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Negotiating the EveryDay. Case Studies from a Post-socialist City

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Abstract

The ‚socialist' still tends to be a widely used argument in Tbilisian every day life. Generally known is its use regarding a huge area of the material heritage of the post-socialist cities or regarding certain soviet techniques which entered everyday life as routine and 'tradition'. In Tbilisi the socialist is used to cover and legitimize the emergence of a social fragmentation. Discussing the negotiation of street renamings in the urban public the paper illustrates how this divide shape urban landscape. The dramatic significance, which this divide has for a lot of Tbilisians in the everyday, gets exemplified tracing the change of selected symbols and practices between the levels of the everyday and of protest.

The *Rustaveli* Boulevard is the main Boulevard of Georgia's capital Tbilisi. The representative buildings in the neoclassical style are dated back to the 19th century. Nowadays these buildings accommodate exclusive hotels, French bakeries, traditionally looking Georgian restaurants for tourists, Svarovksi shops and so on. People used to say in former times that they met there regularly, strolling up and down together, having a *lagidze* lemonade or a *chatshapuri* (a typical Georgian cheese bread). Today some people say: 'We don't go there anymore, all these shops and advertisement changed its character.' Others like youngsters from the *microrayons* at the peripheries or like some old men from the streets at the back of the *Rustaveli* meet at the benches in front of the French bakery. They never enter the coffee shop, run by a Canadian, instead they just sit on the benches and it looks like they taste the cakes on the plates with their eyes and observe the nicely dressed people from the other world.

During my fieldwork stays in Tbilisi between 2009 and 2012 I observed the life on Tbilisian streets, collected casual talks with people, did planned and semi-structured talks and interviews with Tbilisians and tourists about the life in the city. So my material that I am using for my analysis almost only belongs to the Space of Representation (H. Lefebvre 1974). H. Lefebvre was differentiating between three different forms of the production of urban space: perceiving, conceiving and living. So my conclusions about the 'state of art' of Tbilisian life are based on the microscopic level of spatial everyday practices in the physical and symbolical urban environment. In this presentation I am

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going to analyse which new social fragmentations in the public negotiations of the everyday in the city came to shape. Furthermore I am going to give some insights in how the meaning of the 'socialist' was interpreted and negotiated during the government of the Rose Revolutionaries between 2003-2012.

Several ethnographic studies touched the topic how new social fragmentations (which developed along different lines) get evident in the urban space. M. Pelkmans (2006) showed in his analysis about the social life of empty buildings in Batumi, Georgia, how a new constructed kindergarten following European standards was able to promise a desired wealthy future for every one, which, if it would get in use, would convert into a symbol of social fragmentation. V. Buchli (2007) was describing the practice of nicknaming new representative buildings in Astana resembling a dissonance between the new architecture, new materials and the new significations and peoples everyday, what provoked them to point out to the buildings mal construction with nicknames in order to devaluate them. Different authors researched about the practice to enlarge the small living spaces in socialist block-buildings with illegal additive constructions, which are a symbol of the squeezing living conditions for parts of the population (see also V. Buchli 2007; S. Bouzarovski, M. Gentile and J. Salukvadze 2011; S. Fehlings unpublished doctoral thesis 2013). A. Vonderau (2010) exemplifies in her study about the new Lithuanian elite, how people who are excluded from consumerism, new body- and lifestyles are perceived in public. Philipp Schroeder analysed in his study the self-perception and -representation of young men in the peripheral and socially stigmatized socialist *microrayon Shanghai*, how social fragmentations are produced through symbolical regimes of e.g. spatial and ethnic values (workshop presentation 2012, Berlin).

I want to focus on the dynamics concerning the processes of social marginalization, and how they negotiated in public on the level of the lived urban space, which is crisscrossed by borders of the unspoken, the self-evident, the silenced, the shameful, or the taboo. So I am going to try to analyse the (in)visibility of new social borders within the post-socialist society in Georgia in the public urban space. Therefore my presentation is structured by the following questions:

1- what does a post-socialist condition in Tbilisi's urban landscape mean? In this topic I want to exemplify the renaming strategies in Tbilisi and the acceptance, appropriation or disregard of the new symbolic order in everyday life by presenting some of my collected data.

2- which insights do the urban practices of negotiation and appropriation in Tbilisi into the formation and shape of new social borderlines give us? Therefore I am going to present my close reading of Michel de Certeaus *Arts de faire* (1980) and some protest practices in Tbilisi in 2009.

3- which value and further life does the 'socialist' have in the everyday of the transformation process in Tbilisi?

1- Tbilisi in post-socialist colours

Some words about Georgia

In official narratives Tbilisi is proudly called to be a capital since the 5th century. Over long periods the country has been dominated by different foreign powers, the Persians, Mongols, Ottomans and so on. From 1801 Tbilisi was one administrative centre of the Tsarist government in the South Caucasus, from 1918 -1921 it was the capital of a Socialdemocratic Georgia, from 1921 until 1991 it was under Soviet rule, capital of one of the "socialist sisters". Since 1991 Tbilisi has been the capital of the 2nd independent Georgian Republic, which has certain difficulties, with the autonomous regions Abkhazia (War in 1992-1993) and South Ossetia (several military conflicts between 1990 and 1992, 2005 and 2008); with it's presidents: *Zviad Gamsakhurdia*, former dissident and the first elected president of the newly independent Georgia (who have been hardly removed from his position by the Wars in Tbilisi in 1991 and in *Mingrelia* 1993), afterwards with *Eduard Shevardnadze* (he had to leave after the Rose Revolution 2003), and with *Mikhail Saakashvili* (two and half months protests in 2008); with it's neighbour Russia (War in 2008), with Armenia (no War but ethnic racism against Armenians in Tbilisi and in the two regions on the border to Armenia, where the Armenians are a majority). Since October 2012 there has been a new reigning party headed by the Premier Minister *Bidzina Ivanishvili*, an Oligarch having made his money in Russia in the 90ies. Some people are afraid of the Russification of the country, others appreciate his more transparent style, the government is initialising open discussions, and the big

promises of the last years (health insurance) getting at least a minimalistic implementation.

If we speak about Georgia we speak about 4,5 million people (CIA Factbook, 8.08.2013) (around 1 million abroad) that means about 74 people per square Kilometre. We speak about a lot of villages, in the Caucasian mountains where half of the population did not speak Russian and where people live more or less self-supplying nowadays. Regarding certain consequences of this development I can recommend the article of E. Dunn: "Postsocialist Spores: Disease, Bodies and the State in the Republic of Georgia" published in 2008. Further we speak about villages in the fertile lowlands, the wine regions, without permanent water and energy supply. Further we speak about regional centres (cities), which somehow remained big villages, and three big cities. Two of them with some 100.000 inhabitants and Tbilisi with around 1,15 million people (CIA Factbook 8.08.2013), 2000 people per square kilometre. The capital is the only city reaching a density and atmosphere as described in conceptions of urbanity since L. Wirth, and just in some points coincide with descriptions of metropolis made by H. Häußermann and W. Siebel in 1993. Tbilisi is a cultural centre of regional (Caucasian and partly Russian) range, with a historical tradition and heritage. It is an immigration centre for its periphery which is not coupled with the myth of rise, but marked by the necessity making life, being, beside georgias port-city, the place for (informal) working possibilities. Adding to that I can admit that Tbilisi possesses a certain fame and fama in the region as a place of gay-life, a place for casino-tourism among wealthy Azeris, and as a designer drug transfer place for products from the West, as for others.

Tbilisi street names

What means a post-socialist condition in the Tbilisian urban landscape? Summarizing post-soviet politics shaping the new urban landscape follows certain ideological lines: 1st the elimination of the dominant soviet toponyms in outstanding places, 2nd the introduction of the ancient Georgian history (Queen *Tamar*, Queen *Ketevan*, King *David the Builder*) and ancient Christian names, 3rd the introduction of

names of leading personalities sometimes of events in the struggle for 1st and the 2nd Georgian independence.[1]

Let me give you some selective insights into my observations regarding the questions: how this reshaping of urban landscape is entering and leaving its marks on Tbilisi as a lived space, how people are handling this change in the everyday life. The first example is that in the old centre people still use street names given by the Georgian soviet power, like *Kirov*[2] or *Leselidze*[3] despite of having been renamed since the independence. The second example shows that in the socialist quarter *Saburtalo*, which enjoys a very good reputation as living area even among the emerging small middle class of young Specialists with high education from in- and outside of Georgia. Until 1981 the main street in socialist times was called *Pekini*, renamed in 1990 to *Gamsakhurdia*[4] *Avenue* and renamed back in 2006 in *Pekini*.

On some of the new named streets you will hardly find any sign indicating the new names. In 2012 *Leselidzestreet* got additional street signs indicating the new name *Kote Abkhazi* (General in the first Georgian republic, and leader in the rebellious anti-soviet Movement until 1923). On city maps, which are almost only tourist maps, you rarely find the new names. For instance in the maps by *Geoland*, a private Institution, which produce city maps on behalf of the city council and which is owned by the brother of the Mayor.

These described cases are bearing witness of a certain degree of disorder in the communication within city institutions, between city officials and private contractors. Describing this situation more colloquial, this sphere of societal re-shaping is left to everybody's interests and discretion to know or not to know, to or not to carry out administrative decisions. This correlates with observations of different authors that discrepancies and time lags between changes on different levels mark the post-socialist

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[1] The precise amount of street renamings was impossible to get in Tbilisi, according to my flash counts something around 30% of the streets have been renamed after Independence. Just a small side note: The intensity of the symbolic change is very much intertwined with certain material and social up- and downgradings.

[2] S. Kirov, soviet politician, who was very active in the early soviet times in the industrialization of the South Caucasus

[3] Konstantine Leselidze, a Georgian soviet general during the 2nd world war, *Hero of the Soviet Union*, friend of *Leonid Brezhnev*

[4] *Zviad Gamsakhurdia* (1939-1993), Georgian Dissident, the first and highly nationalistic president of independent Georgia. During his presidency several wars with Abkhazia, Adjaria, South Ossetia, and between different political groups in Tbilisi took place.

condition. In the case of Georgia this discontinuities seem to follow a chaotic pattern as they have been influenced by - just giving some examples - a financial flow, which can't be relied on at all, representative reasons, visits of foreign Governors and those individual and unstable parameters like international alliances and political tastes of the succeeding Georgian Governors.

Back to the street names: Until 2012 I rarely found a taxi driver knowing the new street names. On one side the people had little chance to get to know them. Reading paper is not a very common practice anymore in Georgia, only 1/3 of the Georgian households use computers and Internet. TV is pretty much the only media widely used; in 2009 a new programme called "*My Street*" presenting the new names and the history behind it launched. But still in 2012 residents showed me letters of information, from e.g. the gas company K*azgaz* that were directed to the old street names. In the rare cases of people knowing the new names I could of course observe different attitudes toward the topic. A typical reaction was complaining about the muteness of certain new names, like of the hero of the 1st Georgian independence *Kote Abkhazi*, this seems to be a case of collective amnesia due to soviet politics to erase unloved national parts of the history. Another typical reaction was to be upset about the displacement. It was coupled with the critique not to differentiate well enough between Soviet and Georgian history like in the case of replacing the name *Leselidze*) and compared to the practice of silencing of certain things in Soviet times. A third attitude was the use of both names, like in the case of *Kirowa-street*, residents used to say "Kirowa now Leonidze" and explained it with "Kirowa as street has a fame, but *Leonidze* was a good author".[5] The interesting point these examples demonstrate is that the decision for certain names offers quite a differentiated handling of the history represented in street names by the people in the everyday. These individual decisions are also made along the lines of contribution of the honoured to Georgian culture and life, but less along the official trend of the replacement and degradation of all Soviet.

On *Pekini* street in *Saburtalo* the situation is a bit different, there are signs on one side indicating the old and new name *Pekini* and on the other side are also plaques with

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[5] informal talks with different residents and owners of small business in 2010 and 2011. Talks with permanent informants, nearly all women: E.G. (retiree, with occasional jobs), K.K. (middle age, "public servant"), I.X. (middle age, unemployed, with occasional jobs), I.M. (young employee, small income, financially responsible for the family), I.P. (young student with job).

the former name *Gamsakhurdia*. Here the official practice of reshaping provoked (as it seems) a double and divergent meaning. The practices of residents offered a range of motivations and attitudes towards politics and history. 'Not to know' and 'being lost' in the political practice was one kind of handling, another was 'not knowing for sure' but giving *Pekini* a clear preference, arguing that the street was called this way before and asking: 'what is bad now about the Chinese capital, why independence should change our relation to *Peking?'*. Another practice gave preference to the name *Gamsakhurdia*, playing with the uncertainty if the father or the son is meant.[6] Interesting was here, that people exceeded the limits of the words. In the yards between the blocks from the 60ies and 70ies handmade plaques from cardboard indicating the name *Gamsakhurdia* with the entrance-number were not singular, but nobody knew who has been putting this cardboards on the façades. [7] A distinguished beauty salon used the general disorientation between the two names *Gamsakhurdia* and *Pekini* on its business cards. As they told me it was done to demonstrate their fame of being "the first beauty salon in Tbilisi".[8] Meanwhile the handmade plaques are open to be read as a political message (the business cards are as well open to this reading), the name on the business cards should point to the time, as the owner told me, when they opened the salon. This is connected with the narrative of the new era, independence, the first possibilities for private economic agency and their risky personal engagement in the difficult years. And by the way it is able to tell the story of success in spite of the growing competition. An idiosyncratic way of constructing symbolical capital, situated somewhere between strategy and tactic.

These examples are illustrating the appropriation of a gap, the gap between planning and decision of the new order and its implementation in the urban landscape. Due to a high degree of changes on the level of administrative decisions (e.g. naming and renaming), due to a bad communication of the new symbolic order in the public a never ending transformation is taking place on the level of the lived space, the everyday. It is possible to categorize two groups: firstly the people who seem to not be interested in the changes of the symbolic landscape on a level of street names which represent a new collective and national self-representation and is a practice of place making. And

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[6] *Konstantine Gamsakhurdia* was a soviet author of Georgian historic novels, he was the father of the Georgian Dissident and nationalist politician *Zviad Gamsakhurdia*.
[7] See footnote 4.
[8] Talk with the owner of the beauty salon.

secondly people who actively constitute this dynamic. Actually I didn't meet very many of the first group, [9] although Tbilisians assured me that they are the majority. The second group is actively making use of the gap for organizing the transformation on the personal level, on the level of urban public discussions. They see it as a space of possibilities. Whether they are sticking to the old names or preferring the new ones, they use street toponymy as one realm of idiosyncratic representation in the urban landscape, to articulate and negotiate different political and historical attitudes, and even economic interest. In the case of the city council I can't make a profound analysis, as I haven't been doing fieldwork there. It was impossible for me to get in and to find an open-minded and confidential atmosphere. Nevertheless I have been doing some interviews regarding different topics. The statements of the staff insinuate the general situation within the administration as a complicated set of problems, like different ideas between the legislative und executive personnel, no adequate means and definitely too many things to do.

S. Oushakine raised in his article "In the State of Post Soviet Aphasia" (2000) the discussion about the impossibility for people in the everyday life to find new signs appropriate to the new time and the re-use of old signs. And S. Boym and others for instance interprets the sticking to old signs, materials and meanings as (N)Ostalgia (Boym 2001). But both concepts, Nostalgia and Aphasia, have fixed a certain passiveness regarding the changes and radical breaks, in a way of a retreat from public discussion. My presented case studies talk another language as it seems to me. Concepts like aphasia or nostalgia can't be applied to describe or to make explicit what kind of dynamics lay behind the state of art of the Georgian society in the era of *Saakashvili*. The symbolic landscape (and not just of toponymes) seemed to be a field for negotiating actively internal questions of ideological readjustment, reinterpretation of history, the re-shaping of collective memory, the remaking of the urban landscape, and to discuss questions of belonging and economic forthcoming.

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[9] Some of them have been migrants from villages with all the typical problems getting to know the city, some just hardly busy to make life. I remember two women working in a grocery store on *Leselidze*, having been born in this quarter. They where totally ignoring my questions regarding meanings and connotations of sights and signs in the city, their talks reflected a being preoccupied with making life. One Armenian plumber and an unemployed Georgian engineer, 'native' Tbilisians negated to having been thought about it and negated firmly every importance of those things for their personal life, not for the society.

Striking in this context may be another point nobody is talking about. In everyday situations the use of older toponymes is used as a way to distinguish oneself from the newly arrived migrants from the provinces, from the IDP`s of the Wars. They get identified e.g. by using newer names, and they are associated with the uncultured, the uncivilized by the 2nd or 3rd generations of Tbilisians. It is a common narrative that the newly arrived people from the province throw their garbage everywhere, they elect conservative and nationalistic political powers and they are exaggerated religious. What is not said at all in the public is, that they are a serious concurrence on the very thin markets of labour, of cheap flats and goods. So the identification of the migrants by their inability to participate in the discussion about toponyms, by their inability to make individual choice in this sphere is used to establish a kind of fine distinctions aiming to exclude symbolically the new concurrence and to enhance (again symbolically) the own status. So the individual appropriation of the gaps of the transformation might be interpreted in a more general perspective also as a way to adapt the dynamics of the transformation to it's own symbolical need of distinction and up valuation, what is conditioned however by a precarious economic situation.

2rd part: agency and social fragmentations

The examples mentioned above have been illustrating that there is a huge gap between how the transformation is planned and symbolically designed in the urban landscape by official representatives and how it is remodelled and contested by peoples' agency in everyday life. My examples of practices of reconfiguration of Tbilisis landscape point to a use of a broad term of practices from my side, which includes physical, mental, and rhetorical as visual acts or operations at once. In this broad understanding I follow M. de Certeau elaboration on practices of the everyday ((1980) 1988).

I don't use de Certeau for classifying peoples agency in Tbilisi as strategically or tactical in my further analysis. Just for a short explication: Strategies are able to produce stable material effects in the urban landscape. Tactics are practices without this power, they articulate itself in the appropriation of the moment, the situation and the reordering of formal and informal norms to produce altered "movements" *of* or *in* the material, symbolical and structured city. The philosopher I. Buchanan (2000) transferred these categories of human action on the spatial level and reformulated them

the following way; strategy is a quality of place, and tactics a quality of space. From the point of view of my questions above mentioned I translate de Certeaus categories of practices into a way to make conclusions about the changing social order and the emerging borderlines, that means to use the practices and it's effects to make conclusions about the social positions of the actors. So I use de Certeau in a way formulated by A. Roy and N. AlSayyad (2004) as a kind of transnational approach, to re-direct the contextual research groundings, certain questions and established concepts of one field to another, to unsettle certainties, to grasp the implicit. So I'm asking, what is de Certeau able to let me see about my post-socialist urban field? And why de Certeau offers a good lens to look on post-socialist ambits?[10] Now I am going to present some selected points of my close reading of de Certeau and my Tbilisian field notes, which helped me to order and differentiate my thoughts.

1st point: De Certeaus and his colleagues undertake their study of everyday practices in the 70ies against the background of a society in a dynamic change, the expansion of the media- and consumer industry what changed the attitude toward spare time and the perception of the local as P. Mayol exemplified in his study of a neighbourhood in Lyon. In focus is the time in France of a disclosed public discussion about cultural and educational values between conservative and lefty, hippy or other positions which inspired de Certeau in its concern to unsettle e.g. hegemonic values, authority ship in the political and scientific spheres. In addition it has to be acknowledged that his research group was working in a time, which is characterized as postfordistic, although de Certeau didn't reflect on this topic. How this development affected life of and in different cities was well analysed by different authors like S. Sassen, U. Hannerz and Loic Wacquant. The last one wrote a good characterization of how by the end of the fordistic society new regimes of urban marginality were introduced (Wacquant 2006). Although Wacquants preoccupation counts the formation of so called ghettoized zones in the city, it is still helpful to recapitulate his characterization of the postfordistic society. This is marked by amplifying inequalities despite of economical progress and prosperity, by the liquidation of work for lower educated people, by the de-structuring of working conditions, regarding wages and social insurances, the production of a permanently and enforced outnumbered

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[10] I am apologizing to the organizers for choosing another ground of comparison than the required one to find intersections with the Global South.

population from the working market and by a national state which acts as a stratification machine through the dismounting and dissection of the welfare state which is regulating and limiting the access to public and communal goods and therefore deciding about density and extent of poverty.[11]

Comparing this account with the situation in Georgia in general, with Tbilisi in particular, it is possible to apply these characteristics of the postfordistic change with one exception. It is not so much the sector of low-income and low education necessities, which has been shrinking in Tbilisi, but the field for specialists has been almost closed down in the 90ies due to the limited financial possibilities and due to the broken down Soviet networks and the change of the requirements to specialist knowledge in certain spheres. Of course the unemployed staff and the closed down institutions itself are dated back to socialist times and now are heavily loaded with the stigma of the socialist, as I'm going to show further. Another point should be acknowledged too, that the above mentioned liberalization of public discussions in the 70ies is a characterizing marker of the Georgian society after 1991, an account which touches a lot of spheres of the society like family patterns, sexual orientations, political attitudes and usages of public places in the city.

2nd point: De Certeaus main focus is on the activities - as he puts it - of the marginalized ordinary men. He is marginalized by Industry, Media and Politics, which perceive and represent him exclusively as a passive consumer. The term consumer has to be understood more as a metaphor, which points at different accounts, the consumer is excluded from the participation in a creative thinking process, from the planning process, he does not posses own ways to articulate and to represent himself. This implies he is not actively and creatively participating in the production and construction process of the society, he is always and solely a receiver. And as de Certeaus examples suggest, he had in mind the negotiation and definition of meanings about city's places, contents in TV, literature, values of goods, ideas etc.

Marginalization as an on-going and polymorphic process has to be acknowledged on different levels in the Georgian society. The Georgian consumer - in a very literal sense - was produced in the last 20 years by the global and regional (seldom by the national) consumer industry. A big part of the population lost their jobs due to the harsh

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[11] How this gets spatialized within cities s.f. G. Millington 2013.

crash of the centralistic Soviet supplying network. That way they got marginalized from the public sphere of individual reproduction which is one sphere of participation and recognition in the society. At the same time they got marginalized to participate in the consumer market, which at least is one of the defining powers of social and cultural values and capitals. Additionally they got double marginalized by a governmental rhetoric, explaining unemployment after independence with socialist education and a resulting lazy and incompatible attitude toward work in recent times. Officially something around 29%,[12] the unofficial estimated numbers are two times higher, are sorted out as wrongly educated, polluted through a wrong attitude. Certain political positions, certain arguments and certain experiences dating back to socialist times are using it as a frame of reference and are not wished in the public discourses, it is a process of marginalization through stigmatization.

A 3rd point: De Certeau was designing a theoretical and methodical approach to make it visible for scientific analysis practices, which do not posses the power to produce material effects. He analysed their ways of existence, variations of forms and operational types within the frame of a system, how M. Foucault described it. So he raised questions which later on were one main topic of the post-colonial critique formulated the way "Can the Subaltern speak?" (Spivak 2008). Transferring it to the condition of my field of research this research programme has to be translated into the following questions: Along which lines do the new social fragmentations within the Georgian society get visible? What characterizes the different degrees of visibility of action, the respective spaces of action as well as the possibilities to act in the urban field?

It was important for de Certeau to point out the ability of these practices to introduce alterations to the system, to change its movement. This leads me to questions about the impact of human agency on processes of transformation. Which range and variations are influential on respective societies? What are the characteristics of these forms of agency, what is their target, and from which social position is this agency executed? Not all of these formulated questions can be answered here, but the formation of certain *frames of agency* and the respective social positions as well as motivations can be exemplified examining the protests in Tbilisi in 2009. Strictly speaking protests

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[12] International Investment Guide, Tbilisi 2010.

transcend the ambit of de Certeaus practices of everyday life. I treat the protest as an intermediate step in my analyses, contextualizing the protest firstly as a moment of negotiating everyday against the background of the invisible and failed negotiations in the everyday itself. That means the protest has to be acknowledged as a public mirror event (D. Handelman 1998) of the everyday transferring it to another level of intensity. Here I'm going to focus on how certain symbols and practices change and transform entering and exciting the levels of everyday and of performative protest.

Protests in Tbilisi 2009

The 9th of April is a turning point in the Georgian history of Independence. That day in 1989 soviet special troops were ordered to scatter Georgian protests on *Rustaveli* Avenue in front of the peoples parliament building. The people had started to gather in front of the building of the most representative socialist government institution some weeks before because of separatist attempts in Abkhazia. Some of them hadn't left, others had started a hunger strike and for their protection tents had been put up. Peoples' bodies weren't moving away but were standing mutely in front of the main symbol of the government. After 14-19 demonstrators had died this night the protest raised a claiming for an independent Georgia. Since 1991 the 9th of April has been marked as a new commemoration day, which is practised by very different groups of people motivated by their own desire, by the government and the church in an impressive nocturnal commemoration service. And it still is under question whether the soviet general, a Russian, or whether the General Secretary of the Georgian Communist Party in Tbilisi, a Georgian, gave order to take action against the protesters.

In 2009, after several protests before, the opposition decided to start their protest against the president, government's censorship on media and the jurisdiction on the 9th of April. For the protest-rally and the later gathering in front of the former peoples parliament building, now parliament, they could mobilize a big number of people. The same thing happened again; people kept standing in front of the building, *the people versus the institution, the bodies versus architectural monumentality*. In 2009 as well as in 1989 the bodies were used as signs. Meanwhile in 1989 the messages were ambivalent ranging from "we will fight for a whole Georgia" (as people did some time later when informal troops went to Abkhazia to prevent its separation) and then "for an

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independent Georgia". In 2009 the same signs had the clear message, for the politically organized opposition as well as for the ordinary participants, of continuing the struggle of the protestors from 1989-1991.[13] This symbolical accumulation of the events rose up to the self-legitimization of the protestors;[14] it was a main argument of the time-spatial performance of their perspective on the failed changes in Georgia.

I want to select a second symbolical theme of the protests in 2009, that gives a clear insight into the ruptures in the society produced by the changes and that illustrates a common interpretation of the everyday life in Georgia. The metaphor of a prison for socialist countries was widely used, based e.g. on the fact that it was difficult to leave the countries in certain geographical directions. Some time before the protests in 2009 a talk show aired on a small private Georgian TV-broadcaster called "Cell No 5". Five was the spot on the election list of Saakashvili's party and the aim of the talk show was to debate about the situation in the country with prominent guests. It was transmitted from the inside of the replica of a cage-cell. Some days after the start of the protests in April 2009 the opposition decided to order some 300 half cage half rope cells and to put them up around three prominent buildings in the city associated with the failures of the government (the parliament, the presidents palace and the 1 TV station) as a symbol of the prisons character of the country. Some nights later something even the opposition had not planned happened. The participants who have been protesting day and night occupied the cells as shelter and therefore covered them with blankets and plastic. Once the protesters lived there without any infrastructure the centres of protest very quickly looked and smelt like slums.

I cannot go deeper here to illustrate with how much creativity the participants generated a reversed city in a city within days, which transformed the whole city into a precarious space. Instead I want to talk about some selected arguments made around this city of slum huts originally intended to symbolize prison cells. The opposition didn't comment on this, also the participants didn't make any comments in public about their special appropriation practice. Their comment was the performance itself, demonstrating in public a kind of everyday characterized by a basic form of living,

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[13] Interviews and talks with people on the demonstration in 2009 and with participants of the protests in 1989.
[14] It has been characteristic in numerous cases to use historical events to legitimize and to represent the protestor's identity and aims, s.f Tamás Hofer 2001.

almost nothing more than the bare life. The governments' comment was quite clear, the people out there in the streets are 'lazy and corrupt people, who lost their work because of it'. And corruption was, as people said, in different presidential speeches before identified as 'a feature of the former socialist system, and people who got their education in this system, are still used to this way of life'.[15] Here the socialist turns out to be something comparable to a permanently infected impossible to erase.

In some points the president was right in his argumentation. The people out there living in the huts were almost only adult men in the age of 40 and up, who have been educated in the Soviet Union, many with higher education, and who have been unemployed for quite some time now, as I could conclude from my talks.

Summarizing the performative practices and the arguments of the government another problem is becoming evident which was not articulated by the opposition, that of economic and social marginalization. But the participants appropriated their political symbols of protests to perform spatially their own economic crises, which they saw as an effect of a devaluation and stigmatization of education, working and living experience because it was made in socialist times. This transformed them into devaluated citizens. In the everyday consequence this meant marginalized citizens, outsourced from work and subsequently excluded from an individual regeneration process and the societies reorganization and reinterpretation process. This kind of marginalization process seems to me to have less to do with the situation of marginalized groups described by A. Roy (2004), than with the neoliberal effects also taking places in middle Europe. However it is necessary to acknowledge a difference to middle, especially to western, Europe too – the governmental discourse is hybridized, merging neoliberal effects with the local re-interpretation of the past and this way generating a social class which is because of this argumentation busy with a revaluation of the 'socialist' (what I could observe in many other field situations). This kind of revaluation of the socialist, like it seems to me, cannot be explained with nostalgia, although both have the common feature, the remembering and possibly romanticising one.[16] In this case the 'socialist' is used to represent a group of people and it seems to be their only public representation.

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[15] This I've heard many times from very different people, but I could not found any official source to verify it, that's why I'm limited to treat it as a narrative of one side in this negotiation process.
[16] Nevertheless also the ,classic forms of nostalgia' appeared in many of my informal talks.

3rd Conclusive remarks about the 'socialist' a social category

So much for the symbolical direction, dynamic and negotiation practices of change in the reshaping of the urban landscape. In the academic discourse it is an urban landscape almost conceptualized under the epistemic and heuristic concept of a post-socialist transformation. But the lived city's space is on the crossroad of different tropes used in everyday life. I have been illustrating how the 'socialist' is conceptualized in everyday practice from different sides. Furthermore on the 'Soviet', the 'Georgian', the 'neoliberal, the 'global', the 'colonial' and the 'christian' do exist as well as categorizing terms in every day.

The term "colonial" is used as a critical approach to the Soviet time in intellectual circles being educated in the "West" to describe the kind of cultural oppression,[17] which reminds very much of S. Totosys conceptualization of a filtered colonialism. A small number of people use terms like Neo-liberalization and Globalization almost critically. The use of these three terms is almost only based on explicit and reflexive expert knowledge, meanwhile the use of the 'socialist' appears more widely and is often based on experience, tacit and not reflexive forms of knowledge and characterized by an emotional component. Regarding the use of the 'Socialist' as a category designating certain layers of the population, I was arguing that the term is used to designate a new borderline of social fragmentation, which implicates a public devaluation and economic exclusion. This way it became a quasi-social categorization. So the term, when used in public by the government and by ordinary people serves as a tool to define attitudes of the 'others' in the society.

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[17] Meanwhile the Saakashvili government preferred the narrative of soviet occupation, focusing the military invasion and occupation of the territory as well as the terror of the Stalinist reign. This way the narrative got popularized in the Museum of Soviet Occupation but without any reflection about the historical person Stalin.