

## Original Research Article

## Geographical Approach to the Promise and Reality of Urban Public Spaces with Emphasis on the Role of Ideologies

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### Abstract

**Problem statement:** The question of ideology has occupied the minds of most urbanologists from the past to the present during modernity. The present study is a geographical-philosophical introduction to the role of this concept in the public spaces of cities. The discussion of ideology is one of the cases that has not been widely studied in explaining the physical, social, and psychological affairs of public spaces in Iran. From this point of view, it is necessary to pay attention to this issue in urbanological analysis. Based on this, this research seeks to answer the following questions: What can be done to create successful cities in the 21st century? How can the role of face-to-face presence in creating public spaces of cities be explained from the philosophical and scientific perspectives? What is ideology? And what effects does it have on the physical, social, and psychological spaces of cities? How does the relationship between socialist and neoliberal ideology and the public spaces of the city create a space?

**Research objective:** This study attempts to shed light on the concept of ideology and show its relationship with urban public spaces from a geographical perspective to achieve urban spaces on a human scale.

**Research method:** This study employed a textual analysis. To find the answer, we first tried to explain the characteristics of a good city, the role of face-to-face presence in human interactions, the formation of social affairs as well as the concept of public rights and collective interests. Then we explored the use of different socialist and neoliberal ideologies as a case study.

**Conclusion:** The results show that limiting and expanding the concept of public space in cities based on various ideologies changes its spatial, social, and psychological form and create an active, vibrant, and democratic civil society in which the concept of the right to the city can find its true form, creating the possibility and opportunity for purposeful social interaction and exchange, is one of the requirements for the creation of this matter and also the factor of the success of cities in the past and will be in the future.

**Keywords:** *Ideology, Good City, Face-to-face Situation, Human Scale.*

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## Introduction and Problem Statement

A perspective that has emerged in geography assumes that space is a social construction, and social relations are formed beyond space. On the one hand, extensive attention to the diversity of geographical experience in public spaces of the cities reveals that these places have become important as a social index and spatial location. On the other hand, the human soul achieves peace because of security, making urban public spaces comfortable places and the best space to rest and relax. These places are a zone in which a person can look into themselves without any luxury and ornament. Attachment is another feature of the public spaces. When a place is distinguished from other places for the human, he/she will be attached to that place, and try to protect, decorate, and preserve it. The concept of the urban public spaces, as a place, is associated with other concepts, such as “rootedness”, “identity”, and “authenticity”. However, “geographical understanding and political practices” and cultural affiliations are created based on the contextualization of the collective and individual activity. Contextualization is a spatial and temporal factor. That is to say, context is a product of the political, social, and economic processes that operate at a diversity of scales embedded in particular places (Flint, 2004, 6). Therefore, the context, scale, and place require a geographical approach to analyze the urban spaces. To this end, the geographers apply diverse social theories in the dialectic of society and space to offer the audience a physical and humane construction based on their explanatory form and scientific reason. The public spaces of cities are interpreted geographically by the extent of daily experiences and the local scale of human activity, the physical and cultural context of the space, and the mental image of the people living and using that place. In this regard, Thomas Hurka’s argument is also contemplative: “Imagine two worlds containing equal amounts of pleasure. Everyone is selfish in the first world. They do not enjoy each other’s pleasure and make no effort to create it; everyone only cares about himself or herself. However, people in the

second world are benevolent. They help each other to be happy and are delighted when they are happy. Is not the second world better? It is possible to argue that the two worlds cannot have equal pleasure. However, given how they benefit each other, people in the second world will be happier than in the first.” (Hurka, 2017, 1). Studies show that a good life and a good society are two sides of the same coin. The history of the city indicates that thinkers, artists, and great entrepreneurs like Socrates, Rumi, Leonardo da Vinci, William Shakespeare, Benjamin Franklin, Albert Einstein, and many more have spent a great amount of time in the cities. Even now, cities have become the key social and organizing units of the creative new knowledge-power link. In other words, homo creatives are also Homo Urbanus; because the first-hand experiences in the personal life and direct interaction with other humans and the surrounding world indicate that a happy and good life in urban spaces is every human’s right. When people’s life is good, the situation in the society will be also organized; their productivity will increase, and people will have better mental and physical health; the health costs will decrease; the crime rate will reduce; the state’s budget will be spent in improving the people’s lives instead of keeping criminals; the tensions in the house and workplace will be reduced; there will be less addiction and suicide; the political tensions will be meaningless; the internal and external threats will decrease, and the staggering military budgets will become meaningless. However, the main research problem is what measures should be taken to create successful cities in the 21st century. How can the role of face-to-face presence in creating public spaces in cities be explained from a philosophical and scientific point of view of geography? What is the ideology? How does it affect the psychological, social, and physical space of the cities? How does the relationship between socialism and neo-liberalism and the public spaces of the city create a space?

## Research Background

While Peter Hall describes urban history from

Athens to the current era in “Cities in Civilization”, its highlight is the fact that the cities and their public spaces are the manifestations of the political philosophies of that time and their corresponding spaces that are constantly restructured and structured (Hall, 1998, 6). Similarly, in “Social Geography of City”, David Ley believes that the cities are the social and geographical prisms of a society through which they have evolved. He considers cities as a reflection and a model of the society, culture, and politics of a nation (Ley, 1983, 3-4). According to Lewis Mumford, historically, the city is a point at which the maximum concentration of the power and culture of a community is manifested (Mumford, 2006, 21). In addition, Marshall Berman, in his book, “Modernism in the Streets”, considered the city and its spaces to be a place for freedom, anarchy, and self-knowledge. According to Karl Marx, in the inner space, the “Double Life” of the human being is formed in private and public forms. Here, the city is a symbolic space for interacting with strangers, others, and different people, in which public life is a form of social life with strangers and having contact with them. Such public life needs tolerance among the people (Berman, 2017, 2-8). The main point of all urban thinkers and philosophers is that similar to the old world, the creativity of humans emerges in the new world where people interact with each other face to face. Flourishing a sense of collective identity, the preservation of participatory democracy, social interaction, security, and urban well-being will be attainable in such a space.

### Theoretical Foundations

A social relationship without which no society is formed meets two essential needs of a social person: 1) the need to be supported against unpredictable events and life difficulties, and 2) the need to recognize his humane identity as the perfect member of society. This social relationship is constantly associated with the emotional aspect of the individual, strengthening the interdependence of human beings, which is called Homo Sociologicus

by Serge Paugam (Paugam, 2016, 2) and Homo Geographicus by Robert Sack (Sack, 1997, 1). In his analysis of the nature of language and its relation to human action, Ludwig Wittgenstein claims that the social sciences cannot study language or behavior independently and separately because these concepts are profoundly linked (Curry, 1989, 294). It is because the language carries cultural meanings and values. Language shapes individual consciousness making individuals social beings (Billington, 2001, 82). Therefore, it can be claimed that humane thinking is social. In fact, as the language evolved, a social world of organized relationships and culture emerged alongside the inner world of concepts and ideas (Capra, 2007, 73). Accordingly, man has accepted the social life out of nature or need throughout the history of his life, and has found mental peace and met his needs in peaceful coexistence. It might be true to say that “if we were not social beings, there would be no loneliness” (Svendsen, 2018, 7). If a person wants to decide or judge according to his wisdom, he must be alone. However, he is still unable to tolerate loneliness and is dependent on others. Human happiness is essentially associated with others and the past and future generations. For Anthony Giddens, an English sociologist, “the being comes into existence by emerging from the presence.” He believes that a person can have ontological security only by entering into others’ social worlds, i.e., those who can interact safely. According to Giddens, face-to-face interaction is of great importance because the “co-presence” of the bodies enables the actors to record the unique details of evidence, signs, symbols, and behaviors, contributing to determining the meaning (Parker, 2006, 96). Therefore, the most significant experience of others’ presence is obtained in face-to-face interaction, which is the main or sample form of social interaction, and other forms are its derivations. Here, it can be said assertively that the social reality of daily life is perceived in the continuity of the classifications such that, the more they take distance from the “here

and now” of the face-to-face situation, the more their anonymity will increase gradually. It is as if, here, our deepest human experiences are concerned with our bodies, and the exchanged meaning and linguistic messages take place in a non-linguistic (physical) context. Therefore, if we enter these arguments in the context of urban space, we can acknowledge the geographers’ perspective, i.e., the city is destroyed without words and speech, which begin, coordinate, and order human actions (Tuan, 1994, 146). Thus, the face-to-face term implicitly refers to geographical concepts, such as space and place, in particular, because being human means living in places. Based on this perspective, the *raison d’être* and importance of the public spaces of the cities and the intervention of various ideologies become profoundly meaningful.

## Research Method

This study employed a qualitative textual analysis to approach the data. This method is used for interpretation and desirable reading of the texts based on the researcher’s preferences. This method was used to analyze the data, and examine the content and meaning of the various texts and their structure and discourse. This helps to understand how they are constructed, how meanings are produced, how the nature of those meanings is deconstructed, and examine how they operate (Lockyer, 2008, 865). In the current research, the library study was the main method of analysis. However, the researcher needed a “conceptual network” to study the books, and articles before entering the library. This network was formed under a research program developed during many years of research and exploration. Then, the written texts were scrutinized epistemologically. In accordance with the questions, the researcher presented his epistemological encounter. Therefore, while explaining the constituent components of the urban spaces of the cities, the current study explained, identified, and classified the various theories of renowned urban planners from various resources, especially theories, and conducted studies

and criticized them. Finally, the epistemological definition was presented in the research findings and discussion on the human scale of cities, ideology, and its role in the scientific methodological analysis of this area.

## Discussion

### • The promise of public space

Although the city is a controversial and often confusing concept, it is as important as concepts such as place, space, region, nature, or landscape (Hubbard, 2017, 29). Since ancient times, the city has had two principal meanings in the West: human relationships (*civitas*) and built forms (*urbs*). For a long time, the former was dominant in the analyses, as Shakespeare stated in “*Coriolanus*”: “What is the city but the people? True, the city is its people (Tuan, 1988, 316). However, from a geographical point of view, it should be noted that the role of physical cities should also be considered in the analysis of urban spaces in general and public spaces in particular. According to history, two types of civilizations are required for the foundation of any system and the advancement of any society: material civilization and cultural civilization. Material civilization is the tools, methods, and applications, and the term cultural civilization means the strong foundation of thoughts, purposes, visions, and knowledge. If a system neglects one of these two integrated and interdependent civilizations, the grounds for flourishing and progress will not be provided. Therefore, since the human and physical worlds are finely intertwined and cannot be analyzed separately as a society, nature, humans, and objects, hence, Henri Lefebvre distinguished “the urban”—which is non-material urban life—from the “city,” which is physical buildings. He believes that it is important to study the relationship between the objects (Lefebvre, 1991, 102). On the other hand, in today’s sustainable development discourses, the compatibility that exists between economic growth, social vitality, and ecological integrity (environmental quality) (Buttimer, 1998, 2) is of significant importance

in the geographical analysis of urban spaces. The thinkers of “Right to City” also emphasize the fact that the physical city is not separate thought from the social city and should not be neglected.

First, the city is a place for human interactions and meetings. For a long time, geographers and urbanists believe that the physical and social dynamicity of public space plays an essential role in the formation of public affairs and public culture. A city’s streets, parks, squares, and other shared spaces have been considered symbols of collective well-being and the possibility of collective presence which reminded us of spaces reflecting the achievements of the political leaders, places for public interaction, and the formation of the civic culture, and significant spaces of the political deliberation and agonistic struggle (Amin, 2008, 5). According to what has been mentioned, it is clear that accepting the importance of the realm of the public space will contribute to the creation of successful cities. Citizens’ dynamicity and the exciting urban life are the main constituents of a good city and urban identity. The public sphere is a symbol of the performance stage of an urban culture where civil rights are formed. It must be noted that urban philosophers and thinkers separate the public and private areas based on human rights and collective interests, which has a long history as the history of human culture and thought. They believe that humans want to be autonomous, dignified, and with human respect and prestige, which requires privacy.

In the following, they add that one must control and regulate the function and size of the state so that the individual can have privacy as a member of society and citizenship. It is indeed clear that the right to it must be defined in its legal system. The concept of “private space” has always been associated with the concept of the body and loneliness (conscious and without the intervention of a particular institution) and the house in which people address their personal affairs. The concept of “public space” is intertwined with politics in which citizens co-exist. In other words, the private real is closely related to the

concept of the body and embodiment, i.e., it is a reference to the desire that people have to control their body at their disposal. Generally, human beings in private (i.e. houses) or public spaces, such as streets, schools, workplaces, etc. are reluctant to let others touch them and have physical contact with them without their permission and consent. Touching or making physical contact with them without their permission or consent is considered a violation of their privacy. It must be noted that others do not always violate the privacy of humans. It might be possible that the small and large social and political institutions, headed by the state institution, violate our physical privacy. Human beings tend to have someone or an institution control only their body but also protect or disclose the information to others at their discretion, such as age, sexual orientation, the amount of prosperity, the ideology they believe in, etc. Human beings also value the right to make the decision on their lifestyle and friendly relationships without intervention by people, institutions, and social structure for the personal flourishing and development, moral maturity, preservation of human dignity, and freedom, and consider the violation of their rights in contrast to the concept of the privacy. According to this argument, it can be said that the public space is an area intertwined with democracy. People are politically considered equal in a democracy based on which the political life of the people is organized, and the citizens will have the opportunity to participate in the pursuit of their capacities and interests (Soltani, 2019). It is how everyone can have an equal right to the space through which they can pursue their various interests in the political affair, pleasure, knowledge, leisure, etc. The ideal and reason for the existence of various public spaces in the context of cities throughout the history of the city can be well understood here because basically, the public spaces of the city are the mortar of urban society, and the construction of public spaces in the city that are very lively and inclusive leads to the improvement of urban democracy. John Ruskin states: “the measure of any

great civilization is in its cities, and the measure of a city's greatness is to be found in the quality of its public spaces" (Cowan, 2005, 314) because the being of a city is basically conditioned by the existence of a certain density and diversity of population and building, which is practical for the cultural and material exchanges. Accordingly, the prominent urban thinkers consider the concept and idea of public life separated from the idea of the public sphere. Public life is a form of social life with strangers and making contact with them. Such a public life needs tolerance among humans. Here, it must be noted that tolerance can be considered the main virtue of a liberal society. Tolerance is similar to tolerating someone's being instead of having a violent encounter with them. Thus, the individual becomes a citizen through social participation in society. And it is here that the public sphere, as a realm of our social life, brings together as much as the public belief that can be formed (Goheen, 1994, 431). If people talk to each other over time, they will influence each other's thinking. As this purification emerges, people find it more difficult to consider the beliefs and values of others as perverse, irrational, or evil. Gradually, the ideas started taking roots. That might explain why these people have something to say. Then, as a result of this thought, the previous thought of reality, which was taken for granted, becomes shaky (Berger & Zijderveld, 2014, 29). The purpose of this conversation is to get people to live together, whether they agree or disagree. Based on this view, in the ideal of public space, citizens are morally obliged to strive to institutionalize the development and culture of democracy to prevent the creation of a dictatorship of the majority, and secondly, when a citizen participates in the process of institutionalizing democracy, he tries to improve the situation of people compared to what it was; it forms the essence of the philosophy of Jürgen Habermas, Hannah Arendt, and many urban thinkers in the public sphere. For example, according to Jürgen Habermas, a well-known German philosopher, the "public sphere" once refers to the

realm of social life in which something like common sense can be formed. Access to the public sphere is generally free for citizens. Citizens behave like the public when they can investigate the issues related to the public interest without being under pressure; furthermore, they can gather and join together and freely express and publish their opinions and perspectives (Habermas, 2006, 42-43). For Habermas, communicative action is the main mechanism of each modern democracy to preserve a dynamic and vital civic society, and the common ground is the maintenance and preservation of a strong public sphere, which realizes the freedom of speech and participation. Parallel to this argument, Hannah Arendt, the German theorist, and philosopher, says politics makes sense by actively participating in the common realm among citizens, and isolation leads to the death of politics because separation from society whether voluntary or forced, makes politics impossible. Hannah Arendt considers the public realm as a place for people to meet and talk about common issues and considers it inevitable for the existence of politics. Dictators' states, of any type, shut down the lights of the public realm so that the citizens will not be able to see each other. In dark times when there is no light in the public realm, and it is as dark as night, a space is created in which humans become solitary creatures. Then, the state, with all its hegemony, grandeur, and fuss, confronts the lonely and isolated citizen: either it shatters him and makes him a trembling ghost, or it makes the citizen need to belong to something bigger than himself and lays the foundation for the exercise of its authority based on the citizen's deadly fear of loneliness. It makes the citizens obedient, justifying, and the compliant men who lack the power of recognition of good and evil, and despite being ordinary and triviality, can commit the most horrible and unimaginable crime in history (Arendt, 2011, 319). Therefore, enjoying human rights is the minimum necessary condition for a good and prosperous life. The pillars of human rights, i.e., the right to freedom of speech, include the right to be

unjust. Based on this view, human rights are the basis and foundation of the freedom of the public spaces without which the public space is nothing but a deception. For this, it is sufficient to think about the events in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in China that how this process brought the voice of open space to a dead end there. The freedom of speech and civil rights in public spaces lead to the emergence of the freedom experience, which aided in the preservation of these rights. For example, in Greece, despite the discrimination and the privilege of the rights and advantages of a particular class, Agora was the reflection of the spatial expression of social rights. According to this perspective, if we profoundly consider the essence of this throughout the history of human civilization, based on Richard Roger's opinion, it can be said that the inclusive and pioneering public spaces of the cities can result in the development of tolerance, indulgence, and creative thought. It is not surprising that the cities under the dominance of fascists and authoritarians are the causes of segregation and discrimination among the people and they are particularly designed to shatter human individuality because involving all people in public spaces eliminates discrimination and creates links between social groups, forcing us to accept our shared responsibility (Rogers, 2013, 19) and be sensitive to what happens in the polis space. From a geographical and philosophical perspective, the idea of the public sphere is nonetheless democratic-oriented practically and theoretically (Gregory et al., 2009, 584) and the growth and development of public space are closely related to the political and philosophical notions of society, and the importance of public space is to maintain a democratic and vibrant urban culture and to defend the "right to the city." Demanding the right to the city, as Lefebvre clarifies, requires creating a proper space (Pinder, 2005, 399-400). It is the reason for classical Greek philosophers, theorists of urban modernity such as Walter Benjamin, Georg Simmel, Lewis Mumford, Henri Lefebvre, and Jane Jacobs, and insightful figures such as Richard Sennett,

David Harvey, and Sharon Zukin to believe that there is a relationship between public space and civic or citizen virtue or capabilities.

One of the greatest and deepest human desires is that morality and justice prevail in space. In the meantime, cities have provided a ground for human socialization and the formation of levels of moral promotion where "people of all prestige and status, poor and rich, weak and strong, talented and ordinary, healthy and sick, meet (Tuan, 1994, 146); From a geographical perspective on the urban space, it could be understood that the physical city is a moral document or text where the visitor or citizen considers it everywhere as a sign of care and warning in which, one can distinguish between wealth and poverty, uniformity and imagination, care and indifference, justice and injustice (Tuan, 1988, 316). It must be noted that understanding the levels of moral promotion can be best achieved through conversation. A good society will not be realized without the citizens who are morally committed, embrace each other, and consider themselves the guardians of each other's rights, and the health of the fundamental institutions of the society. In this regard, Lewis Mumford believed that the city must be the organ of love. Also, the best economy for the city is to pay attention to the human being and human culture, which determines the principal mission of the future city; i.e., creating a regional and civic structure in which the human considers himself at home with his deeper emotions and a vast world committed to the images of human foster and love (Mumford, 2002, 757). Prominent geographers and thinkers believe that authenticity means having a critical view regarding one's culture and period while preserving a sense of loyalty and belonging to them. Therefore, if we assume three principles of democratic government, "variety in space and territory" and "human rights" (fairness and social inclusion), it is clear that geographers and planners can play a significant role in creating just cities. However, we emphasize that they cannot do it alone. People's awareness and participation in spatial

decision-making obligate the urban political regimes to practice more equality and democracy. To be more clear, it must be noted that human beings have always met their instinctive need for establishing social relations by creating spatial structures in cities; the spaces that are socially active and provide the establishment of the relationship, then, the city is manifested inside these spaces. The public in English originates from *Populus* in Latin, meaning people. Therefore, the quality of the public space cannot be determined by disregarding people's preferences and demands. Based on this perspective, a group of western philosophers following Kant considered "self-centered critic reason" as the essence of modernity. "Self-centered" means that the rationality and validity of its claimants are determined by reasons rather than something external, and "critic" means that it dares to question and criticize" (Naraghi, 2013, 73). Therefore, democracy can be simply considered a way of collective decision-making in which all the members of a group with equal positions participate in the process of decision-making. In the meantime, one of the most important advantages of democratic decision-making is the ability to consider interests, desires, and more varied opinions. The citizens in the context of a democratic system have the opportunity to effectively participate in determining their fate. Also, democratic decision-making significantly reduces errors; that is, it is a more effective way to discover a proper decision. Participation of diverse social groups in the decision-making process enriches and diversifies the knowledge and information resources needed for deliberate decision-making. In other words, as plans and policies are founded on more extensive information resources, they are often formulated consciously and carefully. In addition, the suggested plans and policies are extensively criticized and examined, and their validity is better recognized. Finally, the possibility of effective participation of the citizens in determining their fate can effectively help the citizens' moral and civic flourishing and development. The citizens, who can play a more

effective role in determining their fate, will have a more independent and responsible character. Civic education trains these citizens to listen better and express their opinions bolder and clearer, be more careful in describing and justifying their opinions and consider the interests and benefits of others to some extent (*ibid.*, 101-102). Therefore, living in security and away from violence, oppression, and fear is a precondition for a free society. Also, all the citizens of that society must be equal and have equal rights as free human beings. Basically, the dominant aspect of modern free thinking is to believe in the equality of all people and recognize the plural forms of life. Isn't it true that everyone can see each other and hear each other's voices in a livable city? Such a city lives in contrast to the dead urban space in which people are separated and isolated.

#### • The public space reality

Reality is formed by society. Reality is a quality appertaining to phenomena that we recognize as having a being independent of our own volition, and we cannot 'wish them away (Berger & Luckmann, 1996, 7). Thus, realities are not surrendered easily and need the patience to discover. Based on this argument, throughout history, there is no golden age, nor a completely unfortunate age, which is "repeated" for those who are unaware of it, and a "lesson" for those who are aware of it. However, if we believe that "the culture is the most excellent achievement of the human societies (Billington, 2001) and since the common lived experiences of human beings are generated and fostered in the context of time, history can be considered the capital of culture. Hence, without historical recognition of the essence phenomenon, the public space cannot be properly understood in reality because the writing of this concept acquires scientific credit when it is methodical and based on cognition of totality, realism, rationalism, and frequent rethinking. Answering whether public space is important for democracy depends on the type of democracy. In western thinkers' theories, public spaces are associated with two normative promises; first of all,



public space is considered as an area and field in which thoughts, ideas, and beliefs are expressed and negotiated. Such a promise dates back to the Greek agora, and Roman forums which were called the political promise of public space. Secondly, public space was also considered a common social space in which interpersonal encounters and different contacts could be identified. Such a perspective on public space can be seen in the medieval markets and the city's piazzas. It has been broadly suggested by modern theorists, such as Jane Jacobs, Iris Marion Young, and Richard Sennett, which can be called the civic promise of public space. Here, public space was characterized by its accessibility, which was available to the whole population, and the right of access was assumed without discrimination (Goheen, 1994, 432). The promise of public space might be considered a place where human beings with various backgrounds mix. However, for urban philosophers and geographers, this reflects a mythicized view of the public space that can be often traced to fictitious images of the agora of Athens in the time of Pericles, while Raymond Williams suggests that Plato's public emerged after the poor have conquered their opponents, slaughtering some and banishing others, while giving an equal share of freedom and power to the remainders (Miles, 2012, 678). Hannah Arendt also knows the Greek polis as a political community. However, she notes that political activity is separate from economic life. According to Arendt, publicity means being in public, democratic interaction and openness, and a situation in which a mature self alone reveals own loneliness among others' perceptions. However, it did not happen in agora despite Arendt's leaning on the classical; rather it took place in the cafes of London and Paris in the later 17th and 18th centuries (ibid., 685). Here, the concept of the public sphere makes sense due to its significant role in the works of Habermas. Habermas traced the historical development of this concept to the emergence of literary clubs, halls, newspapers, political publications, and participation in the

bourgeoisie society of the 18th century in Europe. He argued that the public sphere protected the personal interests of individuals against the church and state. Here, the public sphere was not available to everyone, and regardless of all belongings, the individuals did not enter this sphere as "absolute humans". What Habermas indicates is the fall of the public sphere over time as the development of capitalism leads to the monopoly and strengthening of the role of the state. Increasing commodification of daily life by giant companies and irrational proliferation of the companies' advertisements turned the people from rational citizens into sole consumers. The role of the increasing power of the state in social life for well-being and education is one of the points that Habermas emphasized. However, Habermas seeks to revitalize the public sphere based on terms such as the ideal state of dialogue, where "goal-oriented social critique shifts to social development (from non-participation to greater public participation) in which each person equally participates. That is, to provide a situation in which communication is not distorted; Thus, the public sphere is considered a space for discussion based on equality in conversation. Yet, although Habermas's report on the bourgeoisies of the public sphere was particularly influential, the historical accuracy of his report on the public sphere and its patriarchal bias were considerably criticized. His particular attention to the whites, bourgeoisies, his masculine analyses, disregarding women's roles and sexist discrimination, and the historical scrutiny of the particular European communities (Gregory et al., 2009, 84) were considered by the critics. On the other hand, critics, such as Anthony Giddens, suggested that the modern media have developed the public sphere (Barker, 2004, 168) in which, individuals can freely express their opinions and promises, which has been neglected in Habermas's perspective. Another criticism is that public space is a promise that can always be redefined and used by those who have been deprived of real political space and demand to be included within it. For this reason,

some theorists have been attracted to the metaphor of “space” to inevitably articulate the unrealized promise of the democratic public sphere (Gregory et al., 2009, 584). It is a promise that has a bright future, and might not be realized and remain an unfulfilled wish. According to this argument, public spaces are ideal spaces that are accessible to all. However, few public spaces were up to this promise (Latham, McCormack, McNamara & McNeill, 2009, 185). That is, the primary promise of the public space is based on equal access. Although the real life of the public spaces indicates that these spaces are not merely based on access to the building, but, they were organized through different forms of control and exclusion (Tonkiss, 2009, 112-113). Hence, in the west, there is a pessimistic perspective on the fate of public space in contemporary western communities. The signs of such a pessimistic view of researchers can be traced to the increasing obsessiveness of the members of society about their personal life, intensification of privatization, and control of public space. For example, public space is defined as some areas of the geographical environment that are common and accessible for all members of society. These spaces include streets, parks, etc. However, retail spaces, such as shops, make a vague distinction between public and private spaces since they are open to the public yet are privately owned and regulated. In addition, the public spaces are increasingly subject to the customary and state laws, which can prevent using these. The feminists’ works and serious questions on “The other” have properly challenged the publicity and openness of the public spaces. They have well separated the access to these spaces based on gender, race, class, physical and psychological ability, and sexualities. It is reasonable that geographers, such as Mitchell, suggest that “public space is always a struggle and necessary” (Mitchell, 2015, 13) because particular social values, those that reflect the consensus and struggle in the space, create a place in the social geography of the public spaces of the cities to reflect the voice of the deprived and expelled people in the society. Today, in the context of global

space, we are building cities that, instead of liberation and civilization, reflect discrimination, separation, and violence. Thus, scrutinizing the relationship between ideology and public space in cities makes sense to study its effects on the physical, social, and psychological atmosphere of a place.

### **Ideology and Urban Public Space**

When an interviewer asked Mitchell, the distinguished professor of geography and manager of the People’s Geography Project, what questions does human geography or radical geography ask about public space? Dan Mitchell responds: “How are these spaces produced, by whom, and under what conditions and for what purposes?” What are the facilities to transform these spaces into something fairer and more valuable? Who has the right to be in the city, and under what conditions? Who has access to space, and under what conditions? (Mitchell, 2010, 2). According to this view, it is clear that geographers study not only how public spaces are constructed and managed but also how they function socially, economically, and politically (Neal, 2010, 59). However, how we can relate what we experience in the public space to the ideologies and rhetoric of public culture? (Zukin, 1995, 46). To answer this question, it must be noted that philosophies and ideologies cannot represent themselves in our environment through abstract ways but through “architecture and urban space” (Cuthbert, 2016, 98). According to Henri Lefebvre’s perspective, space is a scientific object, not separated from ideology or politics. It has always been political and strategic (Lefebvre, 1991, 105), regulating and preserving the social-spatial relations through the dominant ideology. Therefore, comprehensive recognition of the form, texture, and urban network makes it necessary to analyze the ideology ruling the city because ideology in environmental management provides a justifying context for the decisions. But, what is ideology? And how does it affect the city in general and public spaces in particular?

Ideology is a system of ideas, notions, and sometimes justifications for a particular social or political plan.

From such a perspective, it is possible to examine the ideology behind the actions of a particular state or belief. One ideology, as opposed to other ideologies, generally claims to be right and progressive, and this is to preserve an identity that is considered ultimate (Godin, 2013, 37). It is a system of beliefs that seeks to both explain and transform the world. The dominant order in the ideology system highlights some aspects of reality and others are forgotten. The homogenizing attribute of the inconsistent elements makes ideology simplify the complicated reality. Based on this perspective, the great ideologies form the humans' social, physical, and political environments. They help us to analyze the meaning of the complicated social world in which we live. Defining society, a mind map, and ideologies enable us to consider ourselves in social prospects. Ideologies provide the best possible form of social organization by describing the social reality embodying a set of political promises. In a nutshell, all the ideologies express social and political relations and describe how these relations must be organized for the well-being and happiness of everyone. According to, any ideology is a set of ideas that take place in a certain space of domain of ideology and is the framework of knowledge that provides human beings with an interpretation of a world so that they can act upon it and make a special type of social relations possible and link the individuals to each other in a particular social, political, and economic structure. In such a structure, a rational analysis of power and domination is formed. For geographers, the "relationship between power and geographical phenomena" is one of the key analyses of geography (Shakuie, 2005, 48) because the geographical vision formed in the last stages of planning in the space of life is a symbol of the dominant political ideology in the society. In this regard, planning in general and urban planning, in particular, create various geographical forms in different ideologies, and each of these various geographical forms indicates the amount and share of the public interests in the political ideologies, resulting in areal differentiation. That is, every political system

seeks to organize the urban discourse appropriate to its particular ideology. Accordingly, socialist, capitalist, etc. systems have a desirable and legalized definition of the city. Each of these political systems supports and strengthens special urban representation regimes while avoiding other representation regimes. Based on this view, there is a deep and inclusive link between urban discourse and power relations in society. Urban discourses not only are the reality of the city but also present the desirable and ideal city. "The discourses pursue a selective strategy to achieve this; thus, any discourse sees parts of the urban reality and highlights them, and ignores other parts (Fazeli, 2015, 30). Therefore, in any geographical explanation of urban public spaces, one must first think about the power of political philosophy and ideology in governing geographical environments and put the analysis of decision-making thoughts at the center of all geographical discussions in this regard. Based on these arguments, the following questions should be raised in the minds of geographers in analyzing the public spaces of cities, especially their identity of place: can the political regimes be distinguished in terms of their understanding of public spaces and arrangements, layouts, and spatial characteristics? In other words, does a political regime have a particular spatial regime? For instance, how are the public spaces formed in a fascist regime? For what purposes are they designed? According to what architectural logic are they formed? and what function are they supposed to have? In the public spaces of such a regime, how are bodies and subjects arranged and distributed? What about in a democratic regime? Is it possible to speak of a fascist public space and a democratic public space? Therefore, according to our assumptions, space is not neutral to function based on the scientific criteria or the engineering regulations regardless of value. Hence, any form of space making serves to advance a particular type of power relations or link to a special type of power relations; then, it can be indicated that the organization of the public spaces, as a part of regulating objects and human beings, is subject to a specific logic in every political regime,

directly or indirectly related to the stabilizing, reproducing, and strengthening the complicated system of the power. Any public space, as a shared space, is built by mediating at least three practices or executive mechanisms. First, it distributes points, lines, realms, positions, and boundaries in its more or less defined area based on its internal characteristics. Second, it enables a special type of interhuman relations and the formation of the gatherings or interpersonal communities based on their internal arrangement. Third, according to its spatial logic, it allows certain types of movements, stops, maneuvers, and gestures to appear. In addition, each public space has its own “eye of power” that makes bodies, subjects, and communications visible (Salamat, 2018, 14). Now, one can ask how the public space in one or another political regime advances these triple practices or mechanisms? How does it regulate them? Regarding the ideology and its relation with the urban public spaces, it was previously stated that the urban public spaces are a central index of the social and political health of the city (Latham et al., 2009, 180). Any ideology has a huge emotional load, relating it to passion and ecstasy. Also, it has a rational-logical system, which gives it a scientific and philosophical form. However, ideology is neither a science nor philosophy and religion (Shayegan, 2011, 193). We must consider that “ideology has an inquisitorial aspect even if it claims to foster thoughts” (Mojtahedi, 2006, 322). Thus, when we consider “time” in the analysis of geographical space, we understand that in our world, nothing has its last form and everything in the space is changing and moving; perhaps, in struggling for the space promise for the humanity, one can state that “the absolute is the true enemy of the human being and endlessness of the profound promises of human is the best reason for not ending the urban history and physical public spaces. Based on this perspective, utopian thought teaches us that “not only does history never end, but everything must be rebuilt. “It is better for the world not to stop in its current state, to restore the status of utopia, even if it is merely to open the horizon that the current

neoliberal ideology - the master of today and the future - has blocked.” (Godin, 2013, 99). Hence, Walter Benjamin assumed that “the legend will last as long as the last beggar is alive”. He meant that as long as there is injustice, ideology will be inevitable. Here, we acknowledge that places are never stable and constantly constructed and reconstructed. Thus, it can be said that one of the consequences of understanding space as a social construction is to pay attention to the methods through which different social configurations produce various qualitative concepts of the space (Simonson & Bærenholdt, 2004, 1). On this basis, while accepting the materiality of space, Henri Lefebvre finds it misleading to regard it as a purely physical matter that ignores its “second nature,” i.e., its social, ideological, and political aspects because a complete understanding of society can only be achieved through the analysis of disciplines in spatial structures, political processes, and economic systems. Thus, “the traditional subject importance of the geography- relationships between human and nature, human and space, and human and place- cannot be separated from political considerations” (Short, 1992, 1). There is a reason that today, geography is not the traditional understanding of traveling around the world rather it is theoretical research and analysis in a reciprocal relationship between place and politics because the nature of political power has the most important role in the formation of or prevention of the political and spatial transformations. William Bunge states that “a politician defines “political power”. When he uses “power, his thoughts are often quite geographical (Bunge, 1973, 285). Here, it can be said that states are neither equal nor similar, but they are different in power and influence. The states around the world are busy preserving and reproducing the existing economic and political order. In fact, the state is the communicative point between the global order and ordinary people’s lives. The state connects the global economy to the household economy, space, and place, global and local affairs, the generality of the global order with the particularity of the single households’ life in specific places (Short, 1992,

169). According to the above-mentioned issues, the physical environment has been a reflection of the political landscape. When social and economic changes take place, especially when they are radical and fundamental, the space will experience tangible transformations and changes; these changes will also occur in the structure of the landscape as if the center of the landscape indicates the social ideologies. In other words, ideology continues and is supported through landscapes. When the context of a political regime changes as a result of transformations and revolutions, the new political regime begins to rename the places and conveys a powerful message that they have complete control over the symbolic infrastructure of society (Rose-Redwood et al., 2010, 460). Naming the places can be a channel to challenge the dominant ideologies and introduce the exchangeable and alternative cultural narrations and meanings of the identity. Thus, landscapes have a profound symbolic meaning because it is clear that when someone considers themselves the owner of the plan to change the whole community and the historical course of a nation, he feels righteous in oppressing the opponents of this plan. So, if politics emerges in the landscape, it must be prominent under the influence of the dictator and totalitarian regimes. It can be seen in the relations between the landscape of the public space and politics in Nazi Germany. Nazi theorists had ideas on how a landscape must be manipulated to adapt to their beliefs and principles (Hagen, 2008), which can be also seen in the communist governments. Fascist and communist governments in the twentieth century believed in separating private from public and legislated details of the citizens' personal lives and assigned officers to supervise the implementation of the law. It might be true to state, as Ivan Klima stated, "Not even a totalitarian system can be found that has a real spirit and vitality and has not condemned its citizens to more physical and mental hardships than democratic societies" (Klima, 2013, 147).

### Soviet Socialist Ideology and Urban Public Spaces

Russian revolution, which was celebrated by the great writers, such as Fyodor Dostoevsky, Anton Chekhov, Leo Tolstoy, etc., and had a far more serious and entrenched connection with the new world and modernity and modernization, led to Stalinism. "In the early Soviet era, the great purpose was to form a socialist society, in which people would not exploit each other, and everyone could flourish their talents. Although this ideal seemed far distant, it was believed that the Soviet Union, led by the Party, was moving towards it (Glover, 2014, 424). However, the ideology and political practice of Stalinism, as a basis for a totalitarian regime, dominated it for decades in the twentieth century. This had tragic effects on the situation of individuals, the achievements of the humanistic ideals of socialist society, and the fate of all people (Ishmuratov, 1991, 551). Hence, the Soviet Union in the 1930s was probably the most untrustworthy society throughout history. In the atmosphere of that time, no one could trust the other. No one could find out who was the undercover cop. If someone was confident that he had done nothing wrong, there was always a risk of being arrested and expelled to a prison or concentration camp; because the citizens should prove their trustworthiness to the regime (Svendsen, 2018, 89). Most of the Soviet citizens knew what awaited those who would step forward. For this reason, they separated them to prevent them from supporting each other at the time of resistance (Glover, 2014, 405). Although this fright was traced to August 1918 in Lenin's period, Stalin brought another level of fright and made it global. The deliberate massacre in the Stalin period was so extensive that it could not be compared with the war. The effect of Stalinism on the development of knowledge, especially geography, was also destructive. Stalinism broke down the natural process of forming the geographical sciences based on historical and dialectic materialism. The impact of Stalinist oppression on the geographical

practice and thought eventually led to the death of many geographers, quitting specific research methods, changing and shifting the political and economic geography to natural geography, simplification, eliminating, or falsification of the theoretical paradigms (Ishmuratov, 1991, 551). Such transformation in the focus on planning macroeconomy led to a sudden loss of new modernist architects' concerns, including planning issues, construction, and design. In return, the architecture was applied to serve the ideological-political concerns. In this period, the built environment was supposed to be the most excellent symbolic expression of the power of the Soviet communist state. Similarly, urban capitals (particularly Moscow and Kyiv) changed according to Stalin's perception of Soviet power. Resultantly, the wide streets and broad squares around which there were high-rise buildings, decorated by "Staling Baroque", dominated the soviet urban landscape, inducing the cold neoclassical spaces. Given that the land has no official value in socialism, the planners were not motivated to purposefully deal with the space. At the same time, housing construction for workers of the new industrial enterprises was delayed (Gentile, 2018, 4). Despite the physical organization of the city and urban life, which induced a sense of collectivism and material expression of the egalitarian ideals, the economic-social distinctions were hidden beyond the uniform and similar apartment blocks of the cities (Smith, 1996, 77). The streets of the Soviet era were used to manifest the politics of the politics and lords of power. The street here tells us in the most tangible, tangible, and explicit expression where these decision-makers are going one way, where they have taken a step towards a dead end; Where do they stand at the crossroads, where do they stand far away, where do they stand so close, etc. However, with many monuments related to the homelands throughout the Soviet cities and steely statues of a victorious woman with a drawn sword on the top of a hill in the cities, such as Kyiv, Volgograd (former Stalingrad), Ashgabat, and alike, which was visible

from anywhere in the city, Stalinist architecture in Moscow stimulated an outburst of fear among the people of these cities of the presence of their powerful leader, giving them a sense of "heroism" or "sanctity." These monuments in the public space of cities created more fear of the death of a totalitarian person and a regime instead of reminding the death of people in this world (Donohoe, 2002, 236-237). Urban spaces, with their lifeless, humble, uniform concrete buildings that did not have the space to create trust, justified some of the violence. There is a strong link between concrete and the destruction of memory. "Concrete makes everyone the same; concrete separates people from their past, nature, and each other. Despite its usefulness, it lacks depth" (Forty, 2017, 114). Thus, the concrete city of the Soviet Union was boring. Finally, we should not forget that "sorrow and boredom come to every city after great failures" (Pamuk, 2014, 296). Also, boredom arises from repetition in many cases. Boredom not only affects people but also equally bothers the society, culture, and physique of that city (Svendsen, 2016, 61). Increased boredom means a serious defect in the society or culture that contains meaning. Ingmar Bergman, a Swedish director, properly emphasized this issue: "Faces reflect the inner life of a personality". Hence, boredom was so dense in the urban and public spaces of the Soviet Union that one could touch it and see how it spreads like dust on the people and urban landscapes (Fig. 1).

### Neoliberalism's Ideology

Neo-liberalism, with the prefix "neo," is a classic concept that became responsible for policy-making during the Keynesian crisis and became famous with the dominance of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States as prime minister and president in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Neoliberalism is also used in terms such as 'neoliberal citizenship' and "neoliberalizing spaces" in an emergent discussion of new subjects and spaces. In today's world, neoliberalism is variously



Fig. 1. Public urban space in Moscow during the years of Soviet socialist ideology presence. Left: Sovetskaya Square, Moscow, 1955; Middle: Gorky Street, Moscow, 1961; Right: Gorky Street, Moscow, the 1930s. Source: <https://www.mos.ru/en/news/item/13744073/>

applied as a policy program, hegemonic ideology, etc., in the research literature (Larner, 2009, 375).

First of all, neoliberalism is a theory about practices in the political economy based on which, paving the way for the realization of entrepreneurial freedoms and individual skills in an institutional framework characterized by powerful private property rights, free markets, and free trade, can increase human well-being and welfare. In such a context, the state's role is to create and maintain a proper institutional framework for functioning those methods (Harvey, 2007, 8-9). From the 1970s onward, the right-wing party had a chance to rebuild itself. When Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Regan took over, an opportunity was provided for neoliberalism and conservatism, and scholars such as John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Charles Taylor, and Michael Sandel variously began to produce ideas for neoliberalism. For them, neoliberalism is a doctrine that freely believes that the desirability of a society is organized around the self-regulation of the markets and freedom, and to some extent, political and social interventions. Neoliberalism can be analyzed in two different ways, including a set of theoretical suggestions, a variety of actual practices, and the expression of specific social interests as a policy (Gregory et al., 2009, 497).

According to such a trend, neoliberalism is a global mechanism and logistics are emerging in different forms. The difference between practicing it in Iran, the United States of America, and China will not change its nature but indicates its sagacity to adapt to the environment. Neoliberalism is a system that can

be adapted to any type of structure. It does not care about ideology or being free in the market, as liberals consider it critical. In contrast, earning a profit and limiting wealth, as David Harvey states, repairing and rebuilding the economic power of the elites are important for liberalism. Providing conditions under which capital can be transferred and the market can operate independently of restrictive laws is acceptable if it is provided in the Chinese communist system as well (Harvey, 2007, 45). Neoliberalism has brought about economic-political evolution in space and caused consequences for economic, social, political, and environmental relations in a range of places, and on a variety of scales, along with the vision of social inclusion (Larner, 2009, 374). Based on the evidence and documents that thinkers around the world offer for the implementation and consequences of neoliberal policies, neoliberalism is essentially the last form of capitalism; thus, they believe that critics of capitalism and other phenomena, such as extraction of value-added, objectification, communization, formation of the spirit of capitalism, exploitation of the classes, and increased inequality, like Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Mauss, Simmel, Lukacs, Adorno, and many others stated, are still valid. However, additionally, neoliberalism goes beyond the traditional forms of capitalism and the most recent one, i.e., Keynesian Economics; that is, liberalism is the process of transforming all the global elements into goods and everyone into neoliberal subjects.

Unlike Keynesian economics, which sought to safeguard areas such as education and health from

maximizing profits based on the idea of class compromise, neoliberal capitalism, as evidenced by research, even exploits emotional relationships, emphasizing that a mindset must be created that thinks of nothing but profit and loss, even in the most emotional relationships. From this perspective, neoliberalism should not be diminished to liberal economic policies because neoliberalism is a worldview that encompasses all aspects of human life, as Gary Becker, a socialist and economist from the Chicago School, has developed the fundamental principle of neoliberalism, i.e., the endless pursuit of profit, to the mother-child relationship, man and woman, citizen to citizen, and other micro and macro areas. This ideology is the process of simultaneous transformation of every phenomenon and social role (state, family, religion, university, father, spouse, friend, individual, etc.) into “individual” and “enterprise”. According to this perspective, any social phenomenon in the neoliberal system should function as an individual and an enterprise in society; that is, an individual must market himself, participate in the competition process, and seek the best performance and maximum profit. Inevitably, his links to anyone and anything will be temporary and continue until the continuity of profitability; in other words, neoliberalism is the process of constructing a “neoliberal subject” (Abazari & Zakeri, 2018). There is a reason that, currently, we face the catastrophic consequences of implementing these policies on local and global scales. However, how can we explain and represent this matter in the public space of the cities?

### Neoliberalism and Urban Public Space from a Geographical Perspective

Geographers have traditionally learned that one of the best ways to understand the city is to watch it from above and far away. From this view, the city can be seen as a fixed and extensive context for the viewer. Michel de Certeau introduces the important aspects of urban life while fascinating the view from above. The story begins on the ground with footprints. The passers write about the city without reading it. De

Certeau intends to say that when we walk in the city, we will not pay attention to the representations and knowledge of those who control our cities. People’s movements (traffic, animals, goods, etc.), which form the different contexts of the city, cannot be perceived from a distance. As a result, ignoring this context means ignoring one of man’s aspects of city life (Hubbard, 2017, 173–174). Therefore, it can be said that decoding the city is the essential decoding of the function of social structures (Shakuie, 2005, 290). From a political perspective, all the planning and reconstruction are essentially spatial and geographical; here, Zukin’s question on the culture of the cities makes sense: “whose city and whose culture?” (Zukin, 1995, 74). The concept of “right to the city” is immediately associated with the mind’s ability to answer this question. Peter Marcuse argues that the ultimate purpose of critical urban theory is to use the right to the city (Marcuse, 2009, 185). The right to the city was first raised by Henri Lefebvre in the 1960s. Later, David Harvey used this concept and conceptually developed it. “Right to the city” means that, in a true democracy, people must be given the right to use and build public spaces. It is clear that this attitude is controversial and contentious because other agents and organizations (mainly agents and organizations of the local state) claim that using public spaces depends on their ultimate control or monopoly. However, undoubtedly, if a system suffices for “formal” democracy and ignores the social, cultural, and economic inequalities that distinguish citizens, it will not be worthy of the democratic character. Hence, according to the right to the city, a good city is based on social inclusion, fairness, equality, democracy, and sustainability. David Harvey states that “the right to the city is far more than the right to settle in the city; it is the right to form the city based on our needs and desires” (Harvey, 2018, 28). Therefore, as soon as a social space is created, there will be a struggle to dominate it. There is a dominant hub and a dominated hub, and there will be controversial facts from now on because the truth is inevitably conflicting. If there is a truth,



it will be the reason to struggle. Hence, geographers, planners, and urban designers consider and strengthen the economic, social, civic, and environmental foundations of a person's life more than building their dreams; because if the actual foundations of life are not developed, the best dreams will lead to ideologies that mislead people. Consequently, first, they mention the axes of the democratic city: 1) The non-commodification of cities is the first axis. As a result, the more commodified the urban space, the more people will be misled; 2) the openness or closeness of urban spaces is the democratic city's second axis; in fact, the best space is open urban spaces; thus, the democratic city has the most open spaces. 3) The third factor in being democratic is the vehicle orientation or pedestrian orientation of the city. A vehicle-oriented city is the most dangerous type of non-democratic city. 4) The fourth axis of a democratic city is the micro or macro space of cities. A city with a 10 or 20 million population has more dominance capabilities than a city with a 10 thousand or 20 thousand population. For this reason, the reason why ancient Greece had many democratic cities was its low population. The fifth axis is the sensory and non-sensory nature of cities. The more insensitive the city, the more undemocratic it will be. We have five senses. By cutting off any one of these senses, a branch of undemocratic rule prevails. 6) Identity should be considered the sixth axis of a democratic city, and no one should be able to destroy the diversity of identity in any nation or anywhere. 7) The seventh axis is the body in urban space; the more democratic a body system is, the freer it is. No matter how much the body is under control and coercion in a system, we will see an undemocratic urban space. 8) The greater the number of social protests, the more democratic the society becomes; however, the more conformist the society becomes, the more it moves toward a non-democratic atmosphere. Protest can be called criticism and thinking. 9) The minority and majority of cities are other axes of the democratic city. Democracy means that when there is a majority in a society, they must respect themselves and those who are different

from them. The reason for this is that if we want to assess the development index, we must consider the minorities, not the majority (10). The action system is another axis, including micro-actions and macro-actions. For example, in micro action, if someone sees trash while walking down the street, they will pick the trash and throw it in the trash bin. However, when a macro-action individual sees trash, he will be angry and seek to rebel. (11) Emic and etic city factors are democratic; macro actions have always been harmful. Etic refers to the perspective of an outsider looking at people from above, and emic means something that originates from society (Fakouhi, 2018). In addition to the right to the city, which was mentioned in the democratic city, we must consider the right to nature as well. Plants and animals have the right to live and are also citizens of the city. In a nutshell, a city is a place that has a neighborhood and a public space. The city is not a collection of lonely, self-centered, and selfish people, nor is it a mass of people drowning in its crowds. Thus, we must ask how the ideology of neoliberalism affects urban public space. Does this ideology lead to the creation of a democratic city for all human beings in a spatial reality?

Undoubtedly, globalization can increase economic, cultural, social, and environmental growth, and alike, in turn, such growth can reduce any type of poverty. Poverty reduction, in turn, can ensure that people enjoy their economic, human, and other rights and that their human dignity is respected. However, the type of globalization matters here. As we know, capitalism has truly passed all the regional obstacles and become global; our age is the age of the triumph of capitalist ideology. Neoliberalism has subjected all aspects of life to the market logic around the world and has turned all elements into tradable objects. Capitalism, as a condition for its successful development, has inherited markets for its commodities organized on a global scale. Indeed, in our era, capitalism is not just an economic method, but the spirit of our era. Whether we like it or not, we live in a capitalist society and a modern metropolis, albeit a bad and metropolitan society, which is extremely dirty and

boring, and perhaps dangerous and deadly. Thus, the question is, whose is this city?

It is noteworthy that one of the critical approaches to space and society is the radical political tradition. This tradition was initially influenced by the dominant political movements in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which increasingly began with a variety of Marxist-inspired theoretical traditions. Their concern was not denying the objectivity of the geographical space but the simultaneous explanation of the objective matter and production of the social forces. Different communities use and organize space in various ways and generate specific geographical models for the society, which uses this space (Smith, 2008, 15). Henri Lefebvre believed that capitalism has survived only by occupying and producing space. In the meantime, undoubtedly, the urban sphere is the dominant spatial form of capitalism. According to this perspective, David Harvey defines places as the material ecological artifacts and sophisticated networks of the constructed and experienced social relations. For him, money, time, and space, as the concrete abstractions, form everyday life. The familiar places and safe spaces are removed in the circle of time; however, it is the capital turnover that controls everything. Urbanization is a channel through which the capital surplus begins to build new towns for the upper classes. It is a powerful process that newly determines what is the story of the city? Who is allowed to live in a city? And who not? This process determines the quality of life based on the capital regulations, not people (Harvey, 1996, 316). For example, the spatial form of the capitalist city is different from the feudalist city; however, it is not only about the interaction of the space and society, but a particular historical logic (of capital accumulation) directs the historical dialectic of the space and society (Smith, 2008, 106). The lack of meaning in the space is associated with the consumability of the place. Places have declined in commodities due to the influence of capitalism. Although consumability has increased the importance of the place, it cannot provide what David Harvey called “the authentic

basis for the integrated identity of the place”. Construction and reconstruction of the meaning of the place have declined to the non-historical and non-geographical processes. For instance, in the 1980s, a mass of buildings became inclusive as commercial centers, shopping centers, museums, beach resorts, and entertainment parks; these buildings created a sense of confusion and amazement by simulating some aspects of the traditions and the future world by stimulating the childhood imaginations in the humans. Such a place was described as “non-geographical diversity” by Sorkin, which is characterized by uniformity and assimilation in the space. Urban places are no longer places for gathering and humane relations. In return, they have become a clumsy simulation of the deceiving visual forms of the entertainment parks as if these forms of the places do not reflect the historical relations and are irrelevant to the historical and physical context in which they have been placed. Thus, consumer capitalism continuously provides our capacity to enter the consumer society, and the relationship between consumption and urban space and urban life is defined based on public access. Such perspective raises the question of whether the contemporary urban consumption culture has provided the opportunity to make more inclusive and fair cities or not. Mike Featherstone, in a paper entitled “Global and Local Cultures”, associated the diminishing of the local cultures with the effects of globalization. The sense of belonging, the shared experiences, and cultural forms associated with a place are requisite for the concept of local culture. Local culture often refers to the culture of a relatively small and limited space in which the residents have daily face-to-face relations. Nowadays, the local cultural boundaries have become more vulnerable, and it has become more difficult to preserve them in a way that some stress that there is a lack of sense of the place (Ing, 2015, 25). As if there is an impressive absence of the influential and symbolic layers in the material structure of the buildings and environment in the process of the collective life. Hence, many generations of urban theorists, such as Lewis Mumford Jane

Jacobs, Doreen Massey, and David Harvey, believed that the places in which the cities are restructured are public spaces, not private. For example, Los Angeles is infamous for the irregular and immediate removal of the public spaces and public transportation, and at the same time, there are reports of selling the narrow sidewalks in the city. In 2012, Guardian published a report on the considerable expansion of the POPS in Britain from the 1980s to the 2000s. According to this report, one of these privately owned public spaces is a 13-hectare area of land along the banks of the River Thames in London, which was completed in 2003 and handed over to a Kuwaiti company in 2013 for 1.7 billion Pound; It was the largest real estate deal in the history of Britain. During the privatization of the public spaces, changing the form of the exterior area of a city hall to a POP (privately owned public space) means that photography and pride are no longer allowed in this area. Despite the numerous objections and critiques about these actions, the construction of the POPS and privatization of the public spaces are still increasing in number and area in London. However, the development of the urban public spaces, which are truly owned by the public, is one of the purposes of urban officials and authorities. In 2008, Ash Amin, English Geographer, stated that the indicator of the public spaces is the free movement of the bodies, making many relations possible. When a place is under control, and, particularly, when generic people do not exactly what are the legal or acceptable limits of their movements and activities, people become their police, monitor and control their behavior, and limit their interactions, resulting in many social and psychological consequences for them (Garrett, 2016). Accordingly, it can be said that nowadays, consumerism is true for everyone but the poorest. A prosperous society is a society, in which the “good citizens” rush to try to show off by buying. Those who do not have the facility to fully participate in the consumption do not have access to an important part of the contemporary culture (Svendsen, 2016, 176); because the city has always been a circus for consumerism.

Rem Koolhaas, in his theories on “the generic city, describes the city without history, superficial, shallow and soulless; a city, which was formed in recent decades in which, alley, as an important social, cultural and civic factor, makes no sense and the streets and roads have been given to the cars; thus, it is a non-democratic city, which is based on two pillars: urban officials and capital traders while its third and main pillar, i.e., people and their role, cannot be seen in the city. Therefore, Generic City is always intertwined with the power mechanisms, which sometimes, this authoritarian power is local, and sometimes is national (Rogers, 2013, 8). For example, according to The Economist, the world is crazy about cars, and the criterion for a metropolitan has become its traffic. As soon as the families become rich, the car is one of the first things that they would want. Income elasticity caused by owning a car is almost 2. That is, one percent of an income of a middle-class family equals to two percent increase in the number of cars. In other words, in a short period, we will witness a very great traffic growth in the space of the cities (Hall & Pfeiffer, 2009, 44); because, with the population growth of the cities and its resulted expansion, the traffic in the highways and roads will be blocked. Therefore, more highways, roads, and freeways will be constructed to solve it. This vicious circle repeats, especially in third-world countries. That is, there is a limit to this process because if everywhere is covered with asphalt, the city will be no longer livable, and it will not be a “humane city”. Thus, the result is a large city in that a significant share of its land has become roads and highways, and its traffic has been locked (Watt, 2005, 272). There is a reason that the more the speed of a vehicle, the more space it will need. According to the studies conducted in the Research center of applied sciences in Swiss, a car traveling at 40 kilometers per hour requires three times as much space as a car traveling at 10 kilometers per hour. In addition, the required private space for a driver in the car is six times more than the required private space for the cyclist. Hence, the space of the city is increasingly occupied for establishing the communication infrastructures for cars with higher

speed, resulting in less space for the collective land uses. They continued that the more speed will lead to the more distances between the places referred to by residents, and people will allocate more time for their travels or have access to a faster vehicle to solve the increased distances. Either way, the social differences and a type of injustice will be exacerbated. That is, due to the value of time and its economic reason, a broader space is allocated to the high-income people of the society, and the lower incomes of the city, spend more time on the economic travels. Therefore, as saving time by faster vehicles is emphasized in the policy-making of urban transportation, it will be biased in favor of the high-income people and to the detriment of the low-income people. Are you still thinking only of “mobility” and construction of the highways and widening the streets to develop and improve urban access? Will this solution increase the “social velocity” or will only increase the speed of a group of people at the cost of reducing the speed of the majority? (Whitelegg, 2002, 62). According to this explanation, creating a sense of placelessness is a necessity for the neoliberal ideology. In addition, its philosophical base is the philosophy of placelessness.

## Conclusion

In the current research, while explaining the ontological presence and physical face-to-face relationships, the intervention of ideology in the physical, social, and psychological space was studied to explain the public spaces of cities. In addition, the ideologies are a set of blocked and closed thoughts that, following a utopia, sought to homogenize the space of society, as soon as gaining power. Happiness and saving human beings in the context of space were the ideals of all ideologies, including socialism and neoliberalism. However, in reality, as much as the geometrical physique of democratic public space is defined by its openness and possibilities for connecting humans and creation of the spontaneous population, fascists, communists, etc., public space is characterized by the compactness and contraction of its physical places, designed in a way either to scatter

the population in advance or display it as a formless mass for political propaganda. The architecture of each public space can be distinguished based on to what extent it encourages civic micro relations and produces non-representational spontaneous communities in terms of structure, or, in contrast, as a controlling political intellect, it has served the practices of atomizing individuals and disrupting relations and massification of citizens. All of these can now be analyzed differently from a geographical perspective in the context of the public space of cities, against the neoliberal ideology, and so on. However, the realized criticism of them is that we should not look for a perfect human from the perspective of ideologies for true happiness, but we, human beings, should create this happiness as obligated and responsible citizens. This is because, to create happiness at any time and any place, it is the human being who must take their right back from the society’s regime. Also, a perfect human being and equal space have never been realized in any era. On the other hand, perfect human beings and equal space have not taken on a real form in any age, but human beings have always been evolving throughout history to improve their lives, because human evolution has always been gradual. In the meantime, it seems that the authentic foundations of modernity in which the right to the city is profoundly highlighted, there is a long way that must be taken in the interaction between state, civic society, and citizens, and this is how the spatial differences of such process in the context of time and space can be explained. The essence of the results of the present article show that the contraction and expansion of the concept of public space in cities in accordance with various ideologies change its spatial, social, and psychological form. Also, to create an active, vibrant, and democratic civil society in which the concept of the right to the city is truly realized, providing the possibility and opportunity for social interaction and exchange is one of the requirements for the creation of this matter and also the factor of the success of cities in the past and will be in the future.

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