Autogestion: Correcting the History of Self Management

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> *Autogestion* is the basic principle of this society. […] With it is realized the beginning of the reign of liberty.[1]

Beginning in the early 2000s, discussion of *autogestión* seemed to be everywhere in Mexico City. *Autogestion* (self-management) is a very important concept connected to anarchist thought and ethics, generally attached to the idea of workers organizing the labour of a factory or agricultural pursuit themselves, without bosses.[2] Most of the *proyectos autogestivos* that were emerging in Mexico City had a very loose relationship to any kind of material production or labour, which seemed to be a departure from my frame of reference for the principle. Setting out to trace its roots in order to better understand its popularization in Mexico, what I found was that the intellectual history of *autogestion* as it is commonly repeated, along with the accompanying citations, is almost entirely apocryphal.

Most publications describing *autogestion* will say it is the French translation of a Slavic word (*samoupravljanje*) originating in Tito's Yugoslavia of the 1950s that established workers' councils to manage factories rather than the communist party. This was a major point of disagreement between Stalin and Tito, resulting in the ejection of Yugoslavia from the Cominform (the association of socialist countries in the orbit of the Soviet Union).

Another common point of origin that activists recount, sometimes combined with the Yugoslavian origin, is the French student movement of 1968 that successfully shut down the economy and the government. It is absolutely true that *autogestion* was popularized as a crucial political principle in this 1968 moment, in part by iconoclastic activist scholars such as Henri Lefebvre, Raoul Vaneigem, and José Revueltas (in Mexico). *Autogestion* received a significant boost in France in 1970 when it was adopted as a foundational pillar by one of the most important French workers' unions, the CFDT (*Confédération Française Démocratique du Travail*).[3] It was subsequently adopted as a central concept for the French Socialist Party in 1972 and amplified by an important document titled *Quinze thèses sur l'autogestion* presented at their 1975 national convention.[4]

By 1974, an issue of the anarchist publication *Lanterne Noire* stated that "The word *autogestion*, in the past confined to small political sects, has become a fashionable word, served with every sauce".[5] Its decline in popularity seemed to be rather precipitous in the 1980s in academic circles, but was picked up and popular-

ized extensively in the anarcho-punk scene in Mexico City by the end of the 1980s and throughout the 1990s, which is how the principle came to be taken up in the early 2000's with slightly altered meanings. Unfortunately, many of the mistakes that the early scholars of *autogestion* made in the 1960s and 1970s were then reproduced as part of its lore, including the Yugoslavian origins.

This article seeks to correct the history of the earliest piece of this journey and straighten what has become a quite convoluted genealogy of the concept. An additional correction needed for English-speaking scholars is that in the early days of *autogestion*, it was sometimes translated as "workers' councils" or "worker management," missing a great deal of the point of original texts that held *autogestion* up as a keystone principle. As a result, the radicality of the principle and its centrality to some crucial historical social movements and writing has been missed by English-speaking audiences.

I argue that the term arose out of the environment of revolutionary Algeria in 1962, not Tito's Yugoslavia or the French students. This is not an ideological argument about *autogestion*, but an empirical one tracing the term's emergence through time and geography, focusing on the French publication record. This is not meant to be a comprehensive or "ground up" history of the principle. Rather, the present work is primarily a refutation of the Yugoslavian origins that continue to be widely cited and repeated. I argue the Yugoslavia story itself is a relic of the specific politics of the Algerian context. Even French dictionaries place the date of the origin of the word as 1960 or even 1950 (dates that I argue are too early) but then cite as the earliest usage a publication from the mid-1960s describing Algerian agriculture.[6]

The origin of the word itself is important because within its grammar is the most significant shift in leftist social movements of the twentieth century. The self/auto in self-management/*autogestion* represented a shift from "worker" or "peasant" as the ideal (or even only legitimate) revolutionary subject of the 1950s to a variety of collective selves—Black folks, indigenous peoples, students, women, gays and lesbians—who were the revolutionary subjects of the 1960s and beyond. This is an important piece of our current understandings of identity-based "New Social Movements" that remain important to our contemporary political environment.

To trace *autogestion*'s origins to Yugoslavia is to place the development of such an important principle in the upheavals of the politics of the communist party—the Trotskyites versus the Stalinists—that was defining of Leftist politics in the mid-twentieth century. To trace its emergence to Algerian revolution places the origins of the principle in a more anti-colonial and racial politics of emancipation.[7] The primary establishment against which Algeria was struggling—against which it was defining its *self*-management as opposed to the management by others—was France and the class of *colons* and *pieds-noirs* that formed the white colonial managerial class. To recuperate *autogestion*'s origins as North African is to recuperate the importance of North African activists and Third Worldist political thinkers to the

1968 student movements that have been so defining of our contemporary political landscape. They were foundational and constitutive of the 1968 movements, not an application.

Relevant for understanding a renewed wave of popularization of the principle is the possibility for new, transgressive or transcendent subjectivities in its grammar, detached from the terms of one's oppression: self-management or self-production as punks, as anti-capitalists, as expansive, open-ended anti-neoliberal revolutionary *autogestivos* in the Mexico City sense. It is important to keep in mind, especially as the principle goes through another era of popularization, that the term was articulated and arose out of an environment in which the "self" in question was a racialized, anti-colonial subject seeking autonomy not only from the proximate white colonial power (France), but also the other large hegemonic powers at the time, the Soviet Union and the United States.

In what follows, I will begin with an examination of when and how *autogestion* appears in the historical and activist literature. I then demonstrate how it emerged in Algeria in 1962 and how it came to be attached to the idea of Tito's Yugoslavia. I go on to briefly sketch how it was popularized in France immediately after the Algerian revolution and contend with some of the more well-known European activist scholars connected to the term: Henri Lefebvre and the Situationists, especially Raoul Vaneigem. I conclude by briefly returning to Mexico City and a more contemporary moment.

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Apocryphal History

Autogestion is generally translated as *self-management* in English and yet as with so much translation, does a poor job of conveying its meaning. In his history of *autogestión* in Argentina, Vieta suggests conceptualizing the principle as "self-gestation—to self-create, self-control, and self-provision; in other words, to be self-reliant and self-determining."[8] The term is perhaps not as well known among English-speaking scholars and activists because of its boring translation. The English term *self-management* seems to recede into the background as something that is almost meaningless or technical. In contrast, *autogestion* has the glow of significance around it. In his revolutionary plan of action "From Wildcat Strike to Generalized *Autogestion*", the Situationist Raoul Vaneigem wrote that "Only the coordination of struggles for total *autogestion* can liquidate the market system."[9] Henri Lefebvre wrote in 1966:

> The concept of *autogestion*, today, is the *opening* toward the *possible*. It is both the way forward and the endpoint, the force that can bear the colossal load weighing on society, and which can overcome it. It shows the practical way *to change life*, which remains the watchword, the goal, and the meaning of a revolution [italics in the original].[10]

Jose Revueltas's collective wrote in 1968 that "*Autogestión* is the living and active form of militant and critical knowledge. […] Social, economic, political *auto-*

gestión will be the structural form that the introduction of socialism takes in Mexico within broader and unrestricted freedom and democracy."[11]

The literature of the 1960s uses *autogestion* as if it were an established political, ethical, and practical principle known to all. It needs no introduction. It is only later in the 1970s and 1980s that volumes on the subject begin to describe its origins. German-French anarchist Henri Arvon, for example, begins his slim, but thorough volume *L'autogestion* by explaining that the term *autogestion* was introduced in France at the end of the 1960s to refer to the Yugoslavian experience attempted from 1950 with the view of instituting an anti-bureaucratic and decentralized socialism.[12] He then goes on to relate the principle to an incredibly wide range of examples throughout time and the world, including the experiences of Yugoslavia and Algeria. Most of the literature that provides an origin for *autogestion* state outright or imply that the term's origins are in Yugoslavia.[13] It is the disjuncture between 1950 and 'the end of the 1960s' that is significant for my purposes here. This is the leap that the conventional history of *autogestion* must make that if examined, does not make much sense. Why would it take twenty years to travel so short a linguistic and ideological distance?

In his history of *autogestión* in Argentina, Vieta cites as an origin an essay Cornelius Castoriadis, a Greek French philosopher, wrote in 1955.[14] He is not alone to cite this genealogy. Mexico City anarchists who I have spoken with also have cited Cornelius Castoriadis as a foundational *autogestion* scholar, as does the current French Association *Autogestion* and the English language WorkersControl.net.[15] The common English translation of Castoriadis's important *autogestion* essay titles it "Worker's Councils and the Economics of a Self-Managed Society," making it seem as if Castoriadis was using the term in 1955.[16]

The original essay was published in French in the journal Castoriadis helped found called *Socialisme ou Barbarie* under his pseudonym Pierre Chaulieu in 1955 and then published in a slightly revised version again in 1957.[17] The essay does consist partially of an examination of worker-organized production and the iconoclastic thought that workers should organize themselves rather than through the communist party, an idea Castoriadis was well-known for at the time.[18] The intellectual history of the idea is there in Castoriadis's writing and I do not wish to question his place as a progenitor to the articulation of the principle of *autogestion*. In effect, he *is* talking about what is just a little later termed *autogestion*. However, Castoriadis's original French publications from 1955 and 1957 never mention *autogestion*, only the term *gestion ouvrière* (workers' management). Furthermore, the original essays are both titled '*Sur le contenu du socialisme*' (On the content of socialism), nothing close to "Worker's Councils and the Economies of a Self-Managed Society." It is only when the British society Solidarity translated the essay into English in 1972 with an extensive new preface (clearly influenced by the student upheavals of 1968 that had occurred in the meantime) that the principle *autogestion*/self-management was introduced into the essay. The newly popular principle was placed in the new

title of the essay in English and in Solidarity's preface, but not in the essay itself, which retained its language of workers' management. An English reader could perhaps be forgiven for thinking that Castoriadis was using the term himself in 1955. It seems quite likely that the translators didn't even realize that the term did not yet exist in 1955.

More egregious is the literature that projects the term much further back in time. Henri Arvon does plenty of this in his volume (*autogestion* in the First International, in the writings of Marx, in Proudhon, etc.) even though he clearly articulates the date that he believes it emerged in France.[19] Both Frank Mintz and Sam Dolgoff wrote histories of *autogestión* as a principle of the Spanish Revolution of the 1930s.[20] This is not qualitatively wrong, as the substantive organization they are writing about absolutely fits very well within the concept. However, the Spanish revolutionaries themselves were not using the language of *autogestión* to describe themselves. This vocabulary was available to the authors of these books in the 1970s, but not the subjects of the books in the 1930s.

Daniel Guérin's influential text *L'anarchisme* has a section on *autogestion* that is artfully written to make it appear to the reader that Prodhoun and Bakunin debated the principle of *autogestion*.[21] "Proudhon would have none of self-management of this kind," he writes. And "the optimism which Proudhon had expressed in 1848 with regard to self-management was to prove unjustified."[22] Guérin (whose personal history I will delve into briefly below) was simply using debates Prodhoun engaged with about the proper organization of workers and workers' councils to explain the recently emerged principle of *autogestion*. However, he does not communicate this to the reader.

I do not wish to be too harsh on these historians and translators. I do not think that these scholars deliberately misrepresented use of the term. I don't believe that they were very interested in the term itself as a particular articulation that created something new and so perhaps didn't even notice that they were using a slightly different vocabulary than their historical subjects. It is also significant to note that nearly all the works that I am citing above were written in the 1970s and 1980s when the European popularity of the principle was likely at its peak. These scholars were writing about *autogestion* because it was new and exciting. It is very difficult to recognize that the vocabulary of your time is not the vocabulary of a different historical moment. These works were focused on the substantive ideas of people organizing themselves without bosses, not the history of one of their key terms which was commonsensical to them all. It is only in retrospect, more than fifty years later, that it becomes quite so obvious that they were using the term anachronistically.

Dispelling the Myth of Yugoslavia in 1950

Paul Zorkine, one of the founders of *Noir et Rouge*, a French anarchist journal, was an exiled Yugoslav in Paris who was a living nexus of the connection between the Yugoslavian experience and French anarchists. If *autogestion* were a French transla-

tion of *samoupravljanje*, Zorkine would have had numerous opportunities to use it, or even coin it himself. For example, in 1959 he wrote an essay in his journal that was critical of the Yugoslavian system of workers' councils (as proponents of *autogestion* are, ironically, very likely to be). Written in French, it reveals that the Yugoslavian model of *samoupravljanje* was already being held up in France as an alternative to both state-socialist and capitalist models. However, Zorkine never uses the word *autogestion* in his essay. He refers to the Yugoslavian system almost exclusively as *conseils ouvriers*, or workers' councils. He does refer to factory management (*gestion*), but only to workers' participation in management (*participation ouvrière à la gestion des entreprises*) and workers' co-management (*co-gestion ouvrière*).[23] This article seems heavily significant to the timeline and origins of *autogestion*. I don't think it too bold to claim that if *autogestion* were simply the French translation of *samoupravljanje*, then Zorkine would have used it in 1959. The article would have been replete with the term, especially considering how much the term came up in the same journal in later issues.

Noir et Rouge began publication in 1956, but *autogestion* isn't mentioned at all until its March 1962 issue when it is dropped in a historical analysis of the Cuban revolution: "The first two years the revolutionaries, without ideology or a precise plan, led the country largely by appealing to popular initiatives, the embryos of *autogestion* of agricultural cooperatives".[24] The term *autogestion* is then brought up in every issue of the journal until its last in 1970, peaking in a special three issue series dedicated to the concept of *autogestion* in 1965/1966.[25]

The perhaps more influential journal *Socialisme ou Barbarie* that Castoriadis helped found ran from 1949 until 1967. It mentions *autogestion* much less frequently than the more anarchist *Noir et Rouge* (the terms *gestion ouvrière* or even *co-gestion* are more common), but it does have some early tentative mentions. A version of the word *autogestion* even appears twice in print before it first appears in *Noir et Rouge*. It appears once as *auto-gestion* and then again as *autogestion ouvrière* (note the hyphenation and modifier) in one 1956/1957 issue with reference to the Szeged workers' councils in Hungary. [26] It appears again on the back page of a 1960/1961 issue listing the contents of a Belgian journal with an article by Polish poet Andrzej Falkiewicz entitled "A propos de l'auto-gestion des entreprises."[27] The term comes up again (hyphenated) in a 1964 issue of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* in a letter from Algeria ("However, *auto-gestion* also exists in Algeria") and then in subsequent issues in 1964 and 1965 without a hyphen, in all but one case (a student congress) in the context of Algeria.[28] The journal ended in 1967, the year after the new journal *Autogestion: Études, débats, documents* came together around the concept.[29]

Rather than demonstrating a true origin of the concept in 1956 surrounding the French translation of the Hungarian experience, I think the few earlier tentative mentions of *auto-gestion* or 'worker *autogestion*' with hyphens and clarifiers demonstrate that the term was not yet quite articulated. This is a term under construction at the time and had yet to crystalize. Curiously, none of these early refer-

ences are explicit references to Yugoslavia, but instead have more relevance to the Hungarian experience. The rapid pace and the confidence with which the (un-modified, un-hyphenated) term was picked up after 1962, and especially after 1965, indicate a later, more prominent coinage. What was happening around 1962 that the term suddenly found coherence, and why would it have accelerated after 1965? These dates are dates of particular importance to the Algerian revolution, a French colony until 1962 that had been engaged in a bloody eight-year war for independence.

Origins: Algeria 1962

There is a lifetime's worth of detail in the specifics of Algeria's independence from France.[30] I will only gloss that detail here for the purposes of demonstrating how *autogestion* emerged from the ashes of the disaster that France left Algeria in. Algeria was in the odd position in 1962 that nearly all of its managerial and administrative class of industry and agriculture very suddenly left the country when it was clear that the French state would no longer guarantee their privileged place. Feeling betrayed by the French state and fearing an escalation of the already significant local violence against them, the *colons* left, in some cases attempting to destroy everything they could on the way out. French colonialism had so clearly demarcated worker and (colonial) managerial classes that there were virtually no managers, landowners, or factory owners in residence by March 1962 when the cease-fire was signed with the promise of independence in the coming months.[31] Clegg argues that the country was "left in a state of almost total economic and political paralysis" and that none of the existing revolutionary groups "was capable of establishing sufficient authority to end the chaos that followed the departure of the *colons*."[32]

Both Clegg and Porter show how *autogestion* emerged during this time in Algeria, specifically in the summer of 1962. However, because it is not their primary concern (the emergence of a word during the momentous creation of a nation), neither cares to make the explicit argument. Neither do the more contemporary historians of Algeria, even as they concentrate on the term as a significant principle. Clegg writes "Thus, at the moment of independence, Algeria was plunged into an almost unparalleled economic, social and political disillusion. The war had resulted in some 1,000,000 deaths, leaving at least 400,000 orphans. […] This was the situation that *autogestion* made its appearance" [*sic*].[33] He probably means something closer to "This is the situation in which the already-established concept of *autogestion* made its appearance in Algeria." However, as I show above, there is no evidence to suggest that it *did* already exist. This final sentence is more accurate than Clegg probably realized.

As an emergency measure to ensure continued production across all sectors in the wake of the near complete absence of bosses, the *Bureau National Pour la Protection et Gestion des Biens-Vacants* (BNBV, or National Office for the Protection and Management of Vacant Properties) was established along with *comités de gestion*

(management committees) made up of workers. Most scholars argue that the establishment of *autogestion* was spontaneous and was often motivated by simple self-interest in the chaotic and destructive departure of business and landowners. From the choice to use *gestion* in the language surrounding how the newly "vacant" properties were to be managed, to the use of *co-gestion* to refer to management between Algerian workers and the managers/owners who might still return (note the earlier references to *co-gestion* in the French journals), it was a short slide into the newly coined "self-management," or *autogestion,* as it became clear that no one was coming back. *Autogestion* was pushed along ideologically by the *Union Générale des Travailleurs Algériens* (UGTA), the nationalist trade union and the organization that Clegg cites as the most important organization establishing the *comités de gestion.*[34]

This language delineates more clearly that the *auto* or *self* implied in the term did mean workers, but also with a strong sense of Algerian as opposed to the French (*colons* or *pieds-noirs*) owners. Even though they may have been workers, for example, Harbi notes that Moroccans were ineligible to be a part of the *comités de gestion* or management committees.[35] He specifies that management was for Algerians. The status of *worker* was also unclear, as many of the people working on farms and in factories were recent military combatants or emerging middle-class Algerians. Neither were they exactly peasants in agriculture because of all the forced migration of the revolution. Mahsas (the Minister of Agriculture of the revolutionary government at the time) argues that in the context, worker's consciousness was not at the front of peoples' minds. It was there, he argues, but it was overwhelmed by the idea of the newly independent nation.[36]

It seems that the term *autogestion* was useful in part because the term was conveniently vague about the collective subject, but with a strong anti-colonial sense of *local/Algerian*. This "we" was not a reference to workers managing instead of bosses or the party as in the case of Yugoslavia. It was a reference to Algerians managing instead of the colonizers. There wouldn't have needed to be a shift from Castoriadis's *workers' councils* to Algeria's *autogestion* without the anti-colonial, racial, and religious politics of the Algerian revolution: *self/auto* was Algerian, Muslim, North African. It also skirted Marxist terminology, which was largely seen as a European import, and therefore not properly Algerian.[37]

This is the crucial moment for the emergence of *autogestion* and how the specificity of the Algerian context articulated the concept. The popular base of the Algerian independence movement was not Marxist and was quite suspicious of Marxism and socialism. One of the key originators of the independence movement since the 1920s was Messali Hadj, a charismatic Algerian leader who is a good illustration of all the competing and complementary ideological forces at play. McDougall argues that on one hand, his politics would not have been possible without exposure to French Marxism.[38] He was even married to a white French woman who was a member of the French Communist Party (PCF).[39] The origin story of the movement also begins with a speech Hadj made at a conference of the Third In-

ternational in Brussels in 1927.[40] However, he was hardly a Marxist ideologue. McDougall quotes him as saying that even though he was a member of the communist party, he admitted that he didn't "always really understand what its ideology was." Instead, his politics was more "soldered together" out of "the basic mutual assistance and self-help spirit of poor migrant labourers, small shopkeepers and industrial factory-hands" of Algerians in mainland France.[41] Hadj was a charismatic speaker who also appealed to a much more conservative and religious faction of the Algerian population who sought to reclaim local control from the French for the sake of Islamic morality as well as what they saw as more traditional, local regimes of political control. In the figure of Hadj is the mixture of Islamic morality, French Marxism, the transnational context, the appeal to local control, and other competing ideological, religious, and political factions that ultimately converged for a time for Algeria to win its independence.

The language and organization of *autogestion* took over forcefully from the Fall of 1962 as it became clear that the emerging nation was initially going in a socialist direction. According to Porter, the language of self-management was being taken up as early as mid-August 1962 by the UGTA's publication *L'Ouvrier Algérien*.[42] The idea of *autogestion* was beginning to be formed as a particularly Algerian form of socialism to be contrasted with more European forms. Just a year after independence, in March 1963, the *Décret de mars*, or March decree, defined the parameters of *autogestion* in the somewhat dry detail generally characteristic of bylaws: it was to be made up of the workers' general assembly, the workers' council, the management committee, and a director that communicated with the state.[43]

A further document, *La Charte d'Alger*, or the Charter of Algiers, was taken up in April 1964. It is partially quoted as the epigraph at the beginning of this article and identifies *autogestion* as an essential characteristic of a uniquely Algerian socialism; a post-colonial socialism that was skeptical of Russian and French communist parties as institutions that wished to undermine Algerian independence. In part, it states:

> *Autogestion* is the basic principle of this society. With it are reached the end of exploitation, and the understanding by each worker of the meaning of his actions because economic and political activities will become inseparable: it is the direct involvement of the producer in production, i.e. the complete opposite of wage labour. With it is realized the beginning of the reign of liberty.[44]

Note that this March Decree and the Charter of Algiers are on the very earliest end of the timeline I establish above for when the term *autogestion* begins to emerge in French publications. The only mention of (unqualified, un-hyphenated) *autogestion* in *Noir et Rouge* was the very month of Algerian independence (March 1962), mere months before *L'Ouvrier Algérien*, and in an issue that begins with a criticism of the French left for supporting Algerian revolution in words alone.[45] I have found hardly

any mention of *autogestion* in France at all before the March Decree and Charter of Algiers, decrees in which *autogestion* is confidently claimed as the very basis of the new country of Algeria.

The emergent revolutionary leader of the new nation, Ahmed Ben Bella, is generally credited (sometimes exalted) for both decrees, but Clegg, Porter, and Harbi (who was an advisor to Ben Bella) argue that he was really more of a centrist and *autogestion* was his only choice in the moment. Clegg argues that the March Decree described a system that was already in place and of which Ben Bella was a "figurehead rather than the architect."[46] McDougall describes him as a handsome, charismatic figure who was very popular internationally and saw himself as a Castro or a Lumamba. Islam was important to him, and an important characteristic that distinguished Algeria from other socialist nations, but he did not yield to any specific religious authority.[47] Likewise, Byrne portrays him as genuinely invested in socialism as the higher moral authority (over capitalism), but he sought out Algerian independence over ceding any power to the Soviet Union.[48] Ben Bella was juggling a variety of competing factions in a post-war environment that McDougall describes as having "torn Algerian society and even Algerian nationalist politics apart."[49] It seems quite likely that the terminology emerged from the more ideologically socialist and Marxist factions of the revolutionary movement, with hopes that the principle was different enough to separate itself from European ideologies and flexible enough to not alienate the more religious Algerian factions.

The historians and activists interested in *autogestion* generally agree that the emerging Algerian state slowly allowed a national administrative middle class to take over the system of *autogestion* as soon as it could be cobbled together. In other words, although *autogestion* arrived with a great deal of fanfare among certain national and transnational factions, it was dead on its feet. The new state relied on self-management as an emergency measure while it was needed to keep things going and co-opted it as soon as it could to establish an Algerian (rather than colonial) administrative and managerial class. Porter argues that the congresses of *autogestion agricole* and *autogestion industrielle* of 1963 and 1964

> made absolutely clear that the self-management sector was inadequately assisted by the state, malfunctioning or non-existent in applying the internal structure and dynamics called for in the March Decrees, and often directly sabotaged by local, regional, and national interests opposed to the very principle of workers' self-management.[50]

Clegg argues that the *Charte* was the high point of the leftist influence and that

> the fate of the *Charte d'Alger* was to be enshrined alongside the *décret de mars* as a testament to the endeavours of a small group of intellectuals to donate a radical Marxist theory with Trotskyist overtones to the Algerian revolution. As the official programme of the FLN [the revolutionary party/movement that brought

> about independence], the bureaucracy paid it lip-service while quietly ignoring every one of its recommendations.[51]

Who was this small group of Trotskyist revolutionaries? Clegg identifies three names: Mohammed Harbi, Lotfallah Soliman, and Michaelis Raptis (a.k.a. Michel Pablo). Byrne claims that Harbi and Raptis were largely responsible for the decree, and Mahsas derisively refers to them as simply the Raptis group.[52] I add Daniel Guérin to Clegg's trio for reasons I go into below. Harbi is the only Algerian and seems the likely link among them. He was an elite Algerian studying history in Paris and helping to agitate for Algerian independence in France.[53] As a militant for some time, although a decidedly elite one, he served as an officer in a variety of independence organizations, including the FLN, with whom he had a somewhat rocky relationship.[54] As a member of an elite family in Algeria and somewhat of an intellectual, he was generally given posts to promote Algerian independence among international allies. After being a high-level advisor in the FLN, he then became an advisor to the new President Ben Bella after independence and the editor of the journal *Révolution Africaine*. Porter recognizes Harbi as the socialist voice behind Ben Bella, and a primary author of the 1964 *Charte d'Alger*.[55] In his recent book on Algerian *autogestion*, Harbi writes that he agreed to be a presidential advisor expressly for advising Ben Bella on issues of *autogestion*.[56] During his time editing *Révolution Africaine*, he dedicated the publication almost entirely to investigating and reporting on the state of *autogestion* in Algeria.

Harbi met Lotfallah Soliman, one of Clegg's other references, in Egypt in 1960 and became close with him.[57] Soliman was an Egyptian bookseller and Trotskyite who operated a salon of intellectuals and journalists where he introduced Harbi to many others.[58] Soliman also met Ben Bella through this salon before independence. At the time of independence, Harbi writes that Soliman had been imprisoned in Egypt for being a communist. Ben Bella, now president, intervened on his behalf with the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser, who released Soliman along with a host of other communists and radicals to Algeria. "It was these men," Harbi writes, "who originated what have been called the worker and peasant *autogestion* decrees."[59] These decrees outlined how the system of *autogestion* would work in Algeria in the agricultural and industrial sectors. These men who had been imprisoned in Egypt, along with a few other north African militants had formerly organized study groups with refugee trade unionists in Tunisia and when they returned to Algeria after independence, Harbi describes that they were the ones who propagated *autogestion* as a slogan or watchword (*mot d'ordre*).[60]

Harbi's statement is in tension with much of the literature that saw the decrees as very influenced by European Marxist ideology and not at all grounded in local or popular Algerian sentiment.[61] Mahsas takes a more complex view from inside the Ben Bella government, arguing both that the Europeans (Raptis featured heavily among them) were wrong to claim *autogestion* as so connected to European Marxism at the same time that he claims the decrees were written by a very small

contingent that wouldn't have had the slightest political influence if it hadn't have been for Ben Bella.[62] In Mahsas's nuance, there seems to be a distinction between the practice of *autogestion* and the ways that it was written about in the *Charte*. Davis, for example, cites that one article in an Arabic journal (*Al-Ma'rifa*, that generally saw Islam as an antidote to capitalism) saw *autogestion* as a practice of *hisba,* a traditionally Islamic concept. The academic consensus however, is that the term was "recognizably a product of the European Marxist tradition."[63] The ulamas, for example, seen as the traditional Algerian Islamic leaders, seemed to be entirely unconcerned with *autogestion*.[64] Even Harbi adds that Raptis was the primary editor (if not author) of the *autogestion* decrees.

Of course, to say that *autogestion* was influenced by European Marxism is not to say that it is the European Marxists, like Raptis, who articulated the principle. There were plenty of Arab, North African, and/or Algerians who, while Marxist, were also decidedly North African. These are the men Harbi points toward. There was a population of Marxist Algerians like Harbi and Messali Hadj who had spent significant time in mainland France, and international figures like Raptis and Guérin who had spent time in and were heavily influenced by the Algerian context. They perhaps did not have the broad support of the Algerian public, as the ease with which the Ben Bella government was taken over demonstrated.

However, this more cosmopolitan transnational network made a significant splash on a global stage. There were French militants who worked closely with Algerians, like the journalistic duo Juliette Minces and Mohamed Bekkouche who published articles on *autogestion* under Harbi for *Revolution Africaine*.[65] There were also figures such as the queer poet Jean Sénac who wrote the lines "I love you / You are strong like a management committee [*comité de gestion*]" and "You are beautiful as a worker's management committee [*comité de gestión*]" on the occasion of Che Guevara's visit to Algeria in 1963.[66] Sénac's mother was of Spanish origin and he did not speak Arabic, although he was born in Algeria and it is generally assumed that his unknown father was Algerian.[67] There were also cosmopolitan Algerian militants such as the journalist Zhor Zerari who were quite critical of *autogestion*.[68]

Raptis himself was a Greek Trotskyite born in Egypt who had spent a great deal of time in France and was a founding member of the Fifth International (a major international Trotskyite organization), and who believed that the revolution was going to come from the Third World. Harbi describes Raptis as selfless and completely lacking in ulterior motives, believing that the Algerian revolution was sacred.[69] He wrote and presented his scholarship and activism in Spanish (in Latin America) as well as in French and had numerous publications on the topic of the Yugoslavian workers' councils prior to Algerian independence (none of which that I can find use the term *autogestion* prior to 1963). Raptis also took an active role in the new revolutionary socialist government of Algeria from 1962 to 1965, developing reports, helping draft policy, and even helping found a factory to manufacture arms for the Ben Bella government.[70]

Raptis was among a large contingent of foreigners who were sometimes referred to as *pieds-rouges* (red feet), to connect their communism to the recently departed colonists (some of whom were referred to as *pieds-noirs* or black feet).[71] These were foreigners, many Europeans, who were excited and inspired by the example of revolutionary and independence movements throughout Africa and Latin America as the optimistic way forward through the Cold War. It is difficult to remember, after many decades of the term "Third World" being used as a synonym for "impoverished" or "underdeveloped," that originally the term referred to a third, optimistic, and more virtuous path through the imperialistic powers defining the "First" and 'Second' worlds.[72] It was optimistic, seeing the future of the world in Africa, Latin America and Asia. Algeria was seen as a shining example of the possibility of this third way, this Third World that might even, according to Byrne, transcend the nationalist nation-state organization of the world.[73] Byrne describes that "anticolonialism, world peace, and global economic equality were the dominant themes of this transformative [Third Worldist] impulse" and that "*autogestion* struck a chord with all those people around the world who desperately wanted to believe in the possibility of a viable Marxism untainted by Stalinism." [74]

While still a student in Paris in the early 1950s, Harbi was also friends with Guérin, who came to be one of the strongest voices of *autogestion* in France (and one of its early proponents after Harbi had helped author the 1963 and 1964 documents in Algeria). Guérin is the source of the quote I present in the introductory paragraphs that portrays Proudhon and Bakunin debating the concept of *autogestion*. Harbi writes in *Une vie debout* that in the early 1950s, Guérin, an anarchist, and his library were incredibly influential to his political formation. Guérin opened his library to him and Harbi spent long evenings reading his books and recommendations.[75]

All these authors, both the activists of the time such as Harbi, Guérin and Raptis, and the later historians agree that the Algerian system of *autogestion* was based on the Yugoslavian model. Harbi writes that Raptis was the lead editor of the *autogestion* decrees because he had the most experience with self-management in socialist countries, especially Yugoslavia. "Why the choice of reference to the Yugoslavian experience?" Harbi writes. "This refers to the Algerian experience itself. The Yugoslavs were very early to aid the Algerians, including chartering ships to deliver arms from Yugoslavia. And they had experience in *autogestion*."[76] As a militant for the FLN whose job it was before independence to garner international support for an independent Algeria, Harbi's accounts of his activities prior to independence are filled with references to anxiety over when, how, and under what conditions Yugoslavia would support Algerian independence.[77] He was trying to solidify this relationship as much as possible.

Byrne describes that the partnership between Yugoslavia and Algeria had a lot to offer both countries and they both sought out one another as important allies.[78] Each was trying to forge its own way forward as a socialist country out from

under the Stalinist reach of the Soviet Union. Byrne states that the ambassador to Algeria from Yugoslavia was a particularly close and trusted advisor to Ben Bella.[79] In its early days after independence, Algeria was attempting to carve out a position for itself as a unique, independent nation with its own unique relationships to the major world powers. The more socialist factions saw a kindred spirit in the small country of Yugoslavia that had also managed to create its own sense of socialism apart from the Soviet Union and in relatively peaceful opposition to US capitalism. Yugoslavia also recognized in Algeria a valuable ally and trading partner.

None of these men in the Ben Bella government seem to have realized that the specific coinage of the term *autogestion* as a principle was new. Whenever they write about it, they nearly always talk about it as a conception that they are organizing in Algeria with reference to the system in Yugoslavia. In his quite recent book on Algerian *autogestion*, Harbi never mentions or seems interested in the origin of the term. I believe this is a major source of the misattribution of the word as a translation of *samoupravljanje*. *Autogestion*'s own originators continually told the story that they were following the lead of Yugoslavia. Even as they said it was Yugoslavian however, none of these authors ever use the term (that I can find) in their writing prior to 1963 when it appeared in the *Décret de mars*.

> Additionally, Harbi is clear to delineate his own hopes for Algerian *autogestion* as distinct from what he sees as errors of the Yugoslavian example. I spoke with Ben Bella, and I gave him my opinion on the matter. I felt that *autogestion* and the single party did not go together, and that there was an experience, that of the Yugoslavs, and that one of the main weaknesses weighing on *autogestion* in Yugoslavia was precisely the single party, which was of an authoritarian type, which clashed with *autogestion*.[80]

In short, although everyone in this early crew of *autogestion* enthusiasts cited Yugoslavia as a model for and important supporter of Algerian *autogestion*, there was also a keen sense that Algerian *autogestion* needed to be quite different than *samoupravljanje*. Byrne writes that both the Yugoslavian officials and Ben Bella repeatedly stated, neither taking offense at the distinction, that the Algerian version needed to be quite different from the Yugoslav version because of the different context. While Ben Bella saw Tito as an example and stated that the Yugoslav "experiment" was important to study, they would do so "so that we in turn can freely create our own model."[81]

Indeed, the idea that *autogestion* originated in Yugoslavia, but that it was a failure there because of the communist party is an idea woven into the very fabric of the term and plays a significant role in how people were thinking and writing about *autogestion* from the very beginning. It is a contradiction at the core of the popular anarchist history of the concept: *autogestion* is from Yugoslavia, but it wasn't *really autogestion* in Yugoslavia because it was authoritarian. I have heard this repeated many, many times from Mexico City area self-identified anarchists and it is a story

that seems to have begun with the Ben Bella administration.

After helping to draft the Charter of Algiers 1963-1964, *autogestion* took on a central significance in the writings of each of the men I mention above. Harbi dedicated his work editing the journal *Révolution Africaine* to stories and analyses of Algerian *autogestion*, and Harbi, Guérin and Raptis all spent time traveling through Algeria to report on the state of *autogestion*.[82] Note that all this writing about and reporting on *autogestion* in Algeria starting in 1963 (1962 in *L'Ouvrier Algérien*) is earlier than the writing on *autogestion* in France. The term only took off in a significant way in France after 1965, the year of all the special issues of the journals cited above.

The year 1965 is significant because it was the date of the military coup in Algeria that ended its socialist government and its experiment in *autogestion*. The coup was expedited in part because Algeria was on the cusp of holding a major Third Worldist conference and the anti-Ben Bella factions wanted him deposed before he became too popular internationally.[83] As it was, the international uproar over the coup was much more significant than the Algerian response.[84] A significant popular feeling about Ben Bella in Algeria was that he was too influenced by the European Marxists and Third Worldists, who were seen as a corrupting influence.[85] The coup exiled Guérin and Raptis back to Europe, and left Harbi imprisoned until 1973 in Algeria. After returning to Europe, Guérin and Raptis began the French journal *Autogestion* just as Castoriadis's *Socialisme ou Barbarie* was ending.

In short, the term *autogestion* emerged in the early days surrounding the independence of Algeria amongst a transnational network of activists, militants, and officials in the Ben Bella administration. Furthermore, it gained coherence for a host of practical reasons specific to the Algerian context, not external, European, or purely ideological ones. The Ben Bella government was seeking its own model of socialism that would stake a claim for Algeria apart from the Soviet Union as well as the capitalism of the US and Western Europe. It needed a position that seemed less dogmatically or overtly Marxist in order to not alienate the substantial portion of the population that saw Marxism as a further European imposition. It needed to describe the situation of very local groups of people organizing productive activities in a variety of ways and connect these processes to an idea of a democratic, anti-colonial, future-oriented, Algerian, and Islamic political and economic foundation.

In the end, *autogestion* as a principle seemed to be more inspiring to a foreign audience, the same foreign audience that Ben Bella himself seemed to be more popular among, than a broad base of everyday Algerians. However, I do not think this is a reason to discount its emergence in the context of Algeria. It was needed to articulate a certain set of ideas including anti-colonial, anti-racist autonomous self-determination that signaled the beginning, possibly even enabled the beginning, of the more identity-based New Social Movements of the rest of the twentieth century.[86]

Furthermore, the Algerian origins go a long way toward understanding

why in the literature *autogestion* is nearly always credited to Yugoslavia with no evidence to support this origin and a frequent immediate caveat that Yugoslavian *autogestion* was not *really autogestion* because it was authoritarian. The very inventors of the word (or at least it's very early promoters) told everyone that it was from Yugoslavia and incorporated this story into its very formation. The fact that Yugoslavia (as opposed to, say, Hungary) is so often cited as *autogestion*'s origin appears itself part of the Algerian origins of the term.

Popularization: France 1968

The subsequent popularization of *autogestion* in France after 1965, in general points toward a new generation of leftists and dissidents trying to break free of their own communist and socialist parties and finding a third (Third Worldist) path through capitalism and socialism in Europe. This is Harbi's critique of the Yugoslavian model: it was too authoritarian under the single party. His radical comrades in France were also feeling constrained by the old guard of socialists in their own country. The young revolutionary 1968-generation French activists and scholars were taking their excitement over the Algerian revolution and applying it to their own circumstances of being constrained by their political parties, which were dominated by supporters of Stalin (and not Trotsky). They likened their situation to the tensions between Tito and Stalin and their wishes to be self-managed as young leftists rather than having to fall in line behind their elders. The coinage of *autogestion* encapsulated not only the more expansive array of collective actors of the burgeoning 1968 movements (based on race, gender, sexuality, de-coloniality) but also the generational divide that was felt so keenly between the 1968 generation and their metaphorical and literal parents.

The word was needed in Algeria to carry a tone of native control in contrast to external colonial control, Islamic control rather than the Soviet model. However, it was then useful to a budding student movement in France trying to do something a bit more radical than workers' councils. Furthermore, the recent experience that so many *pieds-rouges* had in Algeria was very inspiring of the possibilities, even if it hadn't worked out the way they wanted. The utopian future, it seemed, was following the example of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

The very first sentence of the 1972 English introduction to Castoriadis' important 1955 essay (written by Solidarity, not the author) is, "To the best of our knowledge there have been no serious attempts by modern libertarian revolutionaries to grapple with the economic and political problems of *a totally self-managed society*" [my emphasis]."[87] The switch from worker-managed to self-managed extends the example of grassroots control to every sector imaginable: a totally self-managed society, the magical day after the (Algerian) revolution when all of the owners and bosses are suddenly gone. This sense of the totally self-managed society seems to be lifted from Raoul Vaneigem's idea of *autogestion généralisée* (generalized *autogestion*) that had become somewhat of a slogan in the 1968 student movement in France.

In 1969, Vaneigem writes, "outside generalized *autogestion*, workers councils lose their sense" and "generalized *autogestion* has only one basis, one motive force: the exhilaration of universal freedom."[88]

It is no wonder that there was such excitement for the term. It allowed mid-century French scholars and activists to take what they knew of traditional social movements and apply it to the new, emerging collective actors. It is the shift in thinking about the collective actors of social movements that enabled the *student* movements of 1968 to occur at all. Students/young people were coming to realize themselves as a collectivity—a shared subjectivity—capable of acting as a class for itself and bringing about widespread political, cultural, and social changes in solidarity with other collective actors.

Vaneigem, a Belgian, was one of the defining members of the Situationist International. Guy Dubord and his *La Société du Spectacle* tends to be more famous, but at the time in Europe, Vaneigem's *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes générations* was equally influential.[89] It was actually Vaneigem who thought and wrote about *autogestion* the most. It is probably also quite likely that the difference between the English and French/Spanish versions of Vaneigem's most famous text were formative for how this text was taken up differently, and therefore how *autogestion* was taken up differently, in English.

Not an early adopter of *autogestion*, Vaneigem seems to have discovered the term in the movements of 1968. There were Situationist texts that used the word before 1968. They wrote a (clandestinely circulated) letter of support to Algerian revolutionaries in 1965 after the military coup that ends "Long live the *autogestion* of the Algerian peasants and workers! The option is now between the militarized bureaucratic dictatorship and the dictatorship of the 'self-managed sector' *extended to all production and all aspects of social life*."[90] Later in the year, they wrote another clandestinely circulating letter to Algeria saying "*autogestion* must be both the means and the end of the present struggle. It is not only what is at stake in the struggle, but also its adequate form. It is its own tool. It is itself the material it works on, and its own presupposition."[91]

However, the word is not used once in Vaneigem's most famous book, the original 1967 text of *Traité*. By the time he wrote the 1969 texts I quote above however, it was central to his thinking. In his 1972 postscript to *Traité* he writes that the Situationist project, "never for a moment relinquished as its unique, self-appointed task the destruction of the social organization of survival in favour of generalized self-management."[92] In the French and Spanish editions, this phrase is placed in italics in the text. Vaneigem revives it again as a central concept for his 1974 "From Wildcat Strike to Revolutionary *Autogestion*."[93] For Vaneigem, after 1968, *autogestion* was the end-goal of revolution. In the French and Spanish versions, *autogestion* is dropped as a bomb in sentences like those above as the crucial antidote to everything that is wrong with the world. *Autogestion* is the means and the end of revolutionary struggle. It is the point of the revolution, what everyone should be

working towards, and how they should be working towards it. What's more, he projects it back in time as the only goal that the Situationists ever had.

Note how similar Vaneigem's generalized or total *autogestion* is to the situation of post-colonial Algeria in which everyone is operating without bosses in the days after the revolution rather than the situation of Yugoslavia in which some factories are working with some autonomy from the state/communist party. Total *autogestion* is a radical vision, the basis of the organization of an entire society to be contrasted with the idea of *survival* as the basis for society. It is very distinct from *workers' councils*.

Unfortunately, in English, *autogestion* was translated as *worker's control* in the first translation of *The Revolution of Everyday Life* that was the available translation through 2012.[94] The translation loses the weight of a magical term that describes the society it is urging the reader to build. 'Worker's control' is rather dry and leaves in place a very traditional vision of Marxist proletarian revolution. Punks, queers, feminists, freaks of all sorts seeking out a new and better world can contribute in a meaningful way to 'total/generalized *autogestion*.' Only people with factory jobs (coveralls, lunch boxes, alarm clocks) will be in charge in a society of 'worker's control.' It is stodgy in comparison to the radicality of *autogestion*.

I suspect that not many English readers will have heard of Raoul Vaneigem or be familiar with his writing. It has been much more readily available in Spanish or French than in English. There is another French promoter of *autogestion* that is more familiar to English-speaking academics, however. Henri Lefebvre was among the first wave of French academics (a bit more respectable, perhaps, than the Situationists) to take up the term after Guérin and Raptis returned to France. He was on the original editorial board of their journal *Autogestion* and wrote an influential article on *autogestion* in its first issue.[95]

Lefebvre was also an early influencer of the Situationists. In his biography of Lefebvre, Hess writes that "there are hardly any Situationist ideas that do not have their point of departure in Lefebvrian thought."[96] He notes there was hardly an issue of the journal *Situationist International* that did not mention Lefebvre, first lauding him and then denigrating him. The Situationist project itself, creating momentary revolutionary "situations" seems to be based in Lefebvre's *The Critique of Everyday Life*.[97] In interviews, Lefebvre describes his relationship with Guy Dubord and Raoul Vaneigem, who he introduced to each other, as a love affair that didn't end well.[98] In one interview, he says that he

> wishes to recall a few episodes of this love story. […] I remember wonderful times, warm friendship, laying down all mistrust, ambition, any manipulation. […] I dropped all sorts of barriers. […] In an atmosphere of passionate community, we chatted for nights. […] We drank alcohol, sometimes with stimulants, and those nights were filled with a fervor, of a friendship – more than a communication, a communion – of which I have a vivid

memory.[99]

There are always women involved, of course, to erase suspicion of any actual sex between them (Lefebvre magnanimously makes it clear that his "bow is missing that [gay] string.")[100] But once the enchantment was over, it was over.

Lefebvre seems to have discovered *autogestion* in 1965 or 1966, after the Algerian military coup (and before Vaneigem explicitly writes about it). He wrote a piece on the "withering away" of the state in 1964 that does not mention *autogestion* at all.[101] However, by the time he writes his piece for the inaugural issue of *Autogestion* in 1966, his conception of *autogestion* is that it is the way forward in the wake of the withering away of the state: "With the state unable to coexist peacefully alongside radicalized and generalized *autogestion*," he writes, "the latter must submit the former to 'grassroots' democratic control. The State of *autogestion*, which is to say the State at whose core *autogestion* is raised to power, can only be a State that is withering away."[102] Note that he uses the phrase *generalized autogestion*, a phrase that Knabb prefers to translate as *total autogestion* or *universal autogestion* and defines it as "self-management extended to every region and every aspect of life; not the self-management of the present world, but the self-management of its total transformation."[103] This phrase is one that is, in my experience, almost definitively attached to Vaneigem and here Lefebvre (and others in this first issue) uses it before most of Vaneigem's writings. However, it could very well be that Vaneigem introduced the concept to Lefebvre and he was just the first to explicitly write about it. This kind of plagiarism is exactly the issue that ended the Situationist's love affair with Lefebvre.[104]

I note these crossings-over of the writing and discourses of Lefebvre and Vaneigem not to draw conclusions about who is plagiarizing who, or who thought of what first. Probably both are taking phrases and thoughts from each other and from other activists, including Algerian revolutionaries and the activist and intellectual women surrounding all these men (definitely participating in late-night drinking and discussion sessions) such as Michéle Bernstein and her friend Eveline who was Lefebvre's girlfriend at the time.[105] Mentions of Algeria are there but are thinned out to blend in with a host of historical and contemporary international examples of *autogestive* experiments.

The timeline demonstrates how language about *autogestion* is continually passed "up" chains of respectability, attached to a more prominent name, and then passed back "down" toward activism as social theory "belonging" to that name. Lefebvre is a few degrees more respectable and less activist than Vaneigem, even as he is on the more activist end of the mid-century French Marxists. Possibly he thought he was bringing legitimacy to their activism through publishing their words under his own name. He was, after all, sixty-four in 1965, an old man to them, while Vaneigem and Dubord were both in their early thirties. Perhaps it was inevitable, considering the politics of 1968, for them to throw him off.

In short, some of the more well-known names attached to *autogestion* were

relative late comers to the principle and there is not a clear line of influence from one to another. The popularization of the concept around the 1968 student movement in France and the subsequent waves of excitement and influence of the concept through the 1970s and into the 1980s was a messy process of co-arising and mutual influence guided by the collective, non-linear, and non-hierarchical ethos of the principle itself. Once introduced, Algeria seems to fade into the background as just another example of *autogestion* along with Yugoslavia, Hungary, Cuba, the Spanish Revolution, the Paris Commune of 1812, and many others.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *autogestion* was articulated out of and for the specific conditions of the Algerian revolution, even as the story of Tito's Yugoslavia from a decade before got folded into its origin story. As the principle was subsequently popularized in France, the story of Yugoslavian origins was repeated, even among those who had come to the principle in their Algerian activism.

Autogestion was an important articulation for the 1968 movements in France and was important to the leftist pivot of the 1960s toward identity-based social movements. The principle originated in part to articulate a third path through capitalism and state socialism, one that saw an optimistic future in the revolutions and independence movements in Africa and Latin America. It makes sense that the anti-colonial, third-path connotations of *autogestión* appealed to young people in Mexico City at a time in the first decades of the twenty first century when the capitalist and socialist poles that had defined the politics of the twentieth century were crumbling away. The Mexico City *autogestivos* are then not misusing or misunderstanding a piece of French social theory but articulating themselves through a radical anti-colonial framework from the Global South connected to the optimistic Third Worldism of the 1960s.

NOTES

[1] The Charter of Algiers, 1964, as translated in Ian Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria* (Monthly Review Press, 1971), 220.
[2] The term is *autogestion* in French and *autogestión* in Spanish. I have attempted to retain the accent mark when speaking of its usage in Spanish, however for simplicity's sake I omit the accent throughout when writing about the principle in general.
[3] Henri Arvon, *L'autogestion* (Presses Universitaires de France, 1980), 39-40.
[4] Arvon, *L'autogestion*, 44-45.
[5] As quoted in David Porter, *Eyes to the South: French Anarchists and Algeria* (AK Press, 2011), 158.
[6] See, for example, *Nouveau Larousse Universel*, (Librairie Larousse, 1969); Paul Imbs and Centre de recherche pour un trełor de la langue Franchise, *Trełor de la langue Franchise: Dictionnaire delLa langue du XIXe et du XXe Siełle (1789-1960)* (Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1974); Pierre Gilbert, *Dictionnaire Des Mots Contemporains* (Le Robert, 1980).
[7] See Murium Davis, *Markets of Civilization* (Duke University Press, 2022) for a discussion of the racialization of Islam by French colonization.
[8] Marcelo Vieta, "The stream of self-determination and *autogestión*: Prefiguring alternative economic realities," *Ephemera: Theory & politics in organization* 14, no. 4 (November 2014): 783.
[9] Raoul Vaneigem [pseud. Ratgeb], *De la grève sauvage à l'autogestion généralisée* (l'Union générale d'éditions, 1974), My translation of the original, but using Ken Knabb's translation of *autogestion généralisée* as "total self-management" in his version, *Contributions to the Revolutionary Struggle, Intended to be Discussed, Corrected, and Principally, Put into Practice without Delay: From Wildcat Strike to Total Self Management* (Bureau of Public Secrets, 2001)
[10] Henri Lefebvre, *State, space, world: selected essays* ed. Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden (University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 150.
[11] José Revueltas, *México 68: Juventud y revolución* (Ediciones Era, 2013), 352-353, Kindle.
[12] Arvon, *L'Autogestion*, 7, my translation.
[13] Alain Guillerm's *L'autogestión généralisée* (C. Bourgois, 1979) is an exception. He matter-of-factly states that the term first "appeared publicly" in 1963 in Algeria (183). The effect is dimmed somewhat by the rest of the 200-page book that anachronistically seeks out autogestion throughout history and around the world, much like Arvon's *L'autogestion* and Guérin's *L'anarchisme*. However, this is the only source that I have seen that has gotten the origin correct.
[14] Marcelo Vieta, *Workers' self-management in Argentina contesting neo-liberalism by occupying companies, creating cooperatives, and recuperating autogestioh* (Haymarket Books,

2020).

[15] "Cornealius Castoriadis (1922-1997)" WorkersControl.net, publication date October 11, 2015, Re-posted French translation on Association Autogestion, May 5, 2016

[16] Cornelius Castoriadis, *Workers' Councils and the Economics of a Self-Managed Society*, trans. Solidarity (Solidarity, 1972).

[17] Pierre Chaulieu, "Sur le contenu du socialismo" *Socialisme ou Barbarie* III, no. 17 (July-September 1955):1-25 and IV, no. 22 (July-September 1957):1-25 respectively

[18] See also Marcel van der Linden, "*Socialisme ou Barbarie*: A French Revolutionary Group (1949-65)" *Left History* 5, no. 1.

[19] Arvon, *L'Autogestion*, 7.

[20] Frank Mintz, *L'autogestion dans l'Espagne revolutionnaire* (F. Maspero, 1976); Sam Dolgoff, *The Anarchist Collectives: Workers Self-Management in the Spanish Revolution 1936-1939* (Black Rose Books, 1974).

[21] Daniel Guérin, *L'anarchisme: De la doctrine à l'action* (Editions Gallimard, 1965).

[22] Daniel Guérin, *Anarchism: from Theory to Practice* (Monthly Review Press, 1970), 46-47.

[23] Paul Zorkine, "Le mythe des conseils ouvriers chez Tito," *Noir et Rouge* no. 14 (Winter 1959): 53-60.

[24] Israel Renof, "La Revolution Cubaine," *Noir et Rouge* no. 20 (March 1962): 21.

[25] *Noir et Rouge*, no. 31-33 (October 1965-February 1966, April 1966).

[26] "Questions aux militants du P.C.F." *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 4, no.20 (December 1956-February 1957):76; Claude Lefort, "L'insurrection hongroise," *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 4, no.20 (December 1956-February 1957): 91.

[27] Backpage reference to Andrzej Falkiewicz, "A propos de l'auto-gestion des entreprises" 6, no. 31 (December 1960- February 1961): 116; reference to the journal *Études, Revue trimestrielle international* published by the Institut Imre Nagy de Sciences Politiques, Brussels, no.5 (July 1960).

[28] "Lettre d'Algérie," *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 6, no. 35 (January-March 1964): 126; Les ètudiants de *Socialisme ou Barbarie,* "Le congrès de l'UNEF," *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 6, no. 36 (April-June 1964): 78; Abdallah J. Rœgler "Correspondance," *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 6, no. 36 (April-June 1964): 89, 91; Alain et Hélène Gerard and Paul Tikal, "Voyage en Algerie," *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 8, no. 38 (October-December 1964): 116-120; It also appeared once in 1965, with a hyphen: Paul Cardan, "Marxisme et théorie révolutionnaire," *Socialisme ou Barbarie* 7, no. 39 (March-April 1965): 21.

[29] The first issue of this journal contained an essay by Henri Lefebvre that continues to be cited as a foundational document (see the extensive, multi-volume encyclopedia *Autogestion: L'encyclopédie internationale* for example).

[30] see Ahmed Mahsas, *L'autogestion en Algérie: Données politiques de ses premières étapes et de son application* (Éditions Anthropos, 1975); Ian Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management*

in Algeria (Monthly Review Press, 1971); Rachid Tlemcani, *State and Revolution in Algeria* (Zed Books, 1986); James McDougall, *History and the Culture of Nationalism in Algeria* (Cambridge University Press, 2006); Catherine Simon, Algérie, les années pieds-rouges (Detouverte, 2011); David Porter, *Eyes to the South: French Anarchists and Algeria* (AK Press, 2011); Jeffrey James Byren, *Mecca of Revolution: Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (Oxford University Press, 2016); Mohammed Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie: Une autre révolution? (1963-1965)* (Éditions Syllepse, 2022). Muriam Haleh Davis, *Markets of Civilization: Islam and Racial Capitalism in Algeria* (Duke University Press, 2022)

[31] Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 39-40; Porter, *Eyes to the South*, 92-104.

[32] Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 39, 40.

[33] Clegg *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 44. McDougall refers to this one million number (and the subsequent claim of 1.5 million) "entirely symbolic and demographically impossible," suggesting a more demographically plausible number at between a quarter to a half million Algerians killed in the war (*History and Culture of Nationalism in Algeria*, 232).

[34] Clegg *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 48-49.

[35] Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie,* 23.

[36] Mahsas, *L'autogestion en Algérie*, 111.

[37] Davis, *Markets of Civilization*, 140; James McDougall, *A History of Algeria*, (Cambridge University Press, 2017), 248-251.

[38] McDougall, *A History of Algeria*, 168.

[39] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 27.

[40] McDougall, *History and Culture of Nationalism in Algeria*, 44, 46.

[41] McDougall, *A History of Algeria*, 168.

[42] Porter, *Eyes to the South*, 93.

[43] Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 201-209.

[44] Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 220.

[45] Noir et Rouge, "Editorial," *Noir et Rouge*, no. 20 (March 1962): i-vi.

[46] Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 59.

[47] McDougall, *A History of Algeria*, 247-248.

[48] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 170-171.

[49] McDougall, *A History of Algeria*, 237.

[50] Porter, *Eyes to the South*, 101.

[51] Clegg, *Workers' Self-Management in Algeria*, 128.

[52] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 161; Mahsas, *L'autogestion en Algérie*, 86, 89-90, 97-98.

[53] Mohammed Harbi, *Une vie debout: Mémoires politiques I, 1945-1962*, (La Découverte, 2001); Mohammed Harbi and Gilbert Meynier. *Le Fln Documents et Histoire: 1954-1962*. (Fayard, 2004); Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie.*

[54] Harbi, *Une vie debout.*

[55] Porter, *Eyes to the South*, 103, 117, 144.

[56] Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie,* 10.

[57] Harbi, *Une vie debout*, 317-320.
[58] Harbi writes that Lotfallah was more of a surrealist than a Trotskyite (Harbi, *Une vie debout,* 317-320).
[59] Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie*, 20, my translation.
[60] Among the names are Omar Belouchrani and Menouar Merrouche (Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie*, 20).
[61] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 161; Davis, *Markets of Civilization,* 124.
[62] Mahsas, *L'autogestion en Algérie,* 89-90, 117.
[63] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 16.
[64] Charlotte Courreye, *L'Algérie des Oulémas: Une histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine (1931–1991)* (Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2020)
[65] See Minces & Bekkouche (often signing as JM &MB) in *Revolution Africaine*, 1963-1965.
[66] Jean Sénac, *The Selected Poems of Jean Senác*, trans. Katia Sainson and David Bergman (The Sheep Meadow Press), 36-49.
[67] Katia Sainson, "'Entre deux feux': Jean Sénac's Struggle for Self-Determination" *Research in African Literatures* 42, no.1 (Spring 2011): 32-48.
[68] See Zerari's work in *Algérie Actualité* 1967-1968,
[69] Harbi, *Un vie debout*, 228.
[70] Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie*, 19.
[71] See, for example, Catherine Simon, *Algérie, les années pieds-rouges* (La Découverte, 2009).
[72] Christoph Kalter, *The Discovery of the Third World: Decolonization and the New Left in France, c. 1950-1976* (Cambridge University Press, 2016).
[73] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 10.
[74] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 5, 297.
[75] Harbi, *Une vie debout*, 110-111. Babeuf, Proudhon, Fourier, Bakunin, and a Ukrainian anarcho-communist named Nestor Makhno were all names Harbi references that Guérin introduced him to. Harbi tells a colorful story of a falling out between the two when Guérin was outed as gay by someone suggesting he simply wanted to seduce Harbi. Harbi did not seem to mind at all, but the implication was that Guérin felt embarrassed enough over the incident to cut off communication until they re-encountered one another in Algeria after independence.
[76] Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie,* 20, my translation.
[77] Harbi, *Une vie debout*; Harbi & Meynier, *Le FLN documents et histoire.*
[78] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 165-166.
[79] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 166.
[80] Harbi, *L'autogestión en Algérie,* 15, my translation.
[81] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 166.
[82] Generally, in *Révolution Africaine,* the Charter of Algiers is referred to simply as the *decrets de autogestion* or *autogestion* decrees.
[83] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 4.

[84] Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution*, 1.
[85] Davis, *Markets of Civilization*, 140; McDougall *A History of Algeria,* 248-251.
[86] See Davis, *Markets of Civilization*, for a discussion of "Islam" as a racialized category in Algeria.
[87] Castoriadis, *Workers' Councils and the Economics of a Self-Managed Society*.
[88] Raoul Vaneigem, "Notice to the Civilized Concerning Generalized Self-Management," in *Situationist International Anthology,* ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), 285, 287.
[89] Guy Dubord, *La Société du Spectacle* (Buchet Chastel, 1967); Raoul Vaneigem, *Traité de savoir-vivre à l'usage des jeunes générations* (Gallimard, 1967). The latter is literally "Treatise on etiquette for the use of younger generations" but is titled *The Revolution of Everyday Life* (Action Books, 1972) in English.
[90] Situationist International, "Address to Revolutionaries of Algeria and All Countries," in *Situationist Anthology,* ed. and trans. Ken Knabb (Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), 152.
[91] Situationist International, "Class Struggles in Algeria," in *Situationist Anthology,* 166.
[92] Vaneigem, *The Revolution of Everyday Life,* trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (PM Press, 2012).
[93] Vaneigem, *De La Grebe Sauvage A!L'autogestion Gehebalisek* (Union gehebale d'editions, 1974).
[94] In his updated 2012 translation, Nicholson-Smith writes that his original 1983 translation was based on what he and others thought "best served our collective aims," but when he returned to it, he was surprised and somewhat distressed at some of his choices ("Appendix 2: Concerning the Translation," 260). One can only assume that his choice to translate *autogestion* as "workers control" was one of these surprises, because he changed it to "self-management" for his updated translation. He was not alone however. In their introduction to Lefebvre's writings on *autogestion*, Brenner and Elden also note that at times a good translation of *autogestion* is "workers control" (Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, "State, Space, World: Lefebvre and the Survival of Capitalism" in *State, Space, World: Selected Essays*, University of Minnesota Press, 2009, 14).
[95] Henri Lefebvre, "Problèmes théoriques de l'autogestion," *Autogestion: Études, débats, documents* no.1 (December 1966): 59-70.
[96] Remi Hess, *Henri Lefebvre et l'aventure du siècle* (Éditions A.M. Métailié, 1988), 226.
[97] Henri Lefebvre, *Critique de la vie quotidienne I: Introduction* (Grasset, 1947).
[98] Henri Lefebvfe, *Le temps des méprises* (Editions Stock, 1975), 109; Kristin Ross, *The Politics and Poetics of Everyday Life* (Verso, 2023), 13.
[99] Lefebvre, *Le temps des méprises*, 158.
[100] Hess, *Henri Lefebvre et l'aventure du siècle,* 44.
[101] Lefebvre, "The Withering Away of the State: The sources of Marxist-Leninist

State Theory," in *State, Space, World*, first published 1964, 69-94.
[102] Lefebvre, "Theoretical Problems of Autogestion," in *State, Space, World*, 150.
[103] Ken Knabb, "Translator's Preface," in *Total Self-Management: Chapter 3 of Raoul Vaneigem's book From Wildcat Strike to Total Self-Management* (Bureau of Public Secrets, 2001).
[104] Hess, *Henri Lefebvre et l'aventure du siècle,* 69.
[105] Ross, *The Politics and Poetics of Everyday Life*, 28.