Urban Renewal, Entrepreneurialism and the Right to the City: a Research of the Social Actors and Their Take on Gentrification in Post-socialist Zagreb

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Abstract

This is a thesis about the "Right to the City" movement in Zagreb. It narrates its inception, the context which nurtured it and the activists that helped it grew. The immediate resaon d'etre of the movement was a specific project of urban renewal in Zagreb known as *Flower Passage* (Cvjetni prolaz), later Flower (Cvjetni).

The project provoked an unseen amount of social action and mobilization of citizens of Zagreb. The movement against it under the banner of Right to the City was started by a coalition of NGOs and citizens initiatives with contribution of many public figures, experts and intellectuals. In 2010, at its height, the movement included a couple of thousands of citizens of Zagreb. The actors of the movement contested the notion of public space and public interest of the project that was put forward by the entrepreneur and the city government, and claimed that asserted the citizens can give such claim.

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Chapter One

Introduction

My thesis deals with a specific project of urban renewal in Zagreb and the social movement that contested it. The project is known as *Flower Passage* (Cvjetni prolaz), later Flower (Cvjetni) was the first such project completed in the center of Zagreb. The project was under way from 2006 to 2011 but the main construction was under way from 2010 to 2011. The project Flower was hailed by the entrepreneur who was building it and the city authorities as a flagship project and one that could provoke the renewal of the city's center.

On the other hand the same project was identified by some researcher as an example of gentrification (Caldarovic and Sarinic 2008, Gotovac Svircic, 2010). The entrepreneur wanted to renew a deteriorating city block, but in a way to demolish two buildings in the block that were protected as a historical landmark. The buildings were to be replaced by a new building that consists of luxurious apartments with elements of a gated community and a shopping center with a underground garage for more than 800 vehicles. The size of the project demanded a change in the *urban master plan* of the city which was green lit by the city council labeling the project to be of public interest claiming that is creates new public space it the center of the city adding new value to it and benefiting all the citizens of Zagreb.

The project provoked an unseen amount of social action and mobilization of citizens of Zagreb. The movement against it under the banner of Right to the City was started by a coalition of NGOs and citizens initiatives with contribution of many public figures, experts and intellectuals. In 2010, at its height, the movement included a couple of thousands of citizens of Zagreb. The actors of the movement contested the notion of public space and public interest of the project that was put forward by the entrepreneur and the city government, and claimed that asserted the citizens can give such claim. In 2007 the Right to

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the city activists managed to collect a petition of 54 000 citizens against the project and made that the basis of the legitimacy for the movement and its demands. Also during the course of the campaign they staged over 40 protest actions and over 10 massive protests culminating in the month long occupation of Warsaw Street in May and June 2010 where an access ramp to the underground garage of the project was to be constructed. This provoked a delay in its construction and the competition of the project but also provoking a crisis of the city government.

One of the major issues was that of public space for the protesting citizens participating in the movement. They maintained that the project transformed the public space of the square and street into private space, but other issues were also voice, the fate of the city block, the change of residents and issue of access to the future renewed space part of it designed as a gated community. The second big issue for the citizens participating in the movement was participation itself. They voiced their concern about the fact that the citizens themselves have been excluded from decision making process and even for obtain information about a project that would considerably change a city block, Flower square itself, but also potentially the center of the Zagreb.

Research questions

Out of this overview two sets of questions arise that I will deal with in my thesis. One deals with is how we can situate the project of urban renewal in Zagreb in a wider discussion of practices of city renewal, especially that are happening in the post-socialist cities of Europe and the urban, social and political fabric in which they occur and transform. I emphasise the entrepreneurs as new actors that emerged with transition from socialism, but also old actors that went through transformation during that process; like city administration, local councils,

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and mayors that in a sense started acting as entrepreneurs themselves. In order to give an answer to this question I will enter the discussion with the a considerable literature on the topic mostly dedicated to actors and practices of urban renewal, to a large extent framed in the literature as gentrification, in the Cites of the United States and Western Europe, but also an growing number of literature on such processes in the post-socialist context.

The second set of questions are that concerning the social movement that formed as a reaction to the project and the underlying structures and processes in which it was "embedded". A substantial foundation for the analysis of the social movement is the fieldwork I conducted in Zagreb in April and May 2012 where I interview a number of activists and citizens who participated in the Right to the City movement there. I will present and discuss how this movement formed, the strategies, tactics and discourses its actors employed to gain momentum. I will present and discuss the issues the activist and citizens voiced in the protests, but also their practices like the month long occupation of Warsaw. I also participated in two events in Zagreb with actors from the right to the city movement.

With this ethnographic account I enter the discussion with existing literature on the concept of Right to the city, and social movement which have emphasized, used and transformed this concept and idea into various practices. I want to present some the voices of the citizens and activist and their reflections on the public space, the protests, the processes of urban renewal in Zagreb, but especially the ideas and practices of the Right to the City itself. How does the Zagreb case contribute to the literature on Right to the City but also what can other similar social movements and practices potentially learn and take from it. I claim that the Right to the City movement cannot be isolated from larger struggles in contemporaty Croatian society. They span issues like privatization of public space, gentrification, and the interplay of economic and political elites on the one hand and right to the city, civil disobedience, solidarity and social justice on the other.

Chapter Two

Methodology

In conducting the research I analyzed the actors in Zagreb who participate in this struggle through the analysis of publications of activists, media reports and academic papers who chronicled that struggle. What I'm most interested was to conduct interviews with certain activists and citizens to better understand their motivations, strategies and goals. That was possible due to access I gained as an activist and observer of some of the most visible actions of the defense of public spaces in Zagreb, especial concerning the case of Flower square. From winter 2009 I participated in protest actions and later in May and June in the occupation on Warsaw Street.

Because of the a sustainable coverage of the protest by media and even some research more the ideas and opinions of the main actors are know, the investor, the mayor, local politicians and local government, experts and the leading activists of the NGO-s who started the protests. Some of these actors were even interviewed in 2007 and 2008 by two researchers (Gotovac and Svircic, 2010). I concentrate my research at events that happened in a specific timeframe and place, from January 2010 to the time when my thesis research has ended.

Two events I will present substantially form the point of my respondent; the two most of them emphasized were the turning points for the movement, but also the discourse that surrounded it. The first was the event that occurred on the 15th May 2010 when 300 activists and citizens had torn down a fence surrounding the construction site in spite of it being guards by security guards. Even when riot police came to the scene the activist and the citizens decided to stay and guard the taken space. This event started the occupation of Warsaw Street that lasted more than a month, 33 days exactly.

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The second event I will present more substantially is the protest that occurred on 15th July 2012 when more than 150 citizens were arrested when they showed civil disobedience against the start of the construction secured by the police. The event lasted for eight hours and made the Right to the City movement the main news in Croatia for four days. According to some of the actors this event provoked a crisis of the city government but also showed

The main methodological tools that will be used in conducting the research is qualitative interviewing (Rubin and Rubin, 2005), and in a far smaller amount discourse analysis. In order to get a quality response that might prove a satisfactory response to the research questions unstructured and semi-structured interviews will be used. Informed consent of the respondents is fundamental, and will be a starting point of every interview. As the literature point out, "unstructured interviewing can provide greater breadth than do other types, given its qualitative nature" (Fontana and Prokos, 2007 39). Also the literature acknowledges that an "increasing number of researchers are using a multi-method approach to achieve broader and often better results." (Fontana and Prokos, 2007 112) In my case I would like to combine qualitative interviews and participant observation.

According to Fontana and Prokos, "the very essence of unstructured interviewing, the establishment of human to-human relation with the respondent, and the desire to understand rather than to explain." (2007: 41) The context here is also an issue of context every interview is shaped by the context and is a collaborative effort of both the interviewer and respondent. My background as activist and participant in the actions will allow me to play in part another role, that of and informant. "An insider - a member of the group being studied – who is willing to be an informant and act as a guide and translator of cultural mores and, at time, of jargon or language. Although the researcher can conduct interviews without an informant; he or she can save much time and avoid mistakes if a good informant is available" (Fontana and Prokos, 2007 45). But additionally to that to gather some more sources ad respondents I will

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relay on informants who were even more involved and coordinated and intercept more with the more passive protesters and some special cases of participants.

Some of the respondents were my acquaintances form the protest, some even persons more close to me and that has to be taken into account, but on the other hand that provided an opportunity for the respondents to give more substantial and more personal accounts. Establishing rapport as a researcher abut also as an activist and acquaintance, but "because the goal of unstructured interviewing is understanding it is paramount to establish rapport with respondents, that is, the researcher must be able to take the role of the respondent and attempt to see the situation from their viewpoint rather than superimpose his or her world of academic and preconception upon them. On the other hand the glaze of neutrality should not be maintained others say, "As researcher with a commitment to change, we must de-center ourselves for the 'ivory tower' and constrict more participatory, democratic practices. We must keep people and politics at the center of our research" (Benmayor in Fontana and Prokos, 2007 104). But as I wanted to keep this in mind a also wanted to avoid not to engineer myself into becoming a "spokesperson for the group studied" (Fontana and Prokos, 2007 46). The key wass to find the right balance, and being aware of my concerns from the star of my research was critical for the success of the research process. Armed with a good methodology and having in mind all this elements it is my conviction that the rapport I obitained and the research is productive and will give a contribution to the field.

2.1 Research site:

The majority of the interviews were conducted on Warsaw Street in Zagreb, near to the location where the camp of the protesters was located in May and June 2010. They were conducted in two establishments, a cinema and a café, where some of the activist and citizens also gathered during the occupation and protests. Two interviews with activists were

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conducted in facilities of Green Action, and one of the interviews was conducted at the home of one of the respondents.

I also proposed to some of the respondents walking interviews thought the shopping center of the Flower square project, all of them declined, most of them saying that they never ventured inside. "Interview data are more than verbal records and should include, as much as possible, nonverbal features of the interaction" (Fontana and Prokos, 2007 46). Walking interviews were very helpful because the participants were engaged with the space that is the field of the research. I believe that this type of interview provided me with intricate response beyond just the content of articulated thoughts. I would also like to walk with some of the respondents thought project flower but I do believe that some of theme might decline that.

The only opportunity that presented itself for engagement in participant-observation, as occurred during my preliminary when I visited Zagreb in December 2011. I participated in a protest action on saint Mark's square during which various members of civil society united under the platform 112 presented their demands to the newly formed government after elections. Among the organization were Right to the City and Green Action, who referenced the case of flower square,[1]

2.2. Data:

I focused my research on the most recent developments that happened in 2010 and 2011, which we marked by the height of the protest as well as the construction of the project. But I also conduct interview with people who less publicly voiced their opinion. There are three categories to which I could got access. Activists of the NGO-s, then active supports but not activists of the NGO-s, involved in more then one of the smaller protests. And also a

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group citizens who only came to large protests organized through the network of more than 2000 people called *Human wall for Warsaw Street*.

An also interesting group would be some of the people that could be named passive supporters, the 50 000 people who signed the petition but did not go to protest I did not interview this people. And others who voiced their opinion against the project an opinion poll conducted in 2010. The access to these last two groups of people would not be so easily gained but it could be very rewarding for the research. And a particularly interesting group of citizens who participated it the protests is the one that demanded it to have a broader agenda that would cover other issues that they see problematic in Croatia, and I did interview some of them. Some of those people also joined the antigovernment protests in Zagreb in March 2011.

I spoke to a number of possible respondents when I was in Zagreb during December 2011, and they gave me feedback that they are genuinely interested to contribute to my research. I contacted them again with some other people in April just before I started my research. My orginal plan was to have between eight and ten respondents , I managed to have ten in the end. Also in may I want back to Zagreb and participated in two panels about public space and the common in Croatia, the Region and Europe. This discussions were very informative as from the interaction of the panelist themselves and as from the audience, I also included some of the ideas and statement I got from there in my thesis.

I also managed to conduct some participation-observation, as i joined the activists of more than 20 NGO-s, among them activists of Green Action and Right to the City in a performance/protest that took place on the December 22th 2011 in Zagreb at the first session of the newly elected government. The performance was accompanied by an agenda made by civil society organization about problems that Croatia faces. In it the issues of privatization of

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public space and other issues the Right to the City and Green Action have been working on were put in to a larger perspective and context.

2.3 Fieldwork

I conducted a series of interviews during April and at the beginning of May with before mentioned actors. In total did nine semi-structured interviews and got around 13 hours of audio recording. As the interviews were conducted in Croatian I'm still in the process of translating the parts that are valuable for my thesis. From the core group of activists i managed to interview the president of one of the NGOs, and member of the NGOs that is specialized in urban issues and the coordinates the NGOs urban program under which activities of Right to the City were conducted. I also interviewed two activists that joined the movement as citizens and later on became activist of the NGOs. I interviewed two activists that were also involved both in the Student Movement and in the Right to the City movement that were going on simultaneously and discussed the relations of the two. I interviewed the coordinator, an artist, of the cultural program that ran during the occupation of Warsaw Street and we discussed the performative aspects of the campaign and the relation of art and public protest. I also interviews two people that were not activists but concerned citizens that regularly attended the bigger protests. With the interviews I covered a larger number of topics starting for urban renewal in Zagreb, the issue of use of public space leading to the issue of protests and performance of the campaign of Right to the City. I also manage to get some personal stories and recollection of the activist's on recent urban and social changes in Zagreb and more substantially their participation in protests and campaign for Right to the City. Through the interviews we also touched upon the role of politics, police and media during the campaign, but also how it affected other movements in different Croatia cities that deal with public space, the commons, but also how it influenced the large anti-government protests in

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spring 2011. Six interviews were conducted in Warsaw Street, one at a home of one of the respondents, and two in the office of Green Action.

Chapter Three

Literature review

In the last 40 years researchers have use the concept of gentrification to make sense of the processes of urban renewal in the American and cities of Western Europe. This concept first emerged in urban studies in the 1960s. It was coined by Ruth Glass to explain a process which defining features included the renovation of working class housings, invariably resulting in the displacement of tenants form gentrifying neighborhoods" (Hutchinson, 2010 305). Till this day literature on gentrification has expanded and diversified, and it became an umbrella term for urban investment and redevelopment. Authors such as Neil Smith (2000) maintain that the defining feature of gentrification is that it leads to a change in class relations leading to displacement of the lower income tenants in the gentrified areas. There are several theories to the causes of gentrification, mostly of them developed by authors studying the processes in American cities and cities in Western Europe. Among the theories two are prevailing, the Rent Gap hypothesis theorized by Smith that gentrification is not driven by a middle class but by capital "to exploit investment opportunities opened up by a developing rent gap in run down neighborhoods"(Hutchison, 2010 307)

On the other hand author such as David Ley focused more on the gentrifiers, their patters of consumption and lifestyle. Leys hypothesis is that we are seeing a formation of a new class brought about by the "growth of financial, professional, administrative and other advanced service in postindustrial economies. (Hutchison, 2010 307) There are also other theories have focused on gender, the role of women. The impact on gentrification on displacement is also contested, some researcher claim that there is more that substantial evidence for support of that claim.(see Hutchison, 2010 309)

But some authors see gentrification as part of or at least tide with a bigger process referred to as neoliberalism, contemporary social theory has been commenting on this process at least since the work of David Harvey and the late 1970s. Authors such as Smith (2000), Harvey (2005) Brener and Theodore (2002), explain that the process at hand is brought about by the unconscientious interests of a part of the elite in nation states and various international actors such as corporations, and international financial organizations. This systemic process stems from the theories and practices of neoliberalism brought about by authors as Milton Friedman and the Chicago School of Economics, that were given life thought the policies administrations of Ronald Regan and Margaret Thatcher and others. [2] The main ideological father of Neoliberalism Hayek and Freidman revived the ideas of a particular tenant of classical liberalism, that of Smith, Bentham and James Mill. The key point is that the greatest good is going to emerge from the free exchange in the market, and that the State should just protect it and should withdrew from all other areas that ware in its domain as far as possible. (Hackworth, 2007 9) So the three pillars of neoliberals are the freedom of the individual, free market and noninterventionist state.

What is according to the before mentioned theorists the position of the cities, of urban space, in this process. Through the unfolding of this process of neoliberalism cities have become more autonomous for the states but also never more interconnected into the global

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[2] There has been much discourse about neoliberalism in academia, civil society and politics, although only a few substantial definitions were proposed by the theorists, when I write about the concept I have in mind the definition by Harvey which puts emphasis on political economic practices: "Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to crate and preserve and institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example, the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defenses, police and legal structures and functions required to secure private property right and to guarantee, by force if needed, the proper functioning of the market. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, healthcare, social security or environmental pollution) then they must be created by state action if necessary. But beyond that the state should not venture…" (Harvey, 2005, 2)

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system. "Arguably the city is the scale large enough for a government to that meaningfully power, but still small enough for a democracy in which people can actually affect politics."(Marcuse et all, 2009 6)

As Brener and Theodore claim "the point is not only that neoliberalism affects cities, but also that cities have become the key institutional arenas in and through which neoliberalism is itself evolving" (Brener and Theodore, 2002 ix), But on the other hand even under the constellation of neoliberalism "cities remain crucially important arenas for struggles in the name of social justice, radical democracy, popular empowerment and the politics of defiance" (Brener and Theodore, 2002, x).

3.1 Urban entrepreneurialism

The remaining of the city by the urban elites under the influence of neoliberalism has been startling, although there is a danger of generalization there are substantial evidence that a large number of cities, especial in North America and Europe but more and more in places like China and other developing countries are following a similar set of policies that put them on a similar pattern of development. These before mentioned ideas of neoiberalism were after WWII a minority view but from the 1970s with the crisis of Keynesianism they became far more prominent, and were taken from classrooms and books by part of the political and economic elites in the US and Britain as an ideological, political and economic project. One of the first testing ground according to Harvey was New York City and "by the 1990s, neoliberalism had become the naturalized as the proper mode of governance for a variety of geo-institutional contexts (Hackworth, 2007 9). Going back to the policies and practices of neoliberalism there are three major ones, any redistributive practice/policy is seen as an

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impediment, labor flexibility is crucial for survival in a competitive market, and monetarism is seen as the only intervention of the state (Hackworth 2007 10)

Hackworth also warn us not to be generalizing Neoliberalism, it should be also viewed as a process, and not the only one going on, it occurs with other processes simultaneously. Maybe more valuable concepts that neoliberalism for understanding and analyzing this transformation of the urban are the notions of neoliberalization and that of actually existing neoliberalism. For Harvey the radical transformation and the interconnectedness of the global and national economies, especial in the financial sector under neoliberalization have lead to the competitiveness of various cities for capital and investment and to keep them in the city. "The urban governance has thus become much more oriented to the provision of a good business climate and construction of all sorts of lures to bring capital into town" (Harvey 1989 11).

Under such pressures what are the main the policies and strategies of the entrepreneurial city. Authors such as MacLeod and others build up on Harvey's three main claims about neoliberal cities and neoliberal governance, the public-private partnership involving public risk and private gain (MacLeod, 2002 604). The neoliberal cry for autonomy and agency on the part of city government seem far from reality if we take this into account. But all these has led to that now "the idea that municipal governments should behave as economically efficient, business-friendly, anti-deficit entities is now an axiom rather than a debated policy shift among city managers." (Hackworth, 200739)

The public private partnerships as one of the key elements is very present in the realm of real-estate, but also in governance and city services. The most sought after strategies for the neoliberal reimagining of the city are private investment in so called flagship projects. These are large scale real-estate projects whose main purpose is to carry the wave of potential new

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investment into the city, they are seen as one of the key elements in city government policies in the last 20 years in the "effort to reinforce the competitive position of their metropolitan economies in context of rapidly changing local, national, and global competitive conditions" (Swyngedouw et al., 2002 548). These projects are seen as "a mean for generating further growth and for waging a competitive struggle to attract investors" (Swyngedouw et al., 2002 551)But it is also apparent that for all the resources the cities give investor for such projects the key elements riding the wave of investment are speculation and in part consumption.

3.2. The critique of urban entrepreneurialism

These projects are also often tied with the process of gentrification, and they give a twist to that process as we use to know it. Gentrification was first identified as a middle class moving into a working class neighborhoods, as it has been stated that capita pays a large part in that but the agency of gentrifiers was also important. Under neoliberalization large corporate gentrifiers are the key players more than small-scale occupiers (Hackworth, 2007 126) With that process under way in the cities we are witnessing formations of new urban boundaries, an "archipelago of normalized enclosures" (MacLeod 2002 607) of developed renewed space among a spreading sea of urban decay and poverty outside these small "islands".

But within the project themselves there is also another change. The area that they occupy becomes privatized. Space that was in a lot of instances public becomes private. The entrance to it is accessible during the time that the corporate interest decides, and private security can regulate and enforce that. It can also exclude those who are seen as not belonging there. Urban development projects thus become an "elite paying fields on which the stake is to shape an urban future in line with the aspiration of the most powerful segment(s) among the participant" (Swyngedouw et. al 2002 568).

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There are jobs for local residents offered in the projects but most often these jobs are different as those these people held before. The jobs offered are in the service sector which is far less secure and more poorly paid and with less opportunities for advancing (Hackworth 2007 170), so additionally to the flexibility of the local population to even be consider for this new jobs, they provide also less security for an permanent income and well being for the citizens. The neoliberal remaining of the city has radical transformed it and its citizens and is presented by political and economic elites as having no alternative. But that is far from the whole story citizens, initiatives but also some local governments have a different vision of the development of their cities, and are prepared to struggle for it, and it is the actions and practice of those actors that show that neoliberalization and the neoliberal city are not the only game in town.

The arguments of the benificiality of urban entrepreneurialism and public-private partnership don't take into account that cities are in the same level on the playing filed some cities are in a far better position in that field that others. Because of "the widespread adoption of urban entrepreneurialism in an urban system can reinforce inequalities between cities lead all to easily to a zero sum game in which all cities feel compelled to engage in urban entrepreneurialism even if it leads to a form of inter-urban competition which becomes more destructive than constructive"(Hackworth, 2007 286). Public-private partnerships sometimes do include representatives of organized labor but that is almost never the case with neighborhood movements consisting of people which get most affected by such projects.

Urban Entrepreneurialism according to Hackworth relies on two key assumptions that are questionable to say the least. It looks at cities as firms that are on the same level of playing field and possess the same access to resources together with full information. That crude economistic vision doesn't take into account the specificities of cities. Hackworth points to three crucial dimensions that make the difference. The first is that each city is differently

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embedded in the social system of production. That means that the same prescriptions and practices of urban entrepreneurial can have radically different outcomes. The second is the geographic and historical role the city has within the political system, it's history is a important element how well can a city respond and adopt to changing circumstances. The third difference is the issue of political favoritism; a city can have a far better position within the national government at the expense of other cities. The example Hackworth gives are cities in the US which are centers of defends production, giving them favoritism with the federal defense policies and resources (Hackworth, 2007 300). Another example can be Zagreb after the independence of Croatia from Yugoslavia has become which from the capital of a federal unit has become the capital city of the country and gained on importance as all the government institutions and thought this is also gating a favorable position.

To sum up, without the regard for the social and territorial equality issues competitiveness and urban growth can worsen the situation a city might be in. "No convincing evidence has been advanced to demonstrate that the increase in private sector investment in economic growth and employment has matched alone exceeded public spending increases on entrepreneurial strategies, the result is the net transfer of societal wealth from the public to the private sector"(Burstein and Rolnick in Hackworthy, 2007:305). It could be summarized that the main difference of cities and firms is in the following, firms are responsible for making profit, and cities should be responsible for the welfare for their inhabitants.

3.3. Urban entrepreneurialism and the post-socialist city

The processes of urban renewal and urban entrepreneurialism have not been so thoroughly studied in the post-socialist context as they have been in the United States and Western Europe. Of course the main reason being that these processes have started only later with the

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transition the introduction of the market economy and private investment. Yet post-socialist they might prove to be the most interesting cases to study this processes. These cities as well as societies made perhaps the most radical transformation in the 100 years. The series of transformations in those societies, from the one party system to liberal democracy, from a centrally planned to a free market economy, and from social ownership of the means of production and wealth to radical privatization and the reassertion of private property rights was startling. Stanilov writes that "the rate of the post-socialist urban change is striking, leading to radical transformations in the character of the Central and Eastern European cities. From high-density, mono-centric settlements, dominated by high-rise public housing and communal mode of transportation, the CEE cities are being transformed into sprawling, multi-nodal metropolitan areas reaching extreme levels of privatization of housing, services, transportation, and public space. Privatization has become 'the leitmotiv of post-socialist urban change' (Bodnar, 2001)" (Stanilov 2007 7). The urban proved to be one of the most rewarding fabric to track this changes, but more than just a mirror of the overarching processes going on in transitions societies, Stanilov asserts that "the post-socialist transition period provided good evidence that urban space utilization is an active element of structuring social relations… the quality of the built environment is becoming one of the main factors in the global competition for capturing investors' attention" (Stanilov, 2007 5)

The direction of the transformation lacked clearance, for the political elites and citizens it was a clear transition from what they want to go away from but not what they want to reach. The emphasis was on the rate of transformation especially in the first years when it was dominated by "the neoliberal economic doctrine… transplanted in the post-socialist context" (Stanilov, 2007 22). Ideas such as shock therapy advocated by people like Jeffrey Sachs and their eastern European counterparts. But soon *the where and to whom* became apparent, "the main direction of urban spatial restructuring could be defined as a transfer of

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assets, resources, and opportunities for the public to the private realm" (Stanilov, 2007 11). With all the talk of markets being the cure for this crumbling societies and cities, in most cases they have "failed to alleviate new pressure points in the urban system" (Stanilov 2007, 13), but they also manage to create new ones.

This general picture should do be refined; the countries that have followed the more or less same model did reached different result, Czech Republic, Croatia or Ukraine. Stanilov sees three main factor why this is so. One is the "level of commitment to political, economic, and institutional reform", the second is "path dependency" countries that had more experimented with the market economy and reforms like Hungary, countries who had a strong position and economic power like the Czech Republic. The third is the level of foreign investment" (Stanilov, 2007 27). That foreign direct investment ended in the a greet number of cases in the real estate sector in the newly formed real estate market of the post-socialist countries.

But this did not occur in all the post-socialist cities, so we must account disparities. Some socialist countries started early experiment with the market the first being Yugoslavia spearheading reforms in the end of the 1970-s and beginning of 1980-s but it wasn't until the 1990-s that the real transition in the market economy happen. Many of the countries followed neoliberal policies of liberalization deregulation requested from them by stand by arrangements of the IMF to get their debt under control. Although in the caste of Croatia the debt got only bigger but we must account for the specificities of the impact of the aggression by Serbia and Montenegro and the Homeland war which was among other developments had the most devastating effect on the economy and the society of the Country. But most of the economic reforms were undertaken precisely in that time. Other countries as the Czech Republic have hade smoother transition but also the more systematic implementation of these policies.

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That does not mean that the socialist states have not had urban development project there were massive developing projects in the socialist states. Cities as Krakow Prague and Zagreb grew considerably for the 1950 onward in an effort to by the regimes to create a working substantial working class. Whole neighborhoods and even cities were build whit social owned housing units most often in the form of prefabricated larger or smaller blocks. Cracow Nowa Huta is maybe the paradigmatic example. But the post-socialist urban development was quite different.

In his article on urban renewal in Prague Cook asserts that "There are certain similarities between different post-socialist states regarding the transformation of housing markets in terms of the processes of property privatization, restitution, internalization and increased residential differentiation and inequality."(Cook, 2010 613) Here Cook sees that such development echo those in the US or Britain researched by other authors (Cook, 2010 621). Another valuable insight that Cook brings to the discussion is that the very nature of this ongoing process. The goals that politicians and entrepreneurs proclaimed seem not to be the ones being reached. "Processes of liberalization, privatization, restitution and internationalization, traditionally seen as indicators of "transition" toward an imagined end state of neoliberal capitalism practices of urban regeneration… should not be seen as a midway of transitory point between the state socialist era and the imagined goal of 'mature', 'western' institutions and practices. Rather then, I pose that the situation presented in Prague should be seen as specifically and distinctly post-socialist, rather than subsuming understanding post-socialism into dominant universals discourses of globalization and transition."(Cook, 2010 625) This is one of the questions that I also want to build upon in my research on the case of Zagreb. How much can we talk of the specificities of the development of the post-socialist cities, as different to the cities in the US and Western Europe.

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3.4. Urban entrepreneurialism and urban renewal in post-socialist Zagreb

In the article *Urban development, legislation, and planning in post-socialist Zagreb* Cavrić and Nedović-Bundić classify the urban development of Zagreb in three modernizations, the first modernization took place in the decades leading to the turn of the 20th century, the second modernization implemented during socialism that was characterized by building of massive housing estates the majority on the south bank of the Sava River, named New Zagreb, a city the size almost the size of old Zagreb across the river Sava is a good example of that, build upon the socialist remaking of the modernist ideals. Although envisioned as a functional and integrated new city for the working class it was never fully developed and thus became Zagreb similarly to other socialist cites not more than large sleeping quarter for the proletariat. Also the older inner city neighborhoods have experienced change a majority of the apartment where nationalized and given as social property to the citizens the best being taken by the higher ranking members of the communist parties.

After the fall of communism and the breakup of Yugoslavia most cities in Croatia struggled but Zagreb continued its growth, especially because of it's new central position in the now independent country, backed by the ideas of the right-wing government that it should be a metropolis and center for all Croats living in Croatia as well as abroad. Through the 1990-s the city started its third modernization which is still ongoing but for more then a decade this process was not adequately regulated leading to a rise in illegal construction and chaotic practices on the level of neighborhoods. That was especial the case with new neighborhoods that have arisen on the periphery but also in the protected are of the park forest of Medvednica on the north edge of the city, the inner city was also effected in a lesser extent by this processes. In an effort to stop these trends a new master plan was finally adopted in 2003, but it became the document of contestation. For my topic it the plan is important because it had far more developed social dimension and conservative of the inner city. "The

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plan classified Zagreb's urban territory in three zones: highly consolidated area (including the historical core in which a strict planning regime is applied), consolidated areas (lower density areas with elaborate street networks governed by more flexible zoning), and unconsolidated areas (lower density zones where large scale redevelopment schemes are permissible) (Stanilov, 2007: 389). The position of mayor of Zagreb can be seen as the most active and most powerful proponent of urban entrepreneurialism in Zagreb. As Cavrić and Nedović-Bundić write "his position is a special case of concentrated political power, combining the function of a politician, urban governor, and entrepreneur. On one hand, this position gives the mayor the power to break through the routines of everyday government operation to advance megaprojects, which can enhance a city's competitiveness in global capital markets. On the other hand, it gives the mayor the opportunity to spend a lot of time with ordinary citizens from his constituency, attending to their problems and needs. (Stanilov, 2007: 396). It has been asserted that the actual mayor of Zagreb Milan Bandic has use this favorable position to bypass "routine planning procedures and to establish adequate public-private partnership acting as initiator, executor, supervisor, or critic of mega-city project such as the city gas pipe-line, the Bundek recreational area… and many more"(Stanilov 2007:396)

As in other post-socialist cities the introduction of shopping centers and their mushrooming are showing new patterns for the citizens in the suburbs and far from the city center and nods of public transport. There are seen as new meeting places and place of entertainment and culture by some, but still they can replace the city center. But another alarming is the development of shopping centers in the city center. The shopping centers Kaptol Center and Prebrear gardens where the first build but the project Flower and Ban center there are implementing this logic in the very heart urban core of Zagreb. Apart from the urban core of the American cities which broad abut the entrepreneurial model, the city center of Zagreb did deteriorate during socialism, but never to the extent as city centers in American

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cities. Within the neoliberal entrepreneurial frame this project are present as giving new life to the inner city and new value, but we can also see them as retires of the urban core, they are not bringing new value to the core but are extracting it form their surrounding, they attractiveness does came from their surroundings not the other way around. There is also evidence that their presence is affecting the city core in a negative way. They affect the public space and environment and health issues. The introduction of underground garages are seen as a cure for the congestation of the city center with traffic of automobiles, but on the other hand they are seen as bringing even more traffic into the city center, taking space of public transport and pedestrians. Models that are presented in Zagreb, and other socialist cites are already model given up by American and western European cites decade ago because their effect were harmful to the city core and its inhabitants.

3.5. The right to the city

The Right to the City is becoming more and more prominent concepts in today's critical urban scholarship as well as in social movements. But according to the literature but also in the way in which it materializes in discourses and actions it remains a fluid and not well defined concept (Prucell 2002). These struggles to gain access but even more struggles for social justice in the city are put by authors like Harvey under the umbrella term Right to the city. Developed originally by French philosopher Henry Lefebvre who maintained that "the right to the city cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed right to urban life" (Lefebvre 2000, 158). The Right to the city according to Harvey is "more than the individual liberty to access urban recourse: it is aright to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitable

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depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization"
(Harvey, 2008 23).

So the key element from which the Right to the city stems is for Lefebvre
participation in the urban life of the city. As Mitchell asserts „the most important is Lefebvre's
normative argument that the city is an ouvre – a work in which all its citizens
participate"(Mitchell, 2003 17). The problem of the contemporary cities in the stage of late
capitalism is that we as citizens are alienated from it as an ouvre. „More and more spaces of
the modern city are being produced for us rather than by us"(Mitchell, 2003 18). At the core
of the right to the city is the right to inhabit, to appropriate the city, but it is also more than
that. Lefebvre tries to make a clear distinction between it and the right to private property. In
other words the "essence of Lefebvre's vision is to favor those who inhabit space over those
who own it" (Prucell, 2006 1936). The right to the city in Lefebvre view is the road to radical,
almost revolutionary, urbanism in the spirit of the Paris Commune. But the question we have
to pose ourselves is what is to be done on the day after. When the "cry and demand" has been
voiced and struggle is going on and gaining some ground. Mitchell gives some good points
about the Right to the city as radical idea put in to practice in the real realm of politics. It is
the cry and demand in and for public space as space of representation. „This process of taking
of space – has often – indeed, I will say always – been contentious. It has ever been a
struggle"(Mitchell, 2003 231). In Mitchell words there is more to that, "social action and
struggle always operates simultaneously to influence the production of law and the production
of space "(Mitchell, 2003 29). The very spontaneity from which it arises helps it direct against
power. „Without spontaneity nothing happens, nothing progresses. Power therefore regards
spontaneity as the enemy"(Merrifield, 2002 87) this spontaneity is expressed according to
Lefebvre in the street precisely because it is not occupied by institutions (Merrifield, 2002
87).

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As the literature also notes there is also a fear that such notion will be appropriated only to the local scale, the city, without having the bigger picture in mind. So we have to issues here the concept can be either too broad or to narrow. Lefebvre can be also used to help because he himself was stressing the interconnected of the city and its surroundings and that the rural and the urban are really a false dichotomy. On the other hand the possible pitfalls but also successes are presented when the Right to the City in envisioned in the global scale.

Moving away from the theories in the realm of activism we find a large number of social movements that appropriated the ideas of Right to the City for a collection of vastly different goals and projects. The use of such a concept in the struggles is welcome because it has the potentiality of bringing this various movement closer or even together in their struggle against the various inequalities and problem they address, but also it can make us fall in the trap that we see also various processes and local conditions as the same pattern of a global schema.

In cities across the globe citizens are demanding this right to the city. Connolly and Steil confirm that the concept echoed with many and "has animated a dynamic coalition of community organizations and other civil society groups across the U.S. calling for economic and environmental justice. Member of this s Right to the city alliance have been active nation wide fighting gentrification and calling for a right to land and housing free from pressure of real estate speculations and that can serve as cultural and political spaces to build sustainable communities"(Marcuse et. all, 2009 8)

Marcuse points out that the Right to the city has become a "major formulation of progressive demand for social change around the word"(Marcuse et. all 246). He lists the many charters and declaration signed by hundreds of group which ended up in producing the *World Charter*

on Right to the City[3]. The Right to the City alliance in the US comprised of 20 groups from 8 cities has adopted in Atlanta in 2007 a statement of principle what the right to the city would entail (see Marcuse, 2009 247).

Mayer following Caldarovic acknowledged the struggle in Zagreb and situates in a more boarder pictures. "The practices against gentrification along with New York, Paris, Amsterdam Hamburg and Berlin activist and citizens thought their struggles have put Zagreb on the map. As Mayer writes the 'Right to the City' group in Zagreb which for three years prevented – with petitions, blockades, and broad support from the public – the implementation of an investor plan to develop the central Flower square into an upscale, exclusive, traffic-rich plaza with underground parking to jumpstart gentrification of the surrounding area" (Mayer, 2011 71-72)

After this overview of some of the theories and practices of the right to the city it can be said that we must be aware of the danger and possibility of corruption of the concept. So we must avoid not falling into the local trap on the one hand, and on the other hand positioning it to broadly to mean everything and accordingly nothing. Still it can be asserted that the Right to the City as a concept, but even more as a practice, is something that has great transformative potential in our cities and beyond. But as with neoliberalism we could also be in danger to make to broad strokes to generalize these struggles. Because of that it is important to studies more thoroughly the individual cases, to asses their strategies, claims and

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[3]This document and the social movement behind it try to push an even border agenda, and see more target and sources of inequalities that just capitalism, and just the working class as the agent of change. The inhabitants in these movement are positioned broader the Lefebvre's working class, and their claim is addressed not only in the streets but also to the institutions. An even more encouraging statement in my mind is the Mexico City Charter signed in 2010 which picks up on the Word Charter articles incorporating Lefebvre's ideas of right to appropriation of urban space and right to participation of those who inhabit. Mexico is not the only example of such what can be seen as steps in the right direction, although research of this developments and practices should be pursued.

goals and se the existing similarities but also differences in these movements. This is why I

want to look more thoroughly on the case in Zagreb

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The "Alliance Operation City", a prelude to the Right to the city movement in Zagreb

The Right to the City movement in Zagreb whose activities culminated in 2010 with the month long occupation of Warsaw Street in the center of the city and massive protests by citizens had its roots and base in civil society in Zagreb. It started as an initiative of various more or less connected youth NGOs and organization of independent culture. It gained ground in 2005 under the banner *Alliance Operation City*. According to Luke who was one of the leaders of the alliance, one of the founding members of the Alliance Operation City, the initiative was formed because the organizations of youth and independent culture realized they had the same problems, namely the lack of spaces in the city where programs for youth and independent culture could be organized and housed.

The city of Zagreb had not long before that adopted a strategy for youth but it did not implement it so the Alliance started an advocacy process to make the city do it. The city and the initiative discussed a couple of possible locations in the city for the programs. The initiative identified/focus on the unused industrial spaces which used to house now closed down factories in the center of the city spaces. According to the law these spaces were protected cultural heritage sites, and could not be demolished and used for real estate development. As local elections in Zagreb were soon to be conducted, the Alliance Operation City decided to occupy one of those spaces to make the public and the politician aware of these issues. They occupied the space of the former factory *Badel* and launched a 10 day cultural festival that attracted more than 15 000 visitors, including Milan Bandic the mayor of Zagreb, who voiced his supported for the Alliance and the event by saying on television that „Europe is for this ten days in Zagreb".

The alliance also drafted a nine point *Declaration on Youth and Independent Culture* and presented it to the political parties competing for the election, most of them including Bandic of the Social Democratic Party who was campaigning for a new term, and won the election in 2005, signed the declaration. Run-on sentence The mayor promised that he will take steps to implement the demands from the declaration into city policy and that soon Badel and other spaces would be given to the youth and independent culture. After a year in power none of the promises were kept and the members of the Alliance have grown impatient and started realizing that the promised spaces would not end up in the hands of the youth and independent culture but could be used for other means, mostly commercial. Luke said that they realized that the problem was bigger and did not just concerns the youth and independent culture but all citizens of Zagreb. The problem was the city had no vision how to use its valuable spaces, that it did not have strategy for those spaces, which could be used for the public and the citizens of Zagreb, but that all issues in the city were handled particularly,meaning and involving particular interests. The alliance would need a more radical, active and visible approach to the problems.

4.1 Putting the Right to the City on the agenda

According to Luke the tipping point occurred when in 2006 they saw that the Major advertised the city's annual manifestation *Youth Salon* with large billboards with his own identity card presenting himself as a supporter of Zagreb's youth. In response members of the Alliance met and decided to make a protest action, during one night they crossed the face of the mayor with red tape on seventy of the billboards. The second stage of action would be next day for which they prepared large sticker with the slogan *Right to the City* that they would stick on the crossed billboards and make a press conference about the unfulfilled promised to the youth and independent culture scene, and the use and misuse of space in the city.

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The crossed billboards started media uproar, the mayor said that this might be the work of a new political party, or maybe even the city's criminal underworld threatening him. The information was soon leaked that the Alliance is behind it and journalists came into one of the meeting of the alliance in the culture club Mama. Representatives from the alliance appeared on the media and presented their case this time as spokespersons for the initiative the Right to the City, and so the Right to the City movement in Zagreb was born. When asked for a comment on the initiative's press conference the mayor only said "The Patient one will be the one saved", dismissing the whole action, but soon the activist used this as a new slogan in their campaign.

On the question as to how they came up with the slogan The Right to the City, and did they know that movements in other cities used the same slogan Luke said that they did not know about those movements at that time, and that the slogan just sounded right to them. He said that in retrospect these movements were and are fighting the same processes, and started to communicate and share experience with each other at a later stage. However, some other activists I interviewed, John for example, have told me that the members of the initiative were aware of these movements even back then, at the very start.

In the summer of 2006, the Right to the City initiative found a case on which it could raise the stakes and present the issues of use and misuse of space in the city to the citizens more clearly. It involved one of the possible spaces for the youth information center that the city proposed to the Alliance a year before. This was a building in a protected downtown block on Zagreb Flower square where member of the alliance also conducted some culture program in the years past. However, after the initial proposal the city soon stopped further negotiations. The activists soon found out why, the city made a bid to investors to regenerate part of the same city block on flower square, the public was not informed on that bid, and the proposal of the investor that won the bid was one that incorporated the demolition of the same

building. A newly established company named IMMO Worldwide Zagreb won the bid in the name of HOTO Group, a company founded by Croatian real estate entrepreneur Tomislav Horvatincic. This was not Horvaticic's first project in the city, he already build a small shopping center in another city block that was labeled as an urban renewal project. His HOTO group also build a business tower in 2004, now housing the offices of Croatian Telekom, part of Deutsche Telekom, and in 2005 they build the first gated community in Croatia name Hoto Villa's in the town of Sveta Nedjelja near Zagreb.[4] Luke explained to the position of Right to the City initiative had on the case:

> We realized that we had a case on which we could unmask the two things
> we wanted, the catastrophic politics of space of the city, that all important
> spatial resources in the city would destroyed or sold, and that everything
> was done for particular interests. This could be the case we could get
> support of citizens, and it would not seem that we are fighting just for our
> own interests."when you cite always include a footnote/endnote "Personal
> interview, date, place (Luke, interview, April, 2012)

According to Luke there were multiple layers to the Flower square case the Right to the City initiative could challenge and bring to the public. First there was that issues that the city has not allocated the space to the youth but to and investor, although it had the right to buy the property first. The second layer was that the building to be demolished was located in the by the heritage law and cites Master plan protected lower city block. In order for the investor to build the project the master plan of the city had to be changed to allow demolition of the building and the denivelation? in the adjacent Warsaw street. This denivelation was at

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4 Horvatincic and Bandic also made public statement that they are friends but that this relationship did not in have any effect on Horvatincic winning the bid.
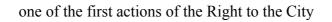
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the center of the third layer of the case, that concerning public space, Warsaw Street was a pedestrian zone, part of it would be destroyed to build an access ramp to a private garage for the new project. The forth layer was the environmental issue, should the city center be a pedestrian and traffic free zone, and according to that less polluted. However, members of the Right to the city initiative knew that they as a newly established and not well-known initiative would not be able to carry the case alone. Luke was at that time also on the board of another NGO, the environmental NGO Green Action, which already in 1996 made a protest and petition against the first reconstruction of Flower Square, then they managed to collect 17 000 signatures against it. Luke and others knew that Green Action had an established network of activists, knowhow and experience in public protest and actions that their inactive lacked. As an established NGO, it also could function as a shield against possible political attacks and smearing campaigns against the younger and less established member of the Right to the City initiative. Other members of the initiative would contribute more financially and give the campaign the performative aspect that would come for their work in independent culture.

The first press conference on which The Right to the City initiate and Green action presented these issue to the public happened on December 6, 2006. The synergy proved to be fruitful, in less than two months the initiative together with the support Green Action manage to collect 55 000 signature of the citizens agent? the that change of the cities Master plan that would make the project on flower square a reality. What was started as a movement for a particular problem of a few youth NGOs and independent culture organizations in Zagreb in four-year time would grow into a citizens movement, that would outgrow it founding organizations and case and present the issues of space and its use as contested an important one on the national level.

The crossed out picture of Milan Bandic, the Mayor of Zagreb,

one of the first actions of the Right to the City

Right to the City activists with "The Patient one will be the one saved" t-shirts

in front of the Badel factory complex

"It is worth mentioning that some NGOs, such as Green Action and Green Forum, have participated in several events concerning important environmental and planning issues. "Authoritarian segments of the city government are fearful of challenges posed by NGOs and the actions of community groups organized at the grassroots level in individual self-governing quarters" (Stanilov, 2007 402). Croatia has a history of small but vibrant civil society, that

started in the end of the 1980-s through various environmental, peace and feminist initiatives and organization, that have matured and developed during the 1990-s, especial through the anti-war movement (Kekez, 2011). But only in the 2000-s has civil society started to tackle the issues of urban space, and public space in particular. "*Travno moj kvart* organization was one of the first attempts in Zagreb to articulate and protect public space interest and initiate the public debate."(Božić 2007 15). I evolved around the issue of building a new catholic church in a public park in the Travno neighborhood build during socialism, and was active from 2001 to 2005. It also formulate itself as a initiative for public space and not as some actor tried to present it as anti-church, their main campaign slogan was "Yes to the church but not in our park!" The NGO Green Action was also active in promoting urban issues like the bicycle lanes and pollution for the ever increasing traffic in Zagreb, before it aligned with Right to City and jointly started more directly to tackle the problem of public space in Zagreb.

For the protesting citizens one of the major issues was that of public space, and they maintained that the project transforms the public space of the street into private space. This leads us to the question how do the activist and citizens envision their cities, and their participation in the Public space, a space that "must be open 24 hours in a day, they must be open for all citizens of a certain city or any kind of visitors. It is also very important that different activates could be organized on pubic space / organized and spontaneous. In another way public space must be permeable" (Caldarovic and Sarinic, 2008 376). This concern about the public space on part of the citizens can be seen a reaction to the "trend in post-socialist cities of Central and Eastern Europe (that) has been marked by a sharp decline in the provision of public space" (Stanilov, 2007 276). It might be rewarding to see how different movement in post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe address this issue, and the research on the Zagreb case could be a good starting point for future comparison.

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Also there have to be taken into account in the specificity of the Flower square as a symbolic place and public space for more than a hundred years. The building on the square until recently housed a cinema, a publishing house, small shops, cafes and bookstores. The square went a controversial reconstruction in the 1990s which was not approved by many of the citizens. Recently most of them closed and were replaced by mobile phone company store and banks and the cinema by the Flower Passage project. The only feature that remained were the reconstructed kiosks where flowers can be bought for what the square got its name from. The street that formed the pedestrian zone next to the square, Warsaw street, where the most of the protests were held, and which was occupied by activist and citizens for more the month also maintained a high symbolic content as it houses the Constitutional Court of Croatia which function is to uphold the constitution rights, including that of right of assembly. Part of street was transformed into access ramp to the private underground garage of the project Flower and the rest actually serves as a terrace for the many cafes of project Flower.

But in the eyes of the citizens the project became more than a issues of the access and use of public space in Zagreb. For them it became the synonym for an "alliance" of the economic power of private capital and the political power of politicians against the citizens in Croatia. The call of many of the protesting citizen to expand the focus of the protest form the specific project and even Zagreb to problems emerging form the process of transition in Croatia seem to indicate that many of the protesters were interested in boarder issues than just gentrification, public space or power struggles in the city of Zagreb.

4.5 Contesting the Changes of the Urban Master plan of Zagreb

The document of contestation on which the initiative tried to show that it doesn't fight just against a single project but against a potential bigger project that would transform the entire center of Zagreb.

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In order to get credibility, the initiative formed a urbanistic council composed of architects, urbanists, art historians that assisted them in formulation their demand on the level on planning documents. This council made complaints on the changes and additions to the master plan concerned with lower town blocks. They showed that it on one hand was tailored to accommodate the Project flower, but on the other hand would make a frame to radically alter the urban structure of lower town as a protected and finished part of Zagreb's urban fabric. The main complaint was that in the changes pushed by the city administration there is not "visible a clear basic stance on Lower town, because it wants to reconcile the irreconcilable regulations, those on protection of the historical core and those on new building in the blocks"(Complaints). According to the urbanstic council the changes would allow building in 16 lower town blocks which are finished structures, and would change their physical but also social fabric. Another problem was posed by the idea that to access the block if vaguely defined public interest is found can be granted by denivelation existing public spaces. The basic irreconcilability of the new regulation point to conflict on interests of entrepreneurs with the property rights and interests of existing residents. On the other hand the regulation the urbanist council proposed would in their prevent such conflicts, establish clear rules of the game for the entrepreneurs and would "improve social, ecological and economic condition of protection and sanitation of the historical center of Zagreb, lower city". This regulation were represented as public interest seen in the legitimacy of the petition of 54 000 citizens the Right to the city initiative collected.

4.3 Building circles of trust and making direct action

As the campaign intensified and the Right to the city indicative broadened, but as the same according to the interviews came more and more under attack, the decision was made to establish circles of trust between the growing networks of activists. On meetings of group 200

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from time to time new persons were invited or showed up and it was determined that new persons should be known to least one existing member of the group before he or she could attend the meeting. Why is this significant? explain

Another important issue was the new media technologies that were used substantially by the initiative for the organization, networking and protests. One of the core members of the initiative was Multimedia institute which for more than a decade was studying the new media and employing them in activism. One of the main tools was the mailing list on which the activists shared information and discussed issues, and on which information about meeting were announced. Facebook was also used as a tool; people could join the group *We won't give Warsaw street!* , there were also Facebook events created for every protests. One of the key tools was the internet site nedamovarsavsku.net, on which people could join the so called *Live Wall for Warsaw Street*, and live their contact information there. By this they would be informed through a mailing list, and also through SMS on impending actions or protests. Till the end of the campaign that group numbered more that 4000 citizens.

One of the tools that was never mentioned in public were the cameras set up by the activists in Warsaw street that allowed them to monitor the activities in the street 24 hours a day to be alerted if the construction starts. The prompt reaction on the construction and was possible because of that among other tools used. The activist formed shifts and monitor the live streaming from Warsaw Street from the comfort of their homes.

When suspicious activities in the street became apparent, might it be a rise in the number of construction worker, security guard or police officer, a activist that would notice that on live streaming would immediately contacted core members of the group by telephone. The core members would then phone the so called callers, a subgroup of the group 200 who each had around 15 activists to call. These activists would then respond ideally in one hour. So in an event of within two hour of start of activity the initative could have between 50 and

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150 people in the street, that would provide a serious disruption of activities, be it construction or otherwise, until more activist and citizens could be alerted and summoned.

A second wave of activist were contacted by SMS, group 500 that could respond between three hours, and after that the Living Wall for Warsaw street was alerted. Within a day of the start a substantially more massive protest could be made that would halt the? construction. This process was put in motion on 17th of May when activists? early in the morning saw that the construction workers with assistance from security guards and police officer set up a fence in Warsaw Street to start construction work. The police forces withdrew soon after but the security guards stayed. Around 50 activists were in Warsaw Street in a matter of hours and till noon managed to block three trucks from entering the construction site. In the meantime the SMS were sent to the larger group of supporter and the live wall, and also the media started reporting the story.

The key for maintaining the group 200 active and ready to respond were the regular meetinsg the group had where the group discussed and made decisions together with the leadership. One of my interviewees observed that:

> Some other NGOs and some people who are also active in public space thought that we have this 200 people who just wait around for us to call and that we can order them to do whatever. They didn't realize that we had this people that this people were interested because they were participating in the decision making (on the campaign). We did get this people by ordering them want to do but because they participated in making decision. These people can be activated again but for that its is needed a new period of communication, meetings and making decisions together. (Michael, May 2012 interview).

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So far I have described and analyzed tactics for ensuring swiftness. What emerged from this section is a patterning of activity which consists of constant return to (some) horizontality through meetings.

4.4 "Occupy" Warsaw Street

The following account comes in most part from my own observation and reflections of the events I witnessed and participated in on that day, as well as accounts by the media and video and photo records[5], with substantial input from the reflection of some of my interviewees who participate in the event. The first day of the occupation of Warsaw Street, on May 17th 2010 space turned form public space of the street into a private space of a construction site. The demolition of a part of the fence by the activists and citizens turned part of it again into public space. But during the struggle almost every inch of it was contested. When the first part of the fence fell and citizens burst into the "private space" a protester was apprehended by the security guards and taken into custody. That only infuriated the protesters and they demolished a far larger portion of the fence after which the security guards retreated and the same space on which the apprehended the protests minutes ago they did not venture. As one of my interviewees recollected the mood and energy the protesters demonstrated that day

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[5] all of Croatian mayor newspapers reported about the protest the next day, as well in the online editions, numerous internet portal also reporeted on it as well, and so did TV channels. The headlines about is   are also very intersting for example: *How the Warsaw wall fell* (http://www.tportal.hr/vijesti/hrvatska/68607/Pogledajte-kako-je-pao-varsavski-zid.html), *War for Warsaw Street: The Activists demolished the fence of HOTO and occupied the territory* (http://dalje.com/hr-zagreb/foto--rat-za-varsavsku--aktivisti-srusili-ogradu-hoto-a-i-zauzeli-teritorij/305646), *Riots in Warsaw Streets: security guards have taked one of the activist hostage* (http://www.nacional.hr/clanak/83651/neredi-u-varsavskoj-zastitari-uzeli-jednog-aktivista-za-taoca   ). One of the best sources for the analsis of the protest come from amature video footage of the activists and citizens themselvs which ended up on sites like youtube.

I remember I was so full of adrenalin, and next to me an 80 year old granny, she can barely walk, but she is hitting the fence, she doesn't want to give the public space away. (People from) every generation were present there. That was not destructive energy, it was positive energy, and the fence just couldn't sustain that energy. We have toppled (the fence) and now we were going to sleep there. That was not planned, to stay there, we had to decide there, and it was decided by voting on the spot. That energy has also taken the organization themselves (Right to the city initiative and Green Action to start the occupation of the street,) you just can't go against it.

I asked my interviewees how they would describe the demolishing of the fence, was it a violent act, one that would go against the core principles of the Right to the city initiative (as the media characterized it). This core principle was the issue of nonviolence; it was one that was not up to debate between the core group and the citizens. The NGOs and the activists made it clear that at the moment violence between the police or security guards and the protester occurred on behalf the protesters they would end the campaign, and each individual would be held responsible for their actions. It seems that point was never crossed, although there were events and opportunities that it was reached and one was the demolition of the fence on May 17th. Still even on 15th July on the day of massive arrests, after most of the core activists were arrested the citizens themselves did not resort to violence. They acted as they learned through the campaign even if they were not present at all protests, the citizens understood that nonviolent resistance was the mode of conduct in the Right to the city movement.

One of my interviewees responded to my question about violence saying that the demolishing of the fence was spontaneous:

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(the dismantling of) the fence was unexpected, that happened, that was not voted upon(in the group meeting beforehand)… result would be the same(the project would be build) if we ended the campaign there or a year later, but It was important that that happened because people had the courage to do that, but I would not call it violence because nobody was injured, there were no confrontation between two individuals only damage was material, only one person was apprehended by the security guard that was problematic. (Steve, April 2012)

Another of my interviewees had a far more pragmatic answer to that question about violence:

I'm not for that fetishization of nonviolence, it depends on circumstance, but I it was a wise tactic, and there were no point to violence in the case of Warsaw Street... For me the trashing of the fence was legitimate, there was the story was it violence or nonviolence, it depends how you define violence so you can say it was violence, or you can say it's was not violence. Our side (the Right to the city initiative) maintained that that was not violence, that we trashed the fence nonviolently, it also selling something, you have to show that you did it peacefully.

The riot police which arrived at the scene after a while only started to take control when most of the fence was already demolished. Soon they went to the protester from the security guards and try to positioned themselves between the protesters and the guards, but as they were too few in numbers they could not do that. So they did not manage to serve as demarcation of public and private space as the protesters and the security guards intermingled soon. The police officers did form a new element as they diverted the tension between security guards and the protesters and formed new tensions between them and the two groups. Soon the

physical confrontation that was present at the start of the protest between security guards and protesters turned into negotiation and persuasion on both sides even with elements of chatter and laughter.

The police moved in an asked the protester to dispersed but they just stayed sitting and securing the fence. "No confrontation with the police and security guards because they want that to delegitimize this protest" said Luke. The changing event happened when the protesters decided to stay on the fence, it came down to a vote, and the vast majority voted to stay, these were not only activists or supporters, these were citizens now. The initiative which went in with a press conference in mind, and maybe with an idea that if they staged a massive protest the next day the fence could be toppled in similar way got more than they were bargaining for. With the democratic decision made by the ad hoc assembly to stay, protect the gained space, organize it and hold changed the dynamic of the campaign, but maybe also the actors. This according to some of interviewees then became a citizen's movement.

So within hours something that could be described as an outburst of frustration and violence, and was by some media (e.g.Nacional 2010 and Dalje.com dubbed the protests "riot" and "war" respectively), now turned into organize civil disobedience, the actors, the protester showed that they were capable of making not just actions political, direct democratic decisions, this was the "agora"[6].

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6 one interesting fact, among the actors who voted not to stay were the security guards, although this was greeted with laughter by some of the protesters and even by some of the guard themselves they also by this act participated in the decision making. The question is where they invited for the vote, the point is that they felt part of it, they had a stake in this and they were part of the public space on which they can voice their opinion. this opinion was in cases completely opposite the one they displayed with their bodies when they protected their fence, in chatting with them after it fell when the protesters and the guards found themselves in the same public space some of them even voiced their support, do most of the doubted that the protester would succeed . A similar event occurred with members of riot police when the students occupied the Ministry of education in December 2009, I recall an officer saying that his son is going to collage soon and that he understands that the students are fighting for him and that he supports them, but he has to do his job now.

One of my interviewees evoked the element of direct democracy when she spoke of that event:

> Yes we had that element of direct democracy, when had a couple of times and assembly of citizens in Warsaw Street. For example when the fence fell we were deciding will we remain or go, the citizens themselves decade that we will stay or not, there were 200 people, and voted to stay and occupy. That was the element of direct democracy. (Anna, April 2012, interview).

The decision to stay led to the 33 day long occupation of Warsaw street, the remaining of the fence were use as a base for the construction of a tent where the activist and citizens could sleep or could found shelter if it started to rain. From the rubble of the fences the protesters formed their camp that they designed as public space. Although it actually occupied more space of the street as a camp then a construction site. An interesting addition to it were the rules that the activist soon posted on the perimeter and they also formed smaller groups that were designated to uphold them. In the case of the police officer, they constantly moved between the "privatized" space of the camp, the privatized space of the construction site and the space of the street surrounding both that was only *de facto* public as it provided the access to all. Here then we can pose the questions of the meaning and the production of a particular public space, the distinctions get blurred through the performances of the various actors on that particular space. – ok, more of such analytical thoughts following the description of events throughout the chapter would strengthen it

Even more interesting than the material dimension of the occupation was the social dimension of the occupied space. According to one of my interviewees the occupied space in Warsaw Street was the complete society on a small scale, forming what looked like a "lifespace" of sorts (see Habermas 1975):

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There were people who you liked and those who you don't like. People who started relationships there and other who broke up there, people who came there to get food, people who came there to play board games people who came there to work, everything. It was a life space; it was far better used then before when it was just a public space in front of a bank building. A majority of people who were passing through this space came to inform themselves and they supported the movement after that. There was a minority of people who came just to provoke, who insulted the occupiers or came drunk there.

Another interviewee said this when I asked her about the occupation of Warsaw Street"

That story is the mirror of the society, we don't have a right to our voices, and in our city, this is the mirror. People tried through the occupation to gain that back. A lot of frustration went out of the people, brought about by the unlawful state that made them loss their voice. Warsaw street was a trigger for other frustrations, an example that speaks for the situation in Zagreb , in Croatia, of injustice, of not having voice. It was an excellent example of gaining that voice back.

Conclusion and contribution

This is a thesis detailing and narrating the birth of a Zagreb movement with truly global dimensions. New topic, new tactics and definitely new concerns coalesced around the movement "Right to the City."

The contribution of the research lies highlighting the issues and complex developments in the struggle around public space in a post socialist city like Zagreb, trying it with the ongoing research about cities particularly in Croatia and more generally in the post socialist countries. It also enriches with new perspectives ongoing debates on gentrification, urban development and neoliberalism which is still dominated by the studies and ideas taken for research conducted in America and Western Europe.

As for the study of the actor participating in the protests, their input might be valuable for studying the relationship between them and the city as an arena of struggle. There can be valuable input on how new social actors emerge and organize in the post socialist city like Zagreb bringing on the agenda issues that were not debated and contested for 20 years or have never been taken into account. In putting emphasis on the post socialist city the research could be a foundation for a future broader and more comparative research about the transformations urban development, and urban social movements in the other post-socialist cities in Europe.

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