownership of private property from capitalists and tend to destroy what cannot achieve. The ultimate or true communism instead is the phase when human being is able to regain his alienated forces and greed for capital and private property would be ended. The changes in this phase would not be limited to economy but it can be seen also in human relations, labor and nature. The relation between man and nature is restored and industry is no longer a place of exploitation and alienation but a tool for using human potentials. (Marx, 1844/1959)

Marx (1844/1959) puts it:

> "In order to abolish the idea of private property, the idea of communism is quite sufficient. It takes actual communist action to abolish actual private property. History will lead to it; and this movement, which in theory we already know to be a self-transcending movement, will constitute in actual fact a very rough and protracted process. But we must regard it as a real advance to have at the outset gained a consciousness of the limited character as well as of the goal of this historical movement – and a consciousness which reaches out beyond it. Marx believed when communist artisans associate with one another, theory, propaganda, etc., is their first end. But at the same time, as a result of this association, they acquire a new need – the need for society – and what appears as a means becomes an end" (p53).

The concept of historical materialism is one of the important notions in Marx's ideas regarding history and transformations in society. Marx (1859/1999) critiques idealist philosophies in which ideas shape the history, and believed that the ideas and social structures and politics are the products of material condition, specifically mode of production. Marx (1859/1999) noted that "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness" (Preface).

In fact, according to his theory, materialistic production of man is the foundation of the history and intellectual, spiritual and cultural production of man are the results. Marx (1859/1999) uses the idea of organism in Hegel's philosophy regarding every society as a united organism in which every part or organ can be apprehended separately. Unlike idealistic philosophy of Hegel that saw the organistic unity of a society in spirits of people, in Marx materialism this unity exists in economic structures of a society. In Marx's theory the materialistic production of man is based on three factors. First, the production more than anything is dependent on conditions of production in a specific society like climate, population and etc. and the second factor is forces of production like technology, labor and resources and the third one is the relations of production which organize the forces of production among society. These constitute the economic base of a society and superstructures including ideology, law, religion, culture and politics are driven by the economic base. (Marx, 1859/1999)

Marx (1848/1955) outlines five modes of production or stages of historical development that societies face, including primitive communism, slave society, feudalism, capitalism in which bourgeoisie are owner of tools of production and workers or proletariat sell their labor and themselves to survive. And in the final stage (communism), the proletariat would abolish capitalism resulting in a collective ownership of production and a classless society. And the main reason for the transition between all these phases is class struggle and conflict between social classes. Moreover, this struggle is not resulted from abstract ideas but is driven by material conditions. (Marx, 1848/1955)

As Marx (1848/1955) pointed out:

> "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — Bourgeoisie and Proletariat" (pp. 9–10).

Marx (1859/1999) claims that economy determines the entire cultural territory of a society and in fact the culture is not based on ideas and old philosophical or religious beliefs but it is the superstructure created by the existing economic mode of production. Dominant ideas in each period of human history are the ideas of a social class which possesses the means of materialistic production and subsequently intellectual production. Marx believed in creation of social relations based on the relations of the material production in a society which is not determined by the will of human beings. He regarded this process as a cycle that a society inevitably follows it. These relations shape the economic structure of the society as the foundation determining the superstructures of the society including ideas, politics, culture and religion. (Marx, 1859/1999)

Marx (1859/1999, Preface) argued that it is the economic structure that shapes the human consciousness and determines the broader social, political and intellectual dynamics. In the process of the development of productive forces in the society, conflicts and contradictions would emerge between the relations of production and economic system and the property relations that hold the power in the society, and the ultimate consequence is a fundamental change in the structure of a society through social revolution. (Marx, 1859/1999, Preface)

Through a Marxian perspective housing is not provided based on social need, but on economic condition of human beings and their ability to afford the rent or buying a house. What results from this type of economic system would be exclusion of underprivileged people and their homelessness or living in the poor housing conditions. According to Marx (1844/1959), private property is the result of the human self-alienation and access to private property is determined by economic relations rather than human needs. Regarding private property Marx (1844/1959) stated that "the transcendence of private property is therefore the complete emancipation of all human senses and qualities, but it is this emancipation precisely because these senses and attributes have become, subjectively and objectively, human" (p46).

It is asserted by Marx (1844/1959, p. 28–29) that the wealthier capitalist becomes, the poorer worker will end up. In fact, it is the worker who brings profit for the capitalist with his labor but his value is reduced through the process of exploitation and the worker is regarded a mere commodity exactly like the product that he produces. The worth of the worker labor would diminish

while the value of the material good rises and the capitalist becomes wealthier. (Marx, 1844/1959, pp. 28–29)

Adam Smith stated that:

> "The rent of land, therefore, considered as the price paid for the use of the land, is naturally a monopoly price. It is not at all proportioned to what the landlord may have laid out upon the improvement of the land, or to what he can afford to take; but to what the farmer can afford to give" (as cited in Marx, 1844/1959, p. 20).

According to Marxism philosophy the issue of housing is not only about lack of access to housing, but it is also about experiencing precarious living conditions by the working class which is linked with wealth disparity and capital accumulation of privileged part of the society. The concentration of wealth in this society results in detaching the working class from proper urban living areas to overcrowded, poor and unhealthy living conditions and neighborhoods. The development and expansion of the capitalist cities is not based on social need, but on profits resulting in exclusion of the working class and displacing them and pushing them further to the margins.

Marx (1867/1887) outlined:

> "Intimate connexion between the pangs of hunger of the most industrious layers of the working class, and the extravagant consumption, coarse or refined, of the rich, for which capitalist accumulation is the basis, reveals itself only when the economic laws are known. It is otherwise with the "housing of the poor." Every unprejudiced observer sees that the greater the centralisation of the means of production, the greater is the corresponding heaping together of the labourers, within a given space; that therefore the swifter capitalistic accumulation, the more miserable are the dwellings of the working-people. "Improvements" of towns, accompanying the increase of wealth, by the demolition of badly built quarters, the erection of palaces for banks, warehouses, &c., the widening of streets for business traffic, for the carriages of luxury, and for the introduction of tramways, &c., drive away the poor into even worse and more crowded hiding places" (p. 456).

In addition, Marx (1867/1887) mentioned:

> "Self-earned private property, that is based, so to say, on the fusing together of the isolated, independent labouring individual with the conditions of his labour, is supplanted by capitalistic private property, which rests on exploitation of the nominally free labour of others, i.e., on wage labour" (p. 539).

According to Friedrich Engels (1872/2021) housing crisis is not an accidental failure but is a result of capitalism system which tries to connect the housing issue to individual failure. He questions the urbanization and development of capitalist society which prioritize its profits rather than human basic needs. As Engels (1872/2021) puts it "the housing shortage from which the workers and part

of the petit bourgeoisie suffer in our modern big cities is one of the innumerable smaller, secondary evils which result from the present-day capitalist mode of production" (p. 15).

Engels (1872/2021) considers bourgeois solutions like private ownership of housing for working class as illusion and believes this only reinforces the system of capitalism and exploitation. Regarding the right to housing, the only solution that Engles believes in is the fundamental transformation of the society or a social revolution in order to take the ownership of property from bourgeois and redistribute it based on social need. He claims that the only way to address the housing question is destroying the capitalist property relations. (Engels, 1872/2021)

It is stated by Engels (1872/2021):

> "To want to solve the housing question while at the same time desiring to maintain the modern big cities is an absurdity. The modern big cities, however, will be abolished only by the abolition of the capitalist mode of production, and when this is once set going there will be quite other issues than sup plying each worker with a little house of his own" (p. 51).

It can be argued that the main critique to Marxism approach toward social struggles is its economic determinism and reductionism. In Marxian approach relations of materialistic production and economy shape structure of a society and this theory regards social and cultural production as outcomes of the economic system and according to Marx (1859/1999, Preface), even the human consciousness is developed by the material condition or modes and relations of production throughout history. The main critique would be the deterministic and fixed causality in Marxism philosophy claiming the private property would emerge only by economic inequality in a capitalism system. Culture, politics, religion and ideology are superstructures of a society and are considered as outcomes of the economy. In Marx theory this fact is underestimated that the economy is not the only factor of social struggles and in fact cultural, political, ideological and institutional factors that are considered as effects of the materialistic production and economy of the society could be the causes of social issues at the same time. In a classical Marxist perspective elements like race, gender and migration are neglected as actors that could play an important role in emerging or reinforcing social struggles like housing issues.

In addition, through the lens of Marxian theory, social movements like housing movements are driven only by the conflicts and contradictions between social classes. This statement can be questioned as another fixed causality in Marx philosophy in which the only cause for social movements and change is class struggles. This perspective overlooks diverse social movements which operate beyond strictly class-based lines. It can be argued that dividing a society into two classes can be considered an oversimplistic division in a complex modern society. Many contemporary housing movements include diverse actors that are not framed in a binary class division (proletariat-versus-bourgeoisie). Worsley (1982/2003, p. 105) argued that social and

financial injustice is not driven only by class struggle everywhere, but there are other issues which can lead to injustice like race, gender and migration that could play an important role in driving social movements along with economic factors. As Worsley (1982/2003) stated:

> "Most modern sociology now recognizes that classes, constituted by virtue of ownership or non-ownership of the means of production, are indeed crucial. But so too, most would claim, are other, numerous forms of exploitation—of race, gender, and ethnicity especially—status inequalities, which form bases for economic inequalities. Proletarians have no monopoly of exploitation, and it is only under the purely theoretical conditions of a perfect capitalist market that economic classes of that kind predominate. In historical epochs before capitalism, in particular, and in the underdeveloped capitalist world today, status-based inequalities (between ethnic and cultural communities, for example) are much more widespread than pure class struggle. And we have seen, even under regimes ideologically committed to socialist egalitarianism, these struggles over inequality go on, though now mainly between 'new' classes which try to monopolize their social privileges through control of the State and the Party rather than via private ownership of the means of production and the market economy" (p. 105).

Furthermore, in Marxist theory the only reason of women's oppression is the capitalist system. This argument neglects the concept of patriarchy as an independent system of domination which could be an important factor in emergence of housing issues for women subjected to domestic violence experiencing precarious and dangerous living conditions.

2.2 | The Frankfurt School and Critical Theory

As one of the most important intellectual movements of the 20th century, Frankfurt school and critical theory was introduced in Institute for Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung) at the university of Frankfurt. The notion is driven from the intellectual and theoretical legacy of a dominant German group of scholars and their critical social theories in domains of philosophy, sociology, political theory, and cultural studies. As the most important thinker laying the foundation of Frankfurt school, Max Horkheimer brought together a group of dominant scholars including Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, and later Jürgen Habermas. The main theories of the members are related to the Marx's thoughts and an effort to introduce a new interdisciplinary perspective toward social analysis moving beyond traditional Marxism. They not only criticized the Soviet Union as a totalitarian regime, but also rejected the revolutionary aspects of Marxism approach. Their approach in opposing the capitalist system was not limited to an economical deterministic approach, but their main argument and effort was showing how

culture, ideology, and mass media could contribute to domination and social control. (Jay, 1973/1996)

It is argued by Martin Jay (1973/1996) that the theories of the Frankfurt school's scholars are not driven only by Marx's ideas and thoughts but they are also strongly influenced by the Hegel's philosophy and also early works of Marx like Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 which could be considered more Hegelian. As Jay (1973/1996) puts it:

> "On one level, then, it can be argued that the Frankfurt School was returning to the concerns of the Left Hegelians of the 1840. Like that first generation of critical theorists, its members were interested in the integration of philosophy and social analysis. They likewise were concerned with the dialectical method devised by Hegel and sought, like their predecessors, to turn it in a materialist direction. And finally, like many of the Left Hegelians, they were particularly interested in exploring the possibilities of transforming the social order through human praxis" (p. 42).

One of the main efforts of thinkers of Frankfurt school was studying all forms of power including those manipulating the human consciousness through an ideological and cultural way. This approach differed from orthodox Marxists who mainly focused only on economic aspects of the society. In theories of Frankfurt school's scholars, ideas of Freudian psychoanalysis were combined with their studies moving beyond economical determinism of Marxism. (Jay, 1973/1996)

Among the theories of Frankfurt school, one of the most dominant ideas is critical theory that is central to all philosophical and intellectual thoughts of the scholars of Frankfurt school and was popularized by Max Horkheimer in 1937. According to Jay (1973/1996, pp. 41–42), critical theory is rooted in 1840s when Hegel's philosophy was initially used in the social and political change in Germany. When the early philosophy of Marx as a dominant thinker in this period of time was later changed to a more scientific approach, critical theory moved away from being truly critical. After World War I, scholars like Karl Korsch regarded the philosophy of Marx a form of rigid thinking and tried to challenge the simplistic materialism of the time by finding the connection with the philosophy of Hegel. Scholars including Georg Lukács and Karl Korsch in the 1920s reintroduced philosophy into Marxism and critical theory which developed further by the works of young scholars at the Institut für Sozialforschung. (Jay, 1973/1996, pp. 41–42)

Regarding critical theory Horkheimer (1972/2002) argued:

> "The hostility to theory as such which prevails in contemporary public life is really directed against the transformative activity associated with critical thinking. Opposition starts as soon as theorists fail to limit themselves to verification and classification by means of categories which are as neutral as possible, that is, categories which are indispensable to inherited ways of life. Among the vast majority of the ruled there is the unconscious fear

> that theoretical thinking might show their painfully won adaptation to reality to be perverse and unnecessary" (p. 232).

The basic feature of the critical theory is its criticism against positivism and its methodological approaches. In positivism social and historical factors that shape the reality are not taken into consideration, and knowledge is just a mere empirical observation limited to things that can be quantified. In addition, underlying social forces at play are underestimated in positivism. According to critical theory positivism is a just a confusing approach that doesn't provide a right understanding of the social life. Moreover, objectivity in positivist science is challenged. Critical theory doesn't consider knowledge purely objective but claims that knowledge is always mediated by historical and social contexts. It can be argued that positivism not only doesn't lead to social change but possibly has the potential to approve or even strengthen the status quo and power structures rather than critically challenge them. Positivism serves as a tool of domination by replacing technical control for genuine understanding and considering existing order as natural and inevitable. In a positivist approach the fact is regarded as independent element from social context. Through positivism hidden power structures that form the reality and knowledge are neglected and the focus is limited to describing observable phenomena instead of challenging the structures shaping the fact and reality. Furthermore, Human being is regarded as a mere object through positivist perspective. (jay, 1973/1996)

jay (1973/1996, p. 54) argued that unlike positivists who regard social facts as independent data that can be explored as an isolated object, critical theory focuses on an interconnection in social reality. Critical theory claims that a social phenomenon should be studied in connection with the broader social, historical, and economic system. Social reality in a critical approach is not considered merely observable and measurable fact that can be studied scientifically, but it is regarded a dynamic product of the history that is in a process of constant shaping by power relations, forces, ideology and politics. (jay, 1973/1996, p. 54)

Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) believe that, enlightenment instead of providing a freedom from myth and superstition ended up in a new form of domination over human beings. This happened mainly because of a notion called instrumental reason which turned into a means of control and domination instead of bringing liberation. Systems of power are strengthened by scientific and technological developments and although they aimed to deliver freedom, they reinforced power structures. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1947/2002)

Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) argued that "Enlightenment, understood in the widest sense as the advance of thought, has always aimed at liberating human beings from fear and installing them as masters. Yet the wholly enlightened earth is radiant with triumphant calamity" (p. 1).

Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) claim that reason and consciousness of human beings turned into a new form which leads to technical control and domination over the nature, that can be

considered the product of capitalism. They see the domination of human beings over the nature equal to domination of human beings over each other. The authors analyze the narrative of Odyssey reflecting the transition from myth to rationality. Odysseus portrays enlightenment when he prevails mythical risks through reason but this survival entails deception and self-denial proving the fact that to embody enlightenment the instinct and nature need to be suppressed. As Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) state that "The contrast between the single surviving ego and the multiplicity of fare reflects the antithesis between enlightenment and myth" (p. 38).

Horkheimer (1947) argue that one of the critiques toward modern societies is that they tend to consider reason and instrumental rationality as equal to each other which results in neglection of broader ethical or philosophical considerations in favor of efficiency and usefulness. As Horkheimer (1947) mentioned:

> "When the ordinary man is asked to explain what is meant by the term reason, his reaction is almost always one of hesitation and embarrassment. It would be a mistake to interpret this as indicating wisdom too deep or thought too abstruse to be put into words. What it actually betrays is the feeling that there is nothing to inquire into, that the concept of reason is self-explanatory, that the question itself is superfluous. When pressed for an answer, the average man will say that reasonable things are things that are obviously useful, and that every reasonable man is supposed to be able to decide what is useful to him. Naturally the circumstances of each situation, as well as laws, customs, and traditions, should be taken into account. But the force that ultimately makes reasonable actions possible is the faculty of classification, inference, and deduction, no matter what the specific content the abstract functioning of the thinking mechanism" (p. 3).

According to Horkheimer (1947) as long as critical theory is ignored, people become more conformist in modern societies. In fact, the crisis of reason is connected to crisis of individuality. The domination of instrumental reason causes the individual losing their autonomy. In the period of Enlightenment reason was meant to define features of the autonomous human being. Human dignity was shaped according to rational self-determination as philosophers like Kant and Hegel argued and the Enlightenment aimed to free individual from dogma, tradition and arbitrary authority through critical and rational deliberation but the idea of reason changed in a way making the promise of Enlightenment impossible to happen. Firstly, the objective reason turned into the subjective one and the reason that was meant to be a tool to understand the world in an ethical and meaningful way became instrumental prioritizing the efficiency and domination. This made individuals turn into passive subjects instead of being autonomous thinkers. Human beings not only are not able to shape the reality and world through reason but they are shaped by the world and bureaucratic and economic systems. Their value is not related to their individuality but to their

usefulness in an economic and political system. It can be argued that what shapes the structures of social relationships, jobs and education is technical efficiency. (Horkheimer, 1947)

Horkheimer (1947) asserted:

> "The crisis of reason is manifested in the crisis of the individual, as whose agency it has developed. The illusion that traditional philosophy has cherished about the individual and about reason the illusion of their eternity is being dispelled. The individual once conceived of reason exclusively as an instrument of the self. Now he experiences the reverse of this self-deification. The machine has dropped the driver; it is racing blindly into space. At the moment of consummation, reason has become irrational and stultified. The theme of this time is self-preservation, while there is no self to preserve. In view of this situation, it behooves us to reflect upon the concept of the individual" (p. 128).

Horkheimer (1947) believe that in a modern capitalist system people have only the illusion of individuality and freedom and in fact their choices are predetermined and their desires and ambitions are shaped by the power structures. In this society, people are merely reproducing socially conditioned behaviors. The most important debate in ideas of Horkheimer is that the tendency of the modern individual to prevail and control nature for achieving the maximum efficiency and wealth accumulation causes the individual to become dominated and controlled by the same system. In this system individuals lose their tendency to question and critique the power structures and simply try to survive and succeed within it. Social critique and resistance of human beings are replaced by their adaptation and adjustment with the existing inequality which resulted in mass conformity and the inability to challenge oppressive power structures. In this situation those thinkers who resist the instrumental reason are marginalized as impractical dreamers. (Horkheimer, 1947)

As Horkheimer (1947) puts it: "The more intense an individual's concern with power over things, the more will things dominate him, the more will he lack any genuine individual traits, and the more will his mind be transformed into an automaton of formalized reason" (pp. 129–130).

An important notion that could be considered as the key theme of Dialectic of Enlightenment is "culture industry". Horkheimer and Adorno believe that creativity and autonomy are removed from culture in the capitalism system and culture turned into a system of standardized and commodified entertainment performing against critical thinking which has resulted in a more social conformity. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1947/2002)

Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) believe that mass culture has become the tool for ideological and social domination under capitalism rather than enlightenment. Mass culture reproduces familiar narratives to have control over the consumers under a predetermined ideology and

entertainment and in this system, choice and creativity is remained a mere illusion. As it is argued by Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002):

> "Unending sameness also governs the relationship to the past. What is new in the phase of mass culture compared to that of late liberalism is the exclusion of the new. The machine is rotating on the spot. While it already determines consumption, it rejects anything untried as a risk. In film, any manuscript which is not reassuringly based on a best-seller is viewed with mistrust. That is why there is incessant talk of ideas, novelty and surprises, of what is both totally familiar and has never existed before. Tempo and dynamism are paramount. Nothing is allowed to stay as it was, everything must be endlessly in motion" (p. 106).

Culture industry tends to shape consumer needs and desires in a way serving best to capitalism system. In such system the entertainment industry operates as a suppressive machine rather than enlightening. One of the main aims of the culture industry is turning even suffering and resistance into marketable commodities. Individuals are transformed into passive subjects instead of questioning and opposing the inequality and oppression around them. Mass culture as a tool of ideological control aims to manipulate the emotions by distracting individuals from injustice and pushing them way from any resistance. People are meant to be only passive consumers of entertainment instead of engaging in critical thinking. Happiness, excitement, and escape are only false promises made by mass culture to maintain the control system and avoid any kind of social change. Diversity and choice are illusions in culture industry and everything is limited to desires of capitalist system which is wealth accumulation. For example, cinema, music and advertisement industry follow the same formula dictated by the capitalist system. Tv shows and movies have been transformed into easy consuming products instead of being critical, radical and intellectual and they are produced with predictable scripts and stories. In music industry society is fed with those styles of songs structured by the same melodies and rhythms that are merely more appealing to the majority of the society rather than being an art. Advertisements sell lifestyle instead of a product and constantly shape the desires of individuals. The ultimate goal of marketing strategies is to manipulate choices in a way bringing more profits to the capitalist system. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1947/2002)

Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) mentioned:

> "All mass culture under monopoly is identical, and the contours of its skeleton, the conceptual armature fabricated by monopoly, are beginning to stand out. Those in charge no longer take much trouble to conceal the structure, the power of which increases the more bluntly its existence is admitted. Films and radio no longer need to present themselves as art. They call themselves industries, and the published figures for their directors' incomes quell any doubts about the social necessity of their finished products" (p. 95).

Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) argue that under capitalism, entertainment serves as propaganda in a way similar to totalitarian regimes, only with this difference that under capitalism the domination and control happens through pleasure and in totalitarian regimes through force. Capitalism maintains its domination in a psychological way and its main goal is preventing any kind of radical thinking, critiques, protests and social movements by entertaining people and media consumption and removing true human relationships. In this way the capitalist ideas are normalized and are shown natural and inevitable. As Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) put it:

> "Entertainment is the prolongation of work under late capital ism. It is sought by those who want to escape the mechanized labor process so that they can cope with it again. At the same time, however, mechanization has such power over leisure and its happiness, determines so thoroughly the fabrication of entertainment commodities, that the off-duty worker can experience nothing but after-images of the work process itself. The ostensible content is merely a faded foreground; what is imprinted is the automated sequence of standardized tasks. The only escape from the work process in factory and office is through adaptation to it in leisure time. This is the incurable sickness of all entertainment. Amusement congeals into boredom, since, to be amusement, it must cost no effort and therefore moves strictly along the well-worn grooves of association" (p. 109).

Enlightenment that was meant to be a tool leading individual towards freedom through reason became a new form of control and suppression. Reason is transformed into instrumental reason in the process of rationalization in capitalism system and this rationalized control and domination operates through ideological propaganda and entertainment shaping individual's perceptions, desires and even their political choices. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1947/2002)

Another important debate associated with ideas of Frankfurt school is the notion of One-Dimensional Society introduced by Herbert Marcuse. What Marcuse (1964/2013) believe about modern industrial societies is that two-dimensional thinking disappeared in modern societies where individuals lost their ability to recognize contradictions and imagine alternatives. People adapted themselves to status quo without any attempt to question it which is regarded as one-dimensional way of thinking. Under the dominance of capitalism individuals are being kept content with consumer goods and entertainment and distracted from any kind of critical thinking. In this system creativity and radical imagination of human beings are limited which stops individuals to reach their human potentials. This fact shows that self-alienation in Marxism approach is not only related to economic exploitation. Moreover, Technology serves as another tool for social domination by increasing productivity for the capitalist system and shaping ideology. Workers are kept dependent on the system and are pacified through technology, and in this situation radical thinking is replaced by consumerism. Freedom in political democracy under capitalism is regard as a mere illusion

while individuals are kept controlled and subordinated by corporate and political elites. (Marcuse, 1964/2013)

As Marcuse (1964/2013) mentioned:

> "Under the rule of a repressive whole, liberty can be made into a powerful instrument of domination. The range of choice open to the individual is not the decisive factor in determining the degree of human freedom, but what can be chosen and what is chosen by the individual. The criterion for free choice can never be an absolute one, but neither is it entirely relative. Free election of masters does not abolish the masters or the slaves. Free choice among a wide variety of goods and services does not signify freedom if these goods and services sustain social controls over a life of toil and fear – that is, if they sustain alienation. And the spontaneous reproduction of superimposed needs by the individual does not establish autonomy; it only testifies to the efficacy of the controls" (pp. 14–15).

Marcuse (1964/2013) claims that any kind of critical and oppositional thinking is absorbed and neutralized by the society. Capitalism commercializes radical ideas. For instance, movements like those with countercultural ideas turned into fashion trends. State tolerates any oppositions as long as they have no tendency for social change and no threats against capitalism profits. Through consumerism, a capitalist system shapes the perception of society in a way that individuals try to find their identity according to what they own rather than by their true desires or political consciousness. As Marcuse (1964/2013) puts it "The people recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment" (p. 15).

Marcuse (1964/2013) believe that in ancient philosophy, truth had a different role. It was not related to knowledge, but it was more about how people should live and the only way to reach the truth was to resist falsehood, as seen in Socrates' challenge to Athenian society. Moreover, Ethics was linked to knowledge in a way that people tried to behave and act according to what was true. On the other hand, in modern industrialized societies, dialectical thought is replaced by one-dimensional thinking and individuals tend to adjust themselves with the reality without challenging it and they lost their ability to recognize the existing contradictions like growth and destruction, freedom and oppression. In such society, technology and rationality have the role of domination instead of liberation. Marcuse claim that in these societies any kind of social change is impossible since the working class lose their revolutionary force and focus more on wages and consumer goods instead of questioning the capitalism, and because the system absorbs Intellectuals, artists, and students to prevent emergence of any radical ideas. Marcuse believed that change would be possible only by creating a new revolutionary consciousness and he highlighted the importance of resistance against the suppression of the system and emphasized the role of marginalized groups. (Marcuse, 1964/2013)

Marcuse (1964/2013) mentioned:

> "However, underneath the conservative popular base is the substratum of the outcasts and outsiders, the exploited and persecuted of other races and other colors, the unemployed and the unemployable. They exist outside the democratic process; their life is the most immediate and the most real need for ending intolerable conditions and institutions. Thus, their opposition is revolutionary even if their consciousness is not. Their opposition hits the system from without and is therefore not deflected by the system; it is an elementary force which violates the rules of the game and, in doing so, reveals it as a rigged game. When they get together and go out into the streets, without arms, without protection, in order to ask for the most primitive civil rights, they know that they face dogs, stones, and bombs, jail, concentration camps, even death. Their force is behind every political demonstration for the victims of law and order. The fact that they start refusing to play the game may be the fact which marks the beginning of the end of a period" (p. 143).

Communicative Action as a significant theory introduced by Jürgen Habermas can be considered one of the most important debates in ideas of Frankfurt School. Habermas's opposition against modernity includes the analysis of the link between lifeworld and system. Concept of Lifeworld has an important role in shaping Habermas's theory of communicative action. In theory of Habermas, lifeworld is regarded as shared background of knowledge, culture, and social norms that people rely on when communicating or making social interactions. The meaning of individual's communications and actions is driven by lifeworld which refers to informal, background context. Culture, traditions, values, language, and social institutions are considered elements constituting the lifeworld. Habermas claims that rationalization and instrumental rationality in capitalist societies has resulted in colonization of the lifeworld. He believes that there is a fundamental difference between lifeworld and system. While the system is created by economic and bureaucratic structures that function through steering media including money and power and instrumental rationality instead of communicative rationality, lifeworld is shaped by shared norms, culture, and communicative structures in which individuals act through mutual understanding and participate in meaningful communications and social life. He believed that through the domination of financial and bureaucratic systems, social communications and interactions are controlled and suppressed which result in loss of democratic participation and individual autonomy. In such societies lifeworld is colonized and human beings experience alienation. (Habermas, 1981/1987)

As Habermas (1981/1987) stated:

> "The lifeworld of a social group is subject to corresponding restrictions. Through its material substratum, every lifeworld is in an exchange with its surroundings [Umgebung], formed by the ecology of external nature, the organisms of its members, and the structures of alien lifeworlds" (pp. 231–232).

In his critique to Parsons' systems theory, Habermas (1981/1987) argue that modernity in Parsons' perspective is regarded as development of rationalization but this fact that economy and bureaucratic structures dominated the human interaction is neglected in Parsons' theory. As Habermas (1981/1987) pointed out:

> "Because he does not resolve the competition between lifeworld and system but only quiets it down with a compromise, Parsons has to bring the rationalization of the lifeworld conceptually into line with the growth of system complexity. Hence, he is unable to grasp the dialectic inherent in modernization processes, the burdens placed on the internal structures of the lifeworld by growing system complexity" (p. 284).

The theory of communicative action of Habermas (1981/1987) refers to a kind of interaction through which individuals engage in meaningful communication resulting in a mutual understanding. Communicative action contrasts with strategic action which includes manipulation and domination aiming to reach personal goals. Unlike Communicative action which is based on rational argumentation in order to achieve consensus, instrumental rationality entails efficiency and domination. As Habermas (1981/1987) stated:

> "The theory of communicative action aims at the moment of unconditionally that, with criticizable validity claims, is built into the conditions of processes of consensus formation. As claims they transcend all limitations of space and time, all the provincial limitations of the given context" (p. 399).

Habermas provide a different interpretation of Weber's theory of rationalization. Habermas claim (1981/1987) that modern societies are structured through reason and efficiency. While Adorno and Horkheimer show pessimism toward rationalization and believe in an inevitable domination created by reason, Habermas argue that besides the negative side of the rationalization which entails technocratic control and disappearance of meaning from human life, rationalization also has a positive side which results in democratic and critical arguments and debates with the aim of progress and liberation from any systemic control. He advocates coordination of human life through radical communication and interaction instead of money and power which lead to oppression. Habermas argues that a rational and meaningful communication is based on validity claims which give legitimacy to a statement in communication. He believes that societies in the past did not clearly distinguish validity claims. The differentiation of validity claims happened across different cultural and institutional domains over time. (Habermas, 1981/1987)

Habermas (1981/1987) puts it "On the level of communicative action, the syndrome of validity claims breaks up. Participants no longer only differentiate between orientations to success and to mutual understanding, but between the different basic pragmatic attitudes as well" (p. 194).

Habermas (1981/1987) regard different types for validity claims: First one is Truth (Wahrheit) or proving that a statement corresponds to the reality or no. Next one is Rightness (Richtigkeit) showing that a statement clearly aligns with the social norms and the third claim is Truthfulness (Wahrhaftigkeit) of the speaker. This means, to have a rational argument individual should not rely on authority or manipulation, but the communication should be based on evidence or facts and ethical reasoning. As it is argued by Habermas (1981/1987) that "The illocutionary components express the fact that the speaker is explicitly raising a claim to propositional truth, normative Tightness, or subjective truthfulness, as well as the particular aspects under which he is doing so" (p. 72).

According to Habermas (1981/1987), one of the most significant aspects of a rational discourse and interaction is criticizability of validity claims. These claims should accept any kind of opposition and disagreement in order to be based on reason rather than mere power and authority, as Habermas (1981/1987) asserted:

> "The concept of truth combines the objectivity of experience with a claim to the intersubjective validity of a corresponding descriptive statement, the idea of the correspondence of sentences to facts with the concept of an idealized consensus. It is only from this combination that we get the concept of a criticizable validity claim" (p. 72).

Generally, it can be claimed that argumentation determines the validity claims instead of compulsion and strategic action. Habermas (1981/1987) pointed out:

> "Under the presuppositions of communicative action oriented to reaching understanding, validity claims cannot be rejected or accepted without reason, there is in alter's response to ego a basic moment of insight, and this takes the response out of the sphere of mere caprice, sheer conditioning, or adjustment—at least that is how participants themselves see it. So long as in their speech acts they raise claims to the validity of what is being uttered, they are proceeding in the expectation that they can achieve a rationally motivated agreement and can coordinate their plans and actions on this basis—without having to influence the empirical motives of the others through force or the prospect of reward, as is the case with simple impositions and the threat of consequences. With the differentiation of the basic modes, the linguistic medium of reaching understanding gains the power to bind the will of responsible actors. Ego can exercise this illocutionary power on alter when both are in a position to orient their actions to validity claims" (pp. 26–27).

Habermas (1981/1987) merge the concept of morality with the structure of validity claims through developing a connection between normative rightness and universalization principle. Morality exists in the domain of the ethics in which instead of tradition and authority, rational discourse justifies and legitimates the moral norms. According to Habermas societies traditionally determined their moral norms based on sacred authority. This approach is transformed in modern

societies, where communicative rationality shapes the moral norms of the society and morality is no longer dependent on metaphysical justifications. Habermas believe in universality of Morality just like Kant; however, he criticizes the highly formalistic approach of Kant toward morality in which consideration of real social practices is neglected. While Kant believed in moral reasoning in isolation based on individual reasoning, Habermas regard this approach highly abstract and insufficient which does not take the perspectives of real people affected by moral norms into consideration. According to Habermas the categorical imperative of Kant only shows the way to examine a norm by universalization without considering the social context and determining the actual validation ways of moral norms within a society. Habermas regards morality as a form of validity claim and argues that moral norms need to be intersubjectively agreed and justified through rational discourse. In addition, he differentiates legal norms from moral ones by claiming that although both of them are forms of validity claim, they are justified in different way. While moral norms need to be justified through rational discourse, legal norms are institutionally applied. (Habermas, 1981/1987)

As Habermas (1981/1987) puts it:

> "While a deinstitutionalized, only internalized morality ties the regulation of conflict to the idea of justifying normative validity claims—to the procedures and presuppositions of moral argumentation—a de-moralized, positive, compulsory law exacts a deferment of legitimation that makes it possible to steer social action via media of a different type" (p. 180).

Habermas (1981/1987) claims that the decline of ethical reasoning and democracy happened due to prioritization of productivity within modern capitalist societies where market logic, bureaucratic domination and financial power structures led to the decline of traditional values, direct relationships and subsequently colonization of the lifeworld. And he believes that lifeworld can become free from colonization through communicative action and involvement of the society in rational dialogue and communication and resisting against any distraction and manipulation by the dominant propaganda. Institutions can stop systemic bureaucratic control by prioritizing open debates and reinforcing democracy. As Habermas (1981/1987) stated:

> "If we start from a model with two steering media, namely, money and power, then an economic theory of democracy developed in terms of Marxist functionalism is inadequate. In comparing these two media, we saw that the institutionalization of power is more demanding than that of money. Money is anchored in the lifeworld by the institutions of bourgeois private law; for this reason the theory of value can start from the contractual relation between the wage laborer and the owner of capital. By contrast, the public-legal (in the sense of the law applying to public bodies) pendant of an organization of offices does not suffice for power; above and beyond this, a legitimation of the political order is needed.

> And only democratic procedures of political will-formation can in principle generate legitimacy under conditions of a rationalized lifeworld with highly individuated members, with norms that have become abstract, positive, and in need of justification, and with traditions that have, as regards their claim to authority, been reflectively refracted and set communicatively allow.14 In this respect, the organized labor movement aimed in the same direction as the bourgeois emancipation movements. In the end, the legitimation process is regulated—on the basis of freedom of organization and of belief, and by way of competition between parties—in the form of free, secret, and general elections. Of course, the political participation of citizens takes place under certain structural restrictions" (pp. 344–345).

Framing social struggles through the theories of Frankfurt school shifts the attention away from Marxian economic determinism to other systemic domination tools of capitalism including ideology, culture, psychology and social control. Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) believe that rationalization that was meant to lead the society towards liberation, instead resulted in injustice and an instrumental control through individual needs. In such system efficiency and profit dominated basic human needs through instrumental rationality resulting in decline of autonomy and creativity of individuals. Unlike Marxism, Frankfurt school focuses on ideological domination instead of economic control of capitalism. Mass media shape the perception of society regarding the social issues in a way that people accept them without questioning them and real social struggles of the society remain unrecognized and unchallenged. (Horkheimer and Adorno, 1947/2002)

Marin Jay (1973/1996) pointed out that "the culture industry administered a nonspontaneous, reified, phony culture rather than the real thing" (p. 216). Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) believe that in this situation people adapt themselves to the exploitation of power structures without questioning it and any kind of political resistance is prevented through culture industry which brings conformity.

Critical approach of Frankfurt school, by shifting the focus away from traditional Marxism's economic determinism to superstructures of the society including culture and ideology as dominant factors of social oppression, neglects economic exploitation as a significant factor causing social inequalities. Both theories of Frankfurt school and Marxism can be accused of different forms of reductionism by underestimating the relational importance of economic factors and social, cultural and ideological ones in shaping the foundation of social relations and injustice. Instead of separating these factors, they need to be treated as interconnected forces rather than isolated ones. For instance, housing cannot be considered only a mere ideological issue, but it is a material necessity as well. In fact, a more integrated and comprehensive approach is needed to synthesize economic, ideological, psychological, cultural and political dimensions which state urban inequalities are products of both material conditions and cultural production.

Another important gap in ideas of Horkheimer and Adorno lies in their strong pessimism toward any potential social change and possibility of application of their critical theory into practice for resistance. Their critical theory and analysis regarding domination of instrumental rationality over nature and human beings was limited to a theoretical framework and lacked any practical strategies for transformation and resisting the control system. Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) believe that the capitalism's reach is so totalizing that social movements, political activism or any cultural resistance would eventually become neutralized and absorbed, and even the possibility to imagine a better world is prevented by the capitalism system. As Adorno (1956/2011) puts it "We do not live in a revolutionary situation, and actually things are worse than ever. The horror is that for the first time we live in a world in which we can no longer imagine a better one" (p. 40).

Moreover, the detachment from real-world struggles is another limitation of the Frankfurt school. Highly academic theories written in difficult language made their work hardly accessible to a large portion of the society who seek freedom. This intellectual Elitism in their approach results in division between academia and activism and detach activists from working-class or those individuals affected by inequality.

Through criticizing mass culture, Horkheimer and Adorno (1947/2002) regard mass media as a mere tool for distraction of the society and preventing any kind of resistance. However, by limiting the mass culture to a mere mechanism for social control, they overlooked the ways in which political resistance and social critique historically have been shaped through the platforms of art, music or literature. Nowadays, the social media plays an important role in raising awareness about social issues like gentrification and displacement and shaping activism. In the approach of Horkheimer and Adorno the agency of individual is strongly underestimated and human beings are reduced to mere passive consumers. However, it can be claimed that individuals can play an important role in shaping culture and resistance as active participants rather than being products of the culture only.

According to Habermas's theory of communicative action (1981/1987), social change and consensus-building is possible through rational dialogue and communication. However, this optimistic solution is not applicable in societies with authoritarian governments in which any rational discussion or open discourse is restricted or violently suppressed and social change remains impossible through mere communication. For instance, in these societies, institutional barriers and legal repression prevent any social movements including those seeking housing justice from operating through communication and open discourse alone. In societies that housing protests are criminalized, the engagement of activists in legitimate discourse is impossible. Thus, it can be argued that Habermas's idealized vision of rational discourse neglects the political context and does not consider possible restrictions on free discussion.

2.3 | Right to The City: The Evolution of Marxism in Urban Studies

It can be argued that the issue of housing cannot be meaningfully understood in isolation from broader urban dynamics. Studying the concept of right to housing needs an engagement with deeper questions regarding urban life, power relations and spatial justice. A more fundamental concept lies at the center of these questions which is called right to the city. The concept of right to the city coined by Henri Lefebvre constitutes the foundational idea of the critical urban theory. According to Lefebvre (1996), the idea of right to the city is not only advocating having access to the urban spaces and resources but it is more about creating a democratic participation and an active involvement in shaping the city as a space of collective life. He believes that urban spaces are not just physical but he considers cities as complex social spaces shaped and produced by inhabitants. While Marx believed that the working class must take the control of industrial production, Lefebvre extends this idea to urban life and advocates the control of urban space production by residents. His idea criticized the capitalist approach toward urbanism in which cities are created based on profit achievement rather than human needs. Through right to the city the focus would be on changing existing structures and revolutionizing urban spaces to prioritize needs of inhabitants over market demands. (Lefebvre, 1996)

As Lefebvre (1996) puts it:

> "The right to the city cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life. It does not matter whether the urban fabric encloses the countryside and what survives of peasant life, as long as the 'urban', place of encounter, priority of use value, inscription in space of a time promoted to the rank of a supreme resource among all resources, finds its morphological base and its practico-material realization" (p. 158).

Lefebvre (1996) regards city as a social product shaped by human interactions evolving through history rather than a static object or a commodity. He believes that the idea of right to the city as a response to alienation of human beings and commodification of urban spaces, arises from marginalized people and residents who are displaced because of capitalist urban policies. City is not a site of capital accumulation and economic exchange but it more a place of lived experience and social interactions. (Lefebvre, 1996)

Lefebvre (1996) claim that right to the city as a social and political demand sometimes might get lost in distractions when people try to seek comfort in nostalgia or by escaping urban life for nature instead of focusing on fundamental issues of urban life. Lefebvre (1996) mentioned that:

> "In the face of this pseudo-right, the right to the city is like a cry and a demand. This right slowly meanders through the surprising detours of nostalgia and tourism, the return to the

> heart of the traditional city, and the Call of existent or recently developed centralities. The claim to nature, and the desire to enjoy it displace the right to the city. This latest claim expresses itself indirectly as a tendency to flee the deteriorated and unrenovated city, alienated urban life before at last, 'really' living. The need and the 'right' to nature contradict the right to the city without being able to evade it. (This does not mean that it is not necessary to preserve vase 'natural' spaces)" (p. 158).

Lefebvre (1970/2003) claim that urbanization has been turned into the dominant mode of social organization, going beyond industrialization and this kind of urbanization has reshaped the social relations, economic and power structures significantly. According to Lefebvre, cities are not mere physical entities but they need to be considered complex social and political structures which are shaped and controlled by capitalism. (Lefebvre, 1970/2003)

Lefebvre (1970/2003) believes that cities turn into isolated spaces and interconnected networks as a result of growth of industrialization which cause countryside get absorbed into urbanization turning everything into part of a unified urban fabric. As Lefebvre (1970/2003) asserted:

> "The urban fabric grows, extends its borders, corrodes the residue of agrarian life. This expression, "urban fabric," does not narrowly define the built world of cities but all manifestations of the dominance of the city over the country. In this sense, a vacation home, a highway, a supermarket in the countryside are all part of the urban fabric" (pp. 3–4).

Lefebvre (1970/2003) sees urbanization as a worldwide process rather than being a local issue. He believes economic structures and modes of living are tools of domination in urban logic and he argues that urban space is not only product of the capitalism but also it is shaping and reinforcing the capitalism itself like when scientific developments drive economic change. Lefebvre introduces a dual process called "implosion" and "explosion". Implosion is about when urban spaces concentrate more people, activities and wealth in their cores and explosion refers to the fact that these entities spread outward resulting in creation of suburbs, exurbs, and vast networks of satellite cities. Industrialization and globalization drive this process in which cities expand not only physically but also economically by linking local economy to global markets. (Lefebvre, 1970/2003)

Lefebvre (1970/2003) puts it:

> "The tremendous concentration (of people, activities, wealth, goods, objects, instruments, means, and thought) of urban reality and the immense explosion, the projection of numerous, disjunct fragments (peripheries, suburbs, vacation homes, satellite towns) into space. The industrial city (often a shapeless town, a barely urban agglomeration, a conglomerate, or conurbation like the Ruhr Valley) serves as a prelude to a critical zone. At this moment, the effects of implosion- explosion are most fully felt. The increase in

> industrial production is superimposed on the growth of commercial exchange and multiplies the number of such exchanges. This growth extends from simple barter to the global market, from the simple exchange between two individuals all the way to the exchange of products, works of art, ideas, and human beings" (p. 14).

Lefebvre (1970/2003) believes that the revolutionary nature of urbanization is neglected considerably. He challenges the approach of traditional Marxism focusing only on industrial production as the dominant force of social change and claims that urbanization as a product of industrialization serves the modern capitalism as a significant tool for maintaining the control and domination. Under capitalism domination, urban spaces are not created for inhabitants and their well-being but they are commodified for profit-making. (Lefebvre, 1970/2003)

Lefebvre (1970/2003) opposes this idea that cities develop naturally and he doesn't see the urban planning as a mere technical procedure and believes that spatial inequalities emerge as a result of controlling the urbanization by capitalist systems in their own favor rather than respecting the public needs. As Lefebvre (1970/2003) noted that:

> "Capitalism appears to be out of steam. It found new inspiration in the conquest of space—in trivial terms, in real estate speculation, capital projects (inside and outside the city), the buying and selling of space. And it did so on a worldwide scale. This is the (un foreseen) path of the socialization of productive forces, of the production of space itself. Capitalism, to ensure its survival, took the initiative in this. The strategy goes far beyond simply selling space, bit by bit. Not only does it incorporate space in the production of surplus value, it attempts to completely reorganize production as something subordinate to the centers of information and decision making" (p. 155).

Lefebvre (1996) criticizes the control and domination of urban spaces by selected specific authorities and believed that city must be a site of inclusion and participation for all residents. In general, he emphasizes centrality not only geographically but also centrality regarding social and political inclusion. He believed that exclusion of people from urban core need to be stopped. This exclusion can be physical through displacement or it can be social exclusion through denying a voice in urban planning. The right to centrality criticizes forcing people to live on the urban periphery and advocates participation of the residents in shaping urban planning. Lefebvre regards right to the city as a political struggle aiming to stop any spatial segregation and to rethink the ways that cities are being shaped and controlled in order to create more democratic urban spaces. Lefebvre links right to the city to broader human rights in a way going beyond liberal democratic frameworks. He considers the idea of right to the city as a call for a new way of living rather than a mere legal claim. In his theory people need to have control over their urban life and environment in a meaningful way instead of being considered as passive actors dominated by the power structures and subjected to decisions that are made by elites. (Lefebvre, 1996)

As Lefebvre (1996) mentioned that “The right to the city manifests itself as a superior form of rights: right to freedom, to individualization in socialization, to habitat and to inhabit” (pp. 173–174).

It is argued by Lefebvre (1996) that although housing is conceived as a social right in public consciousness, it not applied in practice institutionally and politically. Housing issue always remained a secondary priority in political discourse when state intervenes by mass production of cheap and inappropriate houses within the logic of the market instead of creating meaningful urban planning or when even leftist groups merely call for more housing instead of questioning and changing the fundamental power structures causing housing issues in the first place. He believes state-led housing policies turn the living spaces into mere mechanical and functional units instead of treating them as active spaces for lived experience, community, meaningful interactions, creativity and improvement. (Lefebvre, 1996)

Lefebvre (1996) noted that:

> “Housing does not necessarily become a public service. It surfaces into social consciousness as a right. It is acknowledged in fact by the indignation raised by dramatic cases and by the discontent engendered by the crisis. Yet it is not formally or practically acknowledged except as an appendix co the 'rights of man'. Construction taken in charge by the State does not change the orientations and conceptions adopted by the market economy. As Engels had predicted, the housing question, even aggravated, has politically played only a minor role. Groups and parties on the Left will be satisfied with demanding 'more housing’. Moreover, what guides public and semi-public initiatives is not a conception of urban planning, it is simply the goal of providing as quickly as possible at the least cost, the greatest possible number of housing units. The new housing estates will be characterized by an abstract and functional character: the concept of habitat brought to its purest form by a State bureaucracy” (pp. 78–79).

Lefebvre (1996) criticize the capitalism approach in facing housing crisis in which profit is prioritized over human needs and under capitalism as Engels also believed, housing problem is regarded as a systematic issue with the goal of wealth accumulation rather than a technical one. Lefebvre distinguishes between “habitat” and “inhabit”. He believes that in private homes, people owning the house have autonomy and freedom to personalize their environment and control their own space which can be considered an active living condition in which they have a sense of inhabit and belonging to the place. On the other hand, in standardized and rigid large housing estates in which there is no room for social appropriation and creativity, residents merely habitat and are limited to certain regulations without any flexibility to change their surroundings resulting in a sense of alienation in residents. According to the theory of Lefebvre housing cannot be detached from broader social struggles of urban life and the concept of right to housing can be considered a

right to having an appropriate experience of urban life rather than merely having access to a shelter. (Lefebvre, 1996)

In this regard Lefebvre (1996) asserted:

> “This notion of habitat is still somewhat 'uncertain'. Individual owner-occupation will enable variations, particular or individual interpretations of habitat. There is a sort of plasticity which allows for modifications and appropriations. The space of the house - fence, garden, various and available corners - leaves a margin of initiative and freedom to inhabit, limited but real. State rationality is pushed to the limit. In the new housing estate habitat is established in its purest form, as a burden of constraints. Certain philosophers will say that large housing estates achieve the concept of habitat by excluding the notion of inhabit, that is, the plasticity of space, its modelling and the appropriation by groups and individuals of the conditions of their existence. It is also a complete way of living (functions, prescriptions, daily routine) which is inscribed and signifies itself in this habitat” (p. 79).

Lefebvre (1996) considers the working class who are pushed to the margins of urban life and are living in neglected urban areas, as most affected by the capitalist system and subsequently the key force of challenging the domination structures. This idea aligns with Marx theory about class struggle with this difference that Lefebvre applies it specifically to urban space. He believes that the reformation of urban spaces is inherently revolutionary since it seeks challenging the status quo and removing any spatial inequality produced by capitalist order. As Lefebvre (1996) claimed:

> “Only the working class can become the agent, the social carrier or support of this realization. Here again, as a century ago, it denies and contests, by its very existence, the class strategy directed against it. As a hundred years ago, although under new conditions, it gathers the interests (overcoming the immediate and the superficial) of the whole society and firstly of all those who inhabit. Who can ignore that the Olympians of the new bourgeois aristocracy no longer inhabit. They go from grand hotel to grand hotel, or from castle to castle, commanding a fleet or a country from a yacht. They are everywhere and nowhere. That is how they fascinate people immersed into everyday life. They transcend everyday life, possess nature and leave it up to the cops to contrive culture. Is it essential to describe at length, besides the condition of youth, students and intellectuals, armies of workers with or without white collars, people from the provinces, the colonized and semi-colonized of all sorts, all those who endure a well-organized daily life, is it here necessary to exhibit the derisory and untragic misery of the inhabitant, of the suburban dweller and of the people who stay in residential ghettos, in the mouldering centres of old cities and in the proliferations lost beyond them? One only has to open one's eyes to understand the daily life of the one who runs from his dwelling to the station, near or far away, to the packed

> underground train, the office or the factory, to return the same way in the evening and come home to recuperate enough to start again the next day. The picture of this generalized misery would not go without a picture of 'satisfactions' which hides it and becomes the means to elude it and break free from it" (pp. 158–159).

According to Lefebvre (1996) social transformation emerges from struggle for urban space and the urban revolution is not limited to the cities, but it is also about transforming the ways that society organizes space and life itself. Cities not only need to be reformed, but they also need to be reclaimed for inhabitants rather than market interests in order to create an urban life based on participation, creativity, and social justice. Lefebvre believes that housing question is a class struggle over urban spaces in which cities emerge based on profit through top-down urban planning causing the working class become displaced and marginalized. The working-class face not only hard economic problems, but also, they struggle with spatial and social exclusion by getting forced into peripheral housing estates because of urban transformations. Lefebvre argues that in industrialized societies, traditional poverty which included lack of basic needs is declined and a new sort of urban poverty appeared which is called poverty of habitat affecting the working class and underprivileged people who reside in rigid and bureaucratically controlled urban spaces where people are deprived from meaningful social interactions and lose their autonomy and their sense of belonging to the space they live in. (Lefebvre, 1996)

As Lefebvre (1996) puts it:

> "The working class suffers the consequences of the rupture of ancient morphologies. It is victim of a segregation, a class strategy licensed by this rupture. Such is the present form of the negative situation of the proletariat. In the major industrial countries, the old proletarian immiseration declines and tends to disappear. But a new misery spreads, which mainly affects the proletariat without sparing other social strata and classes: the poverty of the habitat that of the inhabitant submitted to a daily life organized (in and by a bureaucratized society of organized consumption). To those who would still doubt its existence as class, what identifies the working class on the ground is segregation and the misery of its 'to inhabit'" (p. 178).

Lefebvre (1996) believes that new rights including right to housing, education, healthcare would emerge eventually even before they are legally recognized. These movements would question the limitation of urban life that are imposed over inhabitants by systems of domination. He claims that among these rights, right to the city is central as a demand for a renewed urban experience based on community and social interaction and human needs. And to achieve this right, the society needs to stand against market driven forces controlling the urban spaces and create a democratic and community based urban space with collective control. In such revolutionary transformation the working class plays an important role. As Lefebvre (1996) asserted:

> “In these difficult conditions, at the heart of a society which cannot completely oppose them and yet obstructs them, rights which define civilization (in, but often against society - by, but often against culture) find their way. These rights which are not well recognized, progressively become customary before being inscribed into formalized codes. They would change reality if they entered into social practice: right to work, to training and education, to health, housing, leisure, to life. Among these rights in the making features the right to the city (not to the ancient city, but to urban life, to renewed centrality, to places of encounter and exchange, to life rhythms and time uses, enabling the full and complete usage of these moments and places, etc.). The proclamation and realization of urban life as the rule of use (of exchange and encounter disengaged from exchange value) insist on the mastery of the economic (of exchange value, the market, and commodities) and consequently is inscribed within the perspectives of the revolution under the hegemony of the working class” (pp. 178–179).

Manuel Castells (1972/1977) claims that debates around urban issue have become widespread mainly because they are not well defined. The concept of urban is applied to many social issues that are not completely recognized and understood. Castell opposes the idea that city evolves based on environmental factors instead of economic and historical forces. He believes that urban society is not only about physical spaces, but it represents culture, social norms and deeper social structures. The author criticizes the theories defining urbanization as a natural and inevitable transformation into modernity. He asserts that in these theories the fact that urban life is shaped by power structures is neglected. As Castells (1972/1977) puts it:

> “When one speaks of 'urban society', what is at issue is never the mere observation of a spatial form. 'Urban society' is defined above all by a certain culture, urban culture, in the anthropological sense of the term; that is to say, a certain system of values, norms and social relations possessing a historical specificity and its own logic of organization and transformation” (p. 75).

Castells (1972/1977) believes that urban culture is not only a concept in contrast with rural life but it is deeply attached with capitalism and industrialization. Urban culture is not naturally driven by urban life but as he argues, urban behaviors like individualism and secularization are shaped by capitalism not through merely living in cities. He sees cities as byproducts of broader economic and technological advancements. As Castells (1972/1977) noted that “The technological fact of industrialization would thus appear to be the major element determining the evolution of the social forms” (p. 82).

Castells (1972/1977) argues that Lefebvre regards the urban society as a liberating force transcending fixed structures of agrarian and industrial societies, and urbanization provides the

potential of freedom and creativity overcoming all traditional limitations. However, Castells questions the abstract nature of Lefebvre's idea of a future post-capitalist or communist society and believes that transformation of social relations through revolutionary class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat is not explained clearly by Lefebvre who uses the term of urban in a broad and unclear way as a utopian society in which people can be liberated from any kind of repression. As Castells (1972/1977) argued:

> "At an initial level of criticism, one might challenge Lefebvre's libertarian and abstract conceptions of the reign of post-historical or communist society, in which one perceives no concrete process of constructing new social relations through the revolutionary transformation of different economic, political, ideological agencies by means of the class struggle and, therefore, of the dictatorship of the proletariat. I have nothing to say to the resumption of millenarist utopias in Lefebvre's thinking_ He is perfectly free, if he so wishes, to call 'urban' the utopian society in which there would no longer be any repression of the free impulses of desire, and also to call urban the still inadequately identified cultural transformations that are emerging in the imperialist metropolises" (p. 89).

According to Lefebvre (1970/2003) creativity, social interaction, and emancipation are inherently and naturally emerged and encouraged by cities where social interactions and experiences are concentrated. In fact, he regards "the urban" as spatial centrality through which urban culture and social relations are shaped. He believes that cities act just as platforms gathering various creations enabling them to develop. (Lefebvre, 1970/2003)

However, Castells (1972/1977) believes that social change is not simply enabled through spatial concentration but it is shaped by broader political and economic factors. As Castells (1972/1977) puts it:

> "For 'the urban' is not only a libertarian utopia; it has a relatively precise content in Lefebvre's thinking: it is a question of centrality or, rather, of simultaneity, of concentration. In urban space, what is characteristic is that 'something is always happening'; it is the place in which the ephemeral dominates, beyond repression. But this 'urban', which is therefore nothing more than emancipated creative spontaneity, is produced, not by space or by time, but by a form which, being neither object nor subject, is defined above all by the dialectic of centrality, or of its negation (segregation, dispersal, periphery)" (pp. 89–90).

Castells (1972/1977) argues that Lefebvre by introducing the concept of right to the city challenges his own belief that social change can be determined by cities alone, because if freedom can exist without a physical place (utopias), then there must be other factors determining the social change rather than mere urban form and spatial arrangements alone. As Castells (1972/1977) asserted:

> “However, Lefebvre is aware of the excessively crude character of the thesis according to which mere spatial concentration makes possible the flowering of new relations, as if there were no social and institutional organization outside the arrangement of space. This is why he adds the condition: providing this concentration is free of all repression; this is what he calls the right to the city. But the introduction of this corrective destroys any causal relation between the form (the city) and human creation (the urban), for if it is possible to have repressive cities and freedoms without place (u-topias), this means that the social determinations of this inactivity, the production of the conditions of emergence of spontaneity, pass elsewhere than through forms -through a political practice, for example. What meaning, then, can the formulation of the problem of freedom in terms of the urban have!” (p. 90).

Castells (1972/1977) believes that space should be explored as part of social structure. He agrees that space creates social life but he claims that space cannot drive historical change alone without broader economic and political forces. As Castells (1972/1977) puts it “To study the organization of space as a chapter of social morphology as Lefebvre proposes, while establishing the specificity of such a form, but without treating it as a new motive force of history” (p. 94).

Castells (1972/1977) claims that cities need to be studied as products of capitalism and state power instead of treating them as cultural entities with their own logic. He warns against simplistic approaches toward relation of the space and culture and criticizes ideas of those urban planners and sociologists who claim that social behavior can be engineered by spatial arrangement. He regards such ideas as utopian or technocratic illusion oversimplifying complex social structures. As it is stated by Castells (1972/1977):

> “The relation between a certain type of habitat and specific modes of behaviour is a classic theme of urban sociology. It is precisely at this level that the 'constructors' try to find a use for sociological reflection in their search for formulas that make it possible to express architectural volume or urbanistic space in terms of sociability. The manipulation of social life through the arrangement of the environment is a dream sufficiently linked to the utopists and technocrats to give rise to an ever growing mass of research, aimed at verifying a correlation, empirically observed in another context” (p. 96).

Castells (1972/1977) believes the urban environments are shaped socially rather than naturally given. He argues that neighborhoods and urban quarters are created based on different social processes, interactions, and historical developments and he believes that social behavior can be influenced by space only through social characteristics, cultural meanings and the ways individuals connect with their surroundings. As Castells (1972/1977) puts it:

> “The way of inhabiting (and therefore the behaviour that should normally undergo the influence of the habitat most directly) is highly differentiated according to the social groups,

> in each of the new residential units studied by Chombart and his team. Does this mean that the disposition of the housing has no influence on the way of life? Not at all! The relation between habitat and inhabiting operates via a complex link between the specific social characteristics of the inhabitant and the symbolic and functional content of the housing, which takes us far away from any attempt to explain a sub-culture in terms of a form of habitat" (pp. 105–106).

Castells (1972/1977) claims that social movements need to be empirically studied and their concrete nature must be recognized before theorizing them in an abstract way. His approach to explore the social movements is preventing fragmented case studies and superficial comparison of different cases, and focusing on a single urban struggle and studying its development over time which results in a deeper understanding of its mechanisms. The study of social movements should be conducted in connection with broader class struggles rather than remaining in isolation. As Castells (1972/1977) mentioend:

> "Before carrying out demonstrative, or even illustrative, analyses of the theoretical perspective outlined, we must circumscribe our concrete object through a long exploratory phase. But this does not mean falling back into empiricism, limiting oneself to mere observation which, of itself, can never be other than an accumulation of incidents. It means treating phenomena that are supposedly charged with contradictions from the point of view of the emergence of social claims and political mobilizations, as one seeks the laws of their articulation with the class struggle in general" (pp. 324–325).

According to Castells (1972/1977), urban renewal policies are made in a way favoring financial institutions instead of serving the residents themselves and he believes what drives the urban development is the corporate capitalist interests. The urban form is shaped in a way to enable capital accumulation and make it easier. As Castells (1972/1977) argued that "There appears to be no alternative model to the crumbling pattern of urban-suburban development within the structural parameters set by the unrestricted dominance of corporate capitalist interests" (p. 421).

Castell (1972/1977) believes that urban problems need to be addressed by grassroots activism rather than being managed by planners or policymakers. And he sees the urban development as a site for resistance of grassroots movements against urban polices dominated by private corporates prioritizing profit-gaining. Urban social movements stem from conflicts in urban system and possess potential for political change challenging the power structures and reshaping the urban policies. As Castells (1972/1977) noted:

> "By urban social movement, I mean a system of practices resulting from the articulation of the particular conjuncture, both by the insertion of the support-agents in the urban structure and in the social structure, and such that its development tends objectively towards structural transformation of the urban system or towards a substantial modification of the

> power relations in the class struggle, that is to say, in the last resort, in the state power" (p. 432).

Castells (2009) claims that power has a relational nature rather than a fixed one. He argues that decisions are influenced by those possessing power who ensure that outcomes are beneficial to them. While Power functions in relationships, domination as an institutionalized form of power reinforces the power through laws, governments, or corporations in which power becomes resistant against any challenge gradually However, he believes that power is not always absolute and it can be resisted, challenged and transformed. (Castells, 2009)

As Castells (2009) puts it:

> "Power is the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favor the empowered actor's will, interests, and values. Power is exercised by means of coercion (or the possibility of it) and/or by the construction of meaning on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their action. Power relationships are framed by domination, which is the power that is embedded in the institutions of society. However, there is never absolute power, a zero degree of influence of those subjected to power vis-à-vis those in power positions. There is always the possibility of resistance that calls into question the power relationship" (pp. 10–11).

Castells (2009) asserts that power is controlled and enforced physically through violence and is maintained and legitimated ideologically through discourse and shaping the beliefs and values and meanings. He believes given the fact that societies are sites of contradictions and power struggle, stability is temporary and is maintained by power rather than shared consensus. While power can be maintained through institutions, it can be contested and changed by individuals. He believes that democracy is meaningful only when the society can influence the state action and reshape the policies through communication. (Castells, 2009)

Castell (2009) argued that "The democratic exercise of power is ultimately dependent on the institutional capacity to transfer meaning generated by communicative action into the functional coordination of action organized in the state under the principles of constitutional consensus" (p. 13).

According to Castells (2009) power exists transnationally, and societies as parts of a global network are influenced by broader power relations. In this structure of globalization, state has no absolute power and control anymore and is considered as a node in a broader system of political, economic, and technological networks. In this decentralized network structure, power is distributed among various nodes as interconnected entities and while some nodes (institutions, corporations, governments) are considered influential and centers of power, others would be excluded and

marginalized. Castells introduced the idea of network society in which the process of shaping power and social structures is not limited to nation-state boundaries, but it is based on an interconnected global network. In fact, digital networks organize social interactions, economic activities, and cultural expressions. Castells claims that structural inequalities stem from digital divide. Institutions possessing power determine the value. While to capitalism profit-gaining is regarded as dominant value, in other contexts value can be defined by military power, ideology, or public opinion which shows the dynamic nature of power existing in networks. (Castells, 2009)

As Castells (2009) noted:

> "A network society is a society whose social structure is made around networks activated by microelectronics-based, digitally processed information and communication technologies. Digital networks are global, as they have the capacity to reconfigure themselves, as directed by their programmers, transcending territorial and institutional boundaries through telecommunicated computer networks. So, a social structure whose infrastructure is based on digital networks has the potential capacity to be global. the network society is a global society. However, this does not mean that people everywhere are included in these networks. For the time being, most are not. But everybody is affected by the processes that take place in the global networks that constitute the social structure" (pp. 24–25).

Castells (2009) asserts that local economies, cultures and identities can be dominated by global networks, but local movements can bring resistance when they shape alternative networks including grassroots activism, NGOs, or decentralized digital movements through which they would be able to challenge the power structures resisting against exclusion. As Castells (2009) puts it:

> "The global network society is a dynamic structure that is highly malleable to social forces, to culture, to politics, and to economic strategies. But what remains in all instances is its dominance over activities and people who are external to the networks. In this sense, the global overwhelms the local– unless the local becomes connected to the global as a node in alternative global networks constructed by social movements" (p. 26).

In a network society as Castells (2009) argues that power is sustained not only through physical force, but also through shaping and controlling individuals' thoughts, ideas and beliefs by using communication systems. According to Castells media technologies enable the communication but those owning the media networks determine the contents and messages people receive. However, Castells believes through new systems of communication people are able to produce and share content on a large scale, an ability which he called it "mass self-communication". (Castells, 2009)

As Castells (2009) mentioned that “The interactive capacity of the new communication system ushers in a new form of communication, mass self-communication, which multiplies and diversifies the entry points in the communication process” (p. 135).

Castells (2009) highlights that in network-based power a paradox can be found which is while communication can be shaped and dominated by corporations and governments, mass self-communication enabled people to use digital tools for resistance and shaping grassroots movements and changing dominant narratives. As Castells (2009) puts it “the more corporations invest in expanding communication networks (benefiting from a hefty return), the more people build their own networks of mass self-communication, thus empowering themselves” (p. 421).

Castells (2009) believes that social change exists inherently in human existence and societies evolve over time either through gradual evolutions or through revolutions or sudden transformations. Structural change happens when individuals change their beliefs and perspectives in a way leading their behaviors to collective action and social change. He believes although any kind of resistance through protests or opposition against injustice is crucial, they will not result in lasting and structural change unless they shape organized projects pursuing clear political or social objectives influencing and transforming institutions. Castells highlights the significance of public spaces as communication arenas where ideas, beliefs and social value are shared and political and social movements emerge. Considering the fact that in contemporary societies domination is not only related to control of resources or institutions, but it is more about shaping and controlling the perceptions, narratives and public opinion through digital communication, it can be argued that networks social change is dependent on transforming these networks to reflect alternative values and perspectives. (Castells, 2009)

As Castells (2009) mentioned:

> “Therefore, the process of social change requires the reprogramming of the communication networks in terms of their cultural codes and in terms of the implicit social and political values and interests that they convey. It is not an easy task. Precisely because they are multimodal, diversified, and pervasive, communication networks are able to include and enclose cultural diversity and a multiplicity of messages to a much greater extent than any other public space in history. Thus, the public mind is captured in programmed communication networks, limiting the impact of autonomous expressions outside the networks. But in a world marked by the rise of mass self-communication, social movements and insurgent politics have the chance to enter the public space from multiple sources. By using both horizontal communication networks and mainstream media to convey their images and messages, they increase their chances of enacting social and political change– even if they start from a subordinate position in institutional power, financial resources, or symbolic legitimacy” (p. 302).

David Harvey (2009) explores Lefebvre's concept of right to the city and regards the urban space as the battleground for exercising and contesting the power of capital. He argues that the city is not just a place for economic production, but it is a central mechanism for capital accumulation. Capitalism considers urbanization as a tool for wealth accumulation through construction and real estate programs and infrastructural investments with the aim of absorbing surplus capital. The idea of right to the city for Harvey is based on Lefebvre's argument which is right to the city is not only about having access to urban spaces, but it is more about right to actively shape the urbanization in a democratic way. As Havey (2009) claimed:

> "What I mean by the right to the city is that we have a real need right now to democratize decisions as to how a city shall be organized and what it should be about, so that we can actually have a collective project to reshape the urban world. Here in New York, effectively, the right to the city has been held by the mayor and the Development Office and the developers and the financiers. Most of us don't really have a very strong say. The democratization of the city, of city decision-making, is crucial. And I think we want to reclaim the right to the city for all of us, so that we can not only have access to what exists in the city, but also be able to reshape the city in a different image, in a different way, which is more socially just, and more environmentally sustainable" (p. 12).

Harvey (2012) criticizes inequalities in modern cities that are created by neoliberal systems through privatization, displacement, and destruction of the urban commons. Marginalizing the communities and displacement are products of gentrification and commodification of urban spaces which are facilitated by financial institutions, developers, and state policies. Harvey claims that the meaning of right to the city cannot be considered fixed and it is dependent on who defines it. The question is that when we are talking about rights, whose rights are actually recognized and enforces. Harvey believes that in the process of claiming the right, power gets to determine the outcome, and consequently in this situation defining the right to the city is itself a political struggle. (Harvey, 2012)

As Harvey (2012) puts it:

> "The right to the city is an empty signifier. Everything depends on who gets to fill it with meaning. The financiers and developers can claim it, and have every right to do so. But then so can the homeless and the sans-papiers. We inevitably have to confront the question of whose rights are being identified, while recognizing, as Marx puts it in Capital, that "between equal rights force decides:' The definition of the right is itself an object of struggle, and that struggle has to proceed concomitantly with the struggle to materialize it" (Preface).

Harvey (2012) criticizes the capitalist urban projects resulting in overaccumulation and financial bubbles that eventually later burst. He believes that capitalist crisis is rooted in cities where capitalist system invests in large-scale urban projects usually with state backing to tackle economic depression. Harvey opposes the neoliberal model for prioritizing profit over human needs. He regards urban shared spaces like infrastructures and other resources as urban commons that belong to all people rather than few private corporations. (Harvey, 2012)

Harvey (2012) believes that the neoliberal system causes social exclusion by privatization of urban public spaces like parks or transportation and he advocates organizing the cities based on collective need instead of profit-driven urban development programs. Harvey (2012) puts it “The neoliberal protection of private property rights and their values becomes a hegemonic form of politics, even for the lower middle class” (p. 15).

It is claimed by Harvey (2012) that displacement of the poor is justified by manipulated legal frameworks benefiting real estate interests and denying any kind of housing rights. Instead of considering the housing demands and struggles of slum dwellers, they are treated as criminals. While urban development programs benefit the capitalists, they cause violent dispossession of many people. Many low-income residents become displaced in favor of high-end development. As Harvey (2012) argued:

> “Since the slum dwellers are illegal occupants and many cannot definitively prove their long-term residence on the land, they have no right to compensation. To concede that right, says the Supreme Court, would be tantamount to rewarding pickpockets for their actions. So the slum-dwellers either resist and fight or move with their few belongings to camp out on the highway margins, or wherever they can find a tiny space” (p. 18).

Harvey (2012) considers housing sector as a significant part of the economy and believes that commodification of housing and using housing markets for capital speculation leads to economic crises, as seen in the 2008 financial collapse. In these situations, urban policies with the tendency to bring homeownership usually cause artificially inflated property values and financial instability for the poor. As Harvey (2012) stated:

> “Stimulating demand by taxation and public policy gimmicks and other incentives (such as increasing the volume of sub-prime mortgages) does not necessarily elicit an increased supply: it merely inflates prices and stimulates speculation. As much if not more money can then be made from financial trading on existing housing rather than from building new. It becomes more profitable to finance shady mortgage-originating institutions like Countrywide than actual housing production. Even more tempting is to invest in collateralized debt obligations made up of tranches of mortgages gathered together in some spuriously highly rated investment vehicle (supposedly "as safe as houses") in which the f

> low of interest from homeowners provides a steady income (no matter whether the homeowners are creditworthy or not)" (pp. 46–47).

Harvey (2012) sees the housing as a collective right rather than a private commodity for speculation and he strongly opposes gentrification which results in disappearance of local communities. Through gentrification cultural vibrancy would be turned into a selling point for the rich and the original residents would become displaced. As Harvey (2012) puts it:

> "A community group that struggles to maintain ethnic diversity in its neighborhood and protect against gentrification may suddenly find its property prices (and taxes) rising as real estate agents market the "character" of their neighborhood to the wealthy as multicultural, street-lively, and diverse. By the time the market has done its destructive work, not only have the original residents been dispossessed of that common which they had created (often being forced out by rising rents and property taxes), but the common itself becomes so debased as to be unrecognizable" (pp. 77–78).

Harvey (2012) argues that under the capitalist system culture, history and even urban identity are exploited as commodified tools for financial gain, for instance by extracting monopoly rent. In this situation, instead of setting the prices based on supply and demand, monopoly rent arises from owning something unique. The owner of a famous location, a luxury brand, or a cultural landmark charges higher prices and extracts extra profit. Urban spaces with unique features can serve as sources of monopoly rent. In this condition, developers, investors and governments commodify the urban cultural identity in order to gain more profits by attracting tourism and investments. Cities compete with each other to attract more investors by marketing their cultural assets and presenting themselves as unique destinations. (Harvey, 2012)

It is mentioned by Harvey (2012):

> "All rent is based on the monopoly power of private owners over certain assets. Monopoly rent arises because social actors can realize an enhanced income stream over an extended time by virtue of their exclusive control over some directly or indirectly tradable item which is in some crucial respects unique and non-replicable" (p. 90).

In a situation that culture and urban identity have become commodities and products, cities operate in a way to attract and cater more tourists instead of their residents. Traditions and heritage are packaged and sold for profit-gaining. When all cities attempt to brand themselves in the same way, capitalism's tendency to bring uniqueness with over-commercialization fails and results in homogenization. (Harvey, 2012)

Harvey (2012) believes that through monopoly rent old neighborhoods would be replaced by high-end districts leading to gentrification and forcing out the local residents and the working class, but the exploitation of the culture and urban identity for rent extraction can be challenged through

social movements including anti-gentrification protests, housing justice movements and other oppositional and resistance forms of activism. As Harvey (2012) puts it:

> “It is here that the contradictions faced by capitalists as they search for monopoly rent assume a certain structural significance. By seeking to trade on values of authenticity, locality, history, culture, collective memories, and tradition they open a space for political thought and action within which socialist alternatives can be both devised and pursued. The space of that commons deserves intense exploration and cultivation by oppositional movements that embrace cultural producers and cultural production as a key element in their political strategy” (p. 112).

Harvey (2010) explores the term "accumulation by dispossession" that was used by Marx for describing evictions and dispossessions of land and resources. He claims that in 17th and 18th centuries many class struggles were about resistance against dispossession instead of questioning the workplace exploitation. He believes that political resistance against these dispossessions are as significant as traditional proletarian movements, however these struggles are often underestimated by more traditional workers' movements. He argues that a more united resistance and new vision of collective politics is needed over labor exploitation and dispossession as two different forms of accumulation. (Harvey, 2010)

Harvey (2010) mentioned:

> “In the history of primitive accumulation that Marx describes, there were all manner of violent struggles against the forcible evictions and the dispossessions. There were widespread movements in Britain-the Levellers and the Diggers, for example-that violently resisted. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries it would not be an exaggeration to say that the primary forms of class struggle were those resisting dispossession rather than those resisting workplace exploitation. If global capitalism in aggregate since the 1970S has not been very successful at generating growth, then the further consolidation of class power has required a much stronger turn toward accumulation by dispossession. The resurgence of the mechanisms of accumulation by dispossession has been particularly marked in the expanding role of the credit system and financial appropriations, the latest wave of which has resulted in several million people in the United States losing their homes through foreclosures. The redistributive impact of loss of housing assets for millions of people and the huge gains on Wall Street appear as a very stark contemporary case of predation and legalized robbery typical of accumulation by dispossession. Political struggles against accumulation by dispossession, I argue, are just as important as more traditional proletarian movements. But these traditional movements and their associated political parties tend to pay little attention to struggles over dispossession, often regarding them as secondary and not particularly proletarian in content since they focus on consumption, environment, asset

> values and the like. If Luxemburg is right, as I believe she is, to say that there is an organic relation between these two forms of accumulation, then we ought to be prepared to envision an organic relation between the two forms of resistance" (pp. 312–313).

Harvey (2012) asserts that cities have revolutionary potentials and are spaces for political resistance to challenge the capitalist urbanization. He believes that urban resistance movements must be shaped based on long-term solutions for social change instead of being limited to spontaneous protests. While capitalism uses city as a tool for social control and dominating processes of urbanization, urban spaces possess potentials for resistance and transformation. (Harvey, 2012)

Harvey (2012) believes that urbanization needs to be reimagined radically in order to remove privatization and to create a collective control of housing, infrastructures and all urban resources for having a more democratic urban planning system, and in general, this purpose requires progressive resistance movements to be organized more effectively. As Harvey (2012) noted that:

> "Only when politics focuses on the production and reproduction of urban life as the central labor process out of which revolutionary impulses arise will it be possible to mobilize anti-capitalist struggles capable of radically transforming daily life. Only when it is understood that those who build and sustain urban life have a primary claim to that which they have produced, and that one of their claims is to the unalienated right to make a city more after their own heart's desire, will we arrive at a politics of the urban that will make sense. "The city may be dead;' Lefebvre seems to say, but "long live the city!"" (Preface).

Neil Smith (1984/2008) blames capitalism for separating the physical space from social space (including human activities and interactions). This enables capitalism to manipulate the social space through urban development program which is justified by claiming that it was just an extension of "natural" space. Space is regarded as an important tool under capitalism rather than being regarded as a mere passive container where economic activities happen. Capitalism created the perception of space as a neutral void where things exist in an empty and ahistorical space. This concept serves the capitalism by facilitating the commodification of urban spaces and entities. (Smith, 1984/2008)

As Smith (1984/2008) puts it "In the advanced capitalist world today we all conceive of space as emptiness, as a universal receptacle in which objects exist and events occur, as a frame of reference, a coordinate system (along with time) within which all reality exists" (p. 95).

Smith (1984/2008) opposes the theories that regard uneven development as a universal law of history and eternal and abstract phenomenon. Instead, he believes that uneven development is deeply rooted in capitalism and it is a crucial condition for survival of capitalist systems. Simultaneous production of differentiation by creating economic differences among regions and

equalization by integration into a global capitalist system is the way that capitalism arranges space which results in uneven development. Spatial arrangement is not a natural phenomenon but it is systematically controlled by capitalism. As Smith (1984/2008) noted:

> "There is no suggestion in all this, finally, that pre-capitalist development was somehow even rather than uneven. What is implied is that whatever the reasons for the unevenness of pre-capitalist development, they are quite different from those pertaining to capitalism, which has its own distinct geography. The geography of capitalism is more systematically and completely an integral part of the mode of production than was the case with any earlier mode of production" (p. 134).

Smith (1984/2008) believes that broader social and economic divisions result in geographical differentiation in a way that some areas develop rapidly, while some experience economic struggles and he sees the division of labor as the main reason of spatial inequality. As Smith (1984/2008) puts it "The division of labor in society is the historical basis of the spatial differentiation of levels and conditions of development" (p. 135).

Smith (1984/2008) argues that in capital accumulation the goal is not only gaining more wealth but it is also about centralizing domination over economic resources which is linked with spatial concentration. Capitalist systems develop economically through geographic organization of industry, cities, and infrastructure. The concentration of capital, labor and resources in fewer hands and centralizing the production spatially and socially bring economic inequality. As Smith (1984/2008) mentioned:

> ""Centralization completes the work of accumulation"; it exaggerates the effects and purpose of the concentration of capital. "Capital proper does nothing but bring together the mass of hands and instruments which it finds on hand. It agglomerates them under its command. That is its real stockpiling; the stockpiling of workers, along with their instruments, at particular points." If social centralization is the centralization of exchange-value in fewer and fewer hands, spatial centralization is the physical centralization of use-values. The social centralization of capital both produces and requires a certain spatial centralization of capital, and at the scale of the individual capital, this provides the primary impetus toward the geographical differentiation of the conditions and levels of production" (pp. 163–164).

Smith (1984/2008) regards uneven development as an inherent condition in capitalism rather than a mere accidental byproduct and its underlying mechanisms need to be recognized carefully instead of oversimplifying its complexity. He calls for an equal economic system based on human needs and collective decision-making regarding geographic and social developments rather prioritizing profit-making and capitalism interests. He considers the working-class movement as the key force in challenging the uneven development cycle of capitalism, however he argues that imposing a

rigid model of even development might be an impractical solution and instead the patterns of differentiation and equalization need to be shaped by social needs rather than being dictated by capital. History needs to be shaped consciously instead of accepting it as a natural process and transformation must happen in political foundation, going beyond capital itself. (Smith, 1984/2008)

Smith (1984/2008) puts it:

> "Even in the midst of widespread defeats, it is to a working-class movement that we must look for an end to the pattern of uneven development, a pattern and process which implies so much more than it says. It is here that we connect again directly with the political treatment of uneven development. It is not that our goal is some rigidly conceived "even development." This would make little sense. Rather, the goal is to create socially determined patterns of differentiation and equalization which are driven not by the logic of capital but by genuine social choice. The hope is that in our efforts to step beyond the natural history of society and to produce real social history, we can avoid the complete obliteration of nature, and society and history with it. It is not merely capital that must be restructured but the political basis of society, in order to produce a genuinely social geography" (p. 211).

Richard Peet (1977) asserts that Civil Rights Movement and the Vietnam War manifested structural contradictions within capitalism rather than being mere random events. Intellectuals and activists started questioning liberalism after the rise of oppositions against the Vietnam War. They rejected the idea that social issues could be addressed within capitalist system and instead they believed that more radical alternatives and political and scientific frameworks were needed to face the social problems. This shift contributed to the rise of radical movements including radical geography. (Peet, 1977)

As Peet (1977) argued that "The process of 'breaking off" from liberalism was an extremely important aspect of the wartime and post-Vietnam 1B'ar radicalization process in politics in general, but also in the simultaneously developing radical movements ill US science" (p. 242).

Scholars in radical geography claimed that real change cannot happen merely by modifying existing theories but there is a need of new radical theoretical foundations based on Marxism to study the systemic issue better and solve them. Peet highlighted in radical geography one approach was academic radicalism and reformation of discipline to analyze the social issues and another approach was direct political engagement and regarding the radical geography as a tool for activism and real-world change. (Peet, 1977)

Peet (1977) puts it:

> "What emerged from the practice of radical geography was an interest in two types of issue: among academically oriented geographers an effort to change the focus of the discipline,

> from what were seen as eclectic irrelevancies, to the study of urgent social problems; among action-oriented geographers, the search for organizational models for promoting social change" (p. 244).

Peet (1977) critiqued the liberal social sciences in United States for the absence of Marxism theory in their framework which made their analysis of social problems full of limitations resulting in superficial solutions instead of challenging the deeper structures of capitalist system and contributing to a more radical systemic transformation. As Peet (1977) mentioned:

> "Social scientists in the capitalist countries, and especially in the United States (the epicentre of contradiction), were forced to recognize at least a state of crisis and to change the direction of their research towards an analysis of the resulting social problems. Most of this research took place under the liberal paradigm, which tends to see problems as resulting from immediate causes and thus proposes ameliorative programs which leave intact the functioning of capitalism. The lack of a marxist tradition in US social science, especially the absence of theoretical structures linking surface problems to deep societal contradictions, made this tendency doubly strong" (p. 248).

Peet (1977) asserts that capitalist nations with higher financial power as the center, dominate and exploit poorer countries which are regarded as the periphery and keep them dependent and under developed by extracting their resources and labor. And in fact, under capitalism it is not only the labor that becomes exploited, but spatial organization of society is also dominated significantly by capitalism which highlights the fact that economic and class injustice are deeply connected with geographic divisions. As Peet (1977) puts it:

> "What marxist geographers are beginning to build is a sophisticated theory of spatial dialectics, in which the description of the obvious division of space into centres and peripheries is quickly passed through in order to reach the more complex analysis of spatial relations. Spatial relations are seen as reflecting social relations; if, in social relations, some people work to support others, so in space the people of peripheries work to support the people of the metropolitan centres, inevitably setting off spatial contradictions and conflicts" (p. 255).

Peet (1977) highlights the fact that by rejecting the mainstream geography and using Marxist and anarchist theories radical geography has gained the capacity to analyze the deep social inequalities in a better way and therefore can lead to revolutionary change by questioning the power system and challenging the spatial structures of capitalism. Peet (1977) argued that:

> "Radical geography began to construct a theoretical base capable of providing an analysis of the events of late capitalism and proposing revolutionary solutions. We began a deep critique of the established theory in geography. We began to build radical theory by reading

> and reinterpreting the socialist and anarchist literature. We gradually began to apply the analytic methods we found there to the contemporary situation. We organized in a more obviously socialist form. Radical geography broke through to marxism and began to mature" (p. 257).

According to Peet (2022), Marxism should not be considered only a theoretical framework, but it needs to be applied in practice scientifically to provide a better analysis of social realities and material conditions. Therefore, a fundamental transformation of the power structures and emancipation of the working class could happen ultimately through a Marxist perspective. He also claims that the working class plays the central role in social production and emphasizes the significance of the labor for human existence, as a result of which, the control over economic structures should be reclaimed by the society to create a real democratic freedom. As Peet (2022) puts it:

> "People must liberate the productive structures that they create, and which creates them—this is the essence of democracy. Understanding the human condition structurally therefore means, understanding the creation of existence through the social-material act of laboring. In that context, emancipation or true democratization of society means dismantling oppressive structures created and imposed on those that labor and produce existence for all" (p. 3).

Peter Marcuse and David Madden (2016) claim that under capitalism, housing is not just a place for living, but it is treated as a significant tool serving the economic system for wealth accumulation and maintaining the social control, in addition they believe that housing is not a neutral product when different ideologies influence, control and distribute housing in their own ways. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) noted "housing is the subject of contestation between different ideologies, economic interests, and political projects. More broadly still, the housing crisis stems from the inequalities and antagonisms of class society" (*Introduction: The Residential Is Political*, para. 7).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) believe that the main purpose of housing is distorted by financial interests and commodification processes. All policy decisions regarding housing including pricing, development and accessibility are dependent on monetary interests. They claim that there is a conflict between consideration of housing as form of profit-making investment and treating it as a functional living place at the same time. These goals cannot exist together and usually clash. They mentioned how privatization of common lands by those possessing power in the history is similar to strategies and approaches of modern real estate market which take over lands and shared resources and commodify them. They believe the historical land dispossession and contemporary housing struggles and crisis are both rooted in financial exploitation. (Marcuse & Madden, 2016)

As Marcuse and Madden (2016) argued:

> "The historical precondition for the commodification of land and of housing was the privatization of the commons. Before land and housing could become exchangeable sources of privately appropriated profit, ancient systems of communal regulation had to be swept away and traditional tenures destroyed. Marx calls this original or 'primitive accumulation,' when peasants are 'suddenly and forcibly torn from their means of subsistence, and hurled onto the labour market as free, unprotected and rightless proletarians.' This entire historical process is, Marx writes, 'written in the annals of mankind in letters of blood and fire'" (*Against the Commodification of Housing*, para. 9).

According to Marcuse and Madden (2016), as elites become wealthier by taking the control of housing market, they gain more political and financial influence and power for further commercialization of housing, and consequently it can be said that housing inequality has a cyclical nature in which every aspect related to housing turn into commodities for profit-gaining. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) put it:

> "Under hyper-commodification, all of the material and legal structures of housing—buildings, land, labor, property rights—are turned into commodities. In the process, the capacity of a building to function as a home becomes secondary. What matters is how a building functions in circuits of economic accumulation" (*Against the Commodification of Housing*, para. 24).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) assert that housing is strongly subject to financial transactions including mortgage-backed securities and real estate investment trusts and the prices are controlled by financial markets. They claim that regulations regarding housing markets have been systematically and strategically removed by the governments which resulted in more speculation and a high increase in prices of houses and rents which caused the poor become displaced. It is a wrong belief that neoliberalism removes the state involvement, when it can be seen that housing markets are deeply under the domination of state favoring the investors and developers for financialization and speculation instead of protecting the tenants and considering the social needs. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) stated:

> "For all of its far-reaching consequences, deregulation has not meant the subtraction of the state from real estate markets. It has not meant getting rid of regulations so much as rewriting them to make real estate a more liquid commodity. The state is still deeply involved throughout the housing system" (*Against the Commodification of Housing*, para. 32).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) don't see the gentrification as an unplanned and unintended result of urban development programs, but they believe that gentrification is created deliberately for profit

and in this situation the poor inhabitants are repositioned and replaced by the wealthier community who are able to afford higher rents. The authors believe that this is not only a result of landlord misconduct but it is a more widespread and systemic issue which cannot be regarded only an economic issue, but it is also a matter of power. Policies and regulations of the state determine who benefits from housing markets and deregulation only favors the investors and landlord rather than residents. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) put it:

> "Housing markets are political all the way down. The balance of power between tenants and landlords, or between real estate owners and communities, cannot be determined in a neutral, apolitical way. What the free market boosters ignore is the question of power. The housing market is, among other things, a domain of struggle between different, unequal groups. Removing the regulations that rein in property owners shifts power towards capital and away from residents—while also, not coincidentally, making land more valuable and more amenable to speculation. This is why it is the real estate lobby that campaigns to deregulate the housing system, a demand that tenants almost never make. The commodification of housing is a political project that refuses to acknowledge itself as such. Supporters of deregulation argue that zoning, rent control, and tenant protections are only pursued by meddling bureaucrats or greedy residents. But the real estate industry does whatever it can to maintain high prices. Removing existing tenant protections would just place real estate firms in a better position to reshape markets even more in their own favor" (*Against the Commodification of Housing*, paras. 64–66).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) believe that the living condition of people depend on their financial capacity and income and they claim that housing issue is related to the fundamental and structural urban inequalities. The housing issue is not only about having a shelter for living, but it is more about the fact that housing should provide stability for the inhabitants. Many people are deprived from stable housing and are left in the state of insecurity. They highlight how precarious living condition can also become life-threatening for marginalized communities without safe housing alternatives. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) mentioned:

> "Overcrowding was a factor in the 2007 fire that broke out in a building on Woodycrest Avenue in the Bronx, killing eight children and one adult, also Malian immigrants. The political and economic elites who make the decisions that shape the housing system tend to experience their dwellings as secure havens. They use their homes as tools for personal fulfillment, economic accumulation, and social advancement. But this is far from reality for many households. Growing numbers of people today do not feel at home in their housing. Overcrowding, displacement, dispossession, homelessness, harassment, disrepair, and other ordeals are increasingly common. Adequate, stable, affordable dwelling space is

> becoming ever more scarce. As a result, many people experience their housing as just another precarious place in an insecure world" (*Residential Alienation*, paras. 4–6).

Marcuse and Madden applied the concept of alienation to the housing issue. They connected the housing struggles experienced by individuals to broader sociological and philosophical concepts. Marcuse and Madden (2016) argue that through commodification of housing as a systemic issue people are disconnected from a fundamental aspect of life and they cannot feel at home, and in this situation, alienation happens as a result of capitalist exploitation in which housing market is shaped by bureaucratic interests to benefit investor and developers instead of considering the human needs. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) put it:

> "There is a term for not feeling at home that has a long history in social science and critical theory: alienation […]. Alienation means estrangement, objectification, or othering. The idea is rarely applied to housing, but it should be. Intuitively, alienation belongs within the field of housing, almost uniquely. Its roots can be found in property law. If something is "alienable," it is exchangeable. It can be bought and sold. Alienation is thus the precondition of all private property […]. The experience of residential alienation in contemporary society, therefore, is precarity, insecurity, and disempowerment. It is fostered by commodification, displacement, and dispossession, and exacerbated by inequality. Residential alienation represents the painful, at times traumatic, experience of a divergence between home and housing" (*Residential Alienation*, paras. 7,10,18).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) highlight how experiencing residential alienation can result in serious health problems, that is to say, having precarious living condition, housing instability and living with the fear of losing your home and eviction can cause serious psychological traumas and mental and physical health issues in people. Marcuse and Madden (2016) noted:

> "Poor health, both physical and mental, is often a trigger for foreclosure, and the foreclosure process itself can worsen health problems. Brought on by stress, anxiety, and fear, residential insecurity can manifest as medical symptoms. Communities with increasing numbers of foreclosures tend to exhibit spikes in the prevalence of mental health problems, an association that is stronger in poorer areas and in communities of color" (*Residential Alienation*, para. 31).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) believe that instead of providing individual freedom, the free market restricted the ability of people to choose their desired living place, and finding a stable and affordable home has become difficult for many people because of market-driven housing policies. They criticize the fact that success of housing markets is evaluated based on property values and real estate speculation instead of ensuring that all people have a proper living condition. The authors argue that residential alienation stems from commodification of housing. Consequently, in order to overcome alienation, the role of housing needs to be reimagined. They believe that to

prioritize “disalienation”, the capitalist approach toward housing which is consideration of housing as a financial product instead of a social right, needs to be challenged and changed. “Disalieantion” is about ensuring long-term housing stability and security and protecting individuals from displacement. (Marcuse & Madden, 2016)

As Marcuse and Madden (2016) put it:

> “Alienation may be rooted deep in the contemporary political economy, but the disalienation, democratization, and humanization of the housing system are still meaningful demands. Disalienation would mean reorganizing the housing system around the goal of providing residential stability and ontological security for all. Changing the housing system in this way would require legal changes to bolster the relative position of residents over landlords and banks, for example by weakening the ability to evict residents or requiring that foreclosed homeowners have the option to stay in their homes as regulated, secure tenants. It would require expanding the role of public, nonprofit, and collective tenures. It would mean putting tenants and residents in control of their housing and decisions that affect them” (*Residential Alienation*, para. 71).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) believe that housing as an important site of power and resistance is strongly neglected by traditional Marxism which focused only on labor movements and workplace struggles. They see the housing issue attached to the broader systems of social and economic domination rather than an isolated issue. They discuss how racial oppression is rooted in housing policies. When black and brown communities are deprived from appropriate living conditions and are experiencing discrimination and exclusion, it can be argued that the concept of safe home is not equally applied to all. Marcuse and Madden believe that people face housing issue with different levels of severity and different forms of oppression based on economic, racial and gender factors. They also claim that gender oppression is deeply strengthened by industrial capitalism. (Marcuse & Madden, 2016)

Marcuse and Madden (2016) mentioned:

> “Due to the gendered division of labor, the household should be seen as a site of struggle. Historically, gender conflict within the home was rooted in “two characteristics of industrial capitalism: the physical separation of household space from public space, and the economic separation of the domestic economy from the political economy.” Women were confined to exploitative toil within the home. Due to the “labor of women in the house,” Charlotte Perkins Gilman wrote in 1898, “women are economic factors in society,” yet “whatever the economic value of the domestic industry of women is, they do not get it.” The spatial separation between workplace and home, and the privatization of domestic labor within separate housing units, bolstered this form of gender oppression” (*Oppression and Liberation in Housing*, para. 31).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) claim that private property strengthens the economic structures of domination by protecting property owners to continue accumulating wealth. In this situation political order is stabilized through keeping the status quo unchallenged and unquestioned. While homeownership is a state of stability for some people, it is a burden for many individuals who have to prioritize mortgage payments over other aspects of life and in such condition, people only focus on their jobs due to financial obligations, and as a result of which they would become strongly discouraged to participate in any political activism. Through privatization, the fundamental systemic housing issues remain unrecognized and instead, people who are struggling with housing issues are blamed for their individual failure and their poor economic choices. The housing inequality is reinforced by homeownership which benefit property owners who tend to impose high rents over low-income residents. As it is argued by Marcuse and Madden (2016):

> "The privatization and individualization of housing leads to the internalization of problems. If something goes wrong, the individual is thought to be to blame rather than social and political structures. The hegemony of homeownership is system-conserving in other ways as well. Homeownership can be used to present the interests of individual households as aligned with the interests of the real estate industry. It facilitates political manipulation through the threat of falling property values. It reduces the demand for state action, as rising house prices are seen as compensation for insufficient social services. Above all, it gives homeowners an economic stake in maintaining scarcity and sustaining the housing crisis—and in supporting political parties that will do what they can to keep prices high. In unstable times, ownership remains the best tool for generating support for an unequal system" (*Oppression and Liberation in Housing*, paras. 28–29).

Marcuse and Madden (2016) believe that housing struggles can lead to political movements challenging the capitalist power and changing the housing policies, and in fact they regard housing as a site for political resistance and imagining housing alternatives which bring autonomy, dignity and collective empowerment. The authors argue that housing movements are not just about securing shelter, but they aim to practice non exploitative social relations and remove residential alienation for restoring human dignity. As Marcuse and Madden (2016) mentioned:

> "But experimental dwellings and emancipatory movements have wider significance as living demonstrations of housing's potential. They should be seen as beacons pointing towards a broader possibility: that housing might support non-oppressive social relations, not in some utopian realm but in everyday life. Residential liberation has a much deeper content than simply making housing more affordable or accessible. Affordable housing is not a challenge to the ruling class […]. The challenge today is to imagine a housing system that enables residents to confront power, social inequality, and structural violence in a more significant way" (*Oppression and Liberation in Housing*, paras. 66–67).

Neil Brenner and Nik Theodore (2002) criticize the way neoliberalism prioritizes financial growth over social welfare. Neoliberalism is not only about economic power but it is also about political domination shaping global governance and capitalism. Urban spaces are shaped through neoliberal policies including privatization, deregulation, and competition. Despite the fact that neoliberalism is defined as a system which minimizes state control and governance over society, neoliberalism is considerably dependent on strong state intervention to enforce market. Neoliberalism leads to uneven development and social injustice and the poor are the most affected by neoliberal policies. As Brenner and Theodore (2002) put it:

> "On the one hand, while neoliberalism aspires to create a "utopia" of free markets liberated from all forms of state interference, it has in practice entailed a dramatic intensification of coercive, disciplinary forms of state intervention in order to impose market rule upon all aspects of social life. On the other hand, whereas neoliberal ideology implies that self-regulating markets will generate an optimal allocation of investments and resources, neoliberal political practice has generated pervasive market failures, new forms of social polarization, and a dramatic intensification of uneven development at all spatial scales" (p. 352).

According to Brenner and Theodore (2002) neoliberalism constantly illuminates economic and social structures focusing on social welfare and labor protection and instead shapes new policy structures based on market logic, privatization, and commodification. The influence of neoliberalism is different geographically but urban spaces often face intense effects of neoliberal policies including deregulation, privatization, and austerity. Cities are the grounds for applying neoliberal market-driven urban strategies resulting in urban issues including poverty, unemployment, and housing crises. (Brenner & Theodore, 2002)

As Brenner and Theodore (2002) argued that "While the processes of institutional creative destruction associated with actually existing neoliberalism are clearly transpiring at all spatial scales, it can be argued that they are occurring with particular intensity at the urban scale, within major cities and city-regions" (p. 367).

Brenner and Theodore (2002) believe that there is always potential for social resistance and transforming the power structures and shaping more democratic urban policies based on social equality, however there is the risk that neoliberal policies remain unchanged and even become more reinforced over time leading to further urban injustice and struggles. As Brenner and Theodore (2002) mentioned:

> "At the present time, it remains to be seen whether the powerful contradictions inherent within the current urbanized formation of roll-out neoliberalism will provide openings for

> more progressive, radical democratic reappropriations of city space, or whether, by contrast, neoliberal agendas will be entrenched still further within the underlying institutional structures of urban governance. Should this latter outcome occur, we have every reason to anticipate the crystallization of still leaner and meaner urban geographies in which cities engage aggressively in mutually destructive place-marketing policies, in which transnational capital is permitted to opt out from supporting local social reproduction, and in which the power of urban citizens to influence the basic conditions of their everyday lives is increasingly undermined" (p. 376).

Brenner (2013) believes what actually drives urban design projects under capitalism is domination and governance of institutions and private interests and in this situation urban designers usually face structural limitations imposed by those possessing power who focus only on financial growth rather than meeting human needs and prioritizing social equality. This proves the idea that meaningful changes cannot happen by urban designer unless they challenge broader political and economic forces controlling the urban development. Brenner highlights in a market-driven system even those urban designers tending to create more inclusive spaces that benefit all inhabitants might contribute to gentrification for example when their intervention might attract luxury development pricing out local residents. Consequently, an urban project aiming to shape more democratic spaces might strengthen the power structures unintentionally and increases the urban injustice. (Brenner, 2013)

As Brenner (2013) noted:

> "Even the most radical designers are seriously constrained by the politico-institutional contexts in which they work, and today these are generally defined by the naturalized imperatives of growth-first, market-oriented urban eco nomic policy and by approaches to urban governance in which corporate and proper ty-development interests maintain hegemonic control over local land-use regimes. In practice, moreover, the interventions of designers concerned with "opening up" the city via project-based initiatives have often intensified the very forms of spatial injustice which, at least in rhetorical terms, they aspire to contravene" (pp. 42–44).

However, Brenner (2013) doesn't consider the urban designers as neutral actors and believes that design cannot be separated from urban politics, economy and governance structures, and he claims that instead of working under the dominance of the system and limitations of neoliberal urban policies, urban designers could seek social justice by actively resisting and challenging those urban policies that prevent public participation in shaping and controlling the urban spaces. As Brenner (2013) puts it:

> "Designers concerned with social justice – the open city in a genuinely democratic, egalitarian sense – can and must devise strategies to push back, with their full intellectual

> capacities, professional influence and political imagination, against the rules, constraints and ideologies imposed by neo liberal, market-oriented systems of urban governance and the forms of sociospatial injustice they produce at all spatial scales" (p. 45).

Neil Brenner and Christian Schmid (2015) believe that while spatial inequalities traditionally were about territorial separation of urban and rural areas, in contemporary urbanization zones of wealth and poverty are created side by side and consequently new theoretical approaches are needed to conceptualize contemporary urban space. Today urbanization is not limited to specific territories but urban processes have become interconnected operating at global scales. For example, economic growth in a specific major district or city can cause displacement and social exclusion somewhere else. (Brenner and Schmid, 2015)

As Brenner and Schmid (2015) put it "Today, divergent conditions of wealth and poverty, growth and decline, inclusion and exclusion, centrality and marginality, mutually produce one another at all spatial scales, from the neighborhood to the planetary" (p. 152).

Brenner (2000) rejects the idea of reducing geographical scales including local, regional, national and global to static and separated categories and spaces, and he believes they need to be treated as interconnected processes which can be transformed and rearranged due to social and political struggles, and in fact these different scales can affect each other rather than operating in isolation. Brenner (2000) mentioned:

> "A reification of scale appears to be built into everyday scalar terms (e.g. local, urban, regional, national, global etc.) insofar as they represent distinctive socioterritorial processes (e.g. localization, urbanization, regionalization, nationalization, globalization etc.) as static entities frozen within geographical space. Relatedly, existing scalar vocabularies are poorly equipped to grasp the complex, perpetually changing historical interconnections and interdependencies among geographical scales. Insofar as terms such as local, urban, regional and so forth are used to demarcate purportedly separate territorial 'islands' of social relations, they mask the profound mutual imbrication of all scales and the dense interscalar networks through which the latter are continually produced and reconfigured" (pp. 367–368).

Brenner and Schmid (2015) claim due to rise of neoliberal systems of governance, regulatory frameworks of urbanization have become more fragmented and multi-scalar and today urbanization is controlled by diverse actors and happens based on transnational economic forces rather than centralized state planning. As Brenner and Schmid (2015) argued that "An intensely variegated, polarized, multiscalar and relatively uncoordinated landscape of territorial and networked governance has emerged through the consolidation of neoliberalized, market-oriented transnational rule regimes" (p. 153).

According to Brenner and Schmid (2015) today urbanization could not be defined only as city expansion but it needs to be framed as a nonuniform process shaped by local political, economic, and social factors in different ways depending on historical and geographical contexts. Under capitalist control, urbanization results in a constant uneven development and it cannot be regarded as a static process. As Brenner and Schmid (2015) claimed:

> "Rather than being analyzed through monodimensional or formalistic interpretive frames, capitalist urbanization must be understood as a polymorphic, multi scalar and emergent dynamic of sociospatial transformation: it hinges upon and continuously produces differentiated, unevenly developed sociospatial configurations at all scales. Under capitalism, urbanization is always articulated in contextually embedded sociospatial formations, since it is precisely in relation to, and through collisions with, inherited structures of uneven spatial development that its specific patterns and pathways are forged and fought out" (p. 175).

Brenner and Schmid (2015) believe that the concept of right to the city needs to be reframed since urban struggles cannot be limited to traditional cities and since urban issues can be seen also in non-city spaces due to the emergence of planetary urbanization, and in this situation broader spatial inequalities can be addressed by activisms expanding beyond classic urban centers. Brenner and Schmid (2015) put it:

> "Under contemporary conditions of planetary urbanization, the classical city (and its metropolitan and regional variants) can no longer serve as the primary reference point for urban struggles or for visions of 'possible urban worlds' (Harvey 1996). Instead, a wide range of new urban practices and discourses are being produced in diverse places, territories and landscapes, often in zones that are geo graphically removed from large cities, but where new forms of collective insurgency are emerging in response to the patterns of industrial restructuring, territorial enclosure and landscape reorganization" (pp. 177–178).

Brenner and Schmid (2015) remind that urbanization is not a process led and shaped only by capital and state power, but urban inhabitants can also control it through everyday practices, urban resistance, social movements, and struggles, and in fact the concept of urbanization is not a fixed process but it can be reframed constantly by collective agency. As Brenner and Schmid (2015) noted:

> "The urban is a collective project—it is produced through collective action, negotiation, imagination, experimentation and struggle. The urban society is thus never an achieved condition, but offers an open horizon in relation to which concrete struggles over the urban are waged. It is through such struggles, ultimately, that any viable new urban epistemology will be forged" (p. 178).

Margit Mayer (2012) claims that urban social movements under the slogan of “right to the city” have become considerably widespread as a reaction against consequences of neoliberal urbanism. She emphasizes the analysis of historical trends of urban resistance for reinforcing the social claim of right to the city which can lead to political and social change. The author believes unlike previous social movements in the urban contexts which included mostly fragmented protests, in contemporary movements diverse urban demands including resistance against gentrification, displacement, and privatization are more unified. As Mayer (2012) puts it:

> “The movements currently gathering under the claim for the “right to the city” could mark a new phase in the development of urban social movements – one where a novel type of coalition across the city appears to have the potential to unify a multiplicity of urban demands under one common banner and thus to create a real challenge to neoliberal planners, politicians, and developers” (p. 63).

According to Mayer (2012) when it comes to the concept of right to the city, the approaches of formal institutions and legal frameworks in dealing with this issue is different with the ways through which grassroots movements and local activists resist against urban inequalities and in fact, their radical social demands are not fully addressed by official policies. (Mayer, 2012)

Mayer (2012) introduces two types of urban movement claiming right to the city: First type includes reformist groups who advocate legal protection but tend to sustain the current urban structure and policies, and other groups include radical movements with the goal of restructuring the power systems and urban policies in order to achieve true democratic participation. Mayer (2012) argued:

> “On one end of the spectrum, groups and organizations working to get charters passed seek to protect specific rights (plural) in order to secure participation for all in the city (as it exists); on the other end of the spectrum, more activist movements seek to create the right to a (more open, genuinely democratic) city through social and political agency” (p. 64).

Mayer’s perception of right to the city is similar to ideas of Lefebvre (1996) who argues that the aim should not be merely demanding access to an unequal system, but urban structures need to be reshaped fundamentally in a way leading to a more inclusive and democratic decision-making system. Mayer (2012) regards the concept of right to the city as a political struggle pursued by marginalized groups, rather than a universal legal right. Mayer (2012) asserted:

> “The “right to the city” is less a juridical right, but rather an oppositional demand, which challenges the claims of the rich and powerful. It is a right to redistribution, not for all humans, but for those deprived of it and in need of it” (p71).

Mayer (2012) highlights that the nature of resistance movements have change compared to the past; while social movements in the past were often led by factory workers or demands for public services, contemporary urban movements include diverse actors with different social claims aiming to challenge the neoliberal urban policies. As Mayer (2012) puts it:

> "The actors in contemporary urban contestations are neither revolutionary factory workers nor social movements politicizing urban space along collective consumption demands (Harvey with Wachsmuth, this volume). Instead, the political activism around producing the city today is carried out by disparate groups that share a precarious existence (whether in the informal sector, in the creative industries, or among college students), by middle class urbanites who seek to defend their quality of life, by radical autonomous, anarchist and alternative groups and various leftist organizations" (p. 77–78).

Mayer (2003) introduces the concept of social capital which aims to bring economic and democratic advantages through encouraging local participation. She believes that this concept with a non-neutral nature has an active control over urban governance and determines how it functions through influencing the role of nonprofit and community-based organizations. As Mayer (2003) argued:

> "What might appear as the fulfilment of earlier grassroots empowerment claims is actually part of a new mode of governance that has emerged in and for neglected and disadvantaged areas and communities. Their 'exclusion' is now described as having a new, more multidimensional character than that which inequality or segregation formerly described, and the need for new policies to address this problematic side of neoliberalism seems uncontested. The concept of 'social capital' plays a key role in these new policies, as it presumably connects local participation, based on horizontal networks and reciprocity, with such positive results as economic growth and democratic intensity, even – or especially – in distressed, excluded areas" (p. 110).

Mayer (2003) claims that the concept of social capital has attracted attention in urban development discourses. By focusing on the role of local movements and third-sector organizations the term has become popular and brought some analytical benefits. However, since it is accepted extensively it is remained uncriticized and its limitation have not been recognized. Mayer believes that the theory of social capital shows the way through which cultural and social structures operate within communities and explains how local movements become allied with larger institutions and sometimes integrate into governmental or market-based and financial initiatives. Mayer warns about the fact that neoliberal system could absorb grassroots activism and distract them from challenging the structural inequalities and this absorption may be justified unintentionally by social capital theory. (Mayer, 2003)

As Mayer (2003) puts it:

> "It not only points analytic attention to the embeddedness of cultural factors in meso-level social structures such as neighbourhoods, churches, voluntary and community organizations, but, by bringing the mediating levels of social structure into the analysis of contemporary democracy, it also helps our understanding of collaboration and cooptation processes and of the emergence of the basis of entrepreneurialism in urban social movements. […] In doing so it also distracts attention from how social and political conditions structure that associational life" (pp. 116–117).

Mayer (2003) believes that social capital framework is not capable of studying the deep roots of urban social struggles and she claims that the way that exclusion and inequality are produced by neoliberal structures is neglected by social capital theory which ignores addressing the structural urban inequalities and instead merely suggests that marginalized individuals can make their situations better simply by building networks and trust. As Mayer (2003) argued:

> "[…] The social capital focus does not help in understanding the source and dynamic of the new forms of incivility and conflict resulting from contemporary economic and political restructuring. In fact, it screens from view how society-state relations have been reconfigured" (p. 123).

Systemic reasons of urban injustice are not taken into consideration by social capital approach which focuses only on institutional-based solutions and values cooperation and consensus and neglects the role of conflict and resistance in social change. According to Mayer more adversarial forms of activism and social movements aiming to a meaningful social transformation can be excluded and neglected by the logic of social capital because they do not fit within the framework of consensus-based civic engagement. In fact, only cooperative and institutionalized civic activities are considered and legitimated, while those movements which tend to directly question and change the urban policies are neglected. The discourse regarding social capital counts only those movements that are integrated into governance structures and prevents the operation of any kind of more radical and confrontational activisms. (Mayer, 2003)

As Mayer (2003) mentioned:

> "The ambiguities and intrinsic contradictions of the social capital concept lead to a number of problems when it is applied to concrete empirical analysis, and end up by actually obstructing our understanding of contemporary restructuring processes and the newly emerging relationships between civil society, social movements and the state. Especially when applied to the local level, these immanent tensions come to the fore concretely. The perspective has difficulties with certain forms of civic engagement: new types of urban activism and movements involving protest and other forms of disruptive repertoires do not appear on the radar screen of most social capital scholars and never on that of policy discourse. This exclusion betrays the one-sided normative conception of state-civil society

> relations so characteristic of the social capital perspective. The perspective also tends to downplay the built-in risks of innovative capacity-building approaches of community-based organizations in the context of current restructuring; overlooking how present economic and political processes structure and transform contemporary forms of civic engagement has problematic consequences illustrative of the concept's presumed independence from context. Though state-society relations have been significantly reconfigured, the social capital perspective does not reflect on these reconfigurations, although they provide the basis for its emergence as such an attractive framework" (p. 117).

Raquel Rolnik (2020) critiques Anglo-Saxon and European academia for their strong domination over urban studies and policy discourses and controlling how they shape, and she believes that Global South is often seen as a place for merely producing case studies instead of providing urban theories. Rolnik opposes this hierarchy and believes that global knowledge considerably needs insights of the periphery. As Rolnik (2020) puts it:

> "Traditionally, scholars in Brazil and throughout Latin America, as well as in Africa, Southeast Asia, and beyond, are on the periphery of knowledge production. Within the international division of labor in academia, our task has been always to do case studies in order to apply the big theory that is produced by Anglo-Saxon and European think tanks, universities, and research centres" (p. 141).

Rolnik (2020) questions the fact that it is only economic inequality that leads housing disparities, and she believes that social injustice is consistently produced by dominant urban and housing policies. Through this perspective housing cannot be seen just as an outcome of economic structures but it needs to be regarded as a site in which inequalities and social issues are shaped. As Rolnik (2020) argued:

> "People live in precarious conditions because they don't have money. They don't have money because of class issues, because they are exploited, because of inequality in the distribution of salaries and wages and in economics. But it's very important to reverse this story. This is what I think we should always highlight in our struggles around cities and housing: Housing differences and different urban conditions produce inequalities. They're not just reflections of inequalities that are produced elsewhere; the territorial production of inequality has always been crucial, very crucial, to building other forms of inequalities" (p. 142).

According to Rolnik (2020), right to housing is not limited to demanding a mere shelter for living, but it is also about reclaiming urban spaces and resisting against the domination of market-driven urban projects with the aim of financial speculation led by neoliberal urban policies in capitalist

systems which causes urban inequalities including displacement and marginalization of the underprivileged part of the society. As Rolnik (2020) mentioned:

> "When we struggle to stay put, we are not just struggling for the right to housing as part of our struggle for human rights, as in the liberal thinking. No. We are also struggling to keep parts of the planet out of the playground of global financial capital. We are seizing part of the planet to provide ground for us to live on. We are fighting to retain at least part of it for life—for the production and reproduction of life. That's how I see the connections. I think it is very important to demonstrate how much one can, through housing, be more exploited, more marginalized, more stigmatized, and more oppressed, and also how one can, through struggles around housing, do the reverse" (p. 143).

Rolnik (2014) sees housing right as a part of a broader and critical social struggles which is right to the city that tends to create a more democratic and community-based urban life which is no more under the domination of market-driven neoliberal urban policies. Consequently, right to housing goes beyond merely right to shelter and it is more about enabling inhabitants to control their surroundings and the built environment they are living in and shape their own urban life. The author also argues that this right needs to be claimed by all the society, from the poor experiencing systemic exclusion and living in precarious informal settlements, to other people including middle-class families who also faced housing insecurity created by global mortgage crisis. As Rolnik (2014) noted:

> "From my point of view, the concept of the right to adequate housing involves precisely that: the right to the city. The concept of 'adequate' housing is not restricted to the right to a house. It is not a matter of having a place with a roof and four walls, but a stake in the territory which can serve as a base for accessing other rights: the right to education, the right to health, the right to protection, the right to freedom of expression, the right to non-discrimination. It is, in short, the right to the city, to the urban space" (p. 83).

Rolnik (2020) argues that it is undeniable that poverty and class struggles and exploitation are important factors that need to be critically addressed, but she reminds the fact that social injustice can be shaped actively also through urban and housing conditions. The built environment is not a mere place where social struggles and inequalities exist but it is used as a mechanism by neoliberal systems to reinforce their financial domination. Therefore, social struggles for housing are deeply connected with more fundamental political struggles aiming to reclaim urban spaces from neoliberal capitalist systems. While housing is used as tool for exploitation, it can serve as site for social resistance and political transformation and challenging the power structures of neoliberalism. Rolnik claims that considering homeownership as the only solution for housing issues makes the deeper structural urban inequalities remain unrecognized and unchallenged. It is believed that through homeownership it is possible to secure a shelter to reside in, however as long

as housing under neoliberalism is considered as a tool for economic speculation and wealth growth house ownership can only raise the risk of exclusion and financial vulnerability. (Rolnik, 2020)

Rolnik (2020) asserted:

> "I was also thinking about another trap related to the individual or family dimension of the house: the trap of homeownership. Why is it a trap? This became so clear over the last few years. If you take the idea of human rights and housing to the extreme of the human rights framework, what's behind it is basically the individual freedom of being at home. It has nothing to do with equality or inequality in the distribution of wealth and opportunities. Indeed, it can be very separate from that, and it's a trap because it has been used like that politically. How? By promoting homeownership as the one and only solution or policy or model or aspiration for everybody—since, in principle, homeownership is the securest form of maintaining your right to stay put in your place and to have a place to live. More so than homeownership as a housing policy, it is the perverse relationship between homeownership and everything that comes with the idea of private property that is the problem" (p. 143).

Rolnik (2014) believes that neoliberalism tends to conceptualize and frame human rights more around individual (like the idea of private property) rather than collective rights, and instead of private property Rolnik suggests community-based ownership as an alternative model. As Rolnik argued (2014):

> "My final task, drafting the Guiding Principles on Security of Tenure for the Urban Poor, led me to deeply question the idea that private property is the safest type of property – and one which people should aspire to – leading to imagine a 'plurality' of forms of ownership from the legal standpoint... A plurality of ways in which individuals relate to territory, also leading, philosophically speaking, to a plurality of forms of social and political organisation" (p. 83).

Moreover, Rolnik (2020) highlights the importance of linking social movements and academia and studying how they can interact and influence each other. She advocates those researches that go beyond focusing only on local housing struggles and tend to explore global housing movements. It can be argued that housing issues and activisms seeking right to housing can be interconnected globally across different regions. As Rolnik (2020) puts it:

> "I think it would be great if we could see more on, for instance, the methodological question that we were talking about, and the interface among movements, social movements, and the academic world. Another thing that would be interesting would be to see more on social movements that take international or global action, and not only local ones" (p. 146).

Rolnik (2014) believes that social resistance movements and activisms pursuing the human rights need to be brought into public spaces to be connected with real-world struggles. As Rolnik (2014)

claims “I was all the time convinced that it was vital to break out of this straightjacket, this controlled environment, to go into the streets, to win the hearts and minds of ordinary people” (p. 84).

Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift (2005) claim that the leftist ideas have evolved and become more adapted to complexity of the new social life. Today the Left is not limited to a united and singular concept, but as a dynamic political process it involves a kind of pluralism with diverse perspectives and theories which are not confined to a determined path with a fixed purpose and ideology. The new Left is capable of providing a better understanding of the new world. (Amin & Thrift, 2005)

As Amin and Thrift (2005) put it:

> “Even now, it sometimes seems there is a kind of nostalgia for the supposed days when the Left knew what was what and what it was about. We do not share that nostalgia. Indeed, in many ways we not only like but also respect the Left more now that it no longer feels the need to rely on just one account of how the world is or feels that it is necessary to strive for complete unity. It is multiple right from the start. It is the heir to many things. It is made up of many things. It is about many things. None of this means that it cannot work as a together; but coming together—around concepts, percepts or affects—is not some natural state” (p. 220).

Amin and Thrift (2005) believe that disagreement is an important part of the Left which not only should not be considered as a weakness, but also it needs to be seen as a productive force that results in opportunities for reflection, debate, and evolution, and in fact what they suggest is a political form in which coexistence is not dependent on total agreement. Amin and Thrift (2005) argued:

> “[…] The strength of the Left will arise from learning from disagreement […]. In other words, our disagreements can provide the basis for connection. To make such a claim is not to espouse weakness or political quietism. Rather, it is to suggest that political agonism can have value in its own right, both tactically and normatively, and to assert that it is possible to think of a world in which we can live with and beside each other but not as one” (pp. 221–222).

Amin and Thrift (2005) argue that the process of theorization should not be considered a complete discussion, but instead it needs to be regarded as an experimental process which needs to be open to transformation and contradictions and they also mentioned the importance of exploring non-Western perspectives and global plurality by the Left. In fact, they believe that the world needs to be seen as interactions rather than fixed territories. As Amin and Thrift (2005) noted:

> "It is no longer acceptable to think the world from the West and its underlying Whiteness. But more than this, this effort has involved a wholesale reperception of the world's history and geography—and its modes of thinking itself—as an interlocking set of interactions, rather than a bounded set of territories, an insight which holds all the way from identity politics to the politics of imperialism" (p. 224).

Amin and Thrift (2005) highlight that traditional Marxist perspective claiming that liberation stems from opposition against and abolition of private property, cannot be considered a sufficient approach anymore and requires to be revised and updated. The reason is that today new types of property have emerged that proves the fact that definition of property is not fixed but it is constantly evolving. The Left cannot understand the complexity of new realities through traditional solutions and approaches anymore. (Amin & Thrift, 2005)

Amin and Thrift (2005) put it:

> "The Left must be involved in a continuous contest to reassert the primacy of the commons, but recognising that the territory of what constitutes property has not only immeasurably changed but often involves very different kinds of material witness. This change throws into very considerable doubt the validity of the claim in Marxism that the simple abolition of private property is the big step that must be taken on the road to freedom" (p. 228).

Amin and Thrift (2005) assert that today we witness a new form of power operating by controlling the flows of data, people, goods through networks and systems. Power structures now use technologies including surveillance and logistics infrastructures for maintaining control over people. As Amin and Thrift (2005) mentioned:

> "Power is now being generated through the ability to initiate and track and modulate flow in ways which are both more systematic and more invasive than in the past. Whatever description is offered of this form of power—network, heterarchy, complexity, flow architecture, immanent forces, technostructure—the fact is that it allows careful placing of bodies and other objects to become a governmental art form at scales and in situations hitherto undreamt of (eg biometrics)" (pp. 228–229).

Amin and Thrift (2005) believe that totalizing politics including revolutionary fantasies of removing capitalism or the state completely are in danger of reproduction of authoritarian systems. Instead, what Amin and Thrift suggest is a transversal politics in which multiplicity is valued rather than a single political unity. This approach can be regarded a more flexible and inclusive way to make a real change politically. As Amin and Thrift (2005) pointed out:

> "We do not believe in the romance of pulling down the whole system, whether that be capitalism, the state, or some other monstrous entity. This would be to assume that such total systems exist, puts too much weight on a kind of Manicheanism and short circuits

> numerous other kinds of political action which come to be regarded as secondary or ephemeral. As importantly, there is some evidence to suggest that such a politics of the total ends up as a kind of authoritarianism that mirrors the objects of its critique. The principle we wish to defend is that of a transversal politics that is constantly worked at, that accumulates new political concerns as new events unfold and that, through such accretion, builds a whole that is more than the sum of its parts—but does not sum up" (p. 232).

Amin and Thrift (2005) believe that Left geography and politics must be more open to diverse perspectives and must advocate unity instead of exclusionary practices in order to avoid internal divisions which makes the Left more vulnerable. They introduce two different and opposing perspective within the Left: First one is "hierarchical Left" which is considered more rigid, structuralist, and orthodox and the other tendency is "heterarchical Left" which advocates fluidity, relationality and experimentality with open-ended politics favoring assemblage thinking. As Amin and Thrift (2005) put it:

> "There are real differences of situation and perspective in the world which go far beyond framing forms of accusatory culture, and they matter in terms of what it is possible to say and do about the world and its ways. However, given that very important caveat, we would go so far as to argue that a clear divide is emerging within Left geography between, for want of a better word, a hierarchical, enclave Left that sees system, deep structure and normative purity everywhere it looks, and a heterarchical Left that perceives a flatter world of multiple orderings and nonlinear connections that calls for constantly re-negotiated tactics" (p. 237).

Amin and Thrift (2005) argue that understanding and addressing contemporary global issues in an interconnected world needs a more fluid political framework rather than a static and rigid one. Geography should be a more plural, interdisciplinary, and inclusive field and the Left needs to accept this diversity. The leftist ideas and practices are not fixed but are constantly evolving in a changing world. Only through openness and creativity, and rejecting the past orthodoxy the Left can survive and gain better achievements. (Amin and Thrift, 2005)

As Amin and Thrift (2005) mentioned that:

> "The Left is a living tradition, with many ways of summoning life. It is time that the Left in geography came to accept this vibrant pluralism, instead of insisting that certain perspectives necessarily hold a privileged insight into the ways of the world. There is just too much going on in the world to need to close things down in this way, and every reason to believe that many of the prospects for better societies will come from the excitement of learning this anew" (p. 238).

2.4 | Conceptualizing Power Through a Post- Structuralist Perspective: Michel Foucault

One of the most important debates of Michel Foucault concerns the concept of power and transformation of dominance and control systems and structures over time. Foucault explored the western penal systems historically and the way they changed in the modern age. He argues the traditional brutal punishment system of prisons which included violence on the body have been replaced with structured, bureaucratic, and rehabilitative punishment as another form of power and control whose main purpose is about discipline of the soul and behavior. Foucault believes that disappearance of violent physical style of punishments in prison is not simply because of the fact that society became more humane but he argues deeper factors and reasons exist behind this transformation which are related to changes in control structures and the fact that the power is exercised differently now. (Foucault, 1975/1995)

Foucault (1975/1995) mentioned:

> "Among so many changes, I shall consider one: the disappearance of torture as a public spectacle. Today we are rather inclined to ignore it; perhaps, in its time, it gave rise to too much inflated rhetoric; perhaps it has been attributed too readily and too emphatically to a process of 'humanization', thus dispensing with the need for further analysis" (p. 7).

Punishments were not about fixing the behaviors but they were more about making the pain visible in the public as a kind of theatrical display of justice, relating it to the crime and consequently warning people and reminding them who holds the power. Justice Systems removed the public physical torture and have made punishments more symbolic and less visible focused on order and control, rather than fear and spectacle. Instead of hurting body, the punishment now is more about psychological methods for changing thoughts, behaviors, and desires. Punishment system is not limited to legal frameworks anymore but it involves fields like science and medicine, psychology and criminology. According to Foucault punishment is noy used only for preventing crimes but it has political and social objectives which include sustaining the order and control and strengthening the power structures which train and discipline people to be useful citizens. According to Foucault physical bodies are directly affected by power systems and people are under control to behave in a right way according to the rules at prisons, schools, and other institutions. Foucault introduced political technology as a specific form of knowledge and control aiming to discipline bodies and control the society and train them with subtle techniques rather than using violence. Foucault argues that power is not simply possessed and owned by one specific group but it is dispersed through relationships and structures. As a result, even those people who are oppressed are not deprived

from the possession of power, but they can be a part of it or resist it which proves this fact that the nature of power is more fluid rather than fixed and unchanged. Power is not only held by governments but it can be found elsewhere like at school, work or in families which are regarded as micro scale sites of power, and each of them has the potential to serve as a site for struggle and resistance. (Foucault, 1975/1995)

As Foucault (1975/1995) puts it:

> "Power is exercised rather than possessed; it is not the 'privilege', acquired or preserved, of the dominant class, but the overall effect of its strategic positions - an effect that is manifested and sometimes extended by the position of those who are dominated. Furthermore, this power is not exercised simply as an obligation or a prohibition on those who 'do not have it'; it invests them, is transmitted by them and through them; it exerts pressure upon them, just as they themselves, in their struggle against it, resist the grip it has on them. This means that these relations go right down into the depths of society, that they are not localized in the relations between the state and its citizens or on the frontier between classes and that they do not merely reproduce, at the level of individuals, bodies, gestures and behaviour, the general form of the law or government; that, although there is continuity (they are indeed articulated on this form through a whole series of complex mechanisms), there is neither analogy nor homology, but a specificity of mechanism and modality. Lastly, they are not univocal; they define innumerable points of confrontation, focuses of instability, each of which has its own risks of conflict, of struggles, and of an at least temporary inversion of the power relations" (pp. 26–27).

Foucault (1975/1995) argues that the goal of modern form of power is to shape subordinate people not through violence but through constant training to make people obey the rules naturally without forcing them, and in this regard, he introduces the notion of "internalized discipline" which is about shaping behaviors and thoughts of individuals through power structures, so they control themselves and act according to the rules and norms. As Foucault (1975/1995) mentioned "The obedient subject, the individual subjected to habits, rules, orders, an authority that is exercised continually around him and upon him, and which he must allow to function automatically in him" (pp. 128–129).

According to Foucault (1975/1995), discipline operates at small and detailed level. It is not only big events and laws that hold power, but power exists in even small and unrecognized things in life, for instance in the ways that people live, behave or work. Inspections or observations are not neutral actions, but they carry political goals of maintaining power and controlling and keeping people efficient and obedient. Moreover, discipline comes with separation of people into special spaces including prisons, hospitals, schools, barracks and etc. to observe behavior of individuals and control them in closed spaces. (Foucault, 1975/1995)

Foucault (1975/1995) noted that “Discipline sometimes requires enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself. It is the protected place of disciplinary monotony” (p. 141).

Foucault (1975/ 1995) claims that discipline separates people and organizes them to ensure every person has a specific spot and consequently to observe and manage them more easily. For example, in factories the goal of division of tasks is to separate workers to observe each individual more precisely. In fact, the analysis of productivity happens at individual level, so people can be controlled more effectively. As Foucault (1975/1995) puts it:

> “Production was divided up and the labour process was articulated, on the one hand, according to its stages or elementary operations, and, on the other hand, according to the individuals, the particular bodies, that carried it out: each variable of this force strength, promptness, skill, constancy - would be observed, and therefore characterized, assessed, computed and related to the individual who was its particular agent. Thus, spread out in a perfectly legible way over the whole series of individual bodies, the work force may be analysed in individual units. At the emergence of large-scale industry, one finds, beneath the division of the production process, the individualizing fragmentation of labour power; the distributions of the disciplinary space often assured both” (p. 145).

Moreover, Foucault (1975/1995) believes that discipline gives people specific positions and arranges them according to the rank or the amount of productivity that they have. For example, it can be said that ranking process of students or giving promotions to workers or allocating special tasks to soldiers are different ways to control them. Foucault (1975/1995) argued that “Discipline is an art of rank, a technique for the transformation of arrangements. It individualizes bodies by a location that does not give them a fixed position, but distributes them and circulates them in a network of relations” (p. 146).

Discipline determines norms and values and makes people behave correctly, and in this process, bodies would be trained repeatedly in a way that one knows what is wrong to do and what is a right action and finally individuals act in a controlled way without even thinking. Today discipline and power structure determine how spaces must be designed and organize people in these spaces in a way to control and observe them more effectively. For example, in a classroom of school seats of students are arranged in orderly rows which makes the observation and control process over students easier for teachers. School is not used only for education, but it a place where power is exercised through observing, ranking, rewarding and punishing students. (Foucault, 1975/1995)

Foucault (1975/1995) puts it:

> “The organization of a serial space was one of the great technical mutations of elementary education. It made it possible to supersede the traditional system (a pupil working for a few

> minutes with the master, while the rest of the heterogeneous group remained idle and unattended). By assigning individual places it made possible the supervision of each individual and the simultaneous work of all. It organized a new economy of the time of apprenticeship. It made the educational space function like a learning machine, but also as a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding" (p. 147).

Foucault (1975/1995) believes that just like factories, schools have turned into mechanical systems where time is organized effectively and students are trained, disciplined and used efficiently by power structures to achieve best results and reach a better controlled system. Foucault (1975/1995) argued "The school became a machine for learning, in which each pupil, each level and each moment, if correctly combined, were permanently utilized in the general process of teaching" (p. 165).

According to Foucault (1975/1995), people can be controlled and dominated by power or hold the power to control others at the same time. Discipline not only affects people, but also creates them through shaping their identities and behaviors. Foucault (1975/1995) puts it "Discipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (p. 170).

Foucault (1975/1995) believes that power functions effectively through three methods: first one is hierarchical observation which prevents people from any misbehavior because people know that they might be watched all the time. Second method is normalizing judgment through which individuals are judged and compared with each other and then they are turned into what is regarded as normal and eventually they would behave similarly. And third tool is examination which aims to classify people and rank them through combining observation and judgment tools. Through examination it is decided what must be considered normal and what is abnormal. In fact, people are defined by power systems and are ranked and categorized according to their characteristics and become data and objects of power. As Foucault (1975/1995) mentioned "The success of disciplinary power derives no doubt from the use of simple instruments; hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and their combination in a procedure that is specific to it, the examination" (p. 170).

Foucault (1975/1995) argues that discipline uses the tool of surveillance to make people act according to the rules. The organization of military camps is the best model for monitoring everyone in an efficient way. This model is used for other institutions including prisons, schools and hospitals. He believes that discipline uses even architecture as a means of control to shape behaviors of people. As Foucault (1975/1995) noted:

> "A whole problematic then develops: that of an architecture that is no longer built simply to be seen (as with the ostentation of palaces), or to observe the external space (cf. the geometry of for tresses), but to permit an internal, articulated and detailed control to render

> visible those who are inside it; in more general terms, an architecture that would operate to transform individuals: to act on those it shelters, to provide a hold on their conduct, to carry the effects of power right to them, to make it possible to know them, to alter them. Stones can make people docile and knowable" (p. 172).

Foucault (1975/1995) claims that unlike the common belief that regards power inherently oppressive and a negative force imposing limitations, power is a positive force resulting in creation of reality, truth and individuals. Foucault (1975/1995) argued:

> "We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it 'excludes', it 'represses', it 'censors', it 'abstracts', it 'masks', it 'conceals'. In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production" (p. 194).

Foucault (1975/1995) describes panopticon as an observation system in prisons that its design separates the observers from those who are being observed in a way that prisoners cannot see the observers and cannot understand when they are watched, so they do not act improperly because of fear. This system ensures that power is maintained invisibly. It is not applied only in prisons, but it is used in every part of the life of people. For example, in schools, hospitals, factories and etc., this power and control system can be found and its aim is shaping useful individuals who benefit the system. In this modern power system, people turn into objects of knowledge and they are constantly analyzed and assessed and classified. The way that we live and behave is under control of this form of power which observes everyone without being seen and noticed. (Foucault, 1975/1995)

As Foucault (1975/1995) puts it "This power had to be given the instrument of permanent, exhaustive, omnipresent surveillance, capable of making all visible, as long as it could itself remain invisible" (p. 214).

Foucault (1975/1995) argues that while the Enlightenment was about bringing freedom and justice, it also created a hidden control system that observes the society and shapes the behaviors of people without being visible. This makes the notion of freedom an illusion. People lose their ability of resistance and political force by discipline and instead they turn into beneficial tools for power systems. Discipline does not function based on equality and justice and there is not any power balance in such control system. While some people possess power, others are constantly observed and judged and lack any power of control. It can be argued that the principles of law are neglected by discipline. As Foucault (1975/1995) asserted:

> "The disciplines should be regarded as a sort of counter law. They have the precise role of introducing insuperable asymmetries and excluding reciprocities. First, because discipline creates between individuals a 'private' link, which is a relation of constraints entirely different from contractual obligation; the acceptance of a discipline may be underwritten

> by contract; the way in which itis imposed, the mechanisms it brings into play, the non-reversible subordination of one group of people by another, the 'surplus' power that is always fixed on the same side, the inequality of position of the different 'partners' in relation to the common regulation, all these distinguish the disciplinary link from the contractual link, and make it possible to distort the contractual link systematically from the moment it has as its content a mechanism of discipline. Moreover, whereas the juridical systems define juridical subjects according to universal norms, the disciplines characterize, classify, specialize; they distribute along a scale, around a norm, hierarchize individuals in relation to one another and, if necessary, disqualify and invalidate. In any case, in the space and during the time in which they exercise their control and bring into play the asymmetries of their power, they effect a suspension of the law that is never total, but is never annulled either. Regular and institutional as it may be, the discipline, in its mechanism, is a 'counter-law'" (pp. 222–223).

Foucault (1975/1995) argues that today it is not only legal institutions that have the task of punishment anymore, and instead punishment now is something that the society as a whole participates in. It means that people are constantly observed, controlled, categorized, disciplined in schools, workplaces and families and the behavior of individuals is shaped in a subtle way reflecting a broader surveillance and control system. Today punishment goes beyond law and courts and allows teachers, doctors, employers, and others to determine norms and discipline those who misbehave. In fact, power is not centered but it is dispersed everywhere among different roles. As Foucault (1975/1995) mentioned:

> "The judges of normality are present everywhere. We are in the society of the teacher-judge, the doctor-judge, the educator-judge, the 'social worker'-judge; it is on them that the universal reign of the normative is based; and each individual, wherever he may find himself, subjects to it his body, his gestures, his behaviour, his aptitudes, his achievements" (p. 304).

According to Foucault (1961/1988), with development of medical science, doctors and psychiatrists gained so much power and authority and they were not mere scientists anymore but they were regarded as magical healers with supernatural powers who had a mysterious ability to cure diseases including madness with their knowledge. Consequently, doctors started to take the full control and power over patients. In fact, psychiatrists tried to hold their authority through making patients believe that doctors as magicians have full access to their minds. There is a deep connection between power and knowledge. While knowledge can be produced by power, knowledge itself can shape power and reinforce it. (Foucault, 1961/1988)

As Foucault (1961/1988) noted:

> "As positivism imposes itself upon medicine and psychiatry, this practice becomes more and more obscure, the psychiatrist's power more and more miraculous, and the doctor-patient couple sinks deeper into a strange world. In the patient's eyes, the doctor becomes a thaumaturge; the authority he has borrowed from order, morality, and the family now seems to derive from himself; it is because he is a doctor that he is believed to possess these powers, and while Pinel, with Tuke, strongly asserted that his moral action was not necessarily linked to any scientific competence, it was thought, and by the patient first of all, that it was in the esotericism of his knowledge, in some almost daemonic secret of knowledge, that the doctor had found the power to unravel insanity; and increasingly the patient would accept this self-surrender to a doctor both divine and satanic, beyond human measure in any case; increasingly he would alienate himself in the physician, accepting entirely and in advance all his prestige, submitting from the very first to a will he experienced as magic, and to a science he regarded as prescience- and divination, thus becoming the ideal arid perfect correlative of those powers he projected upon the doctor, pure object without any resistance except his own inertia, quite ready to become precisely that hysteric in whom Charcot exalted the doctor's marvelous powers" (pp. 275–276).

In his 1977–78 lectures at the Collège de France, Foucault (2004/2009) argues that governmentality should not be considered as something which is only about ruling or giving orders like a king. Instead, it is a way of management and organization of the population with different methods and objectives. As Foucault (2004/2009) puts it:

> "I would like to begin to go over the dimension that I have called by the ugly word "governmentality." Assuming that "governing" is different from "reigning or ruling," and not the same as "commanding" or "laying down the law," or being a sovereign, suzerain, lord, judge, general, landowner, master, or a teacher, assuming therefore that governing is a specific activity, we now need to know something about the type of power the notion covers" (pp. 115–116).

Foucault (2004/2009) highlights that instead of studying the institutions including hospitals, prisons, and schools through their internal dynamics, rules and goals, it would be more effective to look at them from outside and explore broader power structures that shape them. He explains that instead of examining what these institutions claim to do, it is needed to study their broader power structures and strategies tending to control the society as a whole. In fact, institutions don't function in isolation but they are actively shaped and used to strengthen broader power networks. Foucault (2004/2009) mentioned:

> "First, moving outside the institution, moving off-center in relation to the problematic of the institution or what could be called the "institutional-centric" approach. Consider the example of the psychiatric hospital. For sure, we can start from the psychiatric hospital as

> it is given in its structure and institutional density and try to discover its internal structures, to identify the logical necessity of each of its constituent components, and to show what type of medical power is organized within it and how it develops a certain psychiatric knowledge. But—and here I refer specifically to Robert Castel's clearly fundamental and essential work, L'Ordre psychiatrique, which really should be read— we can proceed from the outside, that is to say, show how the hospital can only be understood as an institution on the basis of something external and general, that is, the psychiatric order, precisely insofar as the latter is connected up with an absolutely global project, which we can broadly call public hygiene, which is directed towards society as a whole. As Castel does, we can show how the psychiatric institution gives concrete expression to, intensifies, and gives density to a psychiatric order rooted in the definition of a non-contractual regime for individuals reduced to the status of minors. Finally, we can show how a whole battery of multifarious techniques concerning the education of children, assistance to the poor, and the institution of workers' tutelage are coordinated through this psychiatric order. This kind of method entails going behind the institution and trying to discover in a wider and more overall perspective what we can broadly call a technology of power" (pp. 116–117).

Moreover, Foucault (2004/2009) argues that the question should not be what is the function that they are needed to carry out, but the question must be how they are being used to maintain the power. For instance, the aim of prison is supposed to be reformation of criminals and although they might fail to achieve this objective, they could still reach their main purpose which is controlling, organizing and managing the society. As Foucault (2004/2009) noted:

> "The second shift, the second transfer to the outside, concerns the function. Take the case of the prison, for example. We could of course analyze the prison on the basis of the functions we expect it to perform, those defined as its ideal functions, and of the optimal way of exercising them (which is, broadly speaking, what Bentham did in his Panopticon). Starting from there, we could see what real functions were assured by the prison and establish an historical balance sheet of functional pluses and minuses, or anyway of what was intended and what was actually achieved. But, here again, studying the prison from the angle of the disciplines involved short-circuiting, or rather moving out side in relation to the functional point of view, and putting the prison back in a general economy of power. As a result, we noticed that the real history of the prison is undoubtedly not governed by the successes and failures of its functionality, but is in fact inserted within strategies and tactics that find support even in these functional defects themselves. So, the second principle is to substitute the external point of view of strategies and tactics for the internal point of view of the function" (pp. 117–118).

And finally, Foucault (2004/2009) asserts that concepts of madness or criminality should not be taken for granted as natural categories and fixed objects, but the main point is studying how these notions have been conceptualized and shaped by institutions and discourse and systems of knowledge. Foucault (2004/2009) puts it:

> "Finally, the third de-centering, the third shift to the outside, concerns the object. Taking the point of view of the disciplines involved refusing to give oneself a ready-made object, be it mental illness, delinquency, or sexuality. It involved not seeking to measure institutions, practices, and knowledges in terms of the criteria and norms of an already given object. Instead, it involved grasping the movement by which a field of truth with objects of knowledge was constituted through these mobile technologies. We can certainly say that madness "does not exist," but this does not mean it is nothing. All in all, it was a matter of doing the opposite of what phenomenology had taught us to say and think, the phenomenology that said, roughly: Madness exists, which does not mean that it is a thing" (p. 118).

In fact, the main aim of Foucault (2004/2009) is studying power beyond institutions, without underestimating their significance at the same time. The main argument here is that these institutions are reflection of deeper power technologies that need to be recognized. Foucault (2004/2009) argued:

> "In short, the point of view adopted in all these studies involved the attempt to free relations of power from the institution, in order to analyze them from the point of view of technologies; to distinguish them also from the function, so as to take them up within a strategic analysis; and to detach them from the privilege of the object, so as to resituate them within the perspective of the constitution of fields, domains, and objects of knowledge" (p. 118).

Foucault (2004/2009) describes the concept of governmentality as the combination of government and mentality for understanding the techniques, knowledge and strategies as tools for controlling people and governing them. What Foucault claims is that the idea of government is not limited to the state power or legal structures which is considered a traditional belief, but in fact people are governed based on a different logic and through a wide range of practices which include not only state, but also other institutions like schools, hospitals, prisons and even families. All of these institutions contribute to the process of shaping the behavior of individuals and controlling and regulating the population. Foucault rejects the idea that power has a top-down nature and reinterprets power as a force that functions within every aspect of the society and as a force that is dispersed rather than being centered in a specific position like state. He highlights how traditional governance models based on sovereign authority in which power was usually forced violently is replaced with new forms of governance in which people are controlled through knowledge and

institutions. In fact, instead of forcing people to become obedient, a system is shaped with a decentralized way of control to encourage individuals to regulate themselves and behave according to the expected norms without state intervention. (Foucault, 2004/2009)

In his 1978–79 lectures at the Collège de France, Foucault (2004/2008) asserts that knowledge is the main source of power and it is not only law or military force that produce power. He argues that even when people think that they are behaving freely, actually they are being controlled subtly and they are living, behaving and making choice according to expectations of power structures. Foucault claims that contemporary governance goes even beyond controlling behavior of people and focuses on governing population and regulating them through biological and social factors including health, birth rate, death rates and life expectancy. The idea of shaping population biologically, managing bodies and in general controlling and regulating life itself is what Foucault calls "biopolitics". People are constantly shaped and controlled through surveillance, discipline, and normalization. (Foucault, 2004/2008)

Regarding Liberalism Foucault (2004/2008) argues that this new way of governing is less about respecting legal freedoms and more about the fact that society and economy pursue natural laws. The reason that governments limit their interventions in economic matters in these systems is not related to morality or respecting human's right, but it is more based on the best and most effective strategy that is driven from economic knowledge. As Foucault (2004/2008) mentioned:

> "[…] what characterizes this new art of government I have spoken about would be much more a naturalism than liberalism, inasmuch as the freedom that the physiocrats and Adam Smith talk about is much more the spontaneity, the internal and intrinsic mechanics of economic processes than a juridical freedom of the individual recognized as such. Even in Kant, who is much more a jurist than an economist, you have seen that perpetual peace is not guaranteed by law, but by nature. In actual fact, it is something like a governmental naturalism which emerges in the middle of the eighteenth century. […] the limitation of its power is not given by respect for the freedom of individuals, but simply by the evidence of economic analysis which it knows has to be respected. It is limited by evidence, not by the freedom of individuals" (pp. 61–62).

Foucault (2004/2008) believes that freedom does not develop and grow in a natural way over time and is not distributed equally everywhere. Freedom can be found in the relationship between governors and those who are governed. Freedom is an essential tool for survival of liberal governments. Freedom is not only something that is allowed by these governments or something which exists naturally, but it is structured and managed and used by them and actually they rely on it to survive. In liberalism people are not simply told that they are free, but the way that liberal systems treat freedom is assuring people that government would prepare the needed conditions,

policies and structures in which freedom is possible for them and can be accessed. (Foucault, 2004/2008)

As Foucault (2004/2008) mentioned:

> "If I employ the world "liberal," it is first of all because this govern mental practice in the process of establishing itself is not satisfied with respecting this or that freedom, with guaranteeing this or that freedom. More profoundly, it is a consumer of freedom. It is a consumer of freedom inasmuch as it can only function insofar as a number of freedoms actually exist: freedom of the market, freedom to buy and sell, the free exercise of property rights, freedom of discussion, possible freedom of expression, and so on. The new governmental reason needs freedom therefore, the new art of government consumes freedom. It consumes freedom, which means that it must produce it. It must produce it, it must organize it. The new art of government therefore appears as the management of freedom, not in the sense of the imperative: "be free," with the immediate contradiction that this imperative may contain. The formula of liberalism is not "be free." Liberalism formulates simply the following: I am going to produce what you need to be free. I am going to see to it that you are free to be free" (p. 63).

Foucault (2004/2008) highlights that modern liberal systems claim freedom would not be reduced through governmental control but it would be produced and maintained. For instance, they argue that interventions including economic regulation aim to provide freedom for people to work and participate politically. In fact, liberal governments try to sustain democracy through their economic interventions which creates a paradox in liberal governance because of limiting economic freedom. As Foucault (2004/2008) noted:

> "[…] democratic freedoms are only guaranteed by an economic interventionism which is denounced as a threat to free dom. So we arrive, if you like—and this is also an important point to keep hold of—at the idea that in the end this liberal art of government introduces by itself or is the victim from within [of]* what could be called crises of governmentality. […] So there is a problem, or crisis, if you like, or a consciousness of crisis, based on the definition of the economic cost of the exercise of freedom" (p. 68).

Moreover, Foucault (2004/2008) claims that today there is a fear and a kind of phobia regarding the power of state which might stems from historical events related to Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia. He believes that this fear is simplistic and argues that state is only the effect of diverse power relations. It is more fluid rather than fixed and unchanged structure. It is created constantly based on the ways people are governed in every different historical period and different place. As Foucault (2004/2008) puts it:

> "[…] today there is a phobia about the state which is perhaps also ambiguous. […] the state does not have an essence. The state is not a universal nor in itself an autonomous source of power. The state is nothing else but the effect, the profile, the mobile shape of a perpetual statification (étatisation) or statifications, in the sense of incessant transactions which modify, or move, or drastically change, or insidiously shift sources of finance, modes of investment, decision-making centers, forms and types of control, relationships between local powers, the central authority, and so on. In short, the state has no heart, as we well know, but not just in the sense that it has no feelings, either good or bad, but it has no heart in the sense that it has no interior. The state is nothing else but the mobile effect of a regime of multiple governmentalities" (pp. 76–77).

Foucault (2004/2008) argues that socialism does not offer a central and practical way of governing. It is undeniable that Socialism proposes a logic for economy and has a clear historical vision and practical strategies for managing places including healthcare or social services, but it still lacks its own specific and independent form of governance. Its method for governing is always linked with other governing systems. Foucault (2004/2008) highlighted:

> "[…] what socialism lacks is not so much a theory of the state as a governmental reason, the definition of what a governmental rationality would be in socialism, that is to say, a reasonable and calculable measure of the extent, modes, and objectives of governmental action. […] socialism offers an economic rationality just as it puts forward an historical rationality. We can also say that it possesses, and has shown that it possesses, rational techniques of intervention, of administrative intervention, in domains like those of health, social insurance, and so on. […] I do not think that there is an autonomous socialist governmentality. There is no governmental rationality of socialism. In actual fact, and history has shown this, socialism can only be implemented connected up to diverse types of governmentality. It has been connected up to liberal governmentality, and then socialism and its forms of rationality function as counter weights, as a corrective, and a palliative to internal dangers" (pp. 91–92).

Foucault (2004/2008) believes that focusing too much on interpretation of old theories and texts is the way through which socialism tries to fill its gap which is absence of a unique governing model. Consequently, the main question is which governance model allows socialism to function within its system. Foucault (2004/2008) puts it:

> "We should simply and always ask socialism: So, what is this necessarily extrinsic governmentality that makes you function and only within which you can function? And if this kind of question seems to smell too much of resentment, let us put the question in a more general way, and more turned towards the future: What would really be the governmentality appropriate to socialism? Is there a governmentality appropriate to

> socialism? What governmentality is possible as a strictly, intrinsically, and autonomously socialist governmentality? In any case, we know only that if there is a really socialist governmentality, then it is not hidden within socialism and its texts. It cannot be deduced from them. It must be invented" (p. 94).

Foucault (2004/2008) defines neo-liberalism through a comparison with classical liberalism. He argues while classical liberalism is about providing space for market, neo-liberalism reverses this approach and tends to make a state that operates as market itself through competition tool of governance. Foucault believes that in neo-liberalism, government is not passive without any intervention, but it actively supports and shapes competition indirectly. In fact, competition is not something that emerges naturally, but it is constantly produced and sustained for market by neo-liberal systems. According to neo-liberals, regulation of the market should be done indirectly for instance through interest rates or trade policies, instead of direct actions including controlling the price, public investment or job creation. Foucault asserts that neo-liberalism is not limited to economy control and management, but it also shapes the society in a way that benefits the market. In neo-liberalism inequality is not considered as an issue that needs to be addressed, and instead market relies significantly on inequality to function better. Bringing equality is dangerous for the progress of neo-liberal market-driven economy. (Foucault, 2004/2008)

As Foucault (2004/2008) argued:

> "It cannot be an objective in a system where economic regulation, that is to say, the price mechanism, is not obtained through phenomena of equalization but through a game of differentiations which is characteristic of every mechanism of competition and which is established through fluctuations that only perform their function and only produce their regulatory effects on condition that they are left to work, and left to work through differences. In broad terms, for regulations to take effect there must be those who work and those who don't, there must be big salaries and small salaries, and also prices must rise and fall. Consequently, a social policy with the objective of even a relative equalization, even a relative evening out, can only be anti-economic. Social policy cannot have equality as its objective. On the contrary, it must let inequality function" (pp. 142–143).

Regarding power Foucault (2004/2008) claims that it doesn't stem from laws or governments in the first place, but it is a part of social life before being structured in governments. Power exists in relationships and hierarchies shaped by people in their social life and it is not something that is created and invented by laws and politics. Foucault (2004/2008) puts it:

> "[…] the fact of power precedes the right that establishes, justifies, limits, or intensifies it; power already exists before it is regulated, delegated, or legally established. "We follow a leader, before we have settled the ground of his pretensions, or adjusted the form of his election: and it is not till after mankind have committed many errors in the capacities of

> magistrate and subject, that they think of making government itself a subject of rules." The juridical structure of power always comes after the event or fact of power itself […]. So it cannot be said that men were isolated, that they decided to constitute a power, and then here they are living in a state of society […]. In actual fact, civil society permanently, and from the very start, secretes a power that is neither its condition nor supplement" (pp. 304–305).

According to Foucault (2004/2008), it's not possible to separate social relationships from political power and in fact they are linked with each other. In fact, he believes power is not something that its emergence needs to be stopped but it is a force already existing in society and the question is how it can be controlled and governed. As Foucault (2004/2008) mentioned:

> "[…] civil society makes it possible to designate and show an internal and complex relationship between the social bond and relationships of authority in the form of government. […] we are dealing with an existing society with phenomena of subordination, and so of power, and the problem is simply how to regulate and limit power within a society in which subordination is already at work" (pp. 308–309).

Chapter 3 | Theoretical Framework: Assemblage Theory

3.1 | Philosophical Foundation of Assemblage Theory

The theory of assemblage is a central concept to the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari and was explored in their works specially their famous book “A Thousand Plateaus”. Nail (2017) argues that this theory was not fully explained by Deleuze and Guattari in a formal way and they instead used this concept in a more flexible and situational (ad hoc) way which made it hard to study this theory for later philosophers. Nail highlights that according to DeLanda, a complete theory of assemblages is not provided by Deleuze and Guattari. However, Nail believes that there is a formal theory which is introduced by them that one needs to carefully extract it from their broader work. (Nail, 2017)

Moreover, Nail (2017) believes that there is a significant problem related to the translation of the name of this theory. Assemblage is the English word translated from the French word of “agencement” which is the original word that Deleuze and Guattari used. This translation is misleading cause the French word of agencement comes from the verb “agencer” which means “to arrange” or “to lay out” referring to an arrangement or construction, but the meaning of English translation which is assemblage is “a gathering” or “joining” of things that refers more to a unity or cohesive whole. This is not what Deleuze and Guattari intended. The word of agencement was not used by them to describe a unified whole, but they were more talking about and referring to an arrangement of heterogeneous or different elements. It is possible for us to rethink structures, relationships, and politics by considering assemblage as a layout of differences rather than a unified gathering. (Nail, 2017)

According to Manuel DeLanda (2016), it is not family ties or heritage that matters in an assemblage, but what is important is the fact that how ideas or behaviors spread, and dynamic, unexpected connections are shaped. An assemblage is not just a simple collection of individual parts, but it shapes something unique which cannot be truly understood by reducing it to its parts. In an assemblage, members are allowed to change or mix freely without being restricted by a rigid structure and it is possible that an assemblage becomes part of a larger assemblage, like when neighborhoods form cities. What helps an assemblage keep working, is the interaction of its parts. DeLanda believes that every assemblage is shaped through its unique history without belonging to a strict hierarchy. Each assemblage is a distinct individual and all the assemblages as individual entities are in an equal status that can interact directly with each other. This direct interaction doesn’t happen in traditional hierarchical thinking where entities are organized in fixed levels and can't cross levels easily. (DeLanda, 2016)

As DeLanda (2016) mentioned:

> "Assemblages have a fully contingent historical identity, and each of them is therefore an individual entity: an individual person, an individual community, an individual organization, an individual city. Because the ontological status of all assemblages is the same, entities operating at different scales can directly interact with one another, individual to individual, a possibility that does not exist in a hierarchical ontology, like that composed of genera, species, and individuals" (p. 14).

DeLanda (2016) asserts that the identity of an assemblage is not only defined by its properties, but also by its capacities. Assemblages have potential abilities or tendencies which are real, but they become visible only when they are used. As DeLanda (2016) puts it "[…] in addition to properties, assemblages also possess dispositions, tendencies and capacities, that are virtual (real but not actual) when not being currently manifested or exercised" (p. 71). In fact, the virtual is real, rather than imaginary or fake, and as a part of a thing, it's not just visible or active yet, like a musician's skill. The fact that musician doesn't play wouldn't mean that their skill doesn't exist. (DeLanda, 2016)

Nail (2017) believes that assemblage theory challenges traditional ideas which consider things as unified wholes and complete units like body in which every organ is meant to serve the whole and in case of removing one part, the body stops working. Drawing on the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, Nail argues that in an assemblage parts can be removed or moved around without disturbing the function of the whole and parts maintain their identity even when rearranged. Assemblages are like machines that every part of them can connect with others externally. And this kind of composition is called fragmentary whole which is flexible rather than fixed. What actually matters in assemblages is the relation between the elements and the sets of connections among them rather than individual elements themselves. (Nail, 2017)

As Nail (2017) noted:

> "In contrast to organic unities, for Deleuze and Guattari, assemblages are more like machines, defined solely by their external relations of composition, mixture, and aggregation. In other words, an assemblage is a multiplicity, neither a part nor a whole. If the elements of an assemblage are defined only by their external relations, then it is possible that they can be added, subtracted, and recombined with one another ad infinitum without ever creating or destroying an organic unity. This is what Deleuze and Guattari paradoxically call a "fragmentary whole" (What is Philosophy? 16). The elements of the assemblage are "not pieces of a jigsaw puzzle," they say, but like a "dry-stone wall, and everything holds together only along diverging lines" (What is Philosophy? 23). Each new mixture produces a new kind of assemblage, always free to recombine again and change its nature. Thus, as Deleuze says, "in a multiplicity, what counts are not the terms or the

> elements, but what is 'between' them, the in-between, a set of relations that are inseparable from each other" (Deleuze and Parnet viii). The assemblage constructs or lays out a set of relations between self-subsisting fragments—what Deleuze calls "singularities."" (p. 23).

Nail (2017) argues that assemblage theory rejects any kind of Essentialism, and unlike traditional philosophy in which the main focus is on exploring the essence and fixed identity of things, in assemblage theory the essence is rejected in favor of events. According to Nail, Deleuze and Guattari believe that the question should not be "what is this thing?" but instead we should ask "how did it come to be? or what happened to make it?" and in fact, instead of asking for true essence of things, we should explore their contexts, situations that they are part of, how they work and where they came from. In assemblage theory, identity is something in process all the time and it can be constantly shaped by external factors and events rather than remaining fixed and static. In other word, it can be said that things do not have an unchanging nature, but it is only the specific and unique events and conditions that shape them. The features of assemblages rely on the specific situation and time which make them temporary and unique. (Nail, 2017)

Nail (2017) argued:

> "Deleuze and Guattari do not ask, "What is . . .?" but rather, how? where? when? from what viewpoint? and so on. These are not questions of essence, but questions of events. An assemblage does not have an essence because it has no eternally necessary defining features, only contingent and singular features. In other words, if we want to know what something is, we cannot presume that what we see is the final product nor that this product is somehow independent of the network of social and historical processes to which it is connected" (p. 24).

According to Deleuze (1968/1994), the concept of multiplicity is not only referring to many things, but is a dynamic and complex structure of difference. It cannot be referred to something that is always the same. Deleuze believes that things are not grounded in some unchanging essence or identity as traditional philosophy claimed. In philosophy of Deleuze, an idea is a system of events and singularities, rather than a system of fixed identities. Deleuze claims that the only possible way for keeping the word essence is by inverting its meaning. We need to regard essence not as an unchanging identity, but as "the accident", "the event", "the becoming". Deleuze rejects any kind of binary thinking and believes that we should not think of multiplicity as the opposite of unity. Multiplicity is something different in kind from both unity and multiplicity as we normally understand them. Multiplicity is a new way of thinking which is not based on identity or unity. It is more about differences and change, rather than fixed forms or oppositions like one vs. many or real vs. appearance. It is not a collection of things or a hidden essence, but in fact it is pure difference. (Deleuze, 1968/1994)

Deleuze (1968/1994) mentioned:

> “Multiplicity tolerates no dependence on the identical in the subject or in the object. The events and singularities of the Idea do not allow any positing of an essence as 'what the thing is'. No doubt, if one insists, the word 'essence' might be pre served, but only on condition of saying that the essence is precisely the accident, the event, the sense; not simply the contrary of what is ordinarily called the essence but the contrary of the contrary: multiplicity is no more appearance than essence, no more multiple than one” (p. 191).

Nail (2017) argues that assemblage is not only a random gathering of different things, but is a dynamic and relational system that is constituted from three fundamental components including Abstract Machine or Conditions, Concrete Assemblage or Elements, and Personae or Agents. He explains that Abstract machine is like an invisible code that explains the way things join each other. It is not a physical thing, but it can be regarded as a kind of logic behind the arrangement of elements. Although abstract machine is not something that can be seen or touched, it affects the reality. It is called abstract not because it is unreal, but because it cannot be considered a material thing. However, it is real since it determines how things appear and function. Abstract machine is not made of internal essences or unchanging qualities, but it is external relations that make abstract machine. Assemblages with different relations among their elements have different abstract machines. In fact, abstract machine shapes the stage or conditions for arrangement of elements in meaningful ways. (Nail, 2017)

As Nail (2017) puts it:

> “The abstract machine is abstract in the sense that it is not a thing, but it is absolutely real in the sense that the relations that arrange concrete elements are real. It is a machine in the sense that it is defined only by extrinsic relations and not intrinsic relations of organic unity. Different assemblages are defined by different sets of relations; thus there are also different types of abstract machines that arrange their elements in one way or another. In every case, the abstract machine functions as a kind of local condition of possibility—a set of relations in which elements appear to be meaningfully related” (pp. 24–25).

Nail (2017) asserts that since abstract machine does not exist as a physical thing, we cannot fully represent or symbolize it, instead it can be identified by a proper name that is unique and singular like “May 1968”. In fact, such names refer to configurations of relations happening at one time, rather than abstract categories. We give unique names to abstract machines with the purpose of pointing to specific events or arrangements. For instance, when we choose a name for a constellation of stars, we are actually talking about a group of relational lines that link those stars with each other in the sky shaping a specific pattern. We call these relations abstract machines and the stars are concrete assemblage. Such constellations are temporary and can change at any time. It can be said that they are just one-time arrangements of stars. As Nail (2017) mentioned:

> "The abstract machine does not cause or program the concrete elements in advance, nor does it give them a normative direction. Rather, the abstract machine supports a "conjunction, combination, and continuum" of all the concrete elements it conditions. Take, for example, a constellation of stars. The constellation of Ursa Major does not inhere naturally or essentially in the sky. It does not cause the stars to exist. It is simply the proper name for the set of conditioning relations that arrange a set of stars. Without stars in the sky there are no relations between stars, but without relations between stars there is only radical heterogeneity. In this example, the abstract machine is the relational lines that connect the stars and the concrete assemblage is the stars that are connected. However, since new stars are born and old stars die and all of them move around in relation to our point of view, there is no eternal essence of the constellation. The constellation is a singular event: a set of relations that change as the elements change in a kind of reciprocal feedback loop" (pp. 25–26).

According to Nail (2017) while abstract machine is about invisible relations in an assemblage, the concrete assemblage refers to real and observable material elements that make an assemblage in practice like the actual people, objects, institutions, and actions. These elements can be regarded as machine parts which are placed within the abstract relations and shape or structure assemblage and give stability to it. There is no unchanging or pre-given relation between abstract and concrete, and they shape together and affect or change each other along the way. They are interdependent, and if one of them changes, the other one changes subsequently. Due to the fact that abstract machine is not a static and stable essence and the concrete elements can change always, assemblage has a dynamic and shifting nature and can turn into something new and is capable of doing different things at different times. As a result of which, assemblage cannot be fully understood by exploring its essence or trying to find out what it really is. Instead, we have to ask what it can do now, in real-world terms. Consequently, it can be argued that studying the assemblages is an empirical process in which they need to be explored and analyzed case by case and step by step. (Nail, 2017)

Nail (2017) argued:

> "Since the abstract machine is not an eternal essence or a program given in advance of the concrete elements, when the concrete elements change so does the set of relations that they are in. There is thus a reciprocal determination between the abstract and the concrete: when one changes, so does the other. As Deleuze and Guattari say, there is a "coadaptation," (A Thousand Plateaus 91/71) or reciprocal presupposition of the two (What is Philosophy? 74/77). This is why the consequences of events cannot be known in advance. There is no essence of the event; there are only concrete elements that are defined by their external relations, i.e., what they are concretely capable of at any given point. If we want to understand how an assemblage works, we do not ask what its essence is, but rather what it

> can do. This is an empirical question. We do not know in advance what a concrete body can do. The answer "can only be resolved step by step" […]" (p. 26).

Third component in assemblage is persona which according to Nail (2017) is not same as a person. In fact, it is about role or function that is possessed by someone or something in an assemblage. A persona contributes to organization of things and creation of connections. Personae are not fixed people but they are like moving parts or roles that can link abstract ideas or relations to concrete element like people, materials or actions. A persona exists within the assemblage rather coming from outside and not only it is shaped by assemblage, it can also shape the assemblage itself. The abstract machine and persona depend on each other for existing and none of them is more important, but they are shaped together and define each other. A persona is more a collective role rather a single individual or a personal identity. In fact, to define persona, the individual "I" as the center of action is rejected and persona is more about what a group can do. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Nail argues that what we do is part of something more important and bigger than us like a collective, an event, or an assemblage. In fact, the importance of "I" and "you" are less than "we" or collective and shared identity which is shaped by a group and their action. (Nail, 2017)

As Nail (2017) puts it:

> "For Deleuze and Guattari, personae are not first person, self-knowing subjects; rather, they are third-person (he, she, they) collective subjects of an indefinite event (one, everyone, anyone). "I won't say I anymore," Deleuze and Guattari write in Anti-Oedipus, "I'll never utter the word again; it's just too damn stupid. Every time I hear it, I'll use the third person instead" (30/23). Irony aside, for Deleuze and Guattari the third person subject is the collective subject of an assemblage to which it is immanent. Agents of assemblages deploy their speech acts "in the third person," "where it is always the conceptual persona who says, 'I' [je]" (What is Philosophy? 63/64). The first and second person "I" and "you" are not nonexistent, but rather secondary to the third person "we" that is collectively immanent to the assemblage. No one is subject to themselves alone; they are part of a larger third-person assemblage that arranges the conditioning relations and concrete elements in which the world of the agent is meaningful" (pp. 27–28).

Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Nail (2017) mentions four types of assemblage including territorial, state, capitalist, and nomadic. They are different with each other not based on their content, but based on different ways that things are arranged and the parts are connected with each other. These assemblages are organized in different ways forming a political typology. Such typology is not simply about classical forms of politics like governments and revolutions, but it shows the fact that all arrangements of matter and meaning are innately political not because they are directly related to governance but because they involve practices that shape the world. This

provides a new understanding about politics through which we realize that any way we organize life would become political because it is part of how an assemblage is shaped. (Nail, 2017)

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987), politics comes before everything even our ideas about anything that exists and is real. In fact, power relations and political actions organize how we live and shape out thoughts and understanding about the world. The authors argue that practice does not happen after structures, but it shapes these structures. For instance, people's actions like struggling or resisting could shape how things are organized and defined and create structures and possibilities. Moreover, theoretical structures and practice are not fixed and permanent, but they are instable and can change. As Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) put it "For politics precedes being. Practice does not come after the emplacement of the terms and their relations, but actively participates in the drawing of the lines; it confronts the same dangers and the same variations as the emplacement does" (p. 203).

First type of assemblage is Territorial Assemblage in which things are organized through being assigned suitable usage in a fixed space. In fact, people, objects and behaviors are organized based on traditional and coded norms. (Nail, 2017)

According to Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) One example of this kind of organization is dividing rooms in a house like living room, kitchen and etc. or assigning different functions in urban spaces like public street, private house and other functions. Deleuze and Guattari claim that we experience different divisions in every part of our lives like separating factories into different parts based on different roles or tasks. It can be said the way that we are living, moving, working, behaving is formed by these systems of separation and division that is called segmentarity. These divisions have different forms. For instance, people can be categorized into binary oppositions including rich and poor, men and women, adults and children which shows the fact that there are always clear lines between people and roles. Another form of division is circular that begins from our personal life and expands outward to our neighborhood, city, country and the world. Division can be also linear that is about organization of our lives in which we move from one stage to another one including family life, school, military service, work and etc. just like a sequence of steps. In each stage we experience new roles, regulations and expectation. These forms of division, control and structure our lives. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987)

As Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) mentioned:

> "We are segmented from all around and in every direction. The human being is a segmentary animal. Segmentarity is inherent to all the strata composing us. Dwelling, getting around, working, playing: life is spatially and socially segmented. The house is segmented according to its rooms' assigned purposes; streets, according to the order of the city; the factory, according to the nature of the work and operations performed in it. We are segmented in a binary fashion, following the great major dualist oppositions: social classes,

> but also men-women, adults-children, and so on. We are segmented in a circular fashion, in ever larger circles, ever wider disks or coronas, like Joyce's "letter": my affairs, my neighborhood's affairs, my city's, my country's, the world's .. . We are segmented in a linear fashion, along a straight line or a number of straight lines, of which each segment represents an episode or "proceeding": as soon as we finish one proceeding we begin another, forever proceduring or procedured, in the family, in school, in the army, on the job. School tells us, "You're not at home anymore"; the army tells us, "You're not in school anymore"" (pp. 208–209).

These divisions do not happen naturally but they are shaped and reshaped through repetitive practices which is called coding. The function of Territorial Assemblage is based on repetition and slow change within defined boundaries with a segmentary logic which means crossing one border only to find another. Everything has a clear labeled function which is reinforced by tradition, habit, and local alliances. (Nail, 2017)

DeLanda (2016) asserts that an important feature of an assemblage is the fact that how much it is coded. He argues that coding refers to using specific elements specially language for structuring the assemblage and giving identity to it. In a society, one of the main tools for coding is language. One example is reliance of institutions like governments on language-based rules and rituals to legitimize their authority. While in traditional societies, authority was often based on sacred stories or religious texts, in modern societies it is written rules, procedures, or a constitution that are used for structuring the society. While coding is applied by all organizations, it is used by the state on a much larger scale. Coding can be extended by a powerful or authoritarian state into many aspects of life including clothing, behavior, property, and trade. In some older societies, local communities were allowed to keep their own customs and rules but a dominant and major rule system was imposed over them. Deleuze and Guattari called this process “overcoding”. (DeLanda, 2016)

Nail (2017) argues that another type of assemblage is State Assemblage that is a system in which organization of all parts is based on shaping unity and control. While Territorial Assemblage has more flexibility and openness and there is alliance among different elements, in State Assemblage everything is centralized around a single controlling point. When there are not any limits on a lot of resources, codes, or ideas, a kind of special structure like government or institution is shaped for managing and controlling them. Things are not only organized by this structure, but they are also reshaped around it to fit into one central order. Through State Assemblage, a top-down system and a hierarchy is created in which some elements are dominated by others and all connections are controlled. There is no free interaction and those relations that are not aligned with the system would be blocked and isolated. In fact, a kind of central authority is created by the state by which power and information from everywhere is collected and centralized and all differences are forced to follow one order. This is called State overcoding. (Nail, 2017)

According to Nail (2017), Deleuze and Guattari introduce three kinds of organization through which State Assemblage functions: First one is Binary Divisions like male/female and rich/poor that is used by the state to enforce a power difference between the two and making one of them more important than the other one. Second type of organization is Circular state in which there is a single central power that everything revolves around it and there is always a flow of attention and control toward the middle like a king or government as center of power. And the third type is Linear system in which organization of everything is shaped by the state in a straight line like steps in a process. Everything functions in the same path based on the same rules set by the center of control without any freedom and variety and any possibility for change or creativity. In fact, the state standardizes and controls different forms of knowledge and life through shaping centralized systems. As Nail (2017) puts it:

> "Whereas binary territorial segmentations are defined by multiple binaries that are always determined by a third (an alliance between the two), binary state segmentations are self-sufficient and assure the prevalence of one segment over the other (hierarchy). Whereas circular territorial segments do not imply the same center but a multiplicity of centers (round but not quite circular), circular state segments form a resonance of concentric circles around an axis of rotation, converging on a single point of accumulation. Whereas linear territorial segmentation functions by "segments in-progress," alignments but no straight line, and supple morphological formations, linear state segments function by homogenized segments geometrically organized around a dominant segment through which they pass: a space or spatio rather than a place or territory" (p. 31).

Nail (2017) asserts that the third type of assemblage is Capitalist Assemblage in which the special qualities and specific meanings of all things including people, objects and actions are removed to make them numbers or prices and parts of the economy. In this assemblage the value of different kinds of work, goods, or services are not determined based on their special characteristics, but their value depends on the fact that how much they can sell for. In this system axioms or basic rules are used to secure growth of the market through turning all things into quantities that can be compared, measured, exchanged or traded easily like prices on products. In Territorial Assemblages, organization of labor happens in a meaningful way that specific tasks are connected to a specific amount of work needed to make something. In State Assemblages, money connects goods and services and their value are usually determined by legal or political powers not just the market. However, Capitalist Assemblages function through decoding or breaking down the meaning behind everything including social relationships, work and life and turning them into marketable, tradable and private things. In fact, everything is considered numbers or prices on the market using axioms as a system of rules in capitalism. Although different parts of society are connected by capitalism, their uniqueness is ignored. In capitalism meanings are removed from human relationships to link them with the market and transform them into products or services which can be sold. (Nail, 2017)

Nail (2017) mentioned:

> "While territorial assemblages arrange qualified pieces of labor corresponding to a particular quantum of abstract labor (activity required to create a given artifact), and state assemblages introduce the general equivalent of currency formally uniting "partial objects" (goods and ser vices) whose overcoded value is determined by noncapitalist (imperial or juridical) decisions, neither decode nor dequalify exchange to the degree that capitalism does. Capitalism goes further. On one hand, it decodes qualitative relationships through the privatization of all aspects of social life, free trade, advertising, freeing of labor and capital, and imperialism; on the other, it axiomatizes them as "productions for the market." This capitalist assemblage thus retains a certain version of immanent relation among the three aspects of the assemblage, but instead of treating them as singularities or qualitative differences, treats them all as globally ex changeable quantities" (p. 32).

Nomadic Assemblage is another type of assemblage in which arrangement of social and material elements is made in a way that all parts of assemblage including conditions, elements, and agents have the freedom to transform and be arranged in new ways without being limited by fixed roles and social hierarchies. This assemblage entails fluidity and adaptation. Meanings are not fixed in this type and there is not any top-down control system. While in Capitalist Assemblage change is possible only when it is about turning things into quantities like numbers or prices, Nomadic Assemblage offers the possibility of real and unlimited qualitative change of things and their relations with each other. In this assemblage there is not any center of control or dominance like a boss, a market, or a government, but instead any arrangement happens through equal participation of all parts. In fact, it is a shared, participatory system of transformation. (Nail, 2017)

Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) call this type of assemblage "nomadic" cause it was inspired by the movement of nomadic peoples, which was not toward a final destination, but it was more like an ongoing journey or trajectory. In fact, it is not the places that are important to nomads when they move, but it is the movement between these place that matters to them. Unlike settled people that their lives are organized around fixed points like homes or cities, these places are only temporary stops for nomads along their journey and their life is about the process of moving not staying in one fixed point. The life of nomads is always "in-between", not at the start or the end. As Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) put it:

> "The nomad has a territory; he follows customary paths; he goes from one point to another; he is not ignorant of points (water points, dwelling points, assembly points, etc.). But the question is what in nomad life is a principle and what is only a consequence. To begin with, although the points determine paths, they are strictly subordinated to the paths they determine, the reverse of what happens with the sedentary. The water point is reached only in order to be left behind; every point is a relay and exists only as a relay. A path is always

> between two points, but the in-bet ween has taken on all the consistency and enjoys both an autonomy and a direction of its own. The life of the nomad is the intermezzo" (p. 380).

Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Nail (2017) argues that in Nomadic Assemblage people define their own problems and decide how they aim to deal with them without waiting for permission from any higher authority or expecting any top-down solution. In this assemblage, all dominant systems of power are challenged and life is organized in a more flexible, horizontal and collective way. Nomadic Assemblage, as a form of shared and participatory system, offers a radical political model which stands in contrast to other systems like "territorial hierarchies" in which roles and identities are fixed, "state control" in which power is centralized and "capitalism" which turns everything into tradable values. In the real world, no assemblage is shaped by only one type like territorial, state, capitalist, or nomadic, but all assemblages are usually a mix of these types in different amounts. In order to fully understand the political behavior of an assemblage and the way it functions we need to recognize how much of each type exists in that assemblage and how they interact. (Nail, 2017)

According to Nail (2017) assemblages don't have static and rigid structures, but they are dynamic systems formed by different elements like people, institutions, behaviors, material objects, discourses, and etc. which interact with each other. An assemblage is always in motion and changes constantly in response to pressures, resistances, and new conditions. Studying an assemblage is not only about understanding the types it includes, but we need also to understand how it transforms. Nail argues that the concept of deterritorialization is used by Deleuze and Guattari for describing processes of change in an assemblage. When assemblages are organized in a specific way and become stable, they are territorialized. (Nail, 2017)

DeLanda (2016) argues that territorialization isn't just about determining physical borders, like the edges of a city. It is also about how much the parts of an assemblage are shaped to be similar or act in the same way. people in a community that is very closely connected, tend to become more alike which makes personal differences less noticeable. In this assemblage there's more pressure to behave in similar ways. It can be said that high degree of territorialization results from high conformity. Low conformity means more diversity is allowed. As DeLanda (2016) mentioned:

> "Territorialization refers not only to the determination of the spatial boundaries of a whole – as in the territory of a community, city, or nation state – but also to the degree to which an assemblage's component parts are drawn from a homogenous repertoire, or the degree to which an assemblage homogenizes its own components. When a community is densely connected, we can expect a reduction of personal differences and an increased degree of conformity" (p. 16).

According to Nail (2017) When the organization of an assemblage is disrupted and transformed by something, assemblage is deterritorialized. Nail mentions four different types of deterritorialization

including Relative Negative Deterritorialization, Relative Positive Deterritorialization, Absolute Negative Deterritorialization, and Absolute Positive Deterritorialization. These types help us to understand what are the impacts and characteristics of a transformation. A transformation might reinforce the system, or challenge it, or build something completely new. If we don't fully understand what kind of deterritorialization is happening in an assemblage we cannot realize that the change is revolutionary or it is simply reproducing the status quo or it is resulting in collapse without offering any alternatives. (Nail, 2017)

The first kind of deterritorialization is "Relative Negative Deterritorialization". Nail (2017) asserts that this kind of transformation might look like a break from the system, but in fact it leads to survival of the system through adaptation. One example of this type is reformist actions of the state like changing laws or giving more rights to people in response to oppositions or protests against policies of the government. In fact, through these changes power structures are not fundamentally challenged, and instead they are stabilized. In other words, the system avoids any radical transformation through making small changes and adjustments to survive. As Nail (2017) puts it "Relative negative deterritorialization is the process that changes an assemblage in order to maintain and reproduce an established assemblage" (p. 34).

According to Nail (2017), the second kind of deterritorialization is "Relative Positive Deterritorialization" which introduces an unfamiliar idea, action, or element that doesn't belong the existing structure and might have the potential to cause real change in the system or might have the risk to be absorbed or controlled by the current structure. This kind of change has an ambiguous nature that could be an unusual force, strange to the present order which either ends up being neutralized, or brings the possibility of creating a completely different future and a radical transformation. Nail (2017) mentioned:

> "Relative positive deterritorialization is the process of change that does not reproduce a pre-established assemblage, but does not yet contribute to or create a new assemblage either (A Thousand Plateaus 634/508). These sorts of processes are, in short, ambiguous changes that are not clearly incorporated or incorporable into an established assemblage. Everyone recognizes that a new element or agency has escaped the established assemblage, but it is not yet clear whether it will cause a radical transformation of the whole assemblage or whether it will be incorporated into an already established assemblage through a relative negative deterritorialization" (p. 35).

The third kind of deterritorialization is "Absolute Negative Deterritorialization". This kind of change is about a complete rejection of all systems and structures without introducing a new alternative or making any reformation. This fact makes this type of transformation weak and scattered which subsequently enables existing systems like territorial, state or capitalist

assemblages to take control again easily. In fact, this kind of change which is purely destructive only worsens the situation and reinforces the systems people were trying to escape. (Nail, 2017)

The last kind of deterritorialization is “Absolute Positive Deterritorialization” which according to Nail (2017) can be considered a powerful type of transformation leading to creation of an entirely new structure without escaping the existing system. It wouldn’t be absorbed and pulled back into old patterns and structure, and instead it connects the elements detached from the established order to shape an original organization which is non-hierarchical and avoids commodification. This change doesn’t emerge suddenly, but it develops through reinforcing and connecting small acts of resistance and shifts that are already happening within the current system. The main purpose of this transformation is shaping a new reality or form of life and society within the old one. It can be regarded as meaningful, progressive and revolutionary type of deterritorialization resulting in lasting alternatives. (Nail, 2017)

As Nail (2017) puts it:

> “Absolute positive deterritorialization is the process of change that does not reproduce a pre-established assemblage, but instead creates a new one. Not only do these sorts of change escape the capture of pre-established assemblages, but they also connect to other such elements that have escaped capture. Their connection is not one that reproduces an alliance, totalization, or commodification, but forms an entirely new form of assemblage. This absolute positive deterritorialization does not emerge ex nihilo, but rather simply amplifies the processes of deterritorialization that are already part of every assemblage and connects them together to form a new assemblage” (p. 36).

Nail (2017) argues that exploring these four types of deterritorialization helps us to understand the ways through which systems maintain themselves, or how they can be challenged and transformed. And he believes that we need to know the fact that all types of change are not necessarily productive. While a change may seem radical and progressive, it could be completely destructive or leave old systems intact or even stronger. In general, he regards all assemblages inherently political and believes that they can be guided toward revolutionary outcomes and possibilities only when we truly understand them through analyzing carefully their structure, type and changes. As Nail (2017) mentioned:

> “According to this general logic, all assemblages are political. If we want to know what an assemblage is, we need to know how it works. We have to do an analysis of the assemblage: what is its structure? what is its political typology? and what are the processes of change that shape it? Once we understand how the assemblage functions, we will be in a better position to perform diagnosis: to direct or shape the assemblage toward increasingly revolutionary aims” (p. 37).

3.2 | Assemblage Theory in Urban Studies

Colin McFarlane (2011) asserts the assemblage thinking in social sciences is a relatively vague concept which is not fully developed, and although it holds real potential, it cannot be considered a better theory than other critical urban theories, but rather it can expand and enhance other debates in urban studies and add something new to those discussions or complement them. McFarlane believes that assemblage theory isn't critical or political automatically just like other terms including capital or urbanism, and it can be helpful only if it is used in a critical framework. (McFarlane, 2011)

Wachsmuth, Madden, and Brenner (2011) argue that researchers using assemblage theory as a method need to provide a clear explanation of theoretical ideas and political goals behind their work. The believe that regarding assemblage theory as a purely descriptive or non-theoretical approach could be misleading because all research is shaped by deeper assumptions. In fact, if researchers don't clarify these foundations, the political intentions in their work like calling for justice or social change might remain unclear or unsupported without a solid base. Being open about the guiding principles of their methods and clarifying these goals make the assemblage research more meaningful and stronger especially when compared to other approaches. As Wachsmuth, Madden, and Brenner (2011) mentioned:

> "It would be more productive, from our point of view, for those committed to such methodological procedures to articulate the basic theoretical and normative-political agendas that underpin them, and to make a strong case for their advantages relative to competing approaches. Presenting the assemblage approach as a non-theoretical mode of research is not only misleading in methodological terms; it also leaves indeterminate and ungrounded the political concerns that have been articulated by several contributors to this debate" (pp. 744–745).

McFarlane (2011) highlights that assemblage theory is used in social science to describe conditions of uncertainty, transformation, and complexity. It is about relationality, emergence, diversity, experimentation, collective potential and interaction of material and social forces. Through the lens of assemblage theory, cities cannot be considered as fixed and complete entities, but rather they should be seen as unstable and open-ended objects that are constantly in the process of becoming and changing with an openness to different futures. Assemblage thinking shows how urban realities are shaped by interaction and relationship of different parts that come together. (McFarlane, 2011)

McFarlane (2011) puts it:

> "Assemblage—whether as an idea, an analytic, a descriptive lens or an orientation— is increasingly used in social science research, generally to connote indeterminacy, emergence, becoming, processuality, turbulence and the sociomateriality of phenomena. In short, it is an attempt to describe relationalities of composition—relationalities of near/ far and social/material. Rather than focusing on cities as resultant formations, assemblage thinking is interested in emergence and process, and in multiple temporalities and possibilities" (p. 206).

Ignacio Farías (2011) argues that in critical urban studies focusing on cities is considered a way to understand how capitalism functions and how it is organized and managed. It can be said that in this perspective, city is important only because it shows how economic power functions. However, assemblage theory offers different perspective which is less focused on capitalism. In this approach understanding the city itself is more important and the main goal is to explore how collective urban life is formed by cities. In fact, while critical urban studies focus on cities to understand capitalism, assemblage thinking uses cities to study urban complexity and composition and the city is not merely a backdrop but it's something important on its own. As Farías (2011) puts it:

> "[…] in the case of critical urban studies, the focus on cities and space is only contingent. What is ultimately at stake in those discussions is the organization of contemporary capitalism. Now, if there is one thing we can agree upon with critical urban scholars, it is that the new work in urban studies revolving around assemblage perspectives is not primarily about capitalism. Urban life is obviously tightly entangled with different economic processes, but at stake in this approach is a different question: what is the city, what is urban life made of, how do cities organize collective life?" (p. 367).

According to Farías (2011), assemblages include diverse element including people, materials, institutions and work as self-contained systems which need to be understood through recognizing how they actually function, instead of reducing them to abstract explanations or describing them using external theories like capitalism. As Farías (2011) argued that "Assemblages are self-contained processes of heterogeneous associations calling for a positive description of their becoming, not external explanations" (p. 369).

Drawing on DeLanda, Farías (2017) argues that assemblages don't have any reliance on external systems for giving them meaning. In fact, they are autonomous and self-organizing structures defined by their own internal relationships. As Farías (2017) highlighted that "Indeed, as DeLanda insists, assemblages have no outside, no context and no 'mother' system that would underlie or contextualize them" (p. 188).

Farías (2011) believes that one important benefit of assemblage theory in urban studies is shifting away from regarding city as a single and unified whole or one big system, to studying city as a multiplicity or a composition of different part which are interconnected and to exploring many

smaller urban assemblages which create the urban life through coming together and interacting. In assemblage theory, the focus is on understanding processes which shape urban realities constantly. The assemblage perspective is not just about how we know the city, but about how the city actually is. Instead of seeing the world as a complete and fixed entity, assemblage thinking assumes that it is always in the process of becoming and being reshaped. In fact, there is no final and total version of the world and the reality is never complete. (Farías, 2011)

Farías (2011) mentioned:

> "[…] the constructivism underlying the notion of urban assemblages does not reflect an epistemological problem, but is an ontological proposition. It is based on the general assumption that the world is not all in, that it is in the making and that a finished or complete edition of it within which to dwell does not exist" (p. 369).

McFarlane (2011) believes that through assemblage theory, it can be understood that how fixed patterns can be formed through different processes including historical events, social practices and economic systems which come together at specific moments. However, these stable patterns that are created by powerful forces can be changed through struggles, new power dynamics, or different conditions. In fact, through assemblage thinking, we can realize how cities are shaped by power dynamic and how they can be reimagined and remade. Instead of focusing only on analyzing the actual city or what exists, assemblage theory emphasizes also potentiality of cities and the new possibilities that can emerge. What matters in assemblage thinking is both depth and potential of the city. Depth means that many overlapping histories shape the cities. In fact, the way that people act, how the economic systems work, and how policies are created are affected by the histories that form the city and its inequalities. The cities are resulted from long processes of power, habits, and work done over time. Potentiality on the other hand is about possibilities that exist in cities. Some events or encounters in cities can result in formation of new interactions, new ideas, new ways of living and removal of old patterns. (McFarlane, 2011)

As McFarlane (2011) puts it:

> "Assemblage places emphasis on the depth and potentiality of urban sites, processes and actors in terms of their histories, the labour required to produce them and their inevitable capacity to exceed the sum of their connections (McFarlane, 2011). By 'depth', I am referring to the crucial role of multiple and overlapping histories in producing habits of practice, ways of going on, and trajectories of policy and economy that shape urban inequality—that is, on the historical labour and power of urban formation. By 'potentiality', I am referring both to the intensity and excessiveness of the moment— the capacity of events to disrupt patterns, generate new encounters with people and objects, and invent new connections and ways of inhabiting everyday urban life—and to the potential of urban histories and everyday life to be imagined and put to work differently, whether in the form

> of blueprints, models, dreams or hope for a better city, or in the capacity of random connections to generate the possibility of new ideas, encounters and collectives" (p. 209).

According to McFarlane (2011) while assemblages have some degree of coherence or structure, they are not completely stable but they are often incomplete and can evolve into new forms. Through assemblage theory we can understand real-life complexity of cities. What shapes the assemblages is the interactions and relationships among different elements and these relationships can change over time and lead to new arrangements. McFarlane mentions the idea of "lines of flight" which is a term introduced by Deleuze and Guattari referring to the potential to break out of established structures and reassemble the urban life in new ways. This idea shows that transformation of urban life is not a linear and deterministic process, but it is nonlinear, open-ended, and full of possibilities. Assemblage theory is about rethinking urban life and reshaping new ways of living; however, it doesn't prescribe a specific kind of urban life or world to build, but instead asks us to think about the process of making something different and to explore the ways through which we can shape new urban realities by rearrangement of ideas, people, materials and practices. (McFarlane, 2011)

McFarlane (2011) argued:

> "[…] assemblage thinking places a particular emphasis on the process of *reassembling*, that is, by emphasising how urbanism might be produced otherwise, assemblage thinking asks us to consider how an alternative world might be assembled. Not by implying a particular content of alterity, whether socialist or otherwise, but through the concern with the *making* of alterity […]" (p. 211).

McFarlane (2011) asserts that assemblage theory and dialectical thinking of Marxism theory are both about relationship between the actual and the possible. However, while in dialectical thinking the emphasis is on contradiction and opposition like class struggle, in assemblage thinking what matters is relationality and emergence or the idea of how things come together, interact with each other, change form, and create unexpected outcomes. In fact, in assemblage theory antagonism or struggle is not rejected, but what is more important is interaction, experimentation, and the forming of new collectivities. Moreover, assemblage supports the idea of shaping shared and collective ways of living which is not only about creating shared urban spaces or services, but it is also about shaping shared experiences, knowledge, and relationships. This collective life rejects any kind of control and ownership, and values shared actions. (McFarlane, 2011)

McFarlane (2011) argued that "Politically, assemblage can be read as a form of commoning, of bringing into imagination, debate and realisation forms of thinking and doing that are resolutely held in common" (p. 212).

Farías (2011) highlights that assemblage theory helps to understand how inequality emerges not through big structures, but through everyday actions and social and material arrangements. It shows how power structures and systems of exclusion are shaped and maintained in cities. The author believes that assemblage theory can uncover who and what is included or left out in the processes that shape urban life, and how these processes organize or exclude different forms of life. Instead of focusing on broad theories or critiques, assemblage theory offers detailed and practical knowledge supporting democratic participation, which results in a better understanding of power systems and the way they operate. As a result of which people could have a more effective engagement in urban politics. As Farías (2011) noted:

> "By revealing who and what is taken into account and who or what is not, and how forms of life are composed, subordinated or excluded, the study of urban assemblages seeks to establish a foundation of empirical knowledge available to the public for a democratic politics. It does not aim to offer a structural analysis or theoretical critique. It is intended to support a participatory politics with a richer and more detailed knowledge of the real, including the ways and forms of power shaping city life" (pp. 370–371).

McFarlane (2011) argues that "agency" which is the power or ability causing change in an assemblage, is shared and created through interactions between human and nonhuman parts. In fact, agency is not something that belongs only to one person or institution, but it is created through relationship between people, materials, and ideas. For instance, in a protest it is not only people that shape the outcome, but nonhuman elements including banners, streets, buildings and their interactions also can affect the result. In an assemblage, both the relationships and the individual roles of each element are important. McFarlane argues that assemblage thinking regards cities as a composition of many different human and nonhuman elements that are constantly being shaped and changed. Assemblage theory would help us to imagine new alternatives and to seek more inclusive political imaginaries. Considering cities as assemblages enables a reimagining of urban justice and equality, where the idea of right to the city is shared and diversity is truly appreciated, not just mentioned in words. (McFarlane, 2011)

As McFarlane (2011) puts it "Assemblage's imaginary of gathering and composition is one vehicle through which the rights to the city might potentially be realised, whereby assemblage extends the rights to the city as a process of agonistic composition" (p. 221).

Farías (2017) asserts that according to assemblage thinking, knowledge always results from specific situations and it's never detached from human and nonhuman elements involved. In fact, it is interactions within these assemblages which create knowledge. Importantly, knowledge doesn't just explain the world, but it actually helps shape it. It can be argued that assemblages are not only about collections of things, but they also shape ideas, facts, and shared meanings actively.

Consequently, knowledge is formed by its context and cannot be considered neutral or objective. As Farías (2017) argued:

> "Indeed, one of the most interesting features of assemblage thinking, at least as it has been deployed in science and technology studies, is that knowledge cannot be conceived of or imagined outside specific assemblages. Assemblage theory does not just allow us to pay new attention to the shaping role of non-humans and matters of concern, but it also invites us to think about the performativity of knowledge and how assemblages are involved in the co-production of objects and knowledge" (p. 189).

Farías (2011) argues that the politics of urban assemblages is related to new forms of collaborations and collective learning. It gathers different types of knowledge and everyday experience in inclusive settings like hybrid forums where people can engage in discussions and participate in solving urban problems all together. Drawing on ideas of John Dewey, Farías asserts that shaping a democratic society requires providing people with access to clear and useful knowledge about the complex realities of urban life. In fact, knowledge shouldn't be detached from everyday life, and instead it needs to be shared, open to debate, and easy for everyone to understand. Farías believes that observation and engagement with real-life urban situations is more important than focusing on abstract theories for creating democratic urban politics. Moreover, it is actual urban situation that should matter in political engagement, not broad systems like capitalism. In addition, democracy in urban life depends on idea of regarding cities as constantly evolving assemblages, rather than fixed and unchanged entities. Cities need to be understood as assemblages which are incomplete and open to change and different futures that can be shaped in multiple ways through public involvement. (Farías, 2011)

As Farías (2011) puts it:

> "Firstly, empirical inquiry, not theoretical critique, is necessary for the constitution and strengthening of urban democratic publics. Secondly, actual urban situations define the space of intervention for an urban democratic public, not capitalism at large. And, finally, urban democratic participation is based on a sense that cities are assembled, not structured […]" (p. 372).

This chapter was about studying the philosophical foundation of assemblage theory and how it can be used in the field of urban studies to understand better the complexity, instability, and relational nature of urban environments that we live in. This section prepared the stage for the next chapter which is about reframing the concept of the right to housing through assemblage thinking. Through insights of this new way of thinking and ideas that were introduced in this chapter including the categories of territorial, state, capitalist, and nomadic assemblages, and the role of deterritorialization processes, we can shift from traditional approaches to a more flexible one to

look at housing justice and reconceptualize the idea of the right to housing, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 | Right to Housing Through Assemblage Theory

4.1 | Marxist Urban Theory and The Right to Housing: Critical Insights and Conceptual Gaps

Urban studies based on Marxist principles primarily consists of an ideological opposition against capitalist urbanism alongside the recognition of housing as a fundamental battleground for social and political change rather than just a technical concern. Within this framework, housing exists in a system of relation production, spatial control mechanisms and class power dynamics. The city exists as a social product that reflects the fundamental conflicts of the capitalist economic order rather than being neutral. Therefore, the right to housing needs to be understood within the broader framework of the right to the city which functions as a revolutionary approach to develop democratic communal living spaces and social justice in urban areas. According to this perspective housing should evolve into a creative space of living which supports social existence instead of being treated as real estate properties.

Drawing on the idea of Lefebvre regarding right to the city, Havey (2009) claims that this right is about a collective power to affect the urban life, to change it, and to organize our surrounding living environment, rather than allowing the elites to make decisions alone. This is a democratic, just and sustainable way of shaping the urban life. However, Havey (2012) argues that the idea of right to the city is an abstract label without any fixed meaning, and as a result of which it can be defined in different ways by different people which makes it a contested idea and it is power struggles which shape its meaning. Therefore, he believes that the political fight is not only about making these rights real in practice, but it is also about defining this idea.

Mayer (2012) argues that the idea of right to the city can be approached in two different ways: first approach is about securing legal rights within the existing system to guarantee fair participation, and second approach is about activisms and grassroots movements that are not only looking for improving access to the existing city, but they mainly tend to reshape and reimagine the city completely to make a more democratic and just environment for all. They believe in remaking the city for people rather than managing it better. (Mayer, 2012)

Lefebvre (1996) argues that different fundamental social rights including right to housing which are not practiced and accepted fully begin to emerge and develop from common practice before becoming official laws. Peter Marcuse and David Madden (2016) see the housing crisis a result of basic inequalities and conflicts built into a class-based society. They believe that the idea of homeownership maintains the power structures that bring housing inequality.

And Rolnik (2020) claims that housing issue or the idea of right to housing shouldn't be framed only through class inequality, exploitation, and unfair wages, but we need to recognize the fact that housing itself can create inequality. In fact, social inequality isn't just an idea which is reflected by urban space and housing, but it can be said that urbanism and housing can be used as tools for deepening this inequality. Moreover, Rolnik (2014) argues that through framing the right to housing in broader idea of right to the city, the idea of housing justice goes beyond merely having access to a place for living and surviving, and it would be more about shaping the urban space in a way that supports provision of all other rights and enables inclusion, participation, sense of belonging to urban space which bring dignity and equality.

Lefebvre (1996) asserts that capitalist urbanization creates standardized housing forms which leads to alienation of residents and reinforces class divisions. In his perspective the state is framed as an instrument actively working to allow real estate speculation and privatization through which displacement occurs. Housing policies based on market principles and technocratic planning systems are instruments increasing the social inequalities. In fact, according to Lefebvre, when people own their houses, they have freedom to change their surrounding space based on their desires and preferences which results in a sense of belonging to the place, but on the other hand large state-built housing estates remove this flexibility and impose a kind of strict control over people and force them to adapt themselves. In fact, although the state enables the idea of "habitat", it does it only by eliminating the idea of "inhabiting". (Lefebvre, 1996)

Both in traditional ideas of Marx and those of critical urban theorists, there is an emphasis on the role of the working class as the main actor in driving the social change. As Lefebvre (1996) argues that the working class is the only group that can truly enable social change and challenge the system through their everyday struggles. While in the past their issues were mostly about poverty, poor working conditions and low wages, now they are struggling with different issue which includes poor living condition, and a controlled and dominated form of life driven by bureaucratic systems and consumer society. In this sense, Lefebvre regards an inherent revolutionary nature for urban space which seeks to fight against any kinds of spatial inequality. (Lefebvre, 1996)

Therefore, according to Marxist urban theories, the right to housing functions as a revolutionary political movement dedicated to fighting market domination of urban areas and reshaping the social and spatial patterns of cities. The movement is not limited to creating inclusion in the current system, but it actively seeks to bring back urban areas for public use and democratic governance. The housing struggles maintain a radical stance against allowing life to become a commodity.

According to Havey (2009) the survival of capitalism depends on urbanization through absorbing surplus capital. Consequently, it can be said that housing development stands central to this process since it enables gentrification and displacement while supporting speculative investments.

The profit-making process occurs through deliberate community displacement as part of structured accumulation strategies. As Harvey (2012) highlights that the trend of shaping the city for profit by capitalism only brings overinvestment and financial bubbles crises like the 2008 collapse. In fact, large urban projects supported by governments for addressing the economic problems only benefit the rich, but harm the poor. However, it can be argued that collective housing struggles function as organized movements which oppose such profit-based systems to establish urban spaces for social creation and community-based activities.

Marxist theories argue that urban issues don't emerge only because of poor planning or policy decisions. Housing crises should be viewed as political outcomes that result from capitalist systems together with state collaboration. The state institutions operating under neoliberal policies pursue maximum alignment with capital interests through deregulation and financialization and market incentives leading to the transformation of housing into a commodity. The government utilizes housing space to develop neoliberal governance approaches which combine investment approaches with spatial transformation programs.

Regarding the role of the state Harvey (2010) believes that there isn't a clear theory of the state in the book "Capital" of Marx, however the state appears in his work as the main actor enabling the capitalism to function properly through protecting the private property like house, land, or business to ensure that market operates without any problem. In this perspective, the main role of the state in capitalism is managing the money system. Marcuse and Madden (2016) also argue that the act of deregulation by the state might seem that the state doesn't have any tendency for intervention, however in reality the state hasn't actually left the housing market. In fact, rather than removing the rules, the state just changes them to enable the market to operate more smoothly. Those who benefit from deregulation of the state are investors and landlords, rather than residents. Brenner and Theodore (2002) also claim that the promotion of a free market by neoliberalism is an illusion since this system heavily relies on state control.

Drawing on the ideas of Marxist urban theories, housing struggles that emerge in different place are not isolated, but they have a connection through global systems of capital, policy frameworks and resistance movements. Marginalized groups all over the world can fight dominant narratives and claim housing as a universal right through digital tools and transnational activism and community-led networks. The urbanization process operates on a global scale which dissolves the distinctions between urban and non-urban areas as well as center and periphery regions. Multiple interconnected social mechanisms that span from neighborhoods to cities and beyond to regional and global frameworks produce housing inequality.

Through the lens of Marxism in urban theories, capitalism not only causes housing to become materially inaccessible but as Marcuse and Madden (2016) argues, it also makes it existentially alienating. People who live in unstable situations experience social isolation combined with fear

and powerlessness especially when these factors intersect with racial and gender and economic status. In neoliberalism, there is a systemic inequality and in this political structure homeownership is often seen as an individual achievement. These systems of inequality can be challenged by those movements which call for public, cooperative, and community-based models of living that bring democratic participation and personal empowerment.

Marxist theory is mainly based on the fight for housing rights within the broader struggle against capitalist class power and spatial control. These rights are not only about property access, but also about shaping alternative communal spaces based on solidarity and enabling people to transform spatial structures that cause displacement. However, the risk of institutional co-optation and absorption of grassroots movements remains essential to monitor because institutional frameworks have a tendency to eliminate radical potential

Moreover, as Rolnik (2020) argues we need to address the worldwide inequalities present in both urban knowledge systems and policy frameworks. Poverty is not the only reason of housing crises in Global South, but it is international privatization regimes together with territorial neoliberalism that actively generate these issues. Resistance in these contexts are not driven by abstract ideological positions, but they emerge from genuine life experiences of exclusion as communities fight for territorial control and developing site-specific housing justice concepts.

These viewpoints establish housing rights as essential political, social and spatial requirement that directly opposes the basic principles of capitalist urban development. The approach rejects technical solutions, and calls for radical changes that eliminate housing commodification and create cities dedicated to life instead of profit generation. The Marxist theoretical framework provides deep understanding, but it often fails to completely explain the dynamic and unpredictable nature of contemporary urban conditions and their complexity.

Why Is an Alternative Framework Needed? Rethinking the Limits of Marxist Urban Studies

Marxist urban theories function as essential tools to reveal extensive capitalist housing system inequalities. However, these social frameworks expose multiple conceptual and practical constraints in their efforts to explain the housing rights issue within current urban environments. The study of systemic exploitation and inequality by this approach produces vital insights but as long as it continues to utilize rigid conceptual frameworks and narrow analytical categories it fails to capture the dynamic, evolving and relational aspects of housing struggles.

It can be said that one of the important limitations of these theories is using fixed oppositions between capital and labor, domination and resistance, as well as landlords and tenants. These dichotomies create simplified class-based antagonisms which makes it difficult to represent the complex nature of housing conflicts. Housing struggles develop through multiple dimensions of

inequality beyond class including gender, race, migration status and disability. Perspectives of Marxist thinkers to address gendered and racialized dimensions of housing alienation are often subordinated to a dominant class analysis rather than being treated as equally constitutive of urban injustice. Analyzing symbolic and cultural aspects of housing is often regarded less important than evaluation of economic structures, and this ignores the fact how people can connect emotionally with their living spaces and how these dimensions of housing are important.

In these theories the main focus is on large-scale political and economic forces like networks of global capital, neoliberal reforms and state-driven urban restructuring, while there is no attention to everyday practices and grassroots resistance methods. They neglect informal housing and squatting practices as well as community care networks and other localized survival methods, overlooking the fact that these practices demonstrate essential survival mechanisms and agency. The theories emphasize formal and organized collective resistance while neglecting those fragmented, multiple, adaptive and hybrid methods that people employ to secure housing. Moreover, they tend to represent actors like the working class in broad and somewhat homogenous terms and ignore agency, hybridity, and complexity of urban inhabitants.

Moreover, “the state” receives simplistic treatment in existing theoretical frameworks. Neoliberal housing policies receive their enforcement and regulation and planning functions from the state which operates as a unified centralized authority. This limited perspective fails to recognize that state institutions have multiple internal contradictions, unevenness, and contested nature. In practice, state spaces are not always sites of repression alone, but they can also enable legal experimentation, negotiation and partial transformations to occur. Traditional theories fail to provide detailed explanations about how people can fight for their housing rights through legal channels, policy openings and municipal collaborations.

In addition, the tendency of removing completely the big structures or systems like the state or capitalism as Amin and Thrift (2005) argue, not only is not realistic, but it also might result in a new kind of control or authoritarianism, one that doesn’t have any difference with the previous systems. Instead, they offer a flexible, evolving politics that connects different struggles over time which is called “transversal politics”. This approach values small, ongoing actions that collectively build something meaningful. (Amin & Thrift, 2005)

The urban space gets interpreted primarily through static terms or instrumental views that present it as either a capitalist product or a passive field that needs radical transformation. The analysis lacks a clear explanation of how space can be co-produced through the mutual interaction of people with their built environments, technical infrastructure and social practices. Housing is not merely a container or outcome, but it functions as an ever-changing environment being shaped by everything including building codes, plumbing systems, personal connections and emotional attachments, and even digital technology systems. Standard methods fail to recognize how space

develops through the interconnected relationships between built environments and human social activities. The conventional approach neglects the dynamic spatial connections between social life and physical space while also ignoring how these spaces interact with and shape each other. Marxist thinkers tend to emphasize spatial centrality like “the right to central urban areas”, while ignoring the current decentralized, networked and translocal urban life patterns that define modern metropolitan regions. The flexible and dispersed nature of urban inhabitation today is not aligned with this rigid “central versus periphery” binary framework of traditional approaches.

The political subjects within these frameworks appear as static unchanging entities. Their reliance on a singular revolutionary class or coherent political identity requires stable forms of resistance. However, current housing struggles unite various groups such as migrants, women, informal settlers, precarious workers, NGOs and activists whose alliances transform during different times and locations. These fluid forms of political subjectivity present a dynamic nature that resists representation through models seeking pure ideologies and distinct oppositions.

These theoretical approaches reduce housing to an abstract economic or political category regarding it as a commodity or a site of resistance, and fail to examine its material nature and ontological complexity. Housing is not only about political importance and economic value. It is also about a real lived condition which is shaped and reshaped continuously by daily practices, built structures, legal systems, infrastructure networks, family connections and emotional relationships. So, it can be said that this multiplicity is possible to be understood only through those analytical methods which aim to study the actual combination of all the heterogeneous elements which exist in real housing experiences.

In the approach of Marxism and its focus on critiquing commodification and alienation, there is an essentialist perspective toward space which is arguing that space has either a liberatory essence or an oppressive one depending on its connection to capitalist structures. This binary framework fails to demonstrate how multiple material, institutional and affective forces combine to form urban space that transcends basic capitalist principles.

In summary, while traditional urban theories maintain their importance to expose housing injustice origins yet they fail to provide flexible frameworks that handle the contemporary diverse, emergent and interconnected housing realities. They prioritize abstract critique over situated analysis, organized resistance over informal adaptation, and structural change over everyday negotiation. These theoretical restrictions show that we need open-ended conceptual frameworks which provide flexibility for studying housing both as a fundamental right and as a material, affective, spatial process that results from multiple actors and their shifting relationships.

4.2 | Foucault's Theory of Power: A Bridge Between Marxism and Assemblage Theory

While Marxist analysis is mainly a focus on class struggle and economic structures, Foucault explore power relations and the way they operate as relational forces dispersed in everyday practices and institutions. His conceptual framework enables us to move beyond structural determinism of traditional Marxism, to a more decentered and dynamic understanding of space, subjectivity and resistance which Assemblage Theory will later explore further.

Rethinking power as decentralized, dispersed and productive by Foucault helps us to stop viewing housing as mere material good or legal status and to instead reframe it as a site of biopolitical regulation, subject-formation and spatial governance. Through the theories of Foucault, it can be argued that housing shouldn't be seen as a neutral or technical matter of providing shelter and we can realize that the right to housing exists within the historical development of disciplinary institutions, governmental rationalities and systems of knowledge production.

Through normalization, surveillance and control techniques Foucault (1975/1995) demonstrates that modern governance methods include subtle processes of behavioral modification which shape dominant norms within individuals and he believes that power is distributed everywhere and is constantly practiced through institutions, norms, discourses and everyday actions rather than concentrating in state or capitalist hands. (Foucault, 1975/1995)

This theory shows that that it's not only economic systems or legal rights that shape the idea of right to housing, but institutions that govern urban life or technologies of "governmentality" that manage populations and in general "discursive formations" that define what constitutes normal or desirable forms of living can shape the idea of right to housing.

The disciplinary power concept developed by Foucault helps explain how institutions such as housing systems operate through classifying, ranking and regulating human subjects. The housing regimes function similarly to prisons, schools and hospitals by disciplining subjects through behavioral standards, eligibility criteria and spatial design. The distribution of housing access is not merely based on legal rights and economic need, but it depends on the evaluation of deservingness conducted by administrative authorities. Public housing agencies, landlords and planners serve as "judges of normality" who establish disciplinary mechanisms through surveillance programs, inspections and tenant agreements to control and shape behavior. Housing functions as a modern panopticon that enables residents to internalize control through the perception of perpetual yet invisible authority presence.

Foucault (2004/2008) analyzes governmentality through its rationalities and practices which enable population governance to extend disciplinary principles to the broader structures of liberal and neoliberal governance systems. Housing policies together with zoning laws, mortgage systems and urban planning strategies are not simply responses to housing needs, but they operate as part of a governmental initiative that controls populations, optimizes productivity, strengthens social hierarchies while supporting established social systems. Through these mechanisms, individuals are molded into economically rational actors, such as homeowners, rent-payers, or compliant tenants. Through indirect governance the neoliberal state influences housing by creating market competition conditions, financialization and privatization frameworks. According to Foucault (2004/2008), power operates through the production of freedom rather than its elimination which specifically can be applied to freedom in housing which exists under structured conditions of management. Individuals are told that they are free to choose where to live, how to finance and what to own, but this freedom is enabled only by a system that normalizes inequality, commodifies housing, and disciplines alternative forms of living such as squatting, informality, or collective housing.

Foucault's concept of “biopolitics” enables better analysis of the housing field. Housing is not only a site of shelter but a mechanism for regulating life itself through governing who may reside where, under what conditions, with what rights and visibility. The population management systems operated by housing policies assess the social factors which include birth rates, health conditions, labor mobility patterns and public hygiene standards. Norms of acceptability are defined and enforced by urban planners, economists and policymakers who shape concepts of homelessness, informality, or substandard living through what Foucault (1980) calls “regimes of truth”. Consequently, housing functions as both material and epistemic site of power which enables both physical control of bodies, behavioral management of individuals and population governance.

Foucault's analysis of liberalism and neoliberalism shows how economic principles and rationality take priority over housing rights. Under neoliberal governance the state continues to exist helping market forces operate. The state preserves competition through its non-interventionist approach which also enables speculation activities and property regime protection. According to Foucault (2004/2008) neoliberalism consumes freedom by organizing the conditions in which market subjects are produced. They can be creditworthy individuals, responsible owners or efficient tenants. Market regulation functions through the deliberate creation of housing inequality which serves as an essential mechanism for market control.

For Foucault space is a medium through which power operates. Housing then is regarded as a site through which subjects are shaped and governed through the enforcement of privacy norms, family values, hygiene standards and property boundaries. The combination of public housing policies with architectural standards and spatial regulations creates systems that organize material life and

simultaneously develop subjectivities and implement population categorizations for different social groups.

The right to housing goes beyond material resource claims and challenging capitalist land control. It represents an attempt to question the established norms, classifications, and disciplinary mechanisms which determine what kinds of living are acceptable and legitimate. Foucauldian analysis would show how housing regulations lead to the exclusion of informal settlements and how public housing project surveillance along with bureaucratic oversight reinforces paternalistic control over disadvantaged and racialized groups.

The power analysis by Foucault can be regarded a bridge to shift from Marxist structural frameworks toward more fluid, relational approaches that assemblage thinking can offer. Studying Foucault's concepts about discipline, governmentality and biopolitics and exploring the dispersed, networked, and productive aspects of power help us to move beyond deterministic frameworks and to open a conceptual space for an assemblage-based rethinking of the right to housing. This part of chapter is a stage before developing an assemblage-based right to housing framework that I will explore in the upcoming section, shifting the focus from fixed categories and centralized systems to dynamic relations, emergent practices, and the co-constitution of housing, subjects, and urban environments.

4.3 | Reconceptualizing Right to Housing Through Assemblage Theory

The foundation of assemblage theory in philosophy establishes a complete break from traditional frameworks that rely on essentialism, fixed identities, or hierarchical structures to create a dynamic and relational and historically contingent understanding of right to housing. Through Deleuze and Guattari's concepts and the formal interpretations of Thomas Nail and Manuel DeLanda and urban scholars like Colin McFarlane and Ignacio Farías we can study the right to housing as an assemblage that functions through heterogeneous and shifting elements instead of being a single fixed right given by central authority.

According to ideas of Farías (2011) regarding assemblage theory, it can be argued that entities like cities and housing are not closed systems or totalities which can be fully defined or explained by broad structures like capitalism alone. Such formations exist as unstable and open-ended systems which multiple forces shape and reshape them at various temporal and spatial scales. Farías (2011) highlights that assemblages are processes which are self-contained and rather than receiving external explanations, they need to be understood from within by focusing on how they shape, function and transform as entities which are in the state of becoming, not being. According to McFarlane (2011) the city exists not as final product, but as space of becoming where various

components such as policies, histories, economies, technologies, affects and materials are merged into shifting assemblages that are always subject to change. Applying this insight to housing helps us to understand that the spaces, institutions, and relations that allow or deny access to shelter are not fixed and unchanged themselves, but rather they are emergent. This fact shows that understanding housing requires examining its potentiality rather than considering only its existing state. This ontological openness shows us how new housing life forms and collective dwelling practices can emerge through creative reassemblages.

Moreover, the framework of assemblage theory also critiques the tendency of critical urban studies in understanding the capitalist dynamics through the lens of city. According to Farías (2011), while traditional theories argue that cities function under capitalist relations which can shape urban life, assemblage thinking rejects this simplification of urban life to mere capitalist reflections. Instead, according to this perspective, urban processes exist with their own built-in complexity and multiplicity and in fact assemblage theory emphasizes how urban life itself is arranged, composed and inhabited. Therefore, rather than seeing housing as a site for accumulation or class reproduction, we need to regard housing as an essential urban assemblage which unites human and nonhuman components alongside institutional systems, physical structures, emotional responses, social conventions and architectural arrangements. The right to housing thus requires more than structural critique and it must be understood within the particular socio-material ecologies through which housing assemblages form, operate and are contested. This approach brings the possibility of understanding diverse housing struggles through an analysis that is not merely class-based and state-centered like traditional frameworks.

The main idea in assemblage thinking can be the concept of “deterritorialization” which is about the process of challenging the established patterns, structures and configurations and imagining new ways to reassemble them again and again. Deleuze and Guattari'**s** (1980/1987) concept of “lines of flight”, which is also explored by McFarlane (2011), helps us to understand that, it is everyday struggles, events, and experiments that challenge the dominant urban order and bring transformative change with themselves, not top-down planning or revolutionary shift. The process of deterritorialization in housing takes shape through actions like squatting, community land trusts, housing cooperatives, eviction resistance which demonstrate how existing housing systems are unstable while revealing alternative models of dwelling and shared living. The study of right to housing through assemblage theory is against thinking of a singular model for housing justice like state provision or market regulation, and instead this study demands recognition of plurality of urban futures, and reminds us that it is important to not forget how new housing assemblages can emerge and develop through collective agency, resistance and recomposition.

Moreover, McFarlane (2011) regards assemblage thinking as a political act of “commoning”, which is about uniting people alongside spaces, ideas and practices to fight against privatization,

enclosure and exclusion. In the housing context, it's about creating collective way of inhabiting and organizing urban space that challenge the dominant logics of ownership, control, and commodification. Through this approach the right to housing represents more than mere shelter access since it can enable the creation of new collectivities like networks of shared experience, affect and knowledge that build alternative ways to live. Rather than being a blueprint for a particular utopia, assemblage politics operates as a processual and experimental engagement with urban which seeks to reshape urban life by combining acts of imagination, negotiation and situated resistance.

This post-structuralist perspective doesn't accept the belief that knowledge exists independently. According to Farías (2017) knowledge is always shaped within and through specific assemblages of people, places and practices. This new understanding can transform the way people claim right to housing. According to assemblage thinking, abstract theories and universal claims need to be rejected in favor of experimental, situated and empirical knowledge that comes from everyday urban experiences. Therefore, housing politics needs to put the lived experiences and insights of tenants, migrants, squatters, activists and those who face housing precarity at its forefront. The approach also suggests democratic forms of urban participation through which people can affect and change their living environments based on the unique needs of each local area. Therefore, there should be inclusive spaces open to everyone to encourage democratic discussion and collaboration. Farías (2011) explains that "community assemblies" and "hybrid forums" can be important spaces where different forms of knowledge and life come together to create new alternatives. It can be said that through these spaces it's possible to fight against exclusionary housing practices and build more fair urban futures.

While in traditional theories agency is only assigned to individuals, classes, or institutions, according to assemblage theory as McFarlane (2011) argues, agency is distributed across all human and nonhuman actors. Moreover, he highlights that the power to affect change in the city stems not only from policymakers and developers, but also from buildings, infrastructures, legal documents, emotions and digital platforms. The expanded perspective on agency shows that housing struggles develop from both social elements and physical aspects, for example from interactions between architecture, finance, law and collective organization. Understanding the distributed nature of agency enables new political imaginaries which don't consider right to housing only a legal or economic demand, but instead consider it a material practice of assembly which is a continuous act of composing relations, spaces, and solidarities that bring more inclusive and plural forms of urban life.

The assemblage perspective toward right to housing requires a complete rejection of the idea that housing right exists as an inherent essence or a universal legal principle with established properties. Drawing on Nail (2017) and DeLanda's (2016) explanation of Deleuze and Guattari's theory we

should understand the right to housing as a multiplicity composed of fluid material elements such as shelters, buildings and land as well as human and nonhuman actors including tenants, bureaucracies, migrants, policies and infrastructures along with their relational structures like laws, markets, collective struggles and state apparatuses. According to Nail (2017), what defines assemblages is not their essence, but they are defined by their actions together with the relationships that unite or separate their individual components. As a result, rather than existing in a singular law or constitution, the right to housing emerges in and through the dynamic connections between multiple actors, institutions as well as material elements and historical events.

Each housing assemblage, whether a squatted building, a public housing project, or a tenant movement, develops its unique historical trajectory. Therefore, we cannot see the right to housing as generalized moral or legal truth. Instead, it needs to be regarded as a situated historical event which develops from specific local conflicts together with political circumstances, economic relationships and urban ecologies, and drawing on the ideas of DeLanda (2016), these housing assemblages like all assemblages are individuals. They cannot be understood through their separate components. They transcend both species and category classification and they are formed by singular processes of composition. A neighborhood achieves temporary embodiment of the right to housing through the combination of solidarity networks, spatial occupations, legal loopholes and municipal decisions and they shouldn’t be analyzed separately or within a top-down hierarchy.

Drawing on Nail (2017), it can be argued that a housing assemblage operates through an “abstract machine” which represents its hidden logical framework or code based on which elements come together and interact. Neoliberal housing policies, social movement ideologies and racialized zoning laws serve as examples of such machines that shape housing configurations. These machines do not create housing rights but they create circumstances where specific housing arrangements become recognizable, effective and practical. The abstract machine "right to housing" transforms completely between different geographical locations and time periods since it could manifest as public housing under welfare state or housing as human right under the UN charter or housing through informal occupation or housing as speculative asset under neoliberalism. These particular “constellations” function as a singular event rather than being as an essence, and they represent temporary arrangements of relationships which can transform, dissolve or reconstruct their meaning and power.

“The concrete assemblage” in this context includes both material aspects of housing such as buildings along with their tenants, rent contracts, eviction threats, legal procedures, activist groups, welfare institutions, surveillance systems and construction methods. The “abstract machine” continuously interacts with these elements which produces dynamic situations that affect how the right to housing is asserted, denied, negotiated or transformed. Therefore, rather than being

guaranteed through a fixed institution or abstract legal principle alone, housing rights require continuous active recreation through new assemblages which combine people, materials, institutions and ideologies into ever-changing configurations.

The role of "persona" in housing assemblages enables us to think beyond individualized or juridical subjects such as the citizen, the tenant and the owner and focus on collective entities that form through housing struggles. According to Nail (2017) the concept of “personae” refers to roles or agents that form within an assemblage after its creation and function inside it, rather than preceding the assemblage. The “personae” of the occupier, the tenant union or the homeless activist emerge from the relations and actions and discourses that exist within the housing assemblage. As argued by Nail (2017), drawing on Deleuze and Guattari's ideas, these “personae” derive their definition from the "we" of collective action instead of the "I" or "you" because they emerge from shared struggle. The right to housing thus exists solely as a product of collective agents that build it through real-world activities such as squatting, protesting, negotiating, care work and resistance.

Through the lens of assemblage theory, we can transcend traditional fixed views about the right to housing that mainly rely on state-centered or essentialist perspectives, and instead, we can understand this kind of right as a material, relational, and processual becoming. It is not a fixed right that simply “is”, but it exists as a process that needs constant reassembly by specific arrangements through “abstract machines”, “concrete elements” and “collective personae”. The approach enables better and more detailed analysis of urban conflicts and housing movements and alternative spatial politics which creates an immanent, flexible, and empirical understanding of housing justice rooted in the flows and frictions of everyday life.

Reframing the of right to housing through assemblage theory is about questioning the conventional perspectives which see housing as a fixed universal entitlement that its existence depends only on the approval of the state. Traditional urban theories and state-centric frameworks like Marxism claim that housing is either a product of capitalism or a right that is given or denied by institutional structures. However, Assemblage theory rejects this traditional binary by arguing that housing is as an emergent phenomenon that is created by heterogeneous interactions between people, practices, physical structures, legal systems, economic mechanisms and spatial elements. According to assemblage theory, it can be argued that the right to housing requires more than making demands against the state, but as a process it needs active assembly and continuous reassembly through situated engagements and urban struggles. According to this new perspective right to housing develops through continuous negotiations, territorialization and collective experiments beyond legal frameworks and economic distribution methods.

The right to housing needs reconceptualization through assemblage theory because we need to reject the idea that “right to housing” is a static, legal entitlement or a singular socio-political goal. Housing needs to be reframed as an assemblage and a heterogeneous constellation of physical

elements (buildings, land, infrastructure), social practices (tenure systems, community life), institutions (planning offices, welfare state), discourses (rights, property, poverty) and affective forces (fear, hope, dignity). The right to housing extends beyond normative or juridical claims because it represents a continuous composition process which is always shaped by and shape different assemblages with distinct political logics including “territorial”, “state”, “capitalist” and “nomadic” logics.

Housing as a Territorial Assemblage: Stability Through Coded Norms and Segmentarity

The “territorial assemblage” approach to framing right to housing demonstrates how housing systems maintain their functions through established practices of “segmentarity”, “repetition” and “spatial coding”. The socio-political structure transforms housing into more than material need by using it to establish fixed repetitive roles for people, their behaviors and spaces. According to Nail (2017), territorial assemblages arrange elements by allocating them to a stable and suitable usage in a fixed space. Housing, within this logic, becomes a site of normative assignment which contains traditional and often hierarchical meanings that determine its utilization, its users and their intended activities.

Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) describe territorial organization through “segmentarity” which establishes life into rigid segments based on roles, spaces and expectations. These segmentations are not natural, but they exist because of sustained “coding” which establishes how people should live, move, and behave. For instance, house includes separate rooms like kitchen, bedroom and living room, establishing particular ways of behavior. Or urban spaces are divided into residential commercial, industrial zones which maintain separate areas that enforce a spatial framework which divides life into distinct non-intersecting domains. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987)

The segmentary logic shows its application in housing when policies and institutions distribute access through specific categories. People receive housing grants through predefined categories which include marital status, income level, family size, citizenship and employment status. The social groupings of rich/poor, citizen/migrant and male/female parallel the three division models described by Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) as binary, circular and linear.

The “binary segmentation” system divides society into superior and inferior categories between deserving and undeserving poor groups; the “circular segmentation” system distributes responsibilities starting from households to neighborhoods to cities to nations; and the “linear segmentation” system establishes expected life trajectories from childhood to student to worker to homeowner. Each segmentary logic functions to establish stability by enforcing both conformity and predictability within the assemblage. (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987)

The territorial assemblage structure transforms right to housing from an open-ended or flexible claim into a regulated claim which depends on established roles and repeated institutional rules. It is tradition, bureaucratic habit, and localized alliances that maintain these codes which means that housing access is often reproduced through inertia and historical sedimentation rather than critical reassessment or democratic transformation.

A territorial assemblage absorbs resistance not through repression, but through “Relative Negative Deterritorialization”, which as Nail (2017) argues, involves superficial reforms that modify parts of the system while maintaining its structural base. For example, the implementation of restricted rent subsidies and social housing units creates the illusion of addressing inequality, yet these reforms actually extend the territorial assemblage's coded segmentation rather than enabling emancipative or transformative possibilities. These reforms sustain the systemic integrity by distributing its internal conflicts.

Under this system the right to housing exists in a passive static form that enforces conformity because it requires people to fulfill predetermined social norms and spatial logics. This system promotes a housing justice system that emphasizes stability together with control rather than the elements of fluidity, diversity and self-determination. The territorial approach maintains a direct connection with governmental practices that enforce order through zoning regulations, eligibility criteria, household definitions and bureaucratic classifications thus reducing the political area for exploring new housing futures.

The model establishes a naturalized framework of exclusion. This system regards all nonconforming individuals including undocumented migrants, informal tenants, squatters and non-nuclear family structures, as subjects outside the system who lack deserving status or are classified as "irregular", thus sustaining the belief that current structures function justly. According to assemblage theory these boundaries of territorial logic create essential exclusions which emerge as a necessary condition of their structure.

The perspective helps us to identify those present-day housing rights frameworks which claim social protection status but in fact operate based on territorial logic that controls and regulates. The systems function to bring housing needs into alignment with an existing social structure that is already divided into coded categories. Any real change to housing justice must start by deterritorializing existing coded norms, allowing new, inclusive and participatory life-assembling approaches to emerge.

Housing as a State Assemblage: Centralized Control, Standardization, and Overcoding

The concept of housing as a “State Assemblage” demonstrates how the right to housing exists under the control of centralized authority alongside hierarchical organization that performs processes of

“overcoding” to enforce uniformity and suppress diversity. According to Nail (2017), the state assemblage differs from territorial assemblage since it unites all components under a unified central control instead of depending on coded norms and local segmentarity. Nail (2017) argues that state assemblages don’t allow connections to be free and open, and instead they operate through a top-down apparatus which controls free connections by enforcing standard procedures together with uniform categories and system-wide meanings across the entire network.

The implementation of housing policies and urban planning decisions through legal frameworks and bureaucratic classifications serves as state power expression that transforms the multiplicity of housing needs and personal experiences into standardized governance systems. The state apparatus at both national and municipal levels works to create a unified system that controls population distribution through standardized eligibility and legal and spatial frameworks. The state often tends to keep its authority through a hierarchical system in order to control people by deciding how and where they must live and also to control the networks of information, resources and regulations. This system views housing primarily as a matter of governance instead of recognizing it as a fundamental social right that people experience.

The concept of “overcoding” is essential in this analysis. Nail (2017) argues that through overcoding, the state seeks to take control of preexisting social codes by forcing its own logic, values and classification systems onto society. While in territorial assemblages, local norms along with kinship structures, or traditional customs regulate access to housing, the state assemblage on the other hand establishes its “master code” through legal ownership, citizenship status, building codes, cadastral mapping, or bureaucratic registration, which redefines and reterritorializes housing within a formalized, legible framework. The state makes the unauthorized practices of squatting, self-built housing and extended family cohabitation invisible through illegitimate and pathological labeling.

Nail (2017) highlights that “the state assemblage” uses three main segmentation methods which are “binary”, “circular” and “linear”. Each of these plays a significant role in shaping housing systems. The “binary segmentation” system creates dualities between groups such as tenants and landlords, housed and unhoused people, citizens and migrants, then establishes hierarchical values for these oppositions. This dichotomization naturalizes the power relations within the housing system. The “binary” establishes one group as powerful through legitimization (for example property owners), while the other group becomes discredited or excluded (such as informal tenants and refugees). The state functions as the central organizing point for housing policies, planning decisions, permits and data distribution according to the circular segmentation system. The state operates as the central point of accumulation by controlling demographic data, funding, permits and planning decisions while all local initiatives need to follow this unified central logic. The bureaucratic system enforces housing policies to match national objectives instead of allowing

them to develop from local community requirements or grassroots needs. The linear segmentation creates a standardized life trajectory which demands movement from family reliance, to wage labor, to market involvement, and finally to property ownership. The established model of progress assumes a single path to stability which excludes people who do not follow this logic such as nomadic populations, people in precarious or non-traditional forms of work and those who live in communal or cooperative housing systems.

The centralization and standardization make housing a commodity or service which is controlled by institutional actors, and in this case, housing is no more regarded as collective right and loses its relational and emergent nature. In this system, housing issue is seen as a technical problem that needs to be addressed by experts and through supply and demand calculations, financial systems and planning frameworks. Housing transforms into an administrative matter and the state can control it through its rational approach.

The state assemblage disciplines housing through overregulation which includes zoning laws, construction permits, tax incentives, rent caps and social housing criteria. These instruments aim not merely to manage housing fairly, but they mainly work to enforce conformity to dominant norms like single-family homes, nuclear families, stable work histories and national identification documents. Through its “ordering logic” the state assemblage creates systematic exclusion of alternative living ways which do not match its organizational structure.

Reforms enacted by the state including housing subsidies, tenant protections and inclusionary zoning, work as relative negative deterritorializations. They appear as concessions toward public demands and grassroots movements, but they finally remain confined within state logic which absorbs dissent into existing frameworks without changing fundamental mechanisms. Legalizing squatter settlements can stabilize unstable housing conditions, yet it doesn’t confront the basic issues of housing market control, commodification and social stratification.

Through its control of discourse, the state assemblage both generates and sustains housing inequalities by framing housing problems through the lens of safety concerns, hygiene and economic progress. Authorities portray informal housing as a menace to public order, tenant organizing may be criminalized or neutralized through procedural delay, and migrant housing is managed as a matter of border control rather than inclusion. Through discursive "overcoding", the system maintains control while blocking transformative demands.

The right to housing under state assemblage control, exists conditionally as a stratified system which operates through protocols that require compliance and legibility. The challenge to this assemblage demands the removal of central authority while fighting against its control mechanisms to create space for new housing practices that are participatory and non-hierarchical.

Housing as a Capitalist Assemblage: Decoding, Commodification, and Axiomatization

The analysis of housing as a “Capitalist Assemblage” helps us comprehend how the right to housing evolves through decoding, commodification and axiomatization processes, rather than political or social requirements and struggles. In this assembly, the original cultural, social and political meanings of housing disappear as it becomes a standardized exchangeable commodity. In fact, housing functions as an investment opportunity and financial product while losing its status as fundamental right and life-dignifying material condition.

Nail (2017) argues that capitalist assemblages operate through a dual logic which is decoding original social meanings while axiomatizing these elements by transforming them into market-based quantities. Housing within this system loses its intrinsic value as a protective space, community builder and stability provider. The value of housing emerges through market transactions which include buying, selling, renting, mortgaging and speculation. The process of "decoding" eliminates all intrinsic housing qualities including neighborhood sense of belonging, historical significance and emotional value, and turn them into financial measures such as rental yield, price per square meter and resale value.

The decoding process separates housing from its original territorial and communal value network which once connected housing to various meanings and social relationships. The traditional territorial assemblage saw houses as family heirlooms and social centers for kinship ties and community ties. The capitalist assemblage separates or reduces these relationships to make the property liquid and mobile in financial terms. The dwelling transforms into a financial asset whose function is determined by market circuits, not by human needs.

“Axiomatization” applies general rules and abstract measurements like rent formulas, investment indices, credit scores and zoning incentives which allow diverse housing forms to be processed and compared within the same market logic. The housing market tends to turn all properties including cultural and social values into exchangeable quantities, and it is global capital movements that determine whether they are worthy or no. Under capitalist assemblages, housing is transformed into a universal economic domain which functions based on productivity and profitability.

According to Nail (2017), capitalist assemblages differ from state assemblages, because they do not require either centralized coding or moral legitimacy to function. He believes that the operation of capitalism involves the capture of labor, land, money and desire flows and redirecting them into accumulation circuits. The immanent nature of capitalism allows it to seem natural, as if housing markets simply reflect supply and demand, rather than being deeply political assemblages shaped by legal, institutional, and financial power.

The capitalist system transforms the fundamental right to housing into an economic matter. Having access to housing depends on financial capability and creditworthiness of people and their position

in labor market. The economic system presents housing instability as an ordinary market process and views homelessness as personal failure rather than a structural problem. In this system, those policies with the claim of protecting housing rights including tax credits for developer, subsidies for landlords and public-private partnerships, often maintain or reproduce capitalist axioms or principles while failing to challenge them. These interventions expand the market instead of shielding people from market-related harm.

The process of capitalist deterritorialization happens through privatization of collective life. The social structure of public housing, cooperative forms and communal ownership gets disassembled into private property that owners can buy and use for speculation and extraction. This can be seen in global trends such as real estate financialization, regarding housing as a site of investment, Airbnb tourism economies, and urban renewal projects which have led to mass evictions. These trends are not natural events, but they are expressions of the capitalist assemblage which reconfigures the material and social fabric of the city in its image.

Nail (2017) argues that the capitalist assemblages are not totalizing, since they maintain vulnerabilities to internal contradictions. For instance, the process of axiomatization needs to expand or become flexible constantly, but it can be said that this flexibility creates opportunities for resistance. According to Nail, capitalism needs to repeatedly re-axiomatize relationships to survive. (Nail, 2017)

Therefore, it is relative positive deterritorializations like alternative housing movements that can take advantage of these unstable moments by introducing new practices and values into the system. The capitalist assemblage makes it challenging to achieve housing justice because its logics tend to naturalize inequality, and disguise political decisions as economic inevitabilities, and reduce people’s lives to market indicators. The challenge, then, is to deterritorialize the capitalist housing assemblage not only by opposing commodification in principle, but by practices which resist axiomatization and build qualitative, collective, and relational alternatives to housing as a commodity.

Housing as a Nomadic Assemblage: Participation, Fluidity, and Emergence

The interpretation of housing through "Nomadic Assemblage" enables the development of revolutionary perspectives about right to housing which exclude traditional concepts of fixed roles, centralized authorities and market principles. Drawing on Deleuze and Guattari, Nail (2017) asserts that the nomadic assemblage exists without hierarchical structures or commodification and rigid segmentation because it relies on fluid movement, decentralized organizational patterns and continuous transformation. He highlights that the nomadic assemblage values immanence more than transcendence while emphasizing movement over stasis and participatory composition over

imposed order. Housing emerges as a dynamic and collective process through the nomadic assemblage framework instead of a fixed object or right or institution.

The nomadic assemblage stands in opposition to territorial assemblages that divide space into rigid function zones, and to state assemblages that control housing through standardized top-down approaches. The nomadic assemblage rejects such predetermined structures. Under this approach, housing is not a predefined form or function but an emergent, adaptive process co-created by those who inhabit it. The dweller becomes an “agent”, not merely a recipient, and the housing space is shaped by use, encounter, and experimentation, not by abstract norms or speculative value.

According to Nail (2017) collective autonomy stands as the defining characteristic of nomadic assemblages because people solve their own problems without seeking authority from central structures. Through collective action and mutual design inhabitants transform their living spaces by making decisions horizontally while performing shared labor within their local community practices. Housing politics in this system operates without seeking right from state or purchasing access on the market, and it is mainly about building living spaces through shared participation, adaptive negotiation and ignoring established capitalist and statist frameworks.

Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) argue that nomadic assemblages are not without structures, and in fact, they have forms, relations and paths but these are shaped through the "in-between" and the "intermezzo", which means that they take shape or emerge during the moments of transition and movement, rather than in fixed positions. Housing exists beyond fixed coordinates like ownership, title and zoning and it operates through the relational flow of needs, materials, actors and contexts. A housing project within this logic may evolve through the emergence of new needs, dissolve when it reaches its purpose, or mutate in response to external pressures. There isn’t any fixed blueprint, but instead there is only processual becoming in this assemblage.

Under this framework the right to housing is not a universalized legal abstraction enforced by the state or enabled by the market, but it exists as a practice-based enactment which emerges from communing, occupations, temporary encampments, squatting, collective renovations or self-managed housing cooperatives. Through these practices people oppose overcoding and commodification while developing assemblages of care, situated knowledge and ongoing negotiation. These living experiments are not solutions in the conventional sense, but they operate as continuous experiments in alternative ways of living that remain incomplete, open-ended and context-specific.

For example, urban occupations by housing movements can be seen as nomadic assemblages as they reject state forms and capitalist property logic by establishing collective governance systems, fluid living spaces and political interaction areas. These spaces exist outside legal structures, financial frameworks and architectural permanence, yet they demonstrate an influential affirmative

housing politics that develops new relationships rather than seeking acceptance and recognition from dominant powers.

The core characteristic of the nomadic assemblage revolves around the process of emergence. According to this perspective housing isn't something that is built first and inhabited later, but emerges through the process of inhabitation itself. This viewpoint opposes dominant planning and development models which establish artificial distinctions between design and use, developer and resident, capital and need. Instead, form follows dwelling, and dwelling becomes a collective, temporal, and negotiated act. This assemblage is based on continuous motion and transformation alongside creative adaptation to changes rather than traditional stability.

Unlike capitalist assemblages which tend to make everything exchangeable and state assemblages which need everything to be legible, the main characteristics of nomadic housing assemblages include valuing multiplicity, opacity, and situatedness. Rather than generalizing housing policy, the main goal is developing local housing ecologies that evolve in response to shifting assemblages of people, tools, discourses, and environments. Instead of being permanent or utopian, these ecological systems exist as vulnerable temporary systems which are always partial yet maintain their power through these characteristics. These systems possess the ability to recompose themselves fluidly which enhances their resistance to structural control and overcoding.

While housing is dominated by capitalist commodification and state governance, a radical different alternative can be imagined through nomadic assemblages. In this alternative, we can resist abstraction and reclaim participation. Through this assemblage, the lived, the relational, and the situated can be privileged over the functional, the profitable, and the fixed. Nomadic assemblages can reframe the idea of housing as social right through "absolute positive deterritorialization" which includes slow linking of small resistances, informal practices, and alternative spaces.

Right to Housing as Political Composition

It can be argued that, understanding the right to housing through assemblage theory needs political composition as a framework through which a better alternative approach, compared to traditional conceptualizations, can be offered. Assemblage theory rejects the idea that the right to housing is an abstract or universal principle that is either guaranteed by the state or secured through market access, and instead reframes the right to housing as an emergent collective assemblage, one that is evolving constantly through active relationships and continuous political negotiations. Rather than being merely something to be claimed or defended, the right to housing exists as an assemblage that emerges from constant urban political negotiations between multiple actors and forces.

Nail (2017) argues that according to assemblage theory, politics is immanent to all matter-meaning arrangements. He highlights that all assemblages are inherently political, and it's not because they

relate to traditional forms of governance, but the main reason is the fact that every way of organizing life, space, materials, and relations is a form of political practice. This is a major departure from state-centered or juridical definitions of rights, which locate political legitimacy in the law or the constitution. The exercise of power and agency occurs through everyday life activities, infrastructure systems, established habits and codes, spaces of social contact and resistance. Consequently, instead of regrading “the right to housing” as a static object to be granted or denied by institutions, we need to understand it as an evolving idea which emerges from the continuous interaction between state institutions, markets, community structures and other participating forces.

The political composition framework shows us how these forces unite in different strength levels and organizational patterns. According to Nail's (2017) explanations regarding the typology of assemblages (state, capitalist, territorial, nomadic), we realize that housing assemblages consist of multiple overlapping tendencies which cannot be classified as one specific type. For instance, public housing projects may combine state overcoding including (laws and hierarchies), capitalist axiomatization including (construction contracts, budgeting and privatization), territorial segmentarity including (zoning and functional separation), and even nomadic fluidity elements such as (resident organizing and informal space usage). The political structure of these assemblages requires research into how their multiple logic systems interact and support or challenge each other.

The right to housing not only emerges from these forces but also can transforms them. Political composition exists as an active battlefield where power dynamics evolve between different actors. Assemblages can be deterritorialized, reterritorialized, and recomposed. Nail's (2017) analysis of four categories of deterritorialization (relative negative, relative positive, absolute negative, and absolute positive), provides diagnostic tools to understand what type of political transformations is happening when housing movements form, when laws change or are reformed, when spaces become occupied, and when new alternatives are developed. While the existing system undergoes minor adjustments through relative negative changes, the absolute positive changes create revolutionary new forms of life.

For instance, a housing movement that asks for additional subsidies from state could secure minor reforms but it would strengthen state control and keep dependent relations intact. In this case, the system adapts through relative negative deterritorialization and doesn’t undergo real transformation. A housing movement which self-organizes through occupation, mutual aid and collective design while resisting state control and commodification performs absolute positive deterritorialization by establishing new political compositions through combining elements that have escaped from dominant structures. Rather than being only oppositional, these assemblages tend to be creative and form new possibilities, practices and spatial structures.

Reframing right to housing as political composition also enables us to move away from legal and moral abstractions. This approach helps us to avoid a universal definition of what housing right is or should be, and instead invites us to examine how different contexts, materials and struggles produce various forms of right to housing implementation. It can be said that, the right to housing doesn't have a single form, but it can emerge in different forms when people resist evictions, shape informal shelters independently or when they fight against zoning regulations and property ownership systems. These compositions can be arranged differently based on their unique historical contexts, materials and their different agents. The important point is that we need to avoid insisting on one universal principle. Instead, the focus must be on creating housing arrangements that are both just and participatory in their specific contexts.

This approach also redefines the subject of rights. Traditional theories treat individuals or households as the unit of entitlement while overlooking the collective action, informal networks and non-human factors which include built structures and spatial arrangements. According to assemblage theory, subjects are not given or are not pre-existing entities, but they are assembled themselves. Rather than being abstract legal citizen, the political subject is more a situated, relational figure which emerges through material situations, affective bonds, political partnerships and spatial settings. As a result, the pursuit of right to housing is not only a legal or economic act, but it is about a complete reshaping and recomposition of subjectivities along with community structures and spatial frameworks.

The approach of political composition enables us to transition from criticism to construction. Housing politics under this approach, creates new spaces, governance systems and subjectivities through generative actions instead of reactive opposition. The approach advocates experimentation and helps us to realize that no model is universal, but every composition can offer learning opportunities and potential sites for transformation and connection. While these experiments have partial and fragile nature, they establish a housing politics that bases itself on process alongside multiplicity and situated emergence.

Rather than being a static claim, the right to housing exists as an active political project which brings together or assembles people, spaces, materials, discourses and affects to create evolving structures. Its recognition by dominant powers does not determine its success, but its power derives from the ability to transform the urban field through deterritorialization and recomposition.

The theoretical approach of Assemblage Theory emphasizes the importance of affect and atmosphere in housing issues, whereas traditional discussions have often overlooked these aspects. The right to housing is not only about spatial access or legal protection, but it's also about feeling of home along with experiencing safety, joy, connection and autonomy. The affective aspects matter fundamentally for rethinking housing justice, and assemblage thinking allows us to integrate them without subordinating them to either structural or discursive forces.

Through assemblage theory, we can view the right to housing as a contested, situated, and ongoing process of urban arrangement. As a result, it can be argued that reconceptualizing the right to housing through assemblage theory is not limited only to asking “what housing is”, but it is also about exploring “what housing can become” and how different actors can come together and participate to shape this becoming. This conceptual and political approach opens a new path toward understanding the housing struggles without reducing them to ideological binaries or structural diagnoses, and by embracing multiplicity and complexity and realizing the importance of the local, the minor, the emergent, and the interstitial. Through this framework we can rethink housing as a collective project, one that is always in the process of becoming and changing. This reconceptualization is not about completely rejecting the insights of traditional theories, but it is about using them, studying their strengths and limitations, destabilizing them, rethinking them and directing them toward a broader ontological and epistemological framework. Ultimately, it can be said that this post-structuralist approach provides a flexible and productive understanding of the right to housing that is not fixed, final or universal, but it is situated and always open to change and improvement.

Conclusion

In this thesis it was tried to reconceptualize the right to housing through the lens of assemblage theory in order to challenge the traditional structuralist understandings of housing as only a fixed legal right or market driven commodity. In studying the right to housing through assemblage thinking approach, the thesis made a detailed examination of how territorial, state, and capitalist logics, each can shape the right to housing in different restrictive ways which include dividing and excluding by territorial assemblages, the process of overcoding urban life into rigid categories of governance or control by state assemblages, and reducing housing to a commodity controlled by market abstraction in capitalist assemblages. Within these interactions there can be a moment when the nomadic assemblage emerges as a counter-logic to refuse fixed roles, centralized power, and market dependent practices, and instead to frame the right to housing as a collective, dynamic process of becoming. And it is in this assemblage that the right to housing can be reconceptualized as a lived and open-ended practice of negotiation, collaboration, and experimentation, rather than a mere universal entitlement to a predefined object. This is an open horizon that enables political opportunities to imagine and practice more fair forms of dwelling and urban life. However, as Nail (2017) reminds us, no assemblage is purely one type which means that each assemblage is a dynamic mix of all these forces, and their interactions explain both stability and change.

By truly understand the fact that there isn't any assemblage which is only territorial, state, capitalist, or nomadic, and all assemblages are dynamic blends of these so-called forces, we would be able to reach a deeper understanding of the ways through which housing struggles develop in the real world. Each housing assemblage is a flexible and dynamic combination of these different elements in different proportions, and the political behavior of each assemblage is formed through the ways these forces interact with each other, conflict, and recompose. As Nail (2017) highlights, for truly understanding the political nature of an assemblage we need to recognize how much of each type can be found in the assemblage and how these types influence and affect each other. Political composition, as discussed in Assemblage Theory, provides a more flexible framework for studying the idea of the right to housing. This perspective is about rejecting the idea of a universal model for housing rights that can fit in every context. This framework instead focuses on the ways through which housing arrangements take shape from the particular material conditions, social interactions and relations, and political negotiations of each specific context. In fact, it is through informal networks, collective design, or resistance against state control that the right to housing emerges from the specific struggles of its inhabitants and their ongoing interactions with the forces of capital, state, and territorial assemblages.

Through political composition of housing assemblage, deterritorialization and reterritorialization happen as events which have no final moment, but instead they act as unfinished and continuous

processes of transformation, struggle, and rearrangement. Relative negative deterritorializations, like reforms or subsidies can probably only bring small changes in existing arrangements without fundamentally challenging and transforming the main unjust structures of the system, but absolute positive deterritorializations on the other hand, as can be seen in self-organized housing movements, are able to open spaces for new radical forms of dwelling and political life. These shifts show the fact that right to housing can always be reassembled in a different way, however it is important to know that deterritorialization can be vulnerable to the risk of being reabsorbed into dominant state or market logics. housing struggles can maintain their transformative potential only through continuous recomposition of practices around collective participation, situated knowledge, and locally grounded forms of resistance and care.

In order to frame the right to housing assemblage as political composition we need to prioritize lived practices over legal abstractions. Rights are not merely ideas that must be granted only from above, but in fact they are assembled through social relation and everyday practices, for instance in the encounters between residents, activists, infrastructures, institutions, and environments. Every form of housing struggles produces its own arrangements of power and possibility in its own specific way. They shouldn't be considered as universal and totalizing models, but they need to be viewed as partial, fragile, and situated experiments that have the potential to bring the opportunities for creation of new subjectivities and forms of life.

It can be said that this perspective destabilizes the conventional definition of the right to housing as a mere claim that needs to be recognized within existing frameworks, and instead redefines it as a generative political project which continuously brings alternative ecologies of dwelling resisting commodification, and deterritorializes dominant logics and recomposes urban life around multiplicity, affect, and care. In fact, what we are talking about is not a final model but a horizon of becoming. This means that the idea of the right to housing emerges as a collective and unfinished process, in which justice has not an unchanged and permanent essence or doesn't take a universal form, but rather it has the capacity to constantly change and reassemble and adopt new arrangements and structures. Moreover, the concept of political composition gives a new understanding of the interaction between state power, capital, and housing. Rather than seeing the right to housing only as a tension and struggle between two fixed entities of the state and capital, it is regarded more as a fluid process shaped and developed by different and often contradictory forces and their interactions. These forces may include the territoriality logics in urban planning, principles of property markets of capitalist systems, the techniques of governance by the state assemblage, and the nomadic fluidity that can be seen in grassroots movements.

Assemblage theory, as discussed by Nail (2017), provides a new understanding of politics which views power more localized and immanent. The politics in this perspective is not only about structures of traditional governance, but instead it exists or emerges in the everyday actions of life

through infrastructure, social interactions, and the built environment. This approach directs us to a deeper recognition of the political potential grounded in housing struggles, which emphasizes the fact that the right to housing is not only a claim to be defended, but rather it is a process constantly taking new forms through actions of resistance, negotiation, and transformation.

This thesis emphasizes concepts of fluidity and emergence in housing systems and stands against the traditional dichotomy between the individual right and collective entitlement, and the main attempt is reframing the right to housing as an active and emergent idea which takes shape, changes and develops through the continuous interaction and negotiation of diverse actors, from grassroots movements to institutional powers. Moreover, Assemblage Theory invites us to engage with radical question of what housing can become, instead of only asking what housing is. It also advocates exploring new adaptive models that are shaped by both local contexts and global struggles. This approach helps us to rethink right to housing in different way from traditional frameworks through embracing complexity and developing collective agency in the process of seeking housing justice.

Moreover, the thesis examined the different perspective of Marxism and Assemblage Theory on the role of the economy, state, and capital in the housing system. In Marxism, housing is mainly regarded as a product of capital accumulation and class struggle. The role of the state is facilitating capitalist interests which results in more commodification through financial systems, zoning laws, and legal frameworks, and in this perspective, housing justice is framed as a struggle against exploitation and inequality. The right to housing, in this framework, is regarded as a transformative demand seeking to challenge the unjust systems in which housing is dominated by profit gaining tendencies or practices, and is reduced to an economic commodity.

Assemblage Theory offers a different perspective in which causality is dispersed across heterogeneous relations rather than being positioned in capital or the state alone. Right to housing in this framework turns to an emergent assemblage of infrastructures, laws, imaginaries, social practices, financial dynamics, and grassroots struggles; an assemblage which is always contingent, relational, and in the process of becoming. In this perspective, the state is no longer a monolithic authority, but it is just an actor among other actors and its influence in this relationship is determined by how it interacts with other forces. Foucault's (2004/2008, pp. 76–77) insight can be helpful here, as he argues that the state doesn't exist as an independent center of power, but instead it is a contingent effect of overlapping governmentalities, that is made through shifting relations between institutions, economic systems, local authorities and other forces. Moreover, Capital shouldn't be understood as a totalizing logic, but it is just a force among others and interacts with, or is modified by these broader assemblages.

This reconceptualization also changes the way that idea of the right to housing is defined. Marxism regards this idea as a structural demand which is about redistribution and decommodification and standing against actions and policies of capitalist system. On the other hand, Assemblage Theory

doesn’t accept the idea of the right to housing as a static entitlement, and instead such approach treats this idea as an ongoing process of composition that is shaped and reshaped continuously by collective action, negotiation, and everyday practices through which all different actors including residents, activists, policies, and infrastructures are joined together. In fact, rather than being limited only to a legal claim acting against state and capital, this right is more about rearranging the social and material relations that shape housing itself. It can be said that through this perspective, the right to housing is a practice that is dynamic and situated and can be reimagined all the time by local struggles, mutual aid, and collective agency. In such reimagination, housing is no longer simply a commodity or entitlement, but rather it is more a lived and emergent process that brings possibilities of autonomy, connection, and justice.

The case studies discussed in the first chapter, can explain this distinction better. The Falchera occupations showed how working-class families came together and made new forms of solidarity and survival as a response to the state neglect. The Ex-MOI occupation is a good example to show how migration, welfare, urban policy, and grassroots organizing were intersected, and how migrants and activists collectively shaped new political subjectivities. And finally, case of the Vuoti a Rendere campaign showed the way through which activists reclaimed empty and unused spaces to stand in opposition to the logics of speculation and exclusion, and to experiment with alternative urban futures. We cannot reduce all these struggles to a singular logic of class, capital, or state repression, since they all reflect the messy, creative, and contingent dimensions of right to housing as an assemblage.

This reconceptualization of the right to housing is also about emphasizing construction rather than criticism. While in traditional frameworks the main focus is often on resistance to state authority or market logic, in Assemblage Theory we are invited to take generative actions into consideration. It can be said that such actions are those practices which are not only about reacting simply to existing structures, but instead they are more about creating new possibilities for dwelling. Consequently, the right to housing in this sense becomes a continuous political project, one that creates new alternative forms of governance and subjectivity through everyday practices. Experiments in housing justice movement shouldn’t be seen as practices that bring ready-made solutions, but their main goal must be continuously reshaping our understanding of what housing can become and recognizing potential capacities in the idea of the right to housing.

The Assemblage theory, as discussed by Farías (2011) and McFarlane (2011), reminds us that it’s not only large-scale structures where we can find inequality, but in fact, inequality can be found in every aspect of life including everyday actions, interactions, and social-material arrangements. Farías (2011) argues that although these interactions can sustain power structures in cities and determine who must be included or excluded in urban processes, they also can create opportunities for democratic participation. McFarlane (2011) also emphasizes the importance of shared agency

which is shaped through human and non-human interactions in an assemblage, and he mentions the fact that cities are always in the state of constant transformation and remain all the time open to new inclusive alternatives.

The reconceptualization of the right to housing in this thesis didn't aim to dismiss the contributions of traditional frameworks including Marxist perspectives. On the contrary, this study was a deep engagement with their insights while exploring their gaps at the same time. Assemblage Theory helps us to use the valuable findings and contributions of traditional paradigms, while also questioning their deterministic and reductionist approaches and their totalizing tendencies. And instead, what assemblage theory emphasizes on are multiplicity, relationality, and emergence as the conditions of possibility for new rights.

This perspective invites both scholars and activists to rethink housing struggles and to reevaluate how they are analyzed and organized. Researchers need to pay more attention to the heterogeneity of actors, practices, and materialities as elements which shape housing struggles, and they should avoid reductionism in their frameworks. Moreover, activists are suggested to take into consideration the importance of experimenting with new compositions, alliances, and tactics through which power is dispersed rather than being centralized. And finally, policymakers are encouraged to see rights as living processes that are constantly assembled and reassembled, instead of regarding them a static guarantee.

Using Assemblage Theory to understand the right to housing can have its own complexities and critiques. It's true that this theory can bring the possibility of expanding traditional urban studies, but it shouldn't be considered as a ready-made solution or a universal theory. As McFarlane (2011) points out, assemblage theory in social sciences is still a vague concept which is not developed enough, and it shouldn't be considered superior to other critical urban theories. Rather, it needs to be applied alongside existing debates and frameworks to complement and enhance them. It can be said that assemblage thinking is not inherently critical or political, and in fact, it needs a critical framework to extract its full potential (McFarlane, 2011).

Moreover, as Wachsmuth, Madden, and Brenner (2011) argue, researchers that tend to apply assemblage theory in their studies need to be more explicit in stating their theoretical assumptions and political objectives that they want to pursue. Otherwise, without showing such clarity, assemblage theory in their research would remain only a mere descriptive tool which has no capacity to make meaningful social change. In fact, it can be said that the clarification of the political intentions in the research can make it more meaningful and politically grounded. Assemblage theory is not actually a neutral framework, but it includes deep assumptions that need to be recognized, studied, and explained carefully. (Wachsmuth et al., 2011)

In sum, reconceptualizing the right to housing through Assemblage Theory is noy only about making an analytical or conceptual shift, but it is also a political act through which historical depth

of urban struggles is fully recognized and new paths toward more fluid, situated, and experimental practices of housing justice are introduced. To conclude then, there are two important points to mention. The fist point is that we need to understand the right to housing not as a fixed right but as a practice of political composition which is not final, but is a continuous process of assembling different elements into more just and inclusive ways of living. And second point is that housing struggles themselves can be considered as experimental sites of urban transformation, and in fact, they are spaces where new relations between state, economy, capital, and society are tested and contested. From social struggles in Turin to global urban movements, housing remains an important domain where we can imagine and realize the possibilities of another city and another politics.

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