

The Challenges of the Public Space

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Any daily experience in the urban way of life – the use of a city’s resources within and beyond the confines of one’s home, quotidian interactions – are public acts and are performed in the public space. We are encompassed by this space nearly everywhere: on sidewalks, in parks, in mass transit, at the market, in museums, university lecture halls, centers of contemporary art, shopping malls, and the halls of government, even in social networks and internet forums which afford us the opportunity to merge our ostensible privacy with the incorporeal publicity of virtual space. Yet the dimensions and limits of what is “public” differs markedly from city to city, region to region, acted on and altered by forces economic, political, social, and cultural.

What mode constitutes public space, and is it always associated with the urban setting? Public space is a core feature in the concept of the urban way of life and democratic governance. This dual nature is a constant through the city’s protracted history. Since the time of its rise in ancient Greece, democracy as a means of organization of the *polis* – supplanting tyranny and aristocratic rule – has been associated with the city, that is, a community of citizens endowed with inalienable rights, and a space in which these citizens exist as a political entity. The public spaces of antiquity – the Greek *agora* and the Roman *forum* – were those in which the political and the commercial intersected, blended and played out in a representation of the daily “urban spectacle”. The primary designation of these spaces was as a location where public officials and courts met in direct assembly, and where nothing placed limits on social interaction, and which ensured the free exchange of ideas, maintenance of political equity in the state apparatus, and where no seated official would be allowed to usurp the authority of the *polis*. Admittedly, this state of affairs was manageable in a period when the largest of the Hellenistic states – in the Classical period, Athens – boasted a population of between thirty and forty thousand men possessing full rights of citizenship.

Public spaces of modern cities function in a significantly more complex fashion. All the above-mentioned spaces are “public” by definition that is, intended by their designers for public use in a variety of modes, but far from all of them are truly public. A critical assessment of modern public space makes it clear that it is rife with contradiction and confrontation. On the one hand, it presents individuals with the opportunity of social representation and unlimited contact with strangers, the ability to assess their position in society, and the chance to achieve status as a political entity. At the same time (and with much greater frequency) public spaces become *loci* where the economically advantaged, assisted by government organs, mass media, and professional “creators of space” (architects, designers, municipal planners, urban studies and market researchers) effectuate political, economic, and cultural dominance. In addition, this increased control and dominant ideology are resulting in modes and approaches to the perception of space that exclude entire social groups from public space including the poor, the homeless, immigrants, and political minorities. Privileged political interests are routinely intertwined with economic interests, and authoritarian power structures often employ economic measures in public spaces in order to limit or forestall any civic political action. The central square of a city may be altered architecturally or leased out for commercial purposes in the hopes of preventing public protests, as indeed occurred at the outset of the EuroMaidan protests.

Throughout the world, however, the opposite effect is more often evident: urban grassroots social movements, urban initiatives, and communities excluded from public space respond *via* protest and

open resistance, reclaiming physical and discursive spaces, establishing their "right to the city" as witnessed in the Occupy Movement [Lefebvre 1991, 1996; Harvey 2012; Neal, Orum 2010; Mitchell 1995, 2003; Smith, Low 2006], and the protests on Istanbul's Taksim Square. The events of EuroMaidan in Kyiv and other Ukrainian cities in the winter and spring of 2013-2014 may likewise be evaluated in terms of the return of public space to the citizenry, and the establishment of rights to be "visible" political subjects, actively represented in the urban space.

Socio-anthropological studies suggest that the nature of economic and political dominance and control in post-industrial, globalized societies is growing less evident, pervasive, and interiorized. With the emergence of neoliberal economic thought in the 1960s the private interests of local economic elites (in Ukraine these are identical with political elites) have increasingly dominated the public trust, fragmenting, commodifying, and privatizing the public space. In every instance, forcefully complex strategies are fashioned to demonstrate privatization or private management as the sole effective means of managing quondam public welfare. Ukrainian and, more broadly, post-soviet cities are proving no exception in this regard. Concurrently, in opposition to these strategies employed by economic elites, a variety of subordinated social groups and communities, and those excluded from the public space, have become active. Operating at the local municipal level, these employ a number of tactics in the appropriation of public space in which to make their cause visible, and challenging conventional notions of the "public" nature of the territory. Often this struggle results in open confrontation.

On a fundamental level, public space is often "negatively" delineated in contradistinction to private space, and is expressed through particular modes of ownership, management, and public access, authorized forms of individual and collective behavior, rules of use, character and extent of social interactions, and certainly, varying discriminatory and exclusionary practices. This situation obtains in both western and post-socialist cities, with any distinction between the two growing increasingly blurry. An analysis of the function of modern urban spaces in which we interact with strangers, and which once were considered "public" (coffee shops, amusement parks, and shopping centers), shows that in fact these spaces are neither private nor public, but exist in a middle "gray area". In modern cities, "traditional" public space is becoming less associated with open squares, and more with places of which it is difficult to say with certainty whether they are public or not [Kohn, 2004]. Shopping centers, as one example: Open to public concourse, they are simultaneously privately owned, and an owner may prohibit certain types of social activism there. They ensure comfort and safety, but also reduce the broad diversity of human contacts to a standardized "commodity and cash" interaction. They are touted as spaces free of "undesirable" social elements (e.g., the homeless, beggars) and suitable for public consumerism [Goss, 1991; Zhelnina, 2011].

The public space in post-socialist cities has met with a particularly difficult fate. Research of the transformations of the last quarter-century shows that the economic restructuring of land use, large-scale privatization, and the deregulation of urban planning has significantly altered urban space and continues to do so. Traditional public spaces in the historical core of cities, and newer post-war, modernist, once ideologically loaded public spaces are converted for "goods", which must prove economically "efficient". The absence of local stewardship, and an as of yet unstructured sense of "public" following the collapse of socialism is, in cities, merely facilitating the exclusion of the social function of public spaces, and the privatization of "unclaimed real estate". Similar to the situation in western cities, privatization results in segregation and heightened control: prospective customers in these spaces are kept separate from non-clientele, and access by "undesirables" is rendered impossible, like in Kyiv's Golden Gates Square, part of which has been converted into a private restaurant. Through

remaining a *de jure* State-owned public space, these areas quickly sacrifice their function as a place of free public interaction, turning forbidding and often dangerous. The comfort and safety of a limited group of clients is rendered possible through the elimination of symbolically important urban public space, and their transformation into semi-enclaves. Less attractive spaces in terms of development located on the city's periphery often fall into the trap of unregulated, low-level commercialization. Very few eastern European cities manage to pursue the path of the "OpenCity", where public space with unhampered access is an integral element of the urban fabric (although there are no facilitators of urban policy) [Stanilov, 2007; Axenov, Brade, and Bondarchuk, 2006].

Lacking an analysis of the relationship of control, domination, exclusion, and representation which is generated in urban settings, and the significantly complicated abstract contradistinction of private and public, state and civic, it is nearly impossible to grasp the function and unmitigated contribution of the public space as a factor in the development of the social and cultural diversity in contemporary Ukrainian cities.

Approaches in the Designation of Public Space

The conventional view of urban public space defines it as public property open to unrestricted public access, and which promotes communication and social interaction. Locating space that fits the definition in modern cities is laden with difficulty because of the involved comingling of the public and private sectors. At the very least, one of the above conditions is compromised, when we consider locations teeming with social interaction - like the former territory of Kyiv's Vydubychi plant, at which Gogolfest is held, or for that matter any space that attracts large public gatherings. This *ordinarily private* property, where access may be restricted *via* an entry fee, simultaneously embodies the kind of space which is much more conducive to spontaneous public interaction than other, more "neutral" properties.

Canadian researcher Margaret Kohn draws attention to the matter with her discussion of intersubjectivity, i.e., the potential of a space to foster unplanned public interaction, and also to the juxtaposition of the concepts "private" and "public" which yield differing definitions in political theory, cultural and economic criticism. Her analysis of the privatization of public space in the United States leads to her proposed definition of "public space" as a grouping of concepts with three primary components: ownership, accessibility, and intersubjectivity. This allows for a combination of purposes which are ordinarily in conflict, and accomplishes it without bypassing any one of the component concepts. On one end of the spectrum of urban space we have "public" representing the classical *forum*, or space designated by the State for unrestricted social interaction, and on the other "private", or private premises closed to unauthorized access. Between these two points lie the hybrids of these: spaces which fulfill a public function – from cafes to shopping malls – but do not meet the full criteria of traditional public space. Kohn suggests these be considered "social space" [Kohn, 2004: 1-17].

But is "social" space "public"? Should it be obligated to provide accessibility, and how is this reflected in common practice in urban settings? The answer to which depends on another question: do these spaces allow for the full exercise of civil rights? Kohn remarks that accessibility and ownership alone do not determine public space as such, for this one must consider the character of the interaction which takes place in this space. One type promotes non-structured public contact, while another directs public attention on a designated object, strengthening collective isolation.

In order to clearly demonstrate this distinction Kohn adapts Guy Debord's concept of "spectacle" to her consideration of intersubjectivity. Spaces for "spectacle", or performance – movie theaters, stadiums,

exhibition halls, and public podiums, as well as talk shows, public debates and the like – congregate large audiences, but with attention concentrated on the spectacle exclusively, thus removing the opportunity to participate in the dialogue, and to cooperate in the creation of novel dimensions of public life [Kohn, 2004: 10-11].

In post-socialist urban settings experiencing commercial expansion, in addition to sports venues and public performances, Guy Debord's "lonely crowds" may be found everywhere: on downtown streets, in public transport interchanges which also function quite often as "markets" (the "market by the subway" phenomenon), and in residential areas on the outskirts as witnessed in the explosion of small-scale street vendors (principally kiosks), and in virtually every type of unclaimed space in modern Ukrainian cities. All these indicate how difficult it is to develop non-conventional intersubjective space.

Over the last 30 years sociologists, geographers, architects, and philosophers have focused their attention on the formation of the public space, the tactics of its use, and the battles over it. Three chief constructs may be singled out in the defining of public space: the legal-economic, the socio-spatial, and the political [Neal, 2010], which complement one other to a certain extent, and correspond to the component definition of public space delineated by Margaret Kohn.

The first construct deals primarily with an issue that may be formulated as "how does the law define public space, and who pays for it?" The issue arose in the United States due to a preponderance of court cases regarding the prohibition of the exercise of civil rights. Legal precedent was employed to establish the so-called "Public Forum Doctrine" which allows for three modes of public interest and the use of public space: quintessential (traditional) public forum, i.e., space deliberately set aside (typically by the State) for social interaction, public life, and the exercise of civil liberties; the non-public forum; and the limited public forum – locations with mixed modes of availability, at which not all forms of public political activity are allowed (Neal & Oram, 2010; Mitchell, 2003). This legal definition of the public / private interest regarding space transforms an academic concern into a practical legal application, asserts Kohn. In an application of law, courts may compel owners of private, generally publically accessible spaces not to hinder the exercise of civil rights on said territories, thus rendering those territories public. Conversely, the courts may restrict social activity even in state-sanctioned public spaces, excluding these spaces from the public sphere. Don Mitchell describes a number of cases of judicially determined public space. It should be noted that Ukrainian legislation lacks any definition of "public space"; those regulatory acts relating to urban management and construction are designated simply as "spaces for public use" minus any political designation. The creation of desirable public spaces through the use of design, event management, and the fostering of creative industries is just one set of strategies employed by developers interested in raising property values and rents. The oversaturation of public space often results in increased regulatory actions which hinders petty trade and other activities. Those managing this type of area (municipalities), in an attempt to forestall disorder and realize a profit, subsequently offer these spaces for rent as street cafes. In this manner public space is rendered private [Neal, 2010].

The economic approach is closely linked to the political: a clear legal definition of public space has direct impact on whether the space is suited to allow – or disallow – representation of the broadest range of social groups. The political construct envisions public space as primarily representative space, of engagement in political dispute by a citizenry in pursuit of its rights, with those invested with authority and who exercise it within the urban space. At the root of this model, which remains central to modern conceptualizations of the city, lie theories of the public sphere forwarded by Jürgen Habermas and Hannah Arendt, and the works of French neo-marxist philosopher Henri Lefebvre, in particular his

concept of "the right to the city". Lefebvre's "right to the city" is the fair and impartial - without restriction - use of the benefits of urban life (including symbolic benefits). For Lefebvre, this represents the foundation of modern civil rights which common laborers and residents have been deprived of by big business concerns. Lefebvre's followers, contemporary adherents to his approach include Don Mitchell, and Mike Davis, Sharon Zukin, Seth Low, Neil Smith, and Margaret Kohn. These analyze global processes of privatization and the decline of public space, instances of prohibited groups' struggles for their rights, and mechanisms of "restoring" public space to urban communities. [Mitchell, 1995; 2003; Davis, 2006; Zukin, 1995].

The socio-spatial approach is characterized by an "instrumental" understanding of public space, and is currently the most accepted approach among architects and municipalities. It envisions the use of public space for daily social activities – assembly, communication, walking, and consumer activity – and which is absolutely necessary for the existence and viability of individual communities and cities as a whole. Modern adherents of the socio-spatial approach look to the classic research of urbanists Kevin Lynch, Jane Jacobs, and William Whyte. Central to this approach is an emphasis on an inclusive architectural organization of urban space that encourages the active social use of public space, thus contributing to the diversity of urban life. Two classic works – Lynch's "The Image of the City" (1960), and Jacobs's "The Life and Death of Great American Cities" (1961), depict two foci of this approach. Jane Jacobs demonstrates the social function of traditional public spaces, analyzing how aspects like security, diversity, and vitality are associated with certain spatial configurations, and how reckless intervention in the fabric of urban space quickly erodes social harmony. These two works mark the genesis of the critique of the modernist approach to the construction of cities.

Advocates of this approach (in particular William Whyte's ProjectforPublicSpaces – pps.org) put forward a diagnosis of a dying city: those where convenient pedestrian areas, public parks and squares, and historic residential centers of established local communities give way to freeways, parking lots, restricted access corporate office centers, and homogenous commercial construction [Whyte, 2001]. Conversely, a "successful" and "living" city is that with plentiful inclusive and flexible public space that allows opportunity for entertainment and communication to the entire community. The development of these spaces should be a participatory affair, and include a detailed analysis (often a comprehensive study) of the operation of similar spaces, and the relationship between social activity and public design elements. This emphasis on the vital necessity of public space for urban life and its thoughtful design represents a combination of the socio-spatial, political, and economic approaches. It should be noted that that socio-spatial approach has been adopted by progressive municipalities throughout the world as fundamental to their efforts regarding public space.

The Struggle for Public Space and "the Right to the City"

Urban public space is primarily a place for the exercise of one's civil rights. Essential to this is the fundamental "right to the city", or the idea that the city is simultaneously both the goal and the means to it. In particular, this refers to the right to participate in the creation and appropriation of space. Lefebvre emphasizes repeatedly in this text that this right should belong primarily to those who have been displaced to the city outskirts by the dominant classes, and thus deprived of the benefits of an urban way of life and representational space, that is, the right for creation of symbolic residential space as "collective effort." The practical dimension of this right (relevant to post-soviet cities) includes public access to economic and symbolic resources and opportunities offered by the city [Lefebvre, 1996: 173-179]. In other words, the "right to the city" includes the right not to be excluded from the city's public space, and the right of communities to represent themselves in said space.

Don Mitchell observes that the right to the city and the functionality of public space are closely related: in a world that defines property as private, public space is the sole place of representation for those deprived of this right. Urban public space represents the only location in which a public articulation of demands, rights, and political struggle for rights may be effected. Only public spaces are capable of enacting political movements, which in fact are rendered *political* exclusively in the public, physical spaces. Mitchell stresses the importance of real, physical public spaces: “re-claiming” these, marginalized social groups render themselves public. He concludes that what makes public space (i.e., places where the demands of a particular group possessing a “right to the city” may be seen and heard), is not some pre-set planning contingency or a long-held “public” tradition. Rather, this is effected when a defined group out of necessity appropriates space and renders it public. It is a reassertion of Lefebvre’s principle that appropriation – as a mechanism effecting the right to the city – is fundamentally distinct from private property rights. The latter implies exclusion, which is always secured by force which itself, in turn, is afforded legal protections [Mitchell 2003: 19-35].

The chief objects under the scrutiny of this analytical approach and critique include the enhancement of the processes of privatization and commercialization of public space, the decline and rebirth of space, and the increase in control over public spaces by local authorities. In an analysis of these processes in Los Angeles and New York, Mike Davis and Sharon Zukin discuss the intensification of security of public parks and streets, the regulation of behavior, and the exclusion from public space of “undesirable elements”, all administered by police forces. They also touch on the increase in urban areas of “gated communities” – private subdivisions with proprietary infrastructures and which are closed to outsiders. These latter are commonly developed on recently privatized, desirable properties of former community parklands, woods, and waterfront areas [Zukin, 1995; Davis 2006]. The contrast of “safe suburbia”, the “private, controlled, convenient space” with that of the “hazardous city”, “inconvenient public space”, and “crime-ridden slums” are often a central element in the public position of land developers lobbying for privatization. These processes of the privatization of public space, from sidewalks to city parks and squares, are also characteristic of modern Ukrainian cities. The increase in security procedures demonstrates that cities are increasingly under the control of municipal authorities through security patrols and visual surveillance, and which in some cases allow authorities direct control of public political activities, and otherwise the ability to respond quickly to “undesirables” and “undesirable activities”. This also serves as an enhancement of “public order”, often capable of paralyzing public, civic activity (judging from contemporary realities in both Russia and Belarus).

Mitchell and Zukin take further issue with the largely unconsidered employment of the socio-spatial approach to public spaces, which seeks spatial enhancement (the organization of convenient multifunctional spaces, pedestrian areas, or mere beautification) which facilitates the engagement of some users (the middle or “creative” class) to the exclusion of others – typically the economically disadvantaged, the homeless, and migrant workers.

The End of Public Space? The post-socialist option.

In the modern city, however, it is increasingly difficult to locate conventional markers of public life, including free, unlimited accessibility, clear delineations of public and private, concern for common interests, and unfettered citizen interaction. Classical urban public space is degrading rapidly, and disappearing (and occasionally not appearing at all). This phenomenon is associated both with the privatization of space, and with a general decline of public life, the disappearance of public rights, and the erosion of the concept of place in modern culture [Pachenkov, 2012]. These, as well as the rapid

expansion of contemporary urban mobility (though certainly, this factor is not universally applicable, but only among the so-called "golden billion"), and access to global information networks leads to the conclusion that place, *per se*, is no longer viewed as something static and valuable. Places, including traditional urban public space, are stripped of their anthropological component – spaces of social exercise. This has led to the appearance of the phenomenon that the French anthropologist Marc Augé calls "the non-places" of supermodernity: "non-anthropological" space lacking either identity or history, transitory places of consumer interaction and indeterminacy. The most notable examples are airports and train stations [Augé, 1995: 75-79]. Russian researcher Oleg Pachenkov notes, however, that in modern cities the concept of "non-places" may be extended to almost every kind of space. The concept is applicable not only airport terminals and train stations, but also streets, squares and shopping centers (which, reflective of the nature of global capital, are identical in every city around the world) and virtually any urban territory employed for travel, the primary function of space in an era of mobility [Pachenkov, 2012]. Among the greatest hazards here is concealed the modernist enthusiasm for mobility, which has resulted in the erosion of the value of public space and its subordination to the requirements of transportation, and the displacement from them of social activity [Sennet, 2002: 18-23]. A symbol of individualization is the personal vehicle, around which city life has revolved since the appearance of the initial modern urban utopias. And even as the most progressive international cities are largely moving away from cars as the primary means of public transportation, a core principle of Ukrainian urban development continues to be its automobile-centered orientation.

Which of these features of urban transformation have manifested in post-soviet cities? The categories of public life under discussion are unsuited to any analysis of the nature of public space in soviet cities. In the Soviet Union, there was neither private ownership nor private use of land; all soviet urban space was "public" by definition. The State exercised strict control over land, determining all access and conventional manner of social activism allowed in the public space. In this sense, soviet public space was more "communal" than public; it belonged, formally, to everyone, but simultaneous state control rendered the space "inhospitable". With the return by post-Stalinist urban planners to modernist principles – functional zoning, mass public housing development, and attention to vehicular traffic – urban public space was divided into three groups: a system of public centers, a highway system, and green zones. In this arrangement public spaces, remaining under close control, were employed widely for demonstrations of soviet ideology, and the promulgation of regulated public behavior. Conventional types of activities conducted in public spaces included public (State) holidays, Communist Party and military parades, and so on. Alternative use of these spaces – for informal demonstrations, rallies, or protests – was prohibited. The entire spectrum of social infrastructure (medical, cultural, sports, and children's facilities) and urban public space, in addition to public service and the demonstration of ideology, served primarily to ensure the normalization of "the soviet man/woman", and the consolidation and reiteration of soviet norms [Engel, 2007: 287-290]. The only form of soviet public space in which ideological control was less rigorous was in recreation and "culture" parks. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the individualization of society affected former soviet cities – which were not "immune to" the rise of consumer culture and in which private property had been prohibited – more radically than it ever had western cities.

The post-Soviet city demonstrates yet another characteristic feature which Oleg Pachenkov treated in his research on the "abuse of the public", or, State-sanctioned public abstractions like single-function use of designated urban spaces. As a result, these spaces are reserved (similar to the situation which obtained in the soviet period), for certain types of publically authorized activity (concerts, public holidays, carnivals, demonstrations, fairs, etc.). Yet any rights of appropriation of the space by certain social groups for unrestricted use are abrogated or declared unlawful. It is significant that the

government represents itself as the legitimate representative of the normative public which is allowed to use this public space. This advances an ideological shift inasmuch as contemporary society is comprised of a variety of discrete groups, which evince varying forms of public life, and many of these have been denied their right to use the space.

Other post-soviet urban settings are characterized both by global trends of privatization and commercialization of the public space, and by civic movements for their appropriation and return. Of course, present in these processes is always a local dimension particularly closely associated with the respective, past socialist experience of these locations. In Kyiv, for example, and primarily for residents of the city's outlying regions, shopping centers – with their combination of affordable attractions, goods, and services – have been rendered not merely as accessible public space, but a safe and comfortable alternative to uninspiring, inconvenient, and even dangerous areas of the city.

EuroMaidan and the Return of Public Space

The square that sits at the center of Kyiv, and which was named Independence Square in 1991, and now serves as the country's main political forum, has never been zoned as a public space. Following the destruction of Khreschatyk Street (downtown Kyiv) in World War II, the street was cleared of rubble and the square significantly expanded, turning it into an ideologically Stalinist architectural ensemble. Khreschatyk served as the main arterial for solemn communist processions, and Maidan (at the time, "October Revolution Square") a demonstration platform for the Party leadership, both their podium and a massive monument to their ideology. In 1990, for the first time in the political history of modern Ukraine, the place was used as a space for public protest and representation by a community group previously excluded from the public sphere. This was the student-led "Revolution on Granite", and the inaugural tent city – that marker of tireless occupation of public space by repressed groups – on Maidan. In subsequent years, Maidan has become the main public space for representative public protests, the largest of which would be 2001's "Ukraine Without Kuchma" protests, and 2004's "Orange Revolution".

Architecturally, however, Maidan was not yet suited for this level of protest, remaining as it was a great square of socialist inhospitality, divided into two broad avenues heavy with traffic. In this instance we are dealing with an excellent example of the concept of "introducing publicity" that Don Mitchell describes in reference to cases of the American struggle for public space. It was not the space itself which led to public action, but citizens who "revealed" its publicity as a result of extreme social necessity. In an effort to counterbalance this "revelation", and erase completely the location from the citizenry's mental map of the place as one of public protest and wide civic group representation, in 2001 municipal and state authorities undertook a large-scale reconstruction of the area, designed to convert Maidan into a consumer center and "showplace", and one that could further generate a profit from retail businesses. And so Maidan spent nearly a decade, its metaphor of "community mobilization" transforming slowly into a metaphor of grassroots consumerism.

The 2013-2014 protest movement that began on Maidan with peaceful student protests turned – after being violently dispersed on December 1st – into a permanent occupation (appropriation) of the square. In terms of the struggle for the occupation of public space, this was actually a collective demand of the "right to the city" – in the sense of voting rights (which the State Administration abrogated), the right to be "politically visible", and enacted in the city's center. It was also simultaneously a claim to an open and non-segregated public space, not limited to banal consumerism and control. It is significant that one of the legal (as in the right of ownership to expel violators from privatized space) precedents cited in justification of the dispersal of the students on the night of November 30th was the "need to erect the

municipal Christmas Tree on Maidan". This, by quondam statute, afforded the city administration the legal right to use force. Preemptive mechanisms for "clearing" public spaces had been carefully legislated in the years following Ukrainian independence. In one example, the square facing the Central Election Committee was occupied by an ordinary market for more than two years. The market was dismantled soon after EuroMaidan, but the entire time of its existence political protests were not allowed to be held there.

Immediately following protestors' occupation of Maidan, the upper city ("Government Quarters") were closed to public access, demonstrating the real spatial segregation that existed and continues to exist invisibly in Kyiv. Approaching government buildings was impossible until the dénouement of Maidan. Yet the Maidan, barricaded on all sides as at a military installation, allowed any and all who desired to enter freely as if into the heart of an enemy camp. From an anthropological point of view, Maidan was in fact a self-governing body politic (Gr. *polis*), divided into groups, each of which represented itself and oversaw some aspect of the "city's" function: from its self-defense units to its kitchen, medical services, the AutoMaidan, hospital security and countless others.

The most marked impact of Maidan as public space, that is, a location arising from basic necessity, was in society's rendering a location for the realization of its "right to the city", and which resulted in the opening and reclaiming of other public spaces. It was Maidan that turned the Kyiv City Council (KMDA) and the Ukrainian House into free access zones, where overnight room and board was provided to all comers. Spaces opened by Maidan functioned as "traditional" public space: in the public domain and open to all. In the case of the Ukrainian House, it provided the citizenry with benefits never previously imagined, (benefits similar to those provided by the contested "Hostynyi Dvir" Trade House in Kyiv's Podil neighborhood two years' previously) – an open cultural space at which every Maidan community and urban protest movement was represented. Where film screenings, lectures, and training sessions were held, a library functioned, as well as a surgery, and which offered lodging for protestors.

In the light of critical theory applied to the history of Maidan as public space, its unclear ending is also typical of the movement. In late summer 2014, the City Council once again cleared the square, resorting to stigmatizing rhetoric imputing "the homeless", and opened the Khreschatyk Street again to vehicle traffic. It's impossible to imagine a greater blow that could have been delivered to the public aspect of a space that had functioned for eight months as a pedestrian area. This place which had witnessed urban collective mobilization, new forms of civil solidarity, was rendered again into an all-too-common eight-lane thoroughfare, doing its part for the despoilment of the air the city breathes. It's as if arguments of infrastructure alone which, as may be observed, ever work to establish hegemony over public space had, once again, won the day.

And yet, on November 1, 2014, a nationwide competition ("Territory of Dignity"), for the reconstruction of the public space downtown was launched. The lead-up to the competition proceeded in a fashion unprecedented in Ukraine: a participatory approach in search of consensus, which aims to transform the central streets and squares into an authentic (architecturally sound) public space, and, into the best of all possible monuments to the events of EuroMaidan.

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