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**POTENTIALS FOR THE COMMUNAL LIVING
IN UKRAINE**
**based on historical overview and
present-day practices**

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1 Changing living: from Kommunalka to a common home?

Throughout its history, Ukraine has developed various practices of living together. Such typological richness was drawn from the constant changes in governance, each bringing along different housing cultures, which were often highly contrasting to the preceding ones. In the 20th century housing discourse in Ukraine (at that date Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) seemed to focus on the issues of housing provision, in large part through the collective forms of dwelling. With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, cities of former Soviet Socialistic republics were confronted with the reprivatization of the available housing stock. Over the last two decades the dwelling sphere in Ukraine facing an extreme form of individualization, resulting in the oversaturation of the real estate market with the monotypic residential units and transformation of the established types of communal housing. However, more and more actors involved in city design and development in Ukraine have been exploring the various types of collective living, as a potential for future developments (see such projects as Creating Homes for Tomorrow from CANactions and Alternative living from Service Civil International). The focus of this paper is to explore the history and present-day practices to understand the potentials for the communal living in Ukraine. The analysis of various typologies of collective living could help to describe the life in communal housing and classify divergent meanings of cohabitation in context of everyday life of their inhabitants. It is my experience of encountering various types of communal living in Ukraine (both as a guest and a temporary resident) that has driven this study. The paper takes the reader on a journey through the historical development of the communal living in the context of Ukraine, from the early history to the current trends and practices. In particular, the selection of the representative cases being examined would help us to understand more about the perspective typologies and characteristics for the communal living that apply to the context of Ukraine.

2 Understanding the communal living

From the earliest times until the First Industrial Revolution, communal living seems to be the dominant form of human cohabitation. Radical theorists Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels claimed that the hunter-gatherer tribes were egalitarian communities with the collective means of production and ownership (cf. Engels 1909: 196). And while the communal living was a prevailing household formation across Europe at the medieval period, the shift towards the individualization of housing, raised during the Industrial Revolution and towards the end of 19th century, shaped the modern patterns in the organization of society and dwelling. In general terms, this means that living alone or within a nuclear family is a relatively modern phenomenon (cf. Kurz 2015: 34, also

Hannemann 2006: 31). Moreover, the household characteristics, the certain quality requirements for housing standards and living practices seem to continually evolve. In this respect, it is important to have an idea of how to understand the communal living today and how to imagine the spectrum of possible habitation forms.

In this paper, the term communal living will be used in its broadest sense to refer to all forms of the collective living in which people share space, possessions, and responsibilities in order to compare different types of communal living at various times in the history. Communal living is a common term that usually refers to intentional communities, where a group of people have chosen to live collectively, share property, resources, and responsibilities (cf. Kozeny 1995: 18). In Soviet times, a communal housing, as a common good, was distributed through State institutions and, consequently, „housing strategies of groups and individuals were not based on independent choices reflecting social position“ (Semenova 2004: 54). In the context of post-soviet Ukraine, understanding communal living in its generic definition, as the intentional community (with a high degree of social cohesion and teamwork), seems to be unsuitable, taking into account different perception of this social phenomenon. Additionally, when using the term ‘community’ it is also important to reflect on the two extremes – ‚locality’ formed by people brought together by physical closeness and ‘community’ defined according of the frequency and intensity of positive contacts among residents“ (cf. Farrar cited after Gadecki 2012: 111). In general terms, this means that it is important to distinguish the invariability from the desire to live together. In most cases, maintenance of the common facilities in collective living occurs in shifts that are shared between residents on the voluntary basis, which differentiates it from a condominium, where various services are provided by management firm and imply financial reward. Daniel Kurz holds the view that „the anonymous monetary transactions that replaced relationships based on personal exchange meant that subjects become less shackled to one another but also less protected“ (Kurz 2015: 34). The monetization of goods and services in the market economy contributed to emancipation of an individual in terms of his spending power „from dependence on the give and take of community life“ (Kurz 2015: 34). The first cohousing projects in Denmark, considered as the renaissance of modern communal living, mostly have embraced working families that seek better opportunities for childcare and cooperative housekeeping (cf. ScottHanson/ ScottHanson 2004: 2). However, the latest projects seem to focus more on intergenerational exchange and social mixing (for instance, Zwickyareal in Dübendorf, Weltquartier Wilhelmsburg in Hamburg and R50 Cohousing in Berlin) . According to Christine Hannemann (2016: 34; own translation): „The new demand for community living is based on the growing need to realize living arrangements beyond

the nuclear family“. The new forms of community living meant to meet the demand for housing that encompasses the multiplicities of different lifestyles.

Practices of collective living are directly connected to the context and differ from country to country. In Germany, for instance, communal housing has a rich history and rooted in the culture of private self-help in the form of cooperative building (cf. Kleefisch-Jobst/ Köddermann/ Jung 2016: 77). The report Gemeinwohlorientierte Wohnungspolitik lead by Institut für Stadtforschung und Strukturpolitik (ifS) operates with three core evolving typologies of collective housing in its research – intergenerational housing, projects that aim obtaining an affordable housing and experimental housing projects (cf. IfS Institut für Stadtforschung und Strukturpolitik 2019: 57). Currently, the new models of the collective living are tested through the various projects in a number of different German cities (such as Modellprojekt Haus der Statistik in Berlin, Amaryllis in Bonn and WagnisArt in München). In consideration of the foregoing, the question that arises is what the future held for the communal living in Ukraine. The next chapter, therefore, moves on to reveal the narratives of the community living in the context of Ukraine.

3 Narrative of the collective living in Ukraine

Starting from the first mention of Ukraine in 12th century towards the modern Ukraine within its existing frontiers, the communal living in Ukraine had been undergone various transformations - from the tribal settlement types and the agricultural peasant communities (developed around the cultivated land and extended family) towards the soviet communal ‘tovarishchestvo’¹ (formed around institutions and industries) and more modern types of collective living. While the various natural and geographical conditions of Ukraine contributed to the richness of the typologies and lifestyles, the case of the shared living practices in this paper mostly localized in the central and eastern part of Ukraine, as they depict the most distinctive features of communal living of particular periods, as stated below.

3.1 Collective living in Ukraine before 20th century

The history of Ukraine is deeply connected to the cultivation land and rural lifestyle. Before the 20th century, the vast majority of the population in Ukraine lived in villages. ‘Khata’, the traditional rural house with the white clay walls and four-slope straw roof, was the most prevalent house type within the Ukrainian communities until the begin-

¹ Literally translated as ‘a partnership’.

ning of the 20th century. Ukrainian 'khata' has undergone a centuries-long development (from the single-divisional to multi-divisional structures) with the variety of planning types (cf. Kosmina 1994: 18). The traditional house was shared among four or five family generations, so great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, adult children, and their children commonly occupied the living space. As the family constellations changed through the time, the house units were built in a flexible manner, which allowed provision of the additional rooms that could be easily adapted to housing, as well as allowed constructions to expand the residential building by means of adding the new premises to the original volumes (cf. About Ukraine 2019).

One of the prevailing patterns of the collective living in the context of Ukraine seems to be a cohabitation of the extended family in the several semi-autonomous living rooms. In most of the cases the house entrance area, which also served as a common storage and working space, partitioned the household and thereby allowed the relatively independent access to the residential units² (see image 1).

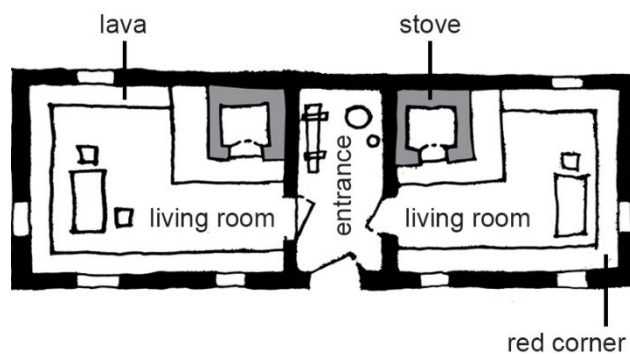


Image 1: Typical layout of 'Khata' in Cherkashchyna, dated from 1907 and currently exposed in the National Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of Ukraine (source: own drawing, 2019)

The daily life of the Ukrainian extended family was organized around the living rooms with the clay cooking stoves as core elements, thus the presence of the stove defined self-sufficiency of the living area (see image 2). The stove, which was used as a cooking and storing place during the day and sleeping facility during the night time, occupied the inner corner of the room on the one side from the front, when the ceremonial corner (so-called 'red corner') was located diagonally from the stove (cf. Kosmina 1994: 20). 'Lava', the traditional stationary place for rest from the wood, was dedicated to the sitting and lying. Every piece of furniture had, in addition to the utilitarian, another, aesthetic purpose (cf. About Ukraine, 2019).

² Such an implicit typology has been called 'Khata na dvi polovuni', literally translated as 'house in two parts'.



Image 2: Living room in 'Khata' in Cherkashchyna, dated from 1907 and currently exposed in the National Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of Ukraine (source: own photo, 2019)

The housework conducted commonly by the family members seems to be an important part of the daily life in the Ukrainian villages. The collective cooking, weaving, and sewing were chanted by singing. The certain types of craftsmanship and grain processing works were held in the yard of the house that was mostly formed by the independent buildings and remained opened. To conclude, the collective living in the period of Ukraine before the Soviet Union seems to characterize by the intergenerational households shaped around the families (with the certain level of autonomy of the living units) and by common redistribution of the work and housekeeping duties.

3.2 Practices of the communal living in the Soviet-era of Ukraine

After several years of the 'Ukrainian revolution'³, Ukraine entered the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1922 and stayed there until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The establishment of the socialist regime in Ukraine brought sudden changes to the political, economic and social organization. The population of Ukraine, which remained mainly rural at the beginning of the 1920s, began to migrate to larger cities with industries and institutions - around them the first praxis of soviet communal housing has been developed. In Soviet times, the housing in Ukraine was owned, financed and provided by the state. In the context of Soviet Union, „the universal access to housing and its provision by the state at trivial prices“ was used as a critical claim that advocated the ideas of superiority of state-socialism over the capitalist system (Renaud 1996: 10). As the initial ideology of Soviets was based on the ideas of Marxists

³ Term 'Ukrainian revolution' is associated with the revolutionary national liberation struggle of Ukrainian people for the political self-determination and the establishment of independent state between 1917 and 1921.

theory⁴, the Soviet era of Ukraine was rich in typologies of the communal living – house-communes, *kommunalka*'s and dormitories are vivid examples of the clash of ideas and reality. „Whereas the house-commune had been a microcosm of the ideal revolutionary universe, the communal apartment was an actual Soviet microcosm, a nonidealized image of Soviet society in miniature“ (Boym 1994: 127). Dormitories, for its part, as a temporary refuge for the new city dwellers, became alike manifest of solidarity and, to some extent, even romanticized.

3.2.1 House-commune as a social experiment

The early 1920s in Soviet Russia and Ukraine was a time of experiments with the housing typologies, hence the thriving utopian communist ideas postulated public ownership and communal use of the dwelling. Kharkiv, as the first capital of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, became a platform of the experiments – there, on a par with cities like Moscow and Leningrad, the first house-communes were built. The house-commune, being a manifestation of the ideal socialist city, aimed to „radically reconstruct the individualist bourgeois quarters, ‘defamiliarize’ them in a literal sense of the word by subverting the structure of the bourgeois family and instituting the relationships of proletarian comradeship“ (Boym 1994: 124). And the communal living, bearing remodeled types of relationships between the cohabitants, seemed to be a tool of such radical reconstruction.

Soviet house-commune constituted as a self-sufficient assemblage of densified blocks with centralized common and living areas (see image 3). Such communal facilities as a dining area and a library, formed a core of the building, along with the working classes on the first floor. As the individual kitchen was generally perceived as „the symbolic space of the nuclear family and the cause of women's enslavement by the daily grind“, house-communes were planned with the common canteen in the center (Boym 1994: 128). In some cases, the living units in house-commune had in-build kitchenettes, but their compact size and a system of public spaced supposed to motivate tenants to use of communal facilities (for instance, house-commune *Novyi Bit* in Kharkiv). The sanitary block with the showers and bathroom implied the conjunction with the residential block, which contained a generous amount of living units. The modest size of the living cells, ranged from 2.5 to 6 square meters and mostly dedicated to sleeping and storing of the personal belongings, was attributed to the fact that the first house-communes were designed for the students and workers.

⁴ The housing question in the Marxists theory is an integral part of the capitalist social relations when tenant acts not as a producer, but as a consumer. As a member of the communal living, tenant „can be part of productive, non-capitalist social processes, which lay the basis for a collective consciousness and a cooperative ethic“ (Barton 1977: 17).

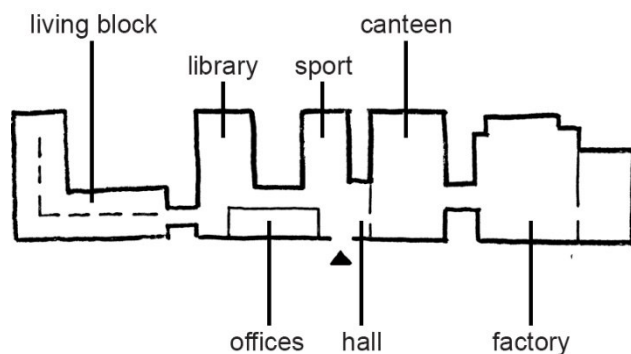


Image 3: Layout of Dzerzhinsky house-commune in Kharkiv
 (source: Anton Makarenko electronic repository, own editing, 2019)

The nuclear family within such a housing typology was supposed to be liquidated, as the unit cells were designed for the accommodation of one or two persons, while children had to live in the specifically allocated area (cf. Lopteva 2019). The long corridors of the residential block supposed to link living units on the floor and, therefore, facilitate the closer communication between neighbors in addition to the communal spaces. Despite all the conditions, the areas dedicated to the communal use were often underutilized. In addition, the shared premises were gradually converted to housing due to the lack of available housing.

3.2.2 Kommunalka and its multiplicities

The origin of Kommunalka, a communal apartment shared by several families, is rooted in the housing crisis in the Soviet Union. The Soviet government was unable to meet the heavily increased housing demand in cities (mostly linked to the industrialization of the economy) and took advantage from the existing housing stock through the quartering of the larger urban apartments in major cities of Soviet Republics (cf. Chervonozhka 2012: 62). The communal apartments used to be core type of housing before the mass housing construction⁵ in the late 1950s in both Kyiv, Kharkiv, and other Ukrainian larger cities. In the novel soviet apartments such premises as fore-rooms, dining rooms, and halls were considered redundant, and therefore, unneeded (cf. Chervonozhka 2012: 62). In this respect, the larger multi-room apartments, previously owned by the middle class, were divided into the smaller parcels, hence up to six families could occupy the sole apartment. Svetlana Boym (1994: 124) said: „The communal neighbors, most often complete strangers from different classes and social groups thrown together by the local Housing Committee, were joined in a premodern

⁵ During the late 1950s a large-scale project of the social housing development took place. A housing reform, driven by Nikita Khrushchchev, manifested itself in the five-storey panel blocks without elevator.

practice of ‘mutual responsibility’“. When in the communal apartment the separated living unit was considered private and inhabited by one family or an individual, such facilities as kitchen, toilets, and hallways were in communal use. Consequently, the life in each dwelling unit lacked self-sufficiency, as it was bounded to the use of common facilities. Sociologist Ilya Utehin roughly divides the areas of common use in Kommunalka’s into specialized (toilets, bathrooms, and storeroom) and non-specialized areas (hallway, corridor, and kitchen) (cf. Utehin 2004: 24). According to Utehin the kitchen was „a center of the public life in a communal apartment, the main place of meeting and interaction between neighbors, the main stage of public events in the life of apartment“ (see image 4) (Utehin 2004: 24; own translation). The use of facilities in communal space was allocated, so each tenant or family used separate shelves, storage unit and burner on the stove.



Image 4: Kitchen in a communal apartment (source: Ilya Utehin, n.d.)

The common ownership of the public space implied the pragmatic use of it. For instance, an area with the common telephone, which was usually located in the hallway, also serve as a message board (cf. Utehin 2004: 33). Entrance to the communal apartment was most often equipped with multiple doorbells with the nameplates belonged to the inhabitants. In most cases, the private living unit appeared as a result of the separation of the initially larger room by the improvised materials and arrangement of the direct connection to the common corridor (see image 5) (cf. Utehin 2004: 35). The space division of the private units occurred mostly with the help of furniture – the area of the older family generation mostly located closer to the entrance, when the area for children was directed closer to the windows (cf. Utehin 2004: 35).

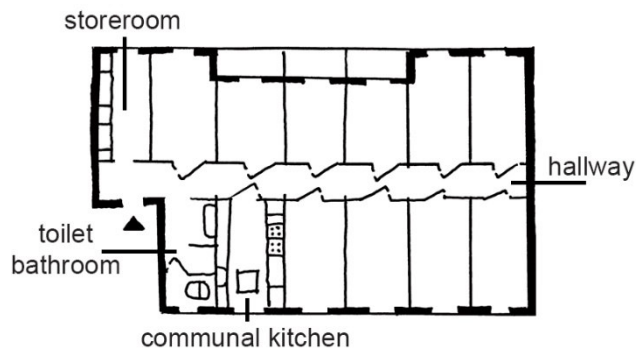


Image 5: Layout of communal apartment at Ivana Franka street in Kyiv (source: materials from Zhurnal Bolshogo Goroda, own drawing, 2019)

Typically, private living room was inhabited by the different family generations and was characterized by the multiple usages – at the same time it was a bedroom, a guest room and, in some cases, a kitchen. Svetlana Boym points out that the room organization had similarities with the pre-industrial rural house, with the red corner (television in the case of the communal apartment) located opposite to the stove (cf. Boym 1994: 151). All in all, the living in the Kommunalka had been characterized by tight living conditions due to the limited amount of living space, which also differs among regions. When up to six square meters of the living area per person were allocated inhabitant in communal apartments in Kyiv, the cities in industrial areas allocated only three square meters per person (cf. Chervonozhka 2012: 64). Resulted from the overcrowding and insufficient sound insulation, life in Kommunalkas lacked privacy. Utehin argues that the visual and symbolic transparency seemed to be the other characteristic of communal apartments, as this idea included the actual and potential awareness of neighbors about each other's lives (cf. Utehin 2004: 30).

3.2.3 Dormitory and equality

Dormitories, or 'obshchezhiya' in the Soviet era⁶, to a large extent, aimed at mass provision of the temporary accommodation close to the place of labor application (cf. Humphrey 2005: 44). Initially, the larger public buildings of the pre-Soviet epoch, similar to the communal apartments, were converted for cohabitation in order to accommodate the increasing number of students and workers. The dormitory projects began to emerge in the 1930s as a later manifestation of the house-communes (cf. Humphrey 2005: 42). Generally, dormitories have been characterized by its diverseness – they differed by the type of residents (segregated by gender or mixed residence),

⁶ Literally, 'a common living space'.

layout (corridor or block floor planning) and attached institution (educational, industrial, etc.), when, at the same time, every type held its own character. The standardized dormitory building was outlined during the mass construction period from the 1950s to 1970s (cf. Humphrey 2005: 46). A premise for the custodian in the hallway of the ground floor, responsible for the access and order control, seems to be a core feature of the 'obshchezhiye' and, in this respect, was vividly featured in iconic movies (such as *Offered for Singles* 1984). An office of the dormitory director was located at the ground floor, along with a place for leisure or individual study. Since the structure of dormitory was „intended to embody the ideas of equality, frugality, openness to others, and communal responsibility“, the maintenance of the order and cleaning duties of the communal facilities took place in shifts (Humphrey 2005: 46). Communally occupied rooms were settled down along the corridor, which leads to the kitchen and showers at the ends (see image 6). The corridors were in some ways the arteries of social life in dormitories and formed a center of the building – there the daily accidental encounters and celebrations took place.

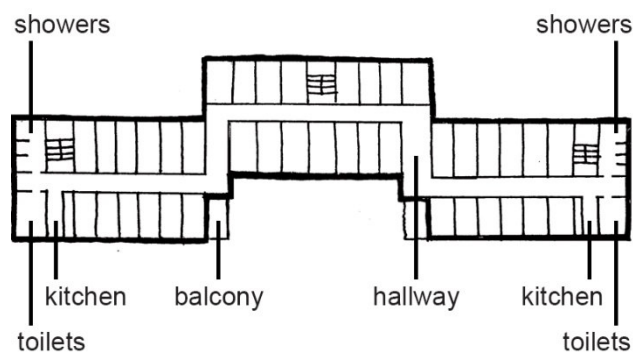


Image 6: Typical floor plan layout of dormitory at the Ukrainian Agricultural Academy in Kyiv (source: own drawing, 2019)

Even though a living room in more prestigious dormitories was shared between two tenants, the living quarters usually were occupied by four or six roommates. Remarkably, tenants of one room often shared not only the living space but also the food and personal items. A person, who lived a great part of her life in dormitories – first in the student ones and then workers, remembered that the roommates shared with each other the food parcels from parents, cooked together and even shared clothes. The living rooms were conditionally divided into several parts – the common entrance area (dedicated to storing of goods, kitchen utensils, and food), the living space (with beds along near the walls) and window area (with a table for the studying or eating). The cramped conditions of the most rooms in dormitories engendered little to no space for privacy. Elena Grednovskaya claims that the life of the dormitory sees in its structures

of everyday life an illustration of the ideas of Michel Foucault on the Panopticon – where the subject no longer belongs to itself since it is an object of constant observation (cf. Grednovskaya 2003: 301). With only partial changes, dormitories, as a type of temporal communal living for mobile citizens, remained on the expanses of independent Ukraine.

4 Current trends and practices

In former Soviet republics, people's rights of property ownership were severely limited, since almost all property used to be controlled by the state. The sudden shift from a state-socialist to capitalism system has led to the growth of the property significance (cf. Laimer 2018: 1). The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and following reestablishment of the state independence of Ukraine contributed to the adoption of the series of reforms, which resulted in spontaneous privatization of state-owned assets⁷. The vast majority of residential units, including ones in communal apartments, were privatized according to their occupants „without clear rules about the ownership and maintenance of the public spaces, and no delineation nor registration of land boundaries“ (Renaud 1996: 11). Though, shared areas in the communal apartments were divided according to the sizes of the share, which facilitated the issuance of property certificates, they remained in the common use. It is frequently discussed in Ukraine⁸ that a striving willingness to own a private apartment rather than live in communal one, which is often possessed by former Soviet citizens, can be loosely described as a symptom of the posttraumatic stress disorder, namely as an attempt to avoid trauma-related cues – precarious property rights. By the one hand, reprivatization created a new housing market marked by extreme singularized housing options. At the same time, the real estate market has become oversaturated with the customary residential units, fast to build and relatively easy to sell. The real estate had been the core investment sector among household in Ukraine, which further triggered the residential construction (cf. World Bank 2015a: 75). In a broader context, in recent decades the neoliberal ideology seems to support the individualization (as a new moral agenda) and to impact in the form of deregulation, privatization, and public/private partnerships (cf. Doherty et al. 2005: 5). Thus, privatization of housing in practice contributed to the descension of alternative living options, including communal living.

⁷ Renaud states that housing is one of the 'four privatizations' in transition economies along with the privatization of such state-owned assets as large state enterprises, medium and small scale urban enterprises, and agricultural concerns (Renaud 1996: 10).

⁸ The author was born in Ukraine and had resided there for 25 years.

On the other hand, it is clear that there is a particular need for the provision of affordable and decent housing, as well as a need for the solutions to the problems related to social exclusion.

The current situation in the Ukraine's housing market is characterized by extremely high homeownership rates and limited rental options with 94 percent and 2.5 percent by 2010 (accordingly) (cf. World Bank 2015a: 125). The supply for affordable housing options for the mobile urban population has been surprisingly limited, as most households with average income level cannot afford to buy a dwelling – an average house price to income ratio in Ukraine stands at 16.8 years of income (cf. World Bank 2015a: 127). Additionally, ongoing military conflict in eastern Ukraine has had an extensive influence on the housing situation in Ukraine. The Ukraine Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment have shown that the number of people living in both internal and external displacement is more than 1.6 million (cf. World Bank 2015b: 3). Internal migrants from eastern Ukraine seem to absorb the market of affordable housing, thereby increasing the general pressure on the housing market in larger cities. Finally, a large proportion of the population in Ukraine (over 37 percent by 2010) experiences acute social exclusion – according to Human Development Report published in 2011 by United Nations Development Programme, youth, families with many children, elderly and migrants most often fall under the category of socially excluded groups (cf. United Nations Development Programme 2011: 19). In a broader framework, a number of scholars have investigated the relation between collective living and social mixing in the context of the affordable housing provision (cf. Harlander/ Kuhn 2012: 389, see also Gans 1961). In the context of Ukraine, the price seems to be a crucial factor in selecting the collective living option over the private. To date, dormitories and shared flats constitute the greater part of communal living options in Ukraine. However, the first coliving and cohousing projects are in the early stages of emerging.

4.1 Dormitory and culture of appropriation

The larger part of the dormitories for the workers, which initially belonged to the enterprises, were reprivatized by private individuals after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the following deindustrialization. In the case of student hostels, the larger part of the operating dormitories in Ukraine consist from the inheritance from the Soviet times with its exquisitely preserved handling system, including the entrance control by the custodian – until today each guest obliged to leave an identification document on the entrance. The ground floor, which in former times held the representative function, usually seems to be unused. A visit to several student dormitories (namely, dor-

dormitory N. 3 at the Kyiv National University of Construction and Architecture and dormitory N. 4 at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine) shows that the soft furnished area, a remarkable attribute of the entrance area dedicated to waiting, often remains underused – in most cases, the meeting venue of tenants is in front of the hostel.

The daily life of dormitory is thriving with activities in the corridors and on the stairs – there tenants meet each other and communicate. As in the dormitory setting the privacy seems to be elusive, the corridor, the most public space, seems to provide privacy for the personal conversations, unlike kitchens with its constant presence of various smells (cf. Humphrey, 2005: 48). The kitchen area is used for the common cooking, but the kitchen appliances typically are stored in rooms. Apparently, the dormitory residents seem to constantly exploring the grey zones – being on the fringe of what is allowed and not. Tenants practice appropriation of the commons space by temporal and, with the lapse of time, permanent interventions. It can be assumed that the core motto of living in the dormitory is ‘what is not forbidden is allowed’. Due to the lack of space, the underused spaces like balconies or hallways are used for the private needs, such as for the clothing drying or equipment storing. Dormitory rooms are usually shared among two to six tenants and hence the storage place for personal belongings or study is limited (see image 7). Residents seems to usually adjust rooms by changing the furniture (for instance, a simple bed is replaced by a two-story bed with in-build table and locker) and, in some cases, by constructing additional facilities.



Image 7: Dormitory room shared between five tenants, dormitory N. 4 at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (source: own photo, 2019)

The newly constructed dormitories in Ukraine are characterized by the autonomous access to building (without surveillance of the custodian), low number of tenants in the shared rooms and extended communal facilities – corridors serve as study and communication area, while collective storage rooms release space in the private rooms (as shown by dormitory at Ukrainian Leadership Academy in Kharkiv).

4.2 Shared flats – beyond formality

A great part of the mobile and aspiring population in Ukrainian cities live in shared flats due to the inability to rent a separate accommodation. Despite the wide prevalence, such type of communal living in Ukraine lacked regulation. The informal agreements between the tenant and landlord play a crucial part in this field. Typically, residents of shared flats do not register in the residence registration system and bound to pay the utility bills through the owners of apartments. The lack of residence registration obstructs the access of tenants to the locally-provided social services, like medical services or right to vote in local or state elections. A landlord of the shared flat confirmed that it is important for the property owner to control the financial flows of the accommodation in order to monitor the overall housing condition. The possibility of sharing the flat between several tenants, as a rule, is discussed with the landlord, but is not specified in the contract and, hence, monthly rent seems to be usually paid by a unite installment, not separately by each tenant. Usually tenants share a dwelling with one to four acquaintances. In the vast majority of cases, each tenant rents a separate room, while the kitchen, corridor, toilet, and bathroom are shared (see image 8). Rooms in the shared flats are normally rented out with a minimum set of furniture, such as bed and locker.

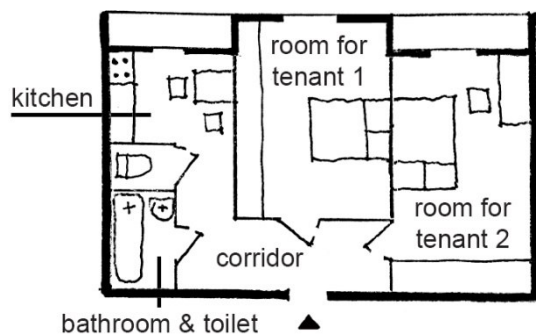


Image 8: Layout of shared flat with two tenants, apartments at Solomiji Krushelnitskoi street in Kyiv (source: own drawing, 2019)

When the communal areas are mostly maintained commonly, typically each tenant cooks according to the separate time slots. Living of the roommates in the shared flat seems to flow semi-independent due to the mutual agreement on the right to privacy. The credibility of the neighbors is an important part of cohabitation, as in the absence of tenants the private rooms are not set under lock and key.

4.3 Coliving and cohousing as emerging typologies

In the context of Ukraine, the projects that imply „rethinking of communal living“, branded as coliving and cohousing, are in the process of emerging and cost-effectiveness plays a crucial role in it. According to architect Grisha Zotov, in the larger Ukrainian cities as Kyiv, where person with an average income level experiences difficulty with purchasing of an apartment, collective living seems to become an alternative, as „people ready to share part of their space and life for the sake of economy, socialization, fun and so on“ (Zotov 2019: 138; own translation). The organizational concept of coliving and cohousing promotes a leaner and more effective configuration of the private areas, whereas saved square meters are used for the common needs. When coliving can be described as a more comfortable communal apartment that ensures decent level of privacy, the cohousing is generally understood as a composition of several fully functioning apartments or houses with commonly shared space. The ideas of communal living are gaining interest and momentum in the professional community, however, to date a few coliving projects are realized, while cohousing projects are still in the design stage. As the core risks associated with the development of this housing types consist in the long projects' payback and difficulties with the profitability calculation, developers typically give preference to the conventional projects or choose the most straightforward option (cf. Volovik 2019: 142). In most cases, the target group of projects that promote new ways of collective living in the Ukrainian cities, are representatives of creative professions or tech sector – such coliving projects as Domivka in Kyiv and Z-House in Poltava are promoted as an environment for active youth with the focus on collaborative creation in apartment buildings (cf. Gin 2019). Hence, residents of the semi-autonomous apartments in coliving have access to the common facilities, which contain extended functions as an addition to the ones in private accommodation (namely, large areas for cooking and meeting, guest rooms, working areas and playrooms). An essential part of the residents' daily life is an organization of the common activities, thus shared spaces are designed according to the interests of the community. Projects targeting young families mostly seem to encompass more the cohousing typology, in which compact private houses are grouped around the common house, a center of the cluster (such as concept design of Koncha Zaspas by ZOTOV&CO). Typically, common house is designed to serve as the heart of the community, where residents meet each other during regular events as common dinners. In both cases, the constituted community seems to be homogeneous, which would not add to the social mixing and possibility of the interactions across different age groups, as carriers of diverse experiences and daily schedules.

5 Conclusions: Unpacking the potentials

Communal living is a relatively long-established phenomenon in the larger Ukrainian cities. Its modern perception seems to be deeply rooted in the communal living practices of the Soviet-era of Ukraine when communal living was not a matter of personal choice, but rather the results of state housing allocation policies. Despite the abundance of collective living practices, it seems to be associated with low living standards. The particular case of flat share in Ukraine has shown that the tenants often have the obstructed access to the residence registration system. Further regulation of the legal relationship between landlord and tenants, thus reinforcing the legal protection of landlords and unlocking the access to a number of social services for residents, has potential to change the attitude towards to communal living in Ukraine. The majority of dormitories are often characterized by overcrowding and subsequent customization of the available space, both shared and private. Hence, the setting of the improved standards for private and common areas, accompanied by restructuring projects, would be crucial to lay the foundation for ensuring dormitory inhabitants decent living conditions. In addition, the introduction of wider coverage of communal living practices to the existing State Construction Norms of Ukraine, which prescribes the minimum quality requirements and maintenance regulation, would advocates for better living quality and construction standards.

In the context of Ukraine, the public and private rental sector, including dormitories and shared flats, playing a growing role for the mobile and aspiring citizens. The collective tenure, in contrast, practiced to only a limited extent and does not always imply mixed social composition. The expansion of the collective living market has the potential to respond to the growing request for affordable housing, as well as to promote the social mixing. The introduction of the different models of public-private partnership for the provision of affordable housing have potential to contribute to the social mixing, especially if the mix of different apartments types would be ensured. The promotion of typological diversity of communal housing would provide the wider range of options for urban citizens with various backgrounds and lifestyles. The establishment of consolidated complexes with the distinct intent (like intergenerationality, multiculturality, affordability or experimental living) have the potential to attract the residents with the specific needs and possessions. While the higher density of living compartments allows for the more extensive communal facilities, the right balance between private and shared spheres is a crucial part of what is required for ensuring the right to privacy, at the same time reducing the living expenses.

The lack of privacy seems to be the biggest concerns regards the communal living in the Ukrainian context. In this respect, the provision of basic sanitary and cooking facilities within the private units of the collective housing would ensure a certain level of autonomy for residents. The extended communal facilities, in turn, bear the potential to motivate socialization and form a community around the sharing of responsibilities. Moreover, the blurring of the boundary between public and private space by the introduction of the in-between spaces, exemplified by hallways in dormitories, have potential to provide the space for the positive social interactions. Communal kitchen and dining areas seems to be a core of the public life within the communal housing, whereas the arrangement of the other common facilities could be based on the interests of the specific communities. The particular emphasis also needs to be placed on improvement of the quality of communal facilities, as well as its maintenance.

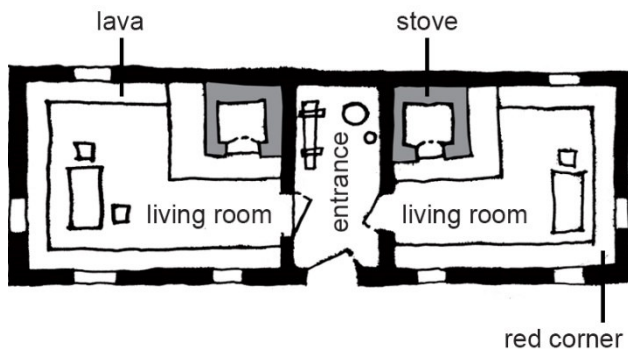
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7 List of Images

Image 1



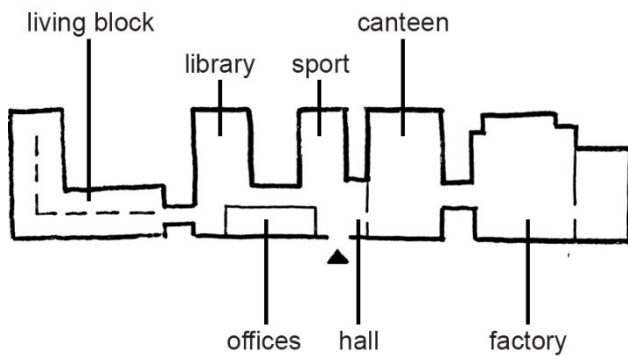
Typical layout of 'Khata' in Cherkashchyna, dated from 1907 and currently exposed in the National Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of Ukraine; own drawing, 2019

Image 2



Living room in 'Khata' in Cherkashchyna, dated from 1907 and currently exposed in the National Museum of Folk Architecture and Life of Ukraine; own photo, 2019

Image 3



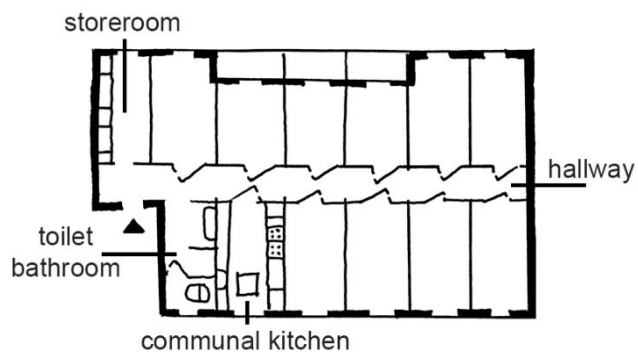
Layout of Dzerzhinsky house-commune in Kharkiv; Anton Makarenko electronic repository, own editing, 2019

Image 4



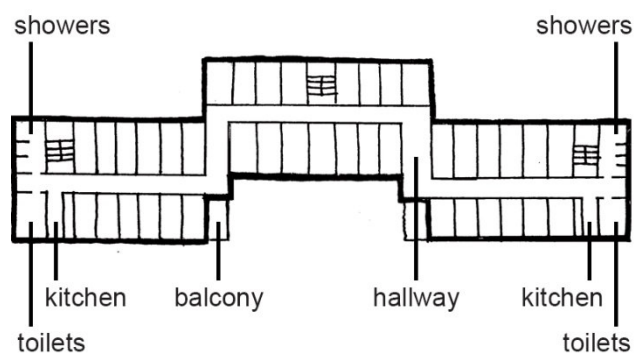
Kitchen in a communal apartment, Ilya Utehin, n.d.; https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQjKNhWxmOnCHqz2j3q7nFHN4mkOJpSbbUk_2L12dSUksLN-OhK; 18.09.2019

Image 5



Layout of communal apartment at Ivana Franka street in Kyiv; materials from Zhurnal Bolshogo Goroda, own drawing, 2019

Image 6



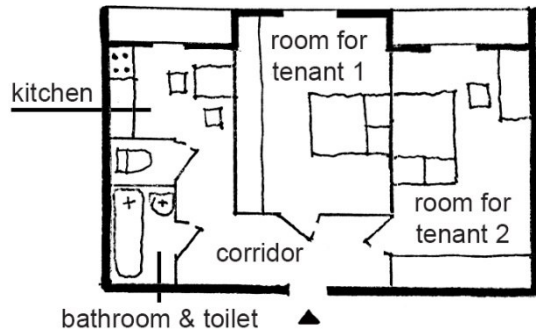
Typical floor plan layout of dormitory at the Ukrainian Agricultural Academy in Kyiv; own drawing, 2019

Image 7



Dormitory room shared between five tenants, dormitory N. 4 at the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine; own photo, 2019

Image 8



Layout of shared flat with two tenants, apartments at Solomiji Krushelnitskoi street in Kyiv; own drawing, 2019