"City within The City": Urban Restructuring in a Residential Area of Saint Petersburg

By

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Abstract

The changes in the political order at the end of 20th century in Russia brought changes in understanding and terms of usage of urban space. In my thesis I address the issue of land-use in residential area in Saint Petersburg and consider two main conditions that determine the approach to public and private distinction in city space. The residential area in the historical center is an interesting case as it reflects both the processes of maintaining control over it, which is an attempt to define private space as opposed to common space in the socialist city, as well as the urban restructuring processes through commercialization of space. Both processes are interconnected and affect one another. The research includes observation in a residential area and interviews with everyday users of the space as well as experts in urban development and regulations. I argue that the existing conflicts around the land-use reflect the understanding of urban space in Russia, which is shaped by the historical past of the Socialist city and new tendencies of economic restructuring.

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I appreciate the support, love and patience of my family. I know that your are always there for me.

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Introduction

Spring 2009. I was standing in the courtyard of the building at Rubinstein Street, 15-17, in a group of French tourists. My friend Pavel Gamalia had just started his work as a tour guide, and that was his first city tour with a group and I wanted to support him. It was not exactly as he had planned… Here is a part of the conversation with the tourists:

> " - In the architecture of Tolstoy House you can see typical for Fyodor Lidval elements. It is a marvelous example of The National Romantic style… Sorry, what did you ask?
> - How much does a square meter in this building cost?
> - In euros? Well, I don't know… very expensive. I think you can compare it to the apartments on Manhattan or in the center of Paris… Let's talk about its beauty. A series of three arches lead from the Rubinstein Street to the Fontanka River Embankment… For Pete's sake, what else? Why is there a broken " Lada" between "Lexus" and "Maserati"? Well, the communal apartments still exist here. What is a communal apartment? Well..."

Several years later, on a nice summer day in 2012, I took my Moscow friends to Tolstoy House. I was going to talk about the unique planning and elements of the decor… But we could not enter the courtyard: the gates were closed and walking residents of the building did not let us in. The lady asked us to leave, pointing out: "Can you imagine how many people come here everyday? Sorry, but you are unwelcomed here". It was not the first time I faced the closed gates, but I did not expect that it could happen with one of the places of interest.

The example of Tolstoy House courtyard closure illustrates the processes of urban restructuring, which have taken place in Saint Petersburg starting from the end of the 20th century. In my thesis I will analyze the changes that the urban development brings in the

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residential area of the historic center of Saint Petersburg, on the case of the mentioned above building.

The substantial body of research on urban restructuring in post-Soviet Russia concentrates on public or open urban spaces, where the changes are the most remarkable. However, the residential area also experiences changes, though less visible. The transformation of the urban space is deeply effected by the establishment of neoliberal economy in the post-Soviet city. The rapid emergence of market economy gave rise to the privatization, commercialization and commodification of urban space. These tendencies resulted in transformation of the city, which affected all users of urban space. Economic restructuring provided the possibilities of profit making and the historic center of Saint Petersburg became a point of tangency of private interests, which were often manifested in spatial changes. In my research I am tracing the links between the economic and urban restructuring. The development of market economy in the context of the post-Soviet city forms an interesting context, which serves as a frame for different conflicts around use of urban space.

The existing conflicts are complicated by the unarticulated definition of urban space in Russia. I think that the terms of urban land-use depend on the distinction of "public" and "private", and balance between them. These notions currently experience the transformation due to the unaccomplished transition from communist to neoliberal order. The battle for the control over the use of urban space provides an insight into the understanding of these transformations, therefore in my thesis I focus on the conflicts of interest in Tolstoy House.

The thesis is divided into four main parts. I will start with the description of the theoretical framework. Firstly, I will contextualize the private/public distinction, and then I will discuss the understanding of this opposition in the communist and neoliberal narratives. It is important for my research to articulate the difference of the two approaches, because, I

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believe, the understanding of the private/public distinction affects the urban space configuration. In the second chapter I will explain my choice of research methods.

Then I will move to my case – a residential building in the center of Saint Petersburg – where I observed different conflicts around the use of space. I will analyze the conflicts and the way they determined by the post-Soviet and neoliberal contexts. I will analyze how urban development is embedded into the economic restructuring. I will also illustrate how the urban space configuration affects the urban dwellers and their patterns of the use of space.

Finally, I will examine the application of the urban restructuring mechanisms. I will consider how users of space perceive the spatial changes. I will examine the expert opinions and residents' attitude, which I will need to define the role that private interests play in urban restructuring. Such combination of different perspectives will give me an opportunity to answer several questions:

- What role does the economic restructuring play on the macro level of urban restructuring?
- How do the consequences of economic restructuring reveal themselves on the micro level of urban practices of Saint Petersburg residents?
- What is the spatial manifestation of private interests?
- Are there any limitations of role of private interests in urban restructuring?

While the studies of public spaces in Saint Petersburg have recently appeared in social sciences[1], the residential area also warrants careful examination. My analysis of the land-use restructuring in the residential area of the historic center of Saint Petersburg

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[1] The Laboratory for Comparative Social Research and the Center for Independent Sociological Research organized several research initiatives in 2013.

contributes to the studies of the urban development. The particular interest of my research lies in the consideration of two tendencies that influence the urban restructuring: the transformation of Saint Petersburg in post-Soviet city and its neoliberalization. Both tendencies are not independent and affect one another. The changes of practices of urban land-use illustrate this interdependence. I believe the research of this aspect will open up the hidden patterns of urban restructuring and will show the existing inconsistencies of the transitional period.

Chapter 1. Shaping the Urban Space: Private/Public Distinction

1.1. Theorizing Private and Public

The public/private distinction is extensively reviewed in sociology. However, few texts discuss this opposition in sociology of space. In urban studies the distinction of public and private spaces is often taken for granted, and private/public division does not problematized. In my opinion, the current practices of land-use are largely determined by this distinction and I believe that urban space reveals problems that are enclosed in a pair public/private. Within the frame of spatial relations in the city, the private/public distinction appears to be an organizing principle, which affects not only everyday life, but also different layers of urban governance. Thus, the necessity of defining public and private is primarily a theoretical one, but its implementation entails practical challenges, which is especially important for the analysis of urban restructuring in post-Soviet Saint Petersburg.

The boundaries between public and private can be set up in different ways, which results in different definitions of these categories. Jeff Weintraub demonstrates the multiplicity of meanings and connotations of concepts of public and private in theory and politics (1997). According to Weintraub, ordering social world in accordance with the opposition is not simply an analytical procedure, but has normative assumption, which leads to actual implementation in society. Public is associated with something open, collective and taken as more general, while private is identified as closed, individual and particular. I should point out that in analysis of urban space these characteristics are literally applicable, especially the pair open/closed: private areas are closed and have limited access. The privatization of urban space often results in its closure. In the third chapter I will discuss reasons and effects of the control over the urban land-use.

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The particular interest for understanding the case of the post-Soviet Saint Petersburg represents the "classical", as Weintraub calls it, approach to public/private distinction. It considers the direct link between "public" and "political", where the political community distinguished both from administration and market. Here "public" is understood in the Habermasian sense (Habermas, 1989) often juxtaposed with Hanna Arendt's conception of "public realm" (1958), where the public space has an important role in establishing of democracy as it the most advantageous for exchange of opinions. This approach is often referred in studies of post-socialist countries, when the transition from communist ideology is analyzed. I will come back to this topic in the next section of this chapter that particularly focuses on public/private distinction in socialist and post-socialist cities.

Another important account of public/private distinction that frames my research is "liberal-economistic" model, as Weintraub calls it. This approach is important because provides the theoretical frame for understanding of economic restructuring in Saint Petersburg and explains spatial modifications that follow it. This model is shaped by the distinction between governmental sector and the market economy (1997). I will outline theories and problems within this approach later in this chapter.

While "classical" and "liberal-economistic" models of public/private distinction are applicable to discussion about the macro level processes of urban restructuring, the definition of public/private opposition in terms of sociability, which is contrasted to the isolation of individual, can explain micro level processes of everyday urban practices. Formulated by Philippe Ariès's historical account of family life (1977) it initiated further considerations in Roger Scruton (1987) and Jane Jacobs (1961) works. This account focuses on the diversity, immediacy and fluidity of urban life created by strangers and their interaction. This framework triggered another block of studies of public and private, mostly from feminist perspective, where the distinction is theorized as gendered in both social order and ideology

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(Rosaldo 1974; Gal 2002). Seyla Benhabib analyses Arendt's and Habermas' theories through the representation of public spaces in liberal tradition (1992). In this approach the macro level and micro level are analyzed together, in their connection, which provides a framework for examining the correlation of the macro level of urban restructuring and the micro level of land-use by urban dwellers. I will carefully look at this link in the third chapter of my thesis.

All four models of defining public/private can be applied to my case in order to describe different levels of urban analysis. As Alan Wolfe demonstrates, even though the models of defining public/private refer to different basis for framing the opposition and seem to be separated from each other, they intersect in political practice, challenging the regulation of public/private relations (1997). Dealing with political issues related to this distinction indicates shifting boundaries between private and public. Wolfe points out that the question of private property is not the only issue that rises in political practice concerning the public/private domains: the opposition receives a broader rendering in orientation towards cosmopolitism in the left's preferences or remaining local in right's preferences. In the forth chapter I will consider the shifting boundaries between public and private in the regulations of use of urban space and possibility of land speculations that may emerge from it.

Susan Gal provides a different perspective on shifting boundaries: she identifies the blurry line between private and public as the result of ideological process, which nevertheless, in people's experiences appear as stable and continuous (2002). Probably the most representative illustration of the unclear distinction of public and private can be found in Soviet Russia, where the communist ideology subordinated private sphere to public good (Boym, 1994). The ideological definition of public/private in Soviet Russia still composes the social context for urban restructuring in post-Soviet Russia.

While in communist ideology the boundary private and public almost disappeared,

in social theory, modernity is often characterized by the polarization of public/private spheres. Public realm is perceived as formal, impersonal dimension of market, administration and bureaucracy, while private domain is inked to family, intimate relations and emotions. Richard Sennett traces this shift, considering emotions as belonging to the private sphere, and narrowing public sphere to formal rationality (1993). He claims the existence of the tension between public and private, because public life in modern world is perceived through the lenses of private interests. This tension should be kept in mind, in the analysis of the conflicts over the use of urban space.

Continuing Sennett's concerns, the majority of the research in urban space concentrates on public spaces and concludes that the public sphere deal with the crisis (Mitchell 1995; Hassan 1997; Banerjee 2001), which is linked to the privatization of urban space, its commodification, and securitization (Aurigi and Graham 1997; Allen 2006; Low 2006; Mitchell, Staeheli 2006). Such a turn from the Habermasian "public" as open and democratic towards "public" as an impersonal sphere, which became a battlefield of private interests, shows the ongoing changes that also affect processes or urban restructuring in Saint Petersburg, which can be traced in Tolstoy House as well.

The social and political context in which my case is situated determined by its Soviet past and post-Soviet economic restructuring. I believe these two theoretical blocks provide the frame for understanding the particularities of the case.

1.2. From Socialist to Post-Socialist City: Defining Public.

The blurry boundaries between private and public in the USSR penetrated all spheres of social world (Zhelnina 2011); even the language reflected the minor importance of private life (Boym 1994;). Marc Garcelon compares the Western tradition of differentiating

public/private, as well as political/public and social/private to the absolutistic model of state/society relations in Soviet countries (1997). The intervention of the party-state in the society was of the high level: "the Bolsheviks assaulted, paralyzed, and destroyed all forms of visible social autonomy as part of their project of engineering a "new socialist man" and eliminating all class distinctions" (1997:311). The city itself became a subject of re-arranging the social order. It was considered as a functional whole that aims to support the establishment of socialist everyday practices (Engel, 2006). The Soviet ideology was embodied through plans of buildings in the public architecture, as schools, houses of culture, kitchens that belonged to factories (Engel, 2006). In Soviet Russia mechanisms of urban restructuring were used to establish and control the everyday practices of citizens, but in post-Soviet city these mechanisms should be adjusted to the new order; it inevitably generated new conflicts that I think serve as the evidence of the economic restructuring and redefining of private/public distinction.

The land in Soviet Russia was nationalized and owned by the state. This was true both for urban and rural land. And as the space was used as the tool of mediation Soviet values, it often received a symbolic value meaningful for all Soviet citizens. Anna Zhelnina gives an example of Leningrad/Saint Petersburg, which became a symbol of act of bravery of Soviet people during the World War II (2011). The nationalized land was that initial setting that the new, post-Soviet economic had to deal with. It defined the macro level of urban restructuring. Privatization of urban spaces as a tool of market economy was new for the residents of the country, and the forming of its regulations has not finished up till now.

Svetlana Boym examines the micro level of everyday practices in the Soviet Russia. She traces how the idea of common life and collective action emerged and spread in the society through its implementation in everyday life (1994). While Barbara Engel focuses on public spaces that were reserved for official ceremonies (2006), Boym reflects the unwritten

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rules of everyday life, which were complied with the principles of common living (1994). The idea of common living encroached even in the planning of residential area. In residential houses designed in 1920s apartments did not have a separate kitchen, as it was common for several families.

Those buildings that were created before the October Revolution of 1917 were organized according to the new socialist way of life and large apartments[2] were reorganized in communal flats - 'kommunalkas' - where several families were settled in one flat (Boym 1994). Such places still exist in Saint Petersburg, and I believe that 'kommunalkas' still affect the use of urban space. Ilya Untekhin provides a detailed description of life in communal apartments in 21th century (2004). Residents of communal apartments have to cope with the openness of communal way of life even in 2014. Today almost all communal apartments are situated in the historic center of Saint Petersburg, where at the same time the upper middle class tends to buy elite apartments. As such different social groups have to share the use of same territory, the tension between them complicates the coexistence and often lead to conflicts.

The privatization changed the way of ownership of the space. In communal apartments residents also privatized rooms. But even though they became owners, the conditions of living have not changed. They have to share a kitchen, a toilet, and a bathroom. And their life still exposed to all other their neighbors. They have to keep the rules of common living. The implementation of Soviet ideology on different levels of urban planning contributed to the displacement of notion "private" to the periphery of everyday practices. And on the level of everyday life the definition of private has not been formulated yet.

Oleg Kharkhordin points out the same uncertainty in defining the private: even in

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[2] Usually 8 or 9 rooms, but the number of rooms could exceed 30, as in some communal apartments in Tolstoy House.

Russian language itself the notion of private is not clear as it can be translated by two different terms, one of which refers to private as personal: 'lichniy'; and another one – to private as a part of something bigger: 'chastniy' (1997). Though this observation does not exactly affirm the absence of private sphere, it also illustrates that the private interests of Soviet people were subordinated to the larger concept of Soviet society (Shlapentokh, 1989; Engel, 2006). And I assume that now in Saint Petersburg attempts to reestablish the private are taken, but now this process is determined by market economy and my case will show how these processes are put into practice.

The lacks of privacy in communist State, "crowded living conditions" (Garselon 1997:324), intervention of the State even in organization of domestic realm were the starting conditions for establishing of the post-Socialist order. The economic restructuring has to reestablish the definition of private and public. But the social context of the communist State still affects the urban development of Saint Petersburg, which is especially noticeable in the diversity of social groups living in the same building, where the Tolstoy House will be a strong example.

1.3. Economic Restructuring and Urban Development: Creating Private

Now I will turn to mechanisms of economic restructuring where the liberal-economic model of public/private distinction plays the central role. Daniela Gobetti considers the theoretical foundations of liberalism taking the distinction of public/private based on the distinction of body politic and realm of household (1997). For my case the most important point in her account is the definition of public/private through the agency of individuals. Private is considered from the perspective of benefits for individuals and public mode refers to the activities that might be harmful for others. The residential building when its residents

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protect their interests can be considered as the household, and such tools of control of the access to the urban space as placing the gates or guard serves both to protect private interests and reduce the possible danger, as I will show in the next chapter.

Neil Smith and Setha Low provide a slightly different framing of public and private, and associate it with principles of utilitarianism, which and in contemporary social theory is linked to Lock and Hobbs' theories: "neoliberalism… harkens back… to the more conservatives doctrines of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century liberalism" (2006:2). Competition and contention become central concepts in neoliberal approach; and public sphere and public spaces are sites, where the action takes place: "by "public space" we mean the range of social locations offered by the street, the park, the media, the Internet, the shopping mall, the United Nations, national governments, and local neighborhoods" (2006:3). Competition and contention go along with the economic restructuring and in everyday practices can be experienced as the conflicts around the urban land-use.

According to Smith and Low, the practical distinction of private and public spaces is examined in terms of rules of access, the control over the space, the regulations of urban land-use, and the appropriate behavior (2006). The control over public spaces is an essential issue in neoliberalism. And the attempts to control the access to the territory through the gates closure that I described in the Introduction illustrate that similar neoliberal tendencies shape the urban space of Saint Petersburg. This explains the importance of this conceptualization of public and private for my research and private interests appear in the analysis as a key concept.

The influence of private interests on control over the urban space is analyzed from different perspectives: in terms of profit, security, property rights etc. (Blackmar 2006; Low 2006; Katz 2006). Elisabeth Blackmar approaches the issues of the property rights through the notion of "the commons", which cannot be defined as public or private (2006), and

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creates a case in urban space of Saint Petersburg as well. Tolstoy House becomes a meeting point of common and private interests and the balance between them, as I will show in the third chapter is not easy to achieve.

Chris Webster provides another perspective on private interests and argues that city, with its gated communities, areas with limited access, as, for example, shopping malls or parking lots, is constructed of public spaces and is shaped by private interests and consumption mode of a land-use (2001). This attitude leads to the commodification of urban space, which is treated as a product that can be sold or bought.

The commodification of urban space contributed to the analysis of shopping mall as a new place of public interest. Anna Zhelnina compares shopping mall to the new museum space (2011). Margaret Crawford (1992) studies it as a mediator between consumer and commodity, and shifts the analysis of public life to "pleasure principle" (Freud 1955). Michael Sorkin provides an expanded theory of social order where the city itself becomes a theme park, dream city (1992). Such tendencies, as the results of economic restructuring, shape the perception of the space, which results in the turning of urban land-use in the consumption. I will provide the example of such approach to the inner territory of Tolstoy House in the next chapter.

The end of socialist system in Russia created the necessity to rethink the private/public balance as well as urban space. Though it is still often recognized as the symbolic space with multiple connotations, now it becomes the subject of interests of different groups and speculated from the possibility of profit making (Zhelnina 2011; Sorkin 1992; Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007). These changes are caused by economic restructuring, and entail urban restructuring. The post-Socialist transformations of cities are embedded in urban space, which can be used as the illustration those transformations (Bodnar 2001; Stanilov 2007; Molodikova, Makhrova 2007). Alexandra Staub gives an account of changes

land-use by residents of Saint Petersburg: as the space is shaped due to establishment of market economy, users of the space have to adapt to these changes and search for new patterns of the use of urban space (2005). Similar changes took place in Tolstoy House, but due to the large size of the building and diversity of its residents, it provides a possibility to trace trends that shapes the configuration of the city while observing a limited territory.

In the chapter I described the theoretical framework, which is important for the analysis of processes of urban restructuring. The privatization is one of the key aspects of neoliberalism defines the direction of economic restructuring in post-Soviet Saint Petersburg. The post-Soviet context complicates the process of neoliberalization as the regulations of privatization have not been yet defined. In Soviet Russia the State was the owner of the land, which makes the privatization specific. Now I will move to my case study, as it will demonstrate the empirical outcome of the combination of economic restructuring of the post-Soviet Petersburg.

Chapter 2. Methodology

William Whyrt formulated his methodological approach to exploration of urban space, life and dynamics in the introduction to the micro-sociological analysis of New York street life: "I have been walking in the streets and public spaces of the city and watching how people use them" ([1998] 2009:1). Kevin Lynch with Malcolm Rivkin conceptualized a walk around the city as the way of experiencing it ([1990] 1996). My ethnographic research also began with observation of the chosen site, which helped me to mark out the main characteristics of the site through analysis of urban visual forms and everyday practices. For the research I selected a particular area in historic center of Saint Petersburg, which I narrowed down to the residential building big enough to stand out in the area and attract people's attention. The residents of the building compose a diverse community, which allows me to consider observed processes as the reflection of scale of whole urban society. Observation of the everyday practices and communication between different users of urban space fit in more general issues of urban restructuring. In order to place the studied building in urban context in April 2014 I walked in the area, and observed flows of people using the communicating courtyard of the building as a path between two parallel streets: Rubinstein Street and Fontanka River Embankment. According to Kevin Lynch, paths are important elements of urban space that influence the organization of other elements, which shape urban environment (Lynch [1960] 1990). This means that the changes in spatial organization of the building will cause changes of patterns of a land-use.

I used my field notes and visual images, which I collected during my observation of the site for the designing of semi-structured interviews as the next step of my research. The interview is an important method in my research as it enriched my own experience of the area

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with the experiences of other users of space. I conducted interviews with the residents of the building and people who use the territory of the building in their daily routine[3]. I tried to interview representatives of different age and social groups in order to learn how they interpret the changes of urban space. Those interviews also gave me the access to people's observations, which I could compare to my own experience of the site. The limitations in this block of interviews were caused by unwillingness of some dwellers to communicate. Sometimes they pretended that they were in a hurry. The most open for communication were elderly residents, but I experienced difficulties with arranging them to record interviews. I also interviewed experts in different spheres who have personal or professional connections to the building. These interviews formulated and conceptualized main conflicts unfolding around the space in course of urban restructuring. The interview with the resident of the building and art historian contextualized the building through its cultural value. The professional tour guide shared his concerns about the effects of urban restructuring on travel industry. The house representative and head of condominium of the building described the administrative, economic and personal challenges that they face. The expert in urban planning and development described the regulations and norms that supposed to control all urban changes and then explained how the construction companies and municipalities got around the regulations by applying tactics of land speculation. The interviews provided me with the information about the regulation of conflicts by experts and experiencing of conflicts by residents, which construct the picture of everyday life of the building. This picture can be expanded to more general level and provide the understanding of main processes that shape urban space.

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[3] People who come to commercial organizations housed in the building or those who use it for shortcuts, for more information see Chapter 3.

All my informants were describing particular situations that illustrate different conflicts around the use of space. In such points of tension, as conflicts appear to be, the general tendencies of urban restructuring become more explicit.

My case study is also based on the analysis of the on-line discussions and news directly referring to the studied building. In the Internet sources I found different opinions regarding the transformations of urban area for the last six years. The possibility to create a retrospective of discussions around the building provides the illustration of evolution of conflicts around the urban restructuring.

I believe the combination of different qualitative methods in my research gave me the possibility to observe varied aspects of the studied processes and though my research was limited only to three weeks, I gathered data that allows me to create a solid description of the site to illustrate the ongoing changes of urban environment.

Nevertheless, I experienced some limitations in my research. One of them is directly linked to urban restructuring as the Rubinstein Street at the moment of my fieldwork was under reconstructions. The noise and the inconveniences of walking down the street led to the changes in people's choice of pathways. Many of them preferred to take paths parallel to Rubinstein Street paths and the number of people using the space of the building, which I studied, decreased. Also the future status of Rubinstein Street is not clear; several years ago an initiative to change the Street into pedestrian was introduced, but it seems the government did not launch it. The changes of type of the Street would affect the pattern of use of the space also at the site of my research. Another challenge was the emotional involvement of my respondents, when we were discussing existing conflicts especially because private interests were in the center of consideration. While some of my informants were open to the discussions, there were three people who used one-word answers for my questions.

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Sometimes people refused to talk to me because I was trying to distance myself from the situation in order to keep the balance.

However, in general, the existing situation was more comfortable for my research than I expected. I managed to uncover different mechanisms that regulate urban restructuring and show that residential area experiences similar with open public spaces problems.

Chapter 3. Urban Restructuring: Conflicts around the Land-Use.

3.1. Site Description

The tendency of privatization of public spaces studied here is just one side of transformations that the post-Soviet city faced. On the one hand, this process can be explained by the fact that the urban space, which was considered as belonging to no one (Zhelnina 2011), became a site for the development of the market economy; in this period, many small shops, business organizations appeared in the city. On the other hand, urban dwellers who had different understanding of urban everyday life and the perception of the urban space started reconsidering the city and developed a new approach to it.

The urban space in Saint Petersburg is perceived in two different, sometimes conflicting, ways. Anna Zhelnina provides the best illustration of these perceptions in her analysis of a public garden in front of the Kazansky Cathedral in the center of Saint Petersburg: the park was closed by the local municipalities to the public because it provides the possibility to preserve the space from damage (2011). In this case the postcard view of the urban space was preferred to the one that understands the important role of the everyday use of urban space.

While the studies of public spaces, such as squares, parks, boulevards, are important for understanding the general pattern of urban development, the residential area in the historical center is also subject to changes that took place in the post-Socialist city. The historical center of the city is a classic example of the regulated type of built-up area, which is shot through with communicating courtyards that allow residents to make shortcuts on their way through the city center.

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Figure 1. An example of the division of land into parcels in the Vladimirsky Municipal District in Saint Petersburg

The historical center of Saint Petersburg was built mainly in the 19th century. As Figure 1 shows, the land was divided into parcels, marked with heavy lines, and each parcel belonged to one owner. These parcels were developed separately and this is how the structure of the historical center formed. Most sections of the dwellings align with the edge of a foundation of buildings. Usually, a tenement building was built on each parcel and the owner of the land, and, therefore, the owner of the building, occupied one of the apartments, while receiving profits by renting out the rest of flats.

Often such apartment houses were named after the owner. As the site for my ethnography, I chose one such former tenement building in the center of the city: "Tolstoy House", named after its first owner's name Major-General Count Mikhail Pavlovich Tolstoy. The construction of the building was finished in 1912. It occupies the territory between Rubinstein Street and Fontanka River Embankment and for years served as a communicating pass between the two for pedestrians as well as for vehicles. It was the popular path first of all because the building itself, executed in National Romantic style by architect Fyodor Lidval, it still attracts people's attention. Three connected courtyards lead from Rubinstein

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Street to the Fontanka River Embankment. Figure 2 shows the initial plan of the building as it was in 1912.
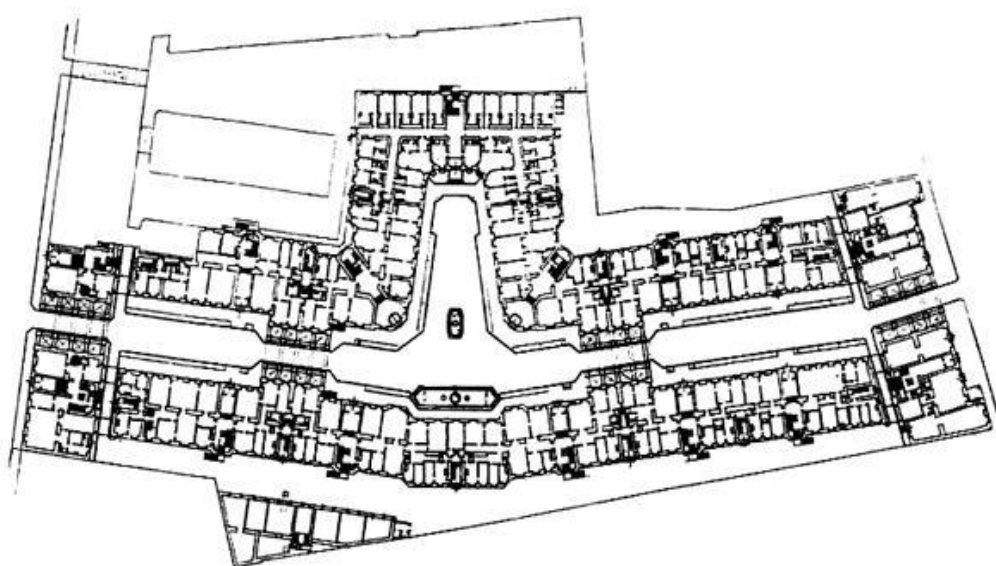
Figure 2 The plan of the ground floor of Tolstoy House. 1912. Rubinstein Street is on the right, Fontanka River is on the left.

Initially in this 5-floor building were approximately 300 apartments, designed for different social groups depending on the tenant's income. The building has 16 front entrances; 4 of them are grand street entrances while the rest are located in courtyards. Each of the front entrances has a connected back entrance for servants and the staircase, connected to the back door of each apartment. The number of apartments changed several times throughout the century history due to the reconstructions of the building in order to supply the housing demand for workers; at the moment there are 500 apartments in the building, but in Soviet Union the building had more then 600 apartments. Soon after the October Revolution in 1917 Tolstoy House was nationalized and apartments were given to workers and almost all became communal flats. Many 'kommunalkas' were bought out in 1990s, but the central part of the

building still consists of shared apartments. According to the house representative now There are 53 communal apartments in the building, according to the house representative.

Figure 3. Tolstoy House. View from the Fontanka River Embankment. April 2014.

In post-Soviet Petersburg regulations of the ownership and usage of urban land started changing. The privatization of urban space appears on the different levels of urban configuration. Through the case study of Tolstoy House I will trace the process of formulation of new attitude towards urban space, that, I think is shaped by the necessity to reconsider its socialist past.

3.2. From History to Sociology: the Privatization.

The Tolstoy House is the subject of the art and history studies. Art historian and culture specialist Marina Kolotilo wrote books about famous residents of the building (2010, 2011), and the role that the building plays in Saint Petersburg architecture and space (2009). Marina Kolotilo, who is also a resident of the Tolstoy House, refers to the building in her

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articles as the dynamic system that interacts with other urban systems (2009, 2010). In the multilayered structure of the city Tolstoy House has higher layered structures: neighborhood, district, city, region; as well as lower layered ones: courtyard, staircase, floor, apartment. This creates the social context of the existence of the building and allows considering processes and changes in its spatial organization as representations of the tendencies that shape the urban space. Not only I read Marina's books, but I also interviewed her during my fieldwork. She told me about her idea that Tolstoy House, due to its size, considerable diversity of residents and activities[4] can be considered as the "city within the city".

Figure 4: On the left, the film frame from *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson* (1980); on the right, the everyday life of the Tolstoy House

The Tolstoy House is also a part of UNESCO World Heritage, it appeared as a setting in several Russian films: *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson* (1980); *Winter Carry* (1985); *Banditsky Petersburg* (1997). The directors of the film refer to the building as one that has a unique atmosphere, which allows them to communicate it in their movies. I think the building also appeals to sociologists and urban anthropologists as the processes and changes that are taking place in the city are reflected in the smaller scale of the building. Described as the "city within the city" Tolstoy House that has its unique atmosphere

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[4] In the building different organizations and offices are situated, I will provide more information further in this chapter.

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and life, due to its scale and diversity, the building comprises the structural aspects that I want to trace. In our conversation Marina Kolotilo compared the building to the society with different social groups and means of communication. I realized that it might be interesting to elaborate on this comparison. The architectural appearance of the building, its situation and significance attract the attention of tourists, urban dwellers and media. This is the reason why the information about this particular building is more detailed, though has not yet been analyzed extensively, as I think it should be.

I studied the everyday practices of the use of inner territories of the building, where initially I expected to observe its walking-through function and conflicts that appear around it, as residents attempt to control the access to the area. But as my observation continued I realized that Tolstoy House represents the collective daily use of the space and provides broader materials on the urban development in post-Soviet Petersburg.

3.3. Life in a Museum: the City as a "Theme Park" and Emerging Conflicts.

The first conflict around Tolstoy House emerges from two different approaches to the urban space: on the one hand, the idea of the city oriented towards everyday use of the space by urban dwellers, on the other hand, city perceived as a museum and urban space regarded as a "postcard view" (Zhelnina 2011). Such city is no longer exists only just a physical space, the urban space is conceptualized in the new city to represent an idea of glorious victory of the past or actualization of fiction. Michael Sorkin defines such city as a "theme park" (1997) and analyzes Disneyland as its manifestation (1997).

There are several reasons for treating urban space as a museum. As I briefly mentioned above, the center of Saint Petersburg is included into the UNESCO World

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Heritage Site as a Historic Center of Saint Petersburg and Related Groups of Monuments[5] (2013). The Tolstoy House itself is labeled as an Architectural Monument of Regional Significance number 7800770000[6] (2012). Currently the building and the area around it is a part of Zone Controlled Building, which means that the Committee on State Control, Use and Protection of Monuments should regulate the development of the area. In the Master Plan of Saint Petersburg, authorized in 2005, areas of protection of cultural heritage are documented respectively to the approved zone mode (Master Plan of Saint Petersburg, 2005). Historic buildings, city skyline, panoramas and views are included in the protected areas. There are different kinds of protected zones in Saint Petersburg. The strictest regulations are applied to the main architectural complexes of the historical center protected by UNESCO. In order to preserve the joint area around them, buffer zones, which set the rules of terms of use and development, were established.

On the other hand, the use of the inner territories of the neighborhoods, i.e. the courtyards, constitutes an important part of the daily routine of urban dwellers. This is true both for the historic center as well as for outskirts. And the improvement of the quality of urban environment is one of the main aims stated in the Master Plan (2005). Its quality directly affects the everyday lives of residents, intersection of their private and communal interests. At the same time, these territories constitute a part of the city image[7] and, therefore, this specific character of the historic center of Saint Petersburg should be taken into consideration in the provisioning of urban amenities.

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[5] To learn more about the UNESCO World Heritage, see the UNESCO web site: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/540/multiple=1&unique_number=635

[6] The list of Architectural Monument of Regional Significance was introduced on September 18, 2012, by the Committee on State Control, Use and Protection of Monuments. To see details visit the web site of Administration of Saint Petersburg: http://old.gov.spb.ru/Document/1347967414.pdf

[7] The Committee on State Control, Use and Protection of Monuments formulated the conception of the approach to the urban space. To see more: http://kgainfo.spb.ru/news/679.html

I believe that these circumstances precondition the dwellers' attitude to the urban space in its everyday use. The example of discussions around the access towards the courtyard of Tolstoy House shows how the inconsistency of the perception of urban space on a general level is implemented in a particular case of the everyday practice at Tolstoy House.

Situated 7 minutes by foot from Vladimirskaya metro station, this 5-floor building attracts the attention of urban walkers. City residents use its courtyards as a shortcut on their way from the metro station. The outstanding building attracts visitors and tourists, as they often stay in the neighborhood area and pass by during their walks. One day I observed such scene:

> *A group of five people enters the building through the gates from the side of Rubinstein Street. They follow a man in his fifties who was going to one of the entrances. In the arch the group stops and starts looking around. They are pointing at the molding on the walls and discussing something in German… Later they explain me that though the gates were closed, they saw a man entering the courtyard and decided to take the chance and explore the building from inside. When I say that there is an entrance code on the gates they answer that they could not understand Russian, but they did not experience any problem in entering the courtyard with the resident of the building.* (Field notes, April, 7th. 2014 around 11 AM)

I should mention that though foreign tourists, walking in the area, notice the building, they do not go to see it on purpose. For them it is more often an incidental finding as the building is not outlined in the guidebooks. As my friend, tour guide Pavel Gamalia told me, the building is more a point of interest for locals and for some Russian tourists:

> "Tolstoy House is mostly interesting for Saint Petersburg residents. This is a local sight. Every self-respecting young man is committed to bring his girlfriend here and she will be amazed".

For Pavel, taking a group to the courtyard of the building is a way to disclose to the visitors of the city the other side of the Petersburg, which is not described in the guidebooks, to show the everyday life of the city. Such tours attract visitors who are searching for the authenticity, for the real life of the city. And Tolstoy House provides the material to learn about the daily routine of the city center. I think this is an illustrative example of how even the everyday practices and inside organization of the space become a tourist attraction. Michael Sorkin highlights a similar tendency in modern American cities (1997). I believe that the gradual implementation of the principles of preservation of history creates the perception of the city as the museum that exists for tourists' amusement. Though Sorkin provides characteristics for American cities, he claims that they are representative and probably same patterns can be found in urban development all over the world (1997). The architecture becomes one of the most common illustrations of city transformation due to the appropriation of history embodied in buildings (Sorkin 1997).

The perception of cultural heritage is still evolving among Saint Petersburg residents. And Tolstoy House sometimes becomes a subject of the discussion about the attitude towards heritage asset. Several years ago, when the gates to the courtyard of the building were just installed, residents of the building - led by the head of the Condominium Association of Tolstoy House - wanted to close the courtyard from strangers and leave the access to inner territory of the building only for residents and their guests. The justification for these measures was that it was "the only way to redevelopment and improvement of the courtyard, especially in case of communicating courtyards" [8]. Those actions provoked numerous discussions in the press and online.

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[8] The on-line discussion took place in 2010 at the web site of the State Television and Radio Company "Saint-Petersburg": http://www.rtr.spb.ru/people_line/viewmsg.asp?ID=156504&FID=156464

I think it is necessary to emphasize two main topics that are interconnected, but should be considered separately because of the different scale. The first one I will discuss in this section, and in the next section I will turn to the second one.

The first issue directly concerns the multiple understanding of urban space in Saint Petersburg context. Anna Zhelnina points out the inconsistency of the city "as a representation of great historic and cultural heritage of the country" (2011) on the one hand, and its everyday use, on the other. When people learned that the gates of Tolstoy House were closed, they started debating the justification of such a measure. One of the reasons in favor of the open gates, and therefore the reproach to the residents of the building was the necessity of open courtyards for shortcuts:

> "It is the comfort of urban dwellers that is at stake here: it is very convenient to use the building as a shortcut from Vladimiskaya metro station to Fontanka embankment, otherwise you have to make a detour"[9].

Proponents of the open courtyards also emphasized in those discussions that the courtyards in Saint Petersburg were traditionally used for shortcuts, and the appeal to the history of the city serves as an illustration to M. Christine Boyer's argument that in modern cities some decisions, aspects of life in present are rationalized by their link to its past (Boyer 1997).

In a more radical way the building is interpreted as a cultural heritage, the understanding of the building goes beyond a mere physical site and it stands for the whole city:

> "And, Tolstoy House is primarily a heritage-listed building, and only secondarily a residential house. And I doubt that "tourist

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[9] The online discussion in a travel blog particularly specified on the case of Tolstoy House
http://forum.turizm.ru/common/russia-sankt/tolstovskij-dom.html

crowds" bother residents so much that they "were under the
necessity to" close the gates. Guard boxes were there even before.
And now both the guard and the surveillance cameras… But whom
they need to protect the courtyard from? It's sad, they are hiding
such a beauty…"[10].

In the above quotation the attempt to prioritize interests of different groups appears
implicitly. It is a common point of debates about the role and status of the city in general and
buildings in particular. The example fits in the broader approach to the city as a museum,
when the historic dimension of urban space becomes the central point of urban restructuring
and the preservation of the past overshadows the needs of present inhabitants of urban
environment (Sorkin 1997).

The opposite point of view, which illustrates the conflict of residents' and visitors'
interests, also comes up on the same website: "Residents of the building are also Saint
Petersburg dwellers. And their comfort should be considered as well". While the solution
more or less compromising the interests in case of Tolstoy House was found, at the scale of
the city it is still unclear how to find the balance between the cultural preservation and urban
development. As the previous governor of Saint Petersburg, Valentina Matvienko, stated in
an interview in 2008, the current preservation of historic cities resemble preservation of dead
cities. She expressed the idea that museum cities are uninhabitable. At the same time, she
pointed out that the preservation of cultural heritage remains the main goal because culture,
museums, historic zones and memorials compose the city value. Moreover, cultural heritage
is the basis for capitalization of Saint Petersburg[11]. Though I think life in museum cities has
both arguments in favor, and against it, more important in the context of my research is that

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[10] Same discussion at the travel blog http://forum.turizm.ru/common/russia-sankt/tolstovskij-dom.html

[11] The interview is available on the web site of the broadcast "Echo Moskvi":
http://echo.msk.ru/blog/echomsk/527947-echo/

the approach towards Saint Petersburg space reflects Sorkin's theorization of city as a "theme park" where ""the "historic" has become the only complicit official urban value" (1997:xiv). The logical effect of interpretation of cultural heritage as an urban value is the assigned price of this value. And in such case the interpretations of urban space and cultural heritage take the direction of another global trend – commercialization of space within the processes of economic restructuring.

And now I will turn to the second issue and source of the conflict.

3.4. Conflict of Interest within the Community

The conflict of interests around the public access to the inner territories of Tolstoy House peaked in 2010-2011; the main discussion took place in those years. When I came to the building in April 2014, the gates were closed, but a sign was placed there, with a direction for getting into the courtyard. Now visitors can get into the building during daytime. From 00.00 till 08.00 the passage is limited and access to the territory is only for the residents of the building who have a key.

I believe that though now visitors and tourists can easily use the passage through Tolstoy House, their interests and convenience were not considered when the decision to open the gates during the daytime was made. As the result of economic restructuring in Russia, combined with the direction that previous governor proposed for the historic center of Saint Petersburg, the city space was appropriated not only by consumers, but also by investors (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007:245). Though the main function of Tolstoy House is residential, the building also hosts several businesses. The number of rented offices increased noteworthy in past two years, and currently there are 20 organizations specialized in various fields of activity.

Two popular restaurants are situated in Tolstoy House and attract different people who work in the district during the lunchtime and in the evenings. But while restaurants have outside entrances and windows overlooking Rubinstein Street, most of the small businesses are situated in the courtyards. Almost all the perimeter of the ground floor in all three courtyards of the building is occupied by agencies and business organizations. And Tolstoy House is not unique. It is a common point for the historic center. The rent in the city center is very high, but it varies depending on the location of the renting area. The price for m^2 situated in the inner territory of the building, overlooking the courtyard is lower and therefore more advantageous and "budget-friendly", as the owner of one of the organization stated, than overlooking the street or the embankment. It is important for the restaurant to have front windows, so I think their owners did not have much choice. The location in city center and reasonable price are more important, then the street entrance and a view, for such organizations as travel agencies, photo studio, construction and investment company, learning center. The possibility to locate an office for a reasonable price, in a city center, in walking distance from the metro station and main transportation routs, attracts many businesses to the courtyards of the buildings. And I think in the case of Tolstoy House the situated offices became the factor that affected the situation with the access to inner territories during the day. Clients of numerous organizations can easily enter the courtyard as the code for entrance is provided at the gates. The opening of the gates did not happen for the accessibility of the place, but for commercial reasons.

And as in 2008-11 the courtyards in the city center were closing form the public access, with the commercialization of the urban space the new tendency emerged. At the entrance to the courtyard where some business is located, the sign plates were placed with the directions for visitors of how to open the gates. Pavel Gamalia, the tour guide commented:

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"It was pretty difficult for several years to get into the courtyard, I even started to take tour groups only to those buildings where I personally knew residents who could let me in. It was very inconvenient, as I often had to modify my tour in accordance with the accessible courtyards. Sometimes I had to make a detour; sometimes I just left important buildings. Now it is easier, almost every building in the center has some offices, you just need to press the code… Of course, residents are often displeased with groups; they blame owners of the businesses, but I doubt they can do something to stop it".

This new tendency reveals the different side of the problem of the access to the courtyard. It illustrates the conflict within the different groups of community of residents and owners of Tolstoy House. Here private interests still appropriate urban space (Low 2006). In this case, instead of "physical" tactics of exclusion, limitation of access to the space, private interests, owners' profit make the space accessible, open to the public (Mitchell, Staeheli 2006). Private interests guarantee the access to the courtyards in this sense. Tolstoy House is not the only, but very representative example of the "pseudo-private spaces" that are subject to control and regulation by private interests" (Mitchell, Staeheli 2006:153). Mitchell and Staeheli consider such spaces as the necessary element in urban restructuring where the increase of profit becomes a primary reason for changes. And all the improvements and reforms in spaces are means to achieve the main goal (2006).

Figure 5 The street name plate at the entrance to Tolstoy House with thename of the business organization on it.

An example Figure 5 shows the result of such improvements at Tolstoy House: a street nameplate at the façade overlooking Fontanka River Embankment. The regular nameplates in the city usually have the street name and number on it. But this one also has on it a name of the organization located in the building. I learned that it was the engineering company "ВИЛКОМ СПб" (VILCOM SPb), which placed the nameplate. The plate at the building has the name of the street and number on it and a name of the organization located in the building. According to one of the employee of the company, their clients often search for the organization and in order to facilitate their search, the company indicated the name of the organization on the nameplate. According to the assistant at the condominium offices, the company did not coordinate it with them, but as there are more serious problems to deal with, the house representative did not concentrate on such aspects. Her assistant explained the necessity of the street nameplate due to the fact that it is situated in the courtyard and people sometimes got lost while searching for it. The design of the plate is fine, and it is made for the convenience of the clients. I think it is an example of a mutual benefit for the users of space and the organization, but it is also a way to mark the place. And it is important to

remember that some of the processes on improvement of urban environment are initiated as long as it is cost-efficient for the private interests of the business owners.

I think the public access to the courtyard of Tolstoy House is one of the consequences of the commitment to the increase of value of the urban space and of the business. As Pavel Gamalia mentions in his interview, residents of the buildings are displeased with the frequent visits, but they have to cope with them and compromise with the demand of access to the inner spaces of the building. It is the result of commercialization of the urban spaces.

While the organizations with the street entrance do not cause much discontent, my respondents who live in the building expressed their negative attitude towards v that are situated there. Situated in the city center, both places are popular among tourists even during the off-season, not to mention spring and summer. The web site of the hotel in the descriptive section has the information about the location of the hotel: "in the heart of Saint-Petersburg, only 300 meters from Nevsky prospect!… Our apartments are situated in the building, which is the monument of architecture of the beginning of the 20th century, known as Tolstoy House[12]". The history and the significance of the building are used by owners of the hotel as an additional reason to chose their hotel and increase its value. And interests of the owners of the hotel are in conflict with those of the residents of the building. Visitors and tourists stay at the hotel or hostel for several days, then leave and their place is taken by new people. The first inconvenience mentioned was the impossibility to remember people who constantly changing and the anxiety and even insecurity, linked to the constant presence of strangers. Another issue mentioned in discussion about the commercial activities in Tolstoy House in particular concerns the hotel. Clients of other organizations situated at the territory of the building have access to the courtyard only during the day, but residents of the hotels often

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[12] From the web site of the hotel in Tolstoy House: http://www.anjuta.ru/index.php?id=srv_u2

come back in the night time and often make quite a lot of noise, which is especially loud in the enclosed space of the courtyard. One f the most important differentiations between public and private spaces is from the perspective of regulations of access (Smith, Low 2006). Depending on time and society those rules are established and kept. And I believe the source of residents' discontent with the hotel and hostel is that in established rules of access they have to make an exception for these organizations. During the daytime the access to the courtyard is open to the public, but in the night the gates are closed and only residents can enter the building. But residents of the hotels are also allowed to enter the territory whenever they are back, so strangers use the space even when it is closed for them.

In this case the interests of residents of the building, who want at least more consistent implementation of rules, conflict with the interests of the owners of the hotels. And, as the corrections in regulations of the use of space shows, the profit interests of the owners seem to be more important, than the comfort of residents of the building. In our conversations, my interviewee specified that though they are displeased with the behavior of some of the tourists, they blame the owners of the hotels for the current state of affairs: "They are doing whatever is advantageous for them, they don't care as they don't live here". Some of my respondents pointed out for the inappropriate behavior directly to the residents of the hotel, but none of them ever addressed any of the business owners in the building. At the moment conflict of interests inside different groups of owners of the Tolstoy House around the rules of use of the space does not have any solution.

I think the controversial nature of privatization of space appears here: on the one hand, people tend to perceive the space as owned by them and therefore they can control access to it, as it is more convenient for them. On the other hand, in process of privatization, as one of the characteristics of the neoliberal order, profit becomes the main category and, as result, the owners of the business are interested in providing potential clients with the access

to their offices. The urban space becomes a meeting point of interests of different groups, which often lead to conflicts. So the problems that the building is experiencing are typical problems of capitalist cities, which arise from processes of privatization and commercialization (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007). Applied to the post-soviet city they strengthen by means of inadequately formulated understanding of urban space and its role in urban everyday life.

And now I will address the most controversial case of the use of urban space at Tolstoy House. A conflict over the use of the space for car parking is the burning issue in Saint Petersburg now, as the interests of different users of space collide here.

3.5. Conflicts around Parking Spaces.

Sooner or later in our conversations with residents of Tolstoy House we reached the point when all respondents mentioned the most problematic issue at the inner space of the building – parking places. Conflicts around parking spaces exist in the historic center as well as at outskirts, but I think for different reasons. In the city center the street grid was formed in 19th century and is more or less preserved as originally framed. Though cases of densification occurred in downtown areas, it soon appeared that there was not enough space and it might soon lead to deterioration of living conditions. The qualities of the land do not allow the construction of underground parking in city center. At the same time the number of cars in Russia doubled in the last decade and in Saint Petersburg in 2013 every third resident had a car [13]. The center of Saint Petersburg thus became a battlefield for the parking space. Attempts to regulate the access of cars to the city center were discussed, but at the moment it does not have any solution.

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[13] The research by RBK, more at http://top.rbc.ru/spb_sz/19/08/2013/870744.shtml

Tolstoy House with its situation in a walking distance from many important points of the city and vast courtyard area attracted the attention of the car owners. People who come to the city center by car often search for a place to park and several years ago the courtyard of Tolstoy House became such a parking space not only for residents of the building, but for all drivers who could find a place inside. And this is how the head of the condominium explained the idea to place the gates and barriers at both arches at the entrances to the courtyard. Most residents of the building endorsed the initiative and the process of placing the gates started. The issue appeared first back in 2008 when the gates were placed and the condominium decided to hire the gatekeepers on a legal basis, instead of the previous guard who was working without being officially employed.

When I approached the house representative for the first time she was in a rush and refused to talk to me, as she thought I would ask her about history of the building. When I asked about the conflicts around the usage of space she changed her mind, as it appeared that at that moment she was dealing with a letter of complaint from one of the residents of the building concerning barriers placed at the entrance to each of the three courtyards. After the establishing of the condominium, the initiative was taken by the representative of the building to organize the access to the courtyards. Before the control over it was given to the guard hired by some residents, but that was just an oral agreement and, according to my respondent "the situation was messy as they were not responsible for anything, because their duties and responsibilities were not formulated". The case provoked a conflict and house representative was even threatened, but, finally, the problem was solved in April 2014 the agreement "for the policing of inner space of the building 15-17 at Rubinstein Street and

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arranging the access for the cars[14]" was signed and its text is available at the condominium's web site:

> "to assure for the owners the possibility to reasonably and respectfully use the automobiles at the territory belonging to the Tolstoy House, taking into consideration interests of other owners, to minimize the occurrence of unauthorized vehicles at the territory, to monitor the implementation of regulations…".

The gatekeepers on both entrances to the courtyard are officially employed by the condominium and the funding of the contract is realized by the target contribution of owners of the vehicles "for the maintenance of the inside territories and inventory".

The house representative explained the necessity to control the car access to the territory of the building by the disastrous effects of the car parking:

> "The cars were parked everywhere and in a very chaotic way, as if their owners used the principle "park wherever you could find a vacant place". Sometimes they parked cars in two rows and people just could not drive out. If they could not find a space more or less suitable for the parking they parked the car on the lawn or sidewalks. And that was both residents of the building and those who have nothing to do with our building at all. We had to stop it".

The most obvious and effective steps were "physical" tactics (Low 2006) of closing and redesigning the space of the Tolstoy House, which helped to control the use of the space. In case of the building the necessary measures that lead to placing the gates were taken. According to the head of the condominium, they applied for the agreement of the project at municipal government and urban committee; concurrently they privatized the land, which allowed the owners to take control over the space. The case of Tolstoy House is rare in Saint

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[14] The text of an official agreement is available at the web site of Condominium: http://tsg-tolstdom.ru

Petersburg as the courtyards of the buildings are usually the property of city[15]. The necessity to regulate the access to the courtyard led to the changes of the status of the land and strategies of governance (Low 2006).

As the courtyard land now is the property of the residents, new conflicts around its use have recently appeared. Interests within the community are also different and the balance is not achieved yet. For example Eduard, a resident of the building, described his memories about the courtyard when he first moved here in the 1980s: "At the same spot where the car is parked now there used to be a fountain; people say, it was the architect of the building, who designed it. And now there is a car. Of course, it's better to have a car then the fountain". The regret that Eduard expressed concerns feeling that residents of the building have that their interests are not considered. The land was privatized but future changes seem to be oriented towards the car owners who pay for the parking places, while others want more improvement of the area were made. Another resident, Valentina also criticizes car owners: "More and more cars are parked in the courtyard, sometimes they are pared so close that it gets in the way of pedestrians". According to pedestrians the territory of the building is regulated or adjusts to the presence of cars. But the condominium had to impose restriction in order to arrange the use of space. The car owners who want to park at the territory of the building have to pay a fee for the parking spot. Such measures made it possible to count the number of cars in the building and to assign a spot for each car. In this case it is easy to trace any dislocation, which helps to keep the order. The house representative has a scheme of the courtyard, where all the gates, barriers and available places are marked. As the building has three communicating courtyards, at the border of each the barriers are placed and for those drivers who want to get into the central courtyard it is necessary to pass through two barriers.

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[15] The discussion at the Saint Petersburg news web site «Karpovka» http://karpovka.net/2013/09/19/134933/

Consequently, only those cars whose owners pay for the parking spot have the access to the central area. At the plan each car has its own number and spot and for the group of cars belonging to the residents of the house who paid for the parking place the house representative has a particular color. Clients of the organizations also can park at the territory of the building during the daytime, but in side courtyards, without the access to the central one. Such cars are also have spots and numbers, but marked at the plan with the different color. During the nighttime all three courtyards are occupied with the residents' cars. At 3 PM on April 18th I counted 29 cars at the territory of the building, 5 were parked in the courtyard closer next to Fontanka River Embankment, rest were spread in two other courtyards.

Twenty organizations are housed in Tolstoy House, their clients and employees usually need a parking place. Not all businesses are paying for the parking places, but as long as cars do not occupy the area in the nighttime, the house representative tolerates them. For example, I talked to a client of the creative studio for children, situated in the central courtyard. Natalia said that most of the clients of the studio are residents of other districts who come to the place by car. According to Natalia, who brings her daughter to the classes twice a week, she never experiences difficulties in entering the courtyard and she even manages to park her car inside, but at the entrance she has to state the host organization and the approximate time that she is going to spend there.

In on-line accounts of the apartments available at the hotel the different information is presented: "spontaneous parking next to the building and paid one in 10 minutes by foot"[16]. Previous visitors suggested to double check the parking spot with the hostel. So different

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[16] The travel blog web site http://ftour.otzyv.ru/read.php?id=160849

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cases take place in the building. The fact that the gates have been placed quite recently let me to conclude that rules and terms of use have not been formulated and put into practice yet.

Figure 6 The view of the courtyard of Tolstoy House on April 15, 2014

The main source of conflict at the territory of the building right now is the necessity to pay for the parking spots. Such regulations are sometimes characterized negatively and called "extreme": "Before you decide to buy an apartment here, starting at 30 million rubles, you should be aware that the building has its problems… parking spaces are provided on a fee-paid basis, though this is unofficial…"

While the information about the fee for the parking places is provided on the web site of the condominium, the legitimacy of these measures provokes discussions and conflicts. The day I approached the house representative, she was dealing with the complaint, which was made by one of the residents of the building. Sorokin was complaining about the barriers and the gates, which blocked the entrance to the building. In the letter of complaint, he referred to the construction codes and regulations, as well as to the fire security and

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pointed out that barriers should be removed, stating that otherwise he would proceed with the complaint to the court. He also claimed that as the land was privatized, each owner should be able to use it without the necessity to pay extra money. According to the house representative, Sorokin's personal interests are crucial in this conflict. He insisted on removing the barriers because he wanted to use the space inside the building area for free, without paying costs that the car owners pay each month and that compose the guard wage and shared bills for common electricity and water. The case is still in progress and the condominium employees do not expect the conflict will be resolved soon. But it illustrated another example of conflicts over the privatization of urban space.

Figure 7 The middle courtyard. Parking at 14.30 AM.

It is difficult to give an account to the situation, but I believe that the fee-paid basis of providing residents with the parking space is one of those solutions of the problem that is actually working (with reservations, as the conflict around it is still the case). It is working as the situation several years ago was much sensitive, cars were

parked at lawns and now the problem is regulated and the situation is balanced in a way, though, as I mentioned already, it is still controversial as the case with the complaint appeared with the illegal barriers and it is no clear where it is moving.

All conflicts that I considered in this chapter finally show that it is the inconsistency in property rights and control over the urban space from the governmental side. And now I will turn to the problems influence of private interests for shaping urban space and its limitation.

Chapter 4. Property Rights and Conflicts of Ideology

This chapter considers the ways in which economic restructuring and economic transformations shape urban space. The concept of agency is important here, as well as, actors who take part in processes or urban development. In the perception of the urban development by different groups of users of urban space, the upper middle class plays an important role. It is recognized as an influential one. The residents and property owners change and control the use of space. But the influence has the limitations, which, I believe, reflects deeper processes of establishing of post-soviet society.

The described in the previous chapter conflicts show that at the level of everyday life private interests direct the changes in urban space and therefore affect the configuration of the city, concentration of activities and main pathways in the city (Law 2006; Staub 2005). Observed facts and conducted interviews show that shaping of urban space depends on the interests of particular groups. At least this is the perception that one can get from observations. In interviews with residents of the studied building as well as in interviews with experts, the question of money and profit was raised several times. During the conversations with my informants I clearly heard reproaches towards the "people with money", "these bourgeois" (with negative tone), "rich", while only had the feeling that my respondents give me some hints about the other interpretations of the state of affairs. Each time when the renovation or the development of the area was discussed my respondents advanced an idea on the possibility of changes in case of the availability of money. Though the topic of actual influence of residents on the changes of the building or restructuring of urban space figured in the discussions only implicitly, I believe it demands more precise analysis as it will disclose important processes of urban development.

When the discussions with my respondents touched upon subject of changes and improvements, they tended to highlight the negative sides: "the courtyard is full of Lexus and Mercedes, but the roof is leaking and plaster is crumbling. If they are so reach, they could renovate the building" or "they have money for expensive cars, parking fee and apartments in the building, why don't they repair the entrance doors?"

The case of Tolstoy House is complicated by the diversity of residents of the building. Between Maserati and Lexus an old Zhiguli is parked. An apartment in Tolstoy House is very expensive, but as one of my friends describes it:

> "…it is an upper-scale real estate, but it is very strange upper-scale real estate. Tolstoy House is not a polished sterile building with the homogenous social environment. The building is unique in its social diversity… it represents all types of life. There are lot of oddities in this "elite" building: new Lexus and old Zhiguli are standing side by side, luxury apartment and communal flat are situated at the same floor. Maybe, this is the single place in the whole world where the complete life, not just a piece of it is represented".

The building appears to be a model of the urban society. Different social groups meet at the space of the building, trying to defend their interests in existing conflicts. Less socially protected and economically safe groups tended to appeal to the more wealthy residents as to the endued with the power to make a difference. The residents of the building who recently bought the apartments there, on the other hand, complained: "they think that we have some kind of responsibilities to them: to change the door, to fix the balcony, but this is not my duty".

I should mention that though the building is considered to be elite and the apartments are expensive, the Tolstoy House is in a bad state. The facades, roof and staircase need repair. Molding and statues have almost lost their shape. The necessity to renovate the building is obvious for residents of the building as well as for visitors. Natalia, the client of the creative studio said: "I'm

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afraid one day a piece of stucco will fall on my head or on my car…I heard it happened to one lady in the neighborhood. She had a concussion". According to the interview with the house representative, when the condominium was established in 2008. The building needed a serious renovation. Six years later the situation has not changed much.

Some of the residents of the building are important figures in cultural life of the city and the world. Singers, ballet dancer, conductor live own the apartments in the building, they seem to have influence, but figures x and y show the state of the facade of the building in April 2014. The sign with the name of the organization (Figure 8) is hanging on the wall that is peeling off. Apparently, the organization does not affect the state of the building.

Figure 8. The walls of the Tolstoy House. New nameplate and old wall.

My respondents tend to blame the owners of the business or the apartments in the state of Tolstoy House, but when I asked them question: "Who is responsible for the courtyard and the building?" I received different answers. Some of my respondents claimed that it is condominium that supposed to watch the building; others said that municipality initiates most of the work on

improvement. Rest of them was confused by the question, but say that rich residents on the building "could have something done".

I felt that there is kind of inconsistency: while the interests of particular groups of people can influence and shape the urban space, it is often limited and results in such paradoxical situations as figure 8 shows. In this respect main questions are: "Who is responsible for shaping urban space?" and "Where are limits of the power to make changes?"

Answers, which my interviews gave me, show that people do not entirely understand the mechanisms of administration and control over the urban area. Many of them believe that all changes depend on the private interests of the wealthy residents and they do not see themselves as owners responsible for their property.

In resent years in media the interest towards middle class as the driving force of the development appeared. Discussions about the real estate market in press consider middle class and upper middle class as the target audience of the whole residential area development. The economic restructuring that took place in post-socialist city is marked by move towards the consumption mode (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007), which was followed by the transformations in the housing market: "The land-use patterns have reflected this transformation accordingly, with more space allocated to residential uses and less to manufacturing" (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007:245).

The changes in a housing market in Saint Petersburg, though slow, are similar to those in Moscow, and the demand for the elite housing continues its growth, but while in the Russian capital upscale housing is moving outside the city, in Saint Petersburg it is still concentrated in historical center by reason of commercialization of central districts, as well as supply of apartments in downtown area, where buildings are protected as part of cultural heritage. The housing in city center experiences the price increase in accordance with bid-rent theory, when land users are ready to pay more for the land that is closer to city center

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(Medvedkov, Medvedkov, 2007), which slowly turns the area into the upscale residential area. This process is complicated by the fact that in the historical center the number of communal flats still accounts for 10% of the whole housing market. Therefore, while the territory of historical center of Saint Petersburg is considered to be elite housing, in actual practice, new well off residents live nearby the residents of communal flats. Such neighborhood creates a social tension and become a cause of conflicts between the two groups, and, in a way, influences the process of shaping of urban space. In order to understand those processes I believe it is important to study the new residents of the buildings and to understand their place in the social order of the city.

As I have already mentioned, the target audience or housing market is often referred to as middle class or upper-middle class, the financial matter is also a reference point in discussions around the questions of improving of conditions in buildings, therefore I believe it is important to understand the middle class as an agent and impulse force of changes. In order to speak about the middle class in Russia I will appeal to the second part of my field research, which addresses the Russian magazines and newspapers. The notion of Russian middle class still hasn't crystalized yet and in recent media sources it usually accompanies with words "emerged", "discussed", "unclear definition" and "new" (Expert 2012; The Moscow Times 2012).

The new owners of the apartments in the Tolstoy House are described as "well-off" and "bourgeois" (burjui), the second one in Russian language has the negative connotation. The possibility to control the space, to use the space for their needs and to get away with it in case of the illegally privatized territory, created and impression that the middle and upper-middle class (as they can be considered) have power to take responsibilities and affect the decision making.

The Tolstoy House cannot yet be described as the elite housing, though in most of real estate agencies apartments in the building are described as those of elite. The history is another aspect that let the building to be described as elite.

The relations between residents and users of space were described in the previous chapter, but now I will consider the relations between residents of the building in accordance with their class position. Initially the building consisted approximately of 300 apartments of different size and conditions and aimed for families with different financial circumstances. And in general the diversity among residents of the building remained, but it is coming form the fact that not all communal flats in Saint Petersburg were rehoused and in Tolstoy House as well almost a whole staircase consists of communal apartments. And while many of flats are privatized, communal apartment still create a social reality in the city. According to data presented by Housing Committee at 2011 Saint Petersburg remains a communal capital of CIS and the number of communal apartments comprise 10% of the housing stock. And though in the city at the moment started in 2007 focused program for "Rehousing of communal flats in Saint Petersburg" exists, the process is very slow and not lack of obstacles due to numerous facts among which is that not all residents of communal flats want to rehouse from city center. When residents of the communal flat are suggested a rehousing program, they usually have an option to get an a small apartments at outskirts (in new housing developed areas) or a room in another communal flat. Residents of communal flats often consider life at the outskirts "not Saint Petersburg" and "not cultural"; outskirts often have negative connotations with the provinciality (Utekhin 2004). Residents of the central districts often look down at residents of the outskirts, which is connected to social segregation of the urban districts. Historical center possesses symbolic meaning and, as it is stated at real estate agencies "only that is valuable that has history behind it".

Between the two types of residents "newcomers" who bought apartment in the building recently and 'old residents', many of those live in communal apartments the social tension exists, which is strengthened by the conflicts around the usage of courtyard space and such tension states in different aspects. One of those is the described conflict around the parking space in the yard, negative expressions addressed to the car owners and 'new residents' of the building, the discontent by the fact that residents changed and apartments were bought by wealthy people. "Long-term residents of the building criticize them for lack of the sense of community, the profit orientation and that the idea that 'new residents' feel that the availability of money allow them to ignore others interests. Similar ideas are claimed at on-line discussions and media: "of course gates were closed as at the moment most residents of the buildings are businessmen". In curse of my research at Tolstoy House I have not faced the real opposition, it is more the expressions in conversation or in blogs.

Role of new residents, business owners and users of spaces is possible to be described in terms of control over the space in the sense that the availability of space fits in their necessities and while at first the gates were closed in a way due to their initiative, then when the necessity to open the access for the clients, changes were made again and the gates are open now.

The question of the impact of middle class to the urban restructuring is still open, but the fact that middle class is perceived as an agent that has the power to take decisions and make changes and those abilities are linked to the money is here.

Conflicts around property rights in urban spaces appear due to the unclear property regulations. In Saint Petersburg the ownership of the apartment does not mean the ownership of the land (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007:261). Russian laws on land are complicated and often contradictory, which adds confusion to the processes of control over the space (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007:261). Existing inconsistencies in land ownership reflect two

controversial tendencies in Russia. On the one hand, the privatization of public spaces (and illegal as well) shows the market-orientation in urban development. On the other hand, the government does not want to lose the possibility to control land. Observed tendencies and attempts reflect the processes of economic restructuring, when the authorities attempt to balance between the market and state control over the territory and complicated, multilayer system of land ownership laws provides the possibility for further speculations.

As in the article on upscale housing in Moscow Medvedkov (2007) claims, the uncertainty over land ownership regulations bring about the question of the balance between market and government: "the wealth generated by the economy…has empowered the probusiness circles, titling the scales in their favor in this clash of ideological views" (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007:261). The question of the privatization and control over the urban space in Saint Petersburg is broader, because, in the public opinion of my respondents they believe in the possibility of changes that money guarantee.

In my interviews with Marina Kolotilo I touched upon the subject. One particular phrase attracted my attention: "As you can see from the plate (figure 3), the building is protected by the state…well…you see the result". And this phrase led me into thinking about the power of money, culture, private interests, and the status.

Though the territory of the building was privatized, the conservation status of Tolstoy House means that any work on the renovation of the building cannot be held without the coordination of the Committee on State Control, Use and Protection of Historical and Cultural Landmarks. The Committee should initiate reconstruction and renovation of the heritage-listed buildings. And if the building is not lined up for renovation, the municipality cannot allocate a budget for renovation. The emergency state of the building should also be examined before the decision about the renovation is made. Therefore, residents' economic, cultural and symbolic capital in this case cannot influence the situation. The ownership of the apartment and even the

privatization of the territory do not guarantee the power to make changes. While such protection by the state has positive implementation as it controls the unauthorized actions that can lead to demolition of cultural heritage, it also can itself lead to its demolition by doing nothing.

Concluding Remarks

Urban restructuring that takes place in modern Russia, which has mostly been theorized from the context of understanding of public spaces, has not yet been analyzed from the perspective of transformation of inner territories and residential areas. However, urban restructuring became a key concept in understanding of changes of urban land-use patterns. Transition form soviet to post-soviet city still affects the processes of economic restructuring, which is connected to broader trends of neoliberalization and commercialization of urban space.

While these tendencies have been observed all over the world, these tendencies took specific characteristics in the context of post-soviet Russia. In my thesis I emphasized different types of spatial representation of such neoliberal trends as privatization and commodification of urban land, which result in establishing of means of control over the access and use of space. Consequently, through the means of control of the space, the mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion of users of space concentrated in particular groups of people. Here the conflicts of private interests got into picture.

The residential area of Saint Petersburg situated in the historic center of the city became a battlefield, where different forces met. The trend of commercialization of urban space led to the necessity for the municipal government as well as everyday users of space to put up with the materialization of private interests of particular social and economic groups. The attraction of private capital into processes of urban restructuring creates an environment where the transformed urban space is adjusted to the interests of owners of capital. I focused my analysis on three different conflicts around the land-use.

Applied in the political and economic context of the post-soviet Saint Petersburg, the mechanisms of urban restructuring framed the necessity to establish new terms of regulation of the changes. The described conflicts at Tolstoy House in Saint Petersburg illustrate an ongoing process of forming of the land ownership regulations. In a broader sense, the case provides the result of the system where the city government controls the land speculation. The designed system of functional zoning leaves the city administration the controlling mechanisms of this speculation (Lazarevski 2004; Medvedkov, Medvedkov, 2007), which means that the influence of the private interests on the urban transformation has its limitations. These limitations are observed in the case of Tolstoy House in restrictions toward the renovation of protected building. I believe this example shows the particularities of urban development in transition period, when the mechanisms of regulations are not totally formulated. The balance between market forces and the government (Medvedkov, Medvedkov, 2007) appears to be fragile and unstable, which also can be observed in misunderstanding of administrative functions by residents and users of the space.

In my research I brought together the theoretical consideration of the distinction of private and public in post-soviet city with the main neoliberal tendencies that affect the transformation of urban space. I described the case of one particular building, situated in the historic center of Saint Petersburg, to illustrate how different perceptions of the urban space create a tension that stimulates urban development. Examining the configuration the of users of urban space who defend their interests, I argue that the case of Tolstoy House provides a relatively successful example of balancing between the inconsistencies of regulations of terms of land-use from the perspective of private and public interests.

Nevertheless, the transition period in post-Soviet Saint Petersburg is not over yet, the complications with the property rights and ownership illustrates the contest between market and governmental ideologies (Medvedkov, Medvedkov 2007). On the one hand, it is

impossible to neglect the empowered upper-middle class, on the other hand, their power is still limited the government.

The perception of urban space in Saint Petersburg is defined by global trends of privatization and commodification of the space; however, applied to the case of the post-Soviet city these trends not only determine the perception and urban development but also shapes the perception of the space and existing everyday activities. The conflicts over the urban land-use are determined not only by collision of private interests, but also by the understanding of urban space based on different ideological positions. In the residential area of historic center of Saint Petersburg the control over the access to the space designs the circumstances for inclusion and exclusion of particular groups in land-use activities.

My research could be continued in studying of the residential area at outskirts of the city and in suburbs. As the patterns of urban planning changed, the described tendencies probably would have different embodiment and regulations. Such research can study the urban area of different time of creation (in 1930s, 1950s, 1960s etc.) and show how the urban space itself defines methods of control. Another possibility is to compare residential area with its tendencies of privatization of space to mechanisms of appropriation of public space. Such research would provide the better picture of the understanding of public and private applied   to   different   types   of   urban   land.

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