AHRA
2020

HOUSING
AND
THE CITY

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Thursday 19 – Saturday 21, November 2020
Department of Architecture and Built Environment,
University of Nottingham

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Katharina Borsi, University of Nottingham

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Research Office and University of Nottingham

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Ingrid Mayrhofer-Hufnagl, University of Innsbruck and Benjamin Ennemoser, UCLA

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From technocrats to laymen:
Community planning and self-help housing for workers in Marshall Plan countries

With the introduction of the Marshall Plan to Europe after the Second World War, architectural practice for workers' housing faced a paradigmatic shift by means of procedural approaches and spatial strategies as well as roles of planner, architect and community in housing production. By the promotion of community participation and cooperation for self-help housing in the postwar period, the technocratic activity of modernist architects of the interwar period for state-led rental housing shifted to a popular practice for home ownership, of which has pioneered the current social housing provision and speculative housing development based on mortgage system in many countries.

This shift is argued to be assisted by the transnational activity on planning and housing as part of the reconstruction and development discourse of the United States, the United Nations and other transnational organisations to build welfare states in Europe. Approaching the Public Housing Program of the American New Deal, postwar workers' housing policies were developed on state-employer-worker collaboration as a means of self-help for low-cost housing construction while utilizing community planning to integrate workers in housing production and neighbourhood unit for suburban development. In this regard, postwar workers' housing programs in Europe utilised the notion of community as both 'object' and 'subject' of industrial development by making workers as builders and owners of housing in 'self-sufficient' neighbourhoods.

As the notion of community is again at the agenda for housing of the 21st century, a historical inquiry on dated yet up-to-date notion of self-help housing is essential to recall community as the evergreen actor of urbanisation. Within this framework, this paper discusses postwar workers' housing policies and programs in two Marshall Plan countries (France and Turkey) in relation to transnational discourse and activity, and aims to reveal the transnational grounds of the programmatic shift from 'architecture for community' to 'community in architecture' with reference to housing built by workers via housing cooperatives in the postwar period.