

# Dissent and Urban Spaces

**Marie Curie Actions (FP7-PEOPLE-IRG-2008)**  
**Commission of the European Communities**

**Dr. Tali Hatuka**

Head, Laboratory for Contemporary Urban Design (LCUD)  
Department of Geography and Human Environment  
Tel Aviv University, POB 39040  
Tel Aviv 69978, Israel

Tel: +972-3-6405162

Email: [hatuka@post.tau.ac.il](mailto:hatuka@post.tau.ac.il)

Personal websites: <http://hatuka.tau.ac.il>

Laboratory website: <http://lcud.tau.ac.il>

Throughout the history of cities, protests and acts of aggression have been embedded within urban life. Especially since the beginning of the 20th century, challenges to the social order have forced politicians to court the masses in public arenas, the same arenas that were also used as platforms to resist political rule. These assemblies – whether supportive of or resistant to the government – take place in a concrete time and space, thus spawning powerful relationships between place and protest. Addressing these relationships, this research offers a window into how people use, manipulate, claim, and appropriate urban space while advocating for their own values. Thus far, we have no coherent theory explaining the relationship between space and contentious politics. We do have significant empirical and theoretical accounts of how prevailing forms of popular struggle vary and change from one political regime to another, but there is little written about the spatial physicality of these struggles.





## Objectives

This research seeks to further understand the phenomena of dissent. It contributes to this goal by setting the rather abstract notions of citizenship and democracy into a concrete framework of time, place and meaning.

The research aims are:

1. Building an analytical, interdisciplinary framework for the spatial physicality of dissent.
2. Advancing a comparative display of forms of citizenship and cultural identities. This framework sheds light on the role of organizations and individuals devoted to the quest for social justice.
3. Offering significant new perspectives on how different and changing notions and practices of citizenship relate to our multicultural society.

**This interdisciplinary research (architecture and urban planning, urban sociology and conflict resolution studies) investigates these ideas by viewing the city as a sphere of conflict and an arena of negotiation between authorities, groups, and interests over territory, resources, and power.**

The research draws particularly on the significance of the spatial attributes of protests by asking, what is the role of the space's design in the socio-political event occurring there? By presenting a microscopic analysis of protests in cities, the research underscores the spatial impact of protests. Moreover, although civil protests are widely acknowledged, this is the first research that focuses on the interrelationship between the act of dissent and space.



Analyzing dissent in 12 cities worldwide, with a focus on groups' strategies, actions' scales (global, national and local), and key principles of action (e.g. difference, decentralization, multiplicity and informal order), the research suggest that contemporary mode of action is not particular, and could be found, with modifications, in different contemporary actions worldwide in both democratic and non-democratic regimes.

**For further reading:**

**Urban Design & Civil Protest (official website)**

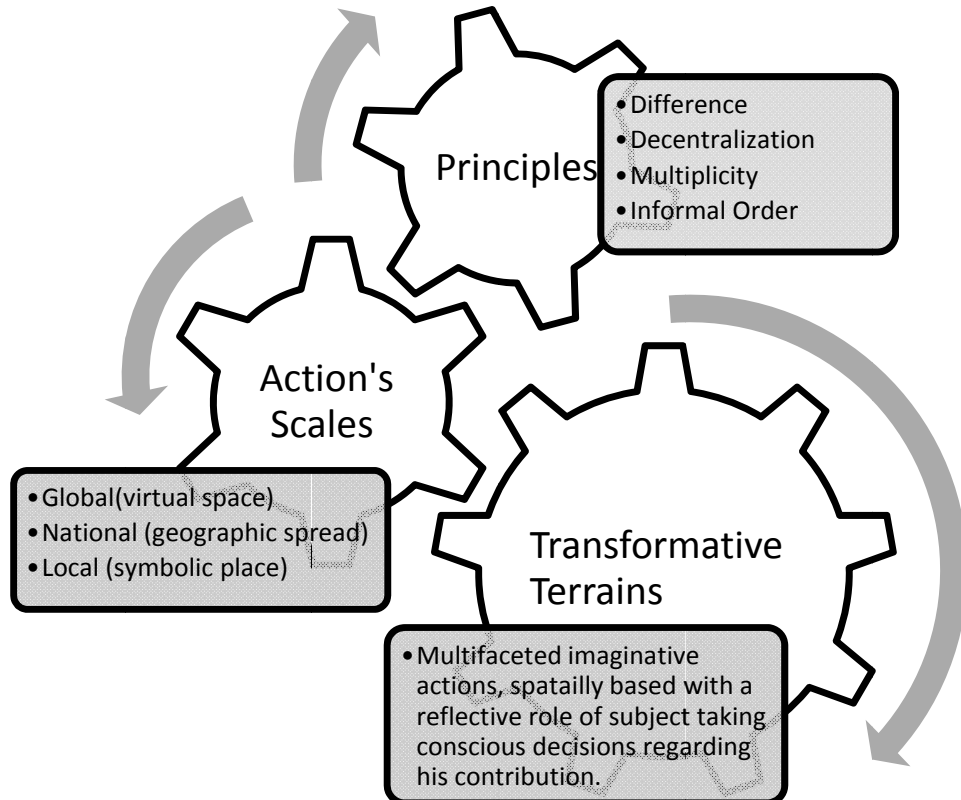
<http://designprotest.tau.ac.il/>

**Designing Protests in Urban Public Space, by Tali Hatuka, Sep. 2011**

<http://www.metropolitiques.eu/Designing-Protests-in-Urban-Public.html>

**Designing a City for Safe Protests, an interview with Tali Hatuka, Feb. 2011**

[http://www.eurekalert.org/pub\\_releases/2011-02/afot-dac022311.php](http://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2011-02/afot-dac022311.php)



Model 1- Transformative Terrains