

THE URBAN PUBLIC SPACE IN THE WORKS BY E. PASHKOVSKY**Darya Matushkina**

External Postgraduate Student, Taras Shevchenko Luhansk National University, Ukraine
e-mail: 24Dasha@gmail.com, orcid.org/0000-0002-2209-797X

Piotr Lisowski

Professor, Ph.D., Polonia University in Czestochowa, Interdisciplinary Faculty, Poland
e-mail: plisowski@ap.edu.pl, orcid.org/0000-0003-2595-2019

Summary

The article investigates the problem of analyzing the functioning of the urban public space in the prose works of the urban writer E. Pashkovsky. The author of the article focuses on various approaches to the interpretation of the concept of “public space”, including legal-economic, socio-spatial and political. The article also reveals the main functions that such a space performs in the writer’s prose works, including political, socialization and the function of a meeting place.

E. Pashkovsky in his works depicts the main topos is the city of Kiev, and in accordance with this, the author of the study singles out public and private space in it. The defining key aspect of the public space of the city of Kiev in the writer’s works is the image of such a space as a place for debate and a place for socialization. In accordance with the aforementioned aspects, Maidan Nezalezhnosti and Khreshchatyk become similar places in the texts of novels and essays. But modern cities are characterized by the absence of a clear distinction between private and public space due to the rapid commercialization processes. The public space plays a leading role in the functioning of the city. It combines physical and social dimensions. This combination makes the city integral.

Keywords: place, topos, urbanism, square, accessible, open, private.

DOI <https://doi.org/10.23856/3912>

1. Introduction

Publicity is one of the key features of a modern city in the context of rapid urbanization. Public space surrounds us everywhere. Under the influence of various factors such as social, geographic, economic, etc. dimensions of such a space are transformed in everyday life. The public spaces have been the most popular places to express thoughts, conduct trade, and communicate on political topics ever since antiquity.

Modern public spaces are characterized by more complex functions. They enable citizens to represent themselves, their political views, and find their own social position in society. At the same time, the political elite is able to control the public through public spaces, using the services of the media, professional urbanists, planners, designers, etc. in order to reduce / avoid protest moods and mobilization of citizens.

Specialists from various fields such as economists, political scientists, lawyers, psychologists, and philologists are increasingly paying attention to the problem of the functioning of the urban public space. Many works of Ukrainian urban literature highlight the problems of the urban space and life in it.

Among the scholars studying the issues of public space, we single out the following: H. Arendt, A. Lefebvre, D. Mitchell, A. Pachenkov, R. Sennett and others. Ukrainian researchers A. Zlobina, L. Males, V. Sereda, M. Sobolevska, I. Tishchenko also refer to the study of such problems. However, not a single scientific article was devoted to the study of the functioning of the urban public space in the prose of the Ukrainian writer-urbanist E. Pashkovsky. Thus, our study of urban public space in his works becomes relevant.

Considering the above, the purpose of the article is to analyze the urban public space based on the prose works by E. Pashkovsky.

This goal assumes the implementation of the following tasks:

- theoretical definition of the concept of “public space”;
- analysis of the texts of works in order to highlight the features of the urban public space;
- disclosure of the functions of public space in the writer’s texts;
- representation of the interaction of public and private urban spaces in works;
- determination of prospects for further research in this direction.

The methodological basis of the work is the analysis, use of typological and hermeneutic methods.

2. Approaches to the interpretation of the concept of “public space”

There are many approaches to the interpretation of the term “public space” despite the fairly widespread use it in different industries. In itself, the public space is closely connected with the city, so we consider the approaches that are most relate to the topic of our research.

According to the European tradition of urban studies, the term “public space” is used to denote the concept of “public urban space”, which is usually considered in three key aspects:

- 1) as an open space for rest, recreation, health protection;
- 2) as a space for debate;
- 3) as an accessible, open space such as places accessible to everyone, or for various groups of people, based on the basis of social freedom of movement and anonymity (*Zhulkevskya, 2012:62*).

So, the first aspect will be of more interest to architects and designers, since it is they who consider the public space as such, which is virtually free from residential and other buildings.

The second approach is partly related to our research. In this context, the city’s public space is seen as an open space for debate. E. Pashkovsky, as an urbanist writer, also represents such public places in his works.

The third, last aspect of the list, which is indicated above, is fully implemented in the author’s prose. As open, accessible spaces for communication, such places serve as an indicator of social relations. It is social interaction, that is, social relations that develop in public space, that are one of the characteristics of an urban city.

Among modern interdisciplinary studies of the city, it is worth highlighting three main approaches to its definition: legal-economic, socio-spatial and political (*Neal, 2010*). Such approaches comprehensively reveal the essence of the public space and successfully complement each other.

The first approach emerged as a result of the practice of legal enforcement of civil rights and freedoms in the United States of America. In accordance with this, there is a legal definition of the publicity or privacy of a certain space.

The legal-economic approach and the political one are closely intertwined. From a legal point of view, the definition of public space affects the ability or inability to present oneself to

various social groups. The political approach primarily characterizes the public space as such, where there is a presentation and political struggle between citizens (for their rights) and those who are vested with power in a particular city space. This model is based on the concept of the “right to the city” by the French neo-Marxist philosopher A. Lefebvre (*Lefebvre, 1996:171 – 179*).

American political scientist-theorist H. Arendt in the second chapter of her work “VITA ACTIVA, or about active life”, which is called “Public space and private sphere” considered the origins of the value of public space. The main characteristics of the public space with H. Arendt are words (speech) and actions. This space for the researcher acts as an “arena” where there is an opportunity to observe, to be under the supervision of each other. (*Arendt, 2000*). “... an open, public space is provided specifically for individuality; it was the only place where everyone had to be able to show how he differs from mediocrity” (*Arendt, 2000*).

In fact, public space represents the life of a city together. Such space is becoming one of the main components of urban life. It is based on two aspects: physical and social. The first is real buildings, sites, transport stops, plants, etc., and the second, represented through the interaction of social groups (subjects).

3. Public space of the city of Kiev in works

“Public space” in the works by E. Pashkovsky is represented mainly by two aspects. In the essay “The land of Damocles” the writer presents the events of 2004 that took place on the Maidan Nezalezhnosti. The Orange Revolution, or, as the people used to say, “Maidan”, then stirred up the Ukrainian people with a series of strikes, rallies and pickets. Here Maidan acts as a space for debate. “People who are now holding rallies to protect the language, if they supported the idea of lustration and purification of society in the 90’s <...> not accepting the idea of purification – the idea of repentance and the creation of a new one – they lost the first, and the second, and the third. <...> And now they are crying! it’s a cannibal of sobbing! <...> And now they are shouting, let’s defend the language and freedom of speech! sleepyhead! <...> this cannibalism was established in 1991, and extended in 2004; will never wash off. No rallies, no walking from square to square, no noise in the void. Nothing will help” (*Pashkovsky, 2013*). E. Pashkovsky indirectly represents the public space through the depiction of the actions of power groups that take place at the destination. Thus, the public space of the city of Kiev is Independence Square, becomes the main stage of political and social events.

The readers see the Maidan and the main street of Kiev Khreshchatyk, which is inextricably linked with it, through human references, in the novel “The Daily Rod”. There are two aspects of the definition of “public space” intertwined here. This space also becomes a place for debate, since the townspeople here “... were all idealists, wrote leaflets, prepared for barricades, wiped their last pants at opposition meetings, drank one coffee at three, put their necks under batons bent from a blow, like an arc odnokonky, nursed their patience, listened to the protesters, wore patriotic badges, drank for the last time in the Khreshchatyk basements, where the real, oblivious owners would later move, read newspapers that were still soiled with paint, retell the news, waited for paratroopers and sapper shovels, washed the squares with ascension, put signatures in telegrams, they let the granchak go around – and this is how democracy began ...” (*Pashkovsky, 1999*) and a free place for communication, since it was at such meetings that the progress of the socialization process for the then Kiev was clearly traced.

Khreshchatyk also becomes the embodiment of public space in the next novel “The Holiday”. Here we can say that it is impossible to clearly distinguish in what aspect it is presented, since it is in this text that the street is both a place for rest and an open space for communication. The heroes

of the novel are full of optimism, in a good mood, as "... two streams of people with voices floated along Khreshchatyk, and the booming rumble boiled, drowning out the laughter, the cry of the musicians in embroidered shirts with crimson cuts; <...> Edik wanted to listen to songs on the other side of the square. <...> Anna waving her free hand over their heads <...> Andrey noticed her silky black head among other heads from a distance, heard her call among other people's voices ..." (*Pashkovsky, 1989*). This symbiosis shows that the city is developing, characteristic urbanization processes are taking place in it, it is full of different moods, which E. Pashkovsky successfully conveys.

The public space depicted in the novel "Autumn for the Angel" acquires an opposite mood. Even a good prosperous city always has another dark side. In this case, we see a representative of society who could not resist the harmful power of alcohol, or is even homeless. We can only guess about the reasons that led to this state. E. Pashkovsky deliberately attracts the attention of readers and cites as an example the moment of the meeting of the hero of the novel with a classmate, who "... on Poornoti Square, he rattles off about culture, memorized half of Stus's poem, grieves over the national, scolds always regular events, buttoned a gray jacket on the last button, hardened, hardened, jumps sideways to the audience of ten drunks and instantly boils with a horned chiefdom; vile and sweaty sadly beats in a fit of truth and revenge, then swallows hungry saliva, then curses the deceit of visible enemies, but in fact is busy with what was before: the destruction of his own soul; I am hurt by the invisible – what will happen to the human heart at the height of two threshed millennia, will we grow closer to one falling grain with the hope of a conscientious fruit? hardly" (*Pashkovsky, 2006*).

4. Functions of urban public space in prose

Let us consider the main functions of the concept of "public space" for a more accurate disclosure. Since ancient times, the main functions of such a space in a city have been: a meeting place, a marketplace, and a communication / traffic space (*Harvey, 1989*). Among others, we can name political, control, integration, differentiation between public and private. However, the key, in our opinion, is the socialization function. All of the above functions are fully embodied in the public space of the city of Kiev in the texts of the works by E. Pashkovsky. Maidan Nezalezhnosti and Khreshchatyk, as the main public spaces, perform several functions at once:

- 1) to a greater extent, townspeople meet there, discuss important issues (meeting place)
- 2) political rallies, actions, debates are held (political)
- 3) as the direct center of the city, where various events are held, the central square is a place for assessing the characteristics of social relationships, supporting communicative practices (socialization).

Thus, the "public space" plays a leading role in the functioning of the city, combining the physical and social dimensions. This combination makes the city integral.

5. Interaction of public and private spaces of the city

The definition of "public space" is based on the public / private opposition. It is generally accepted that the personal is something intimate, personal, individual. First of all, we pay attention to the form of ownership and limited access to such space.

Considering the connection between public and private spaces, it should be noted that both spheres of human life are closely related to everyday life, but reflect it in different ways. In a private space, a person is distracted from everyday life, becomes what he really is, feels natural, because nothing limits him. In public space, everything happens in front of each other, here people like to observe, evaluate, they have to play different social roles.

In the prose works by E. Pashkovsky, the interaction of public and private spaces is also presented. Private space in the texts is usually: a dorm room, a basement and a “house-emptiness” (the novel “The Abyss”), rooms in the apartments of Anna, Oleg, Lena and rooms in dormitories, the apartment of Sava’s friend (the novel “The Holiday”), a house and rooms (the novel “The Wolf Dawn”), an entrance, an apartment and rooms (the novel “Autumn for the Angel”), a house and a hotel room (a story “A Well for Roses”), but a purely public space is usually squares and the streets adjacent to them.

With the rapid processes of commercialization and privatization, the boundaries of public space are blurring. This process restricts access to this space; specific owners of cafes, various complexes and the like appear. A similar phenomenon is typical for modern cities, including Kiev.

6. Conclusions

Thus, the public space of the city in the prose works by E. Pashkovsky appears as an open, free and accessible place for various social groups, where communication processes, integration of the urban population take place, political debates, rallies and meetings take place. Public space as a litmus test conveys social moods and with its help it is possible to trace the development of certain cultural, historical and social events and phenomena.

We consider a more detailed study of the problem of privatization of urban public spaces in the works by E. Pashkovsky in recent years to be a promising research in this direction, since this topic has not yet been disclosed in modern urban articles.

References

- Arendt X. (2000). *VITA ACTIVA, Ili o deyatel'noj zhizni [VITA ACTIVA, Or about an active life]*. SPb: Aletejja.
- Harvey D. (1989). *The Urban Experience*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Lefebvre H. (1996). *Writings on cities*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Neal Z. (2010). *Seeking common ground: three perspectives on public space*. *Urban Design and Planning*.
- Pashkovskiy Ye. (1989). *Sviato [The Holiday]*. Dnipro.
- Pashkovskiy Ye. (1999). *Shchodennyi zhezl [The daily rod]*. K.: Geneza.
- Pashkovskiy Ye. (2006). *Osin dlia anhela [Autumn for the Angel]*. K.: Nova literature.
- Pashkovskiy Ye. (2013). *Damoklova zemlia [The land of Damocles]*. K.: Prosvita: Ukrainskiy pysmennyk.
- Zhulkevskya O. (2012). *Suspilnyi prostir mista yak ob'iekt sotsiologichnoho vyvchennia ta empyrychnyi referent sotsialnykh zmin [The public space of the city as an object of sociological study and an empirical referent of social change]*. Lutsk: Skhidnoievropeiskiy natsionalnyi universytet imeni Lesi Ukrainky.