PUBLIC SPACES: EVERYDAY RESISTANCE AND ALTERNATIVE SOCIETIES

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Introduction
What kind of practices do urban residents develop in order to create alternative drafts of society in the face of economic and social crises and daily experiences of exclusion? This question is the starting point of our paper. The notion of everyday resistance covers various types of critique of social orders. In contrast to a common understanding in political sciences (cf. o/a Ballestrem 2013: 68f.) 'resistance' is not exclusively understood as a form of political opposition that uses illegal methods. Resistance is rather regarded as objection to prerogatives of explanation and regulations by authorities or institutions (cf. McCann 2010: 240f.). This results in nonconformities with established social orders and impacts on the appropriation of space. Hence 'resistance' does not inevitably comprehend the violation of rights (the legal definition of 'violence') but also includes 'soft', everyday forms of resistance, such as the initiation of alternative discourses, subcultural commitments or the participation in artist events. Simultaneously, scrutinizing and extending rules or well-established notions of good behavior or the mundane caring for others may constitute resistant practices. An exact demarcation between legal and illegal practices is however almost impossible (cf. Gertel et al. 2014: 11).

Four questions lead the examination of daily practices of resistance:
(1) What types of daily urban resistance can be observed – also beyond the local scope of Leipzig; what happens, when rules are circumvented, watered down or ignored; is it possible for non-violent, even non-deviant actions, to be categorized as 'practices of resistance'?
(2) How do people deal with the practices carried out in public spaces?
(3) What kinds of practices connect virtual and material spaces – and what forms of integration and exclusion arise from these practices?
(4) Why is the physical material space so important for resistance – despite the omnipresence of virtual spaces and organizations?

Public Spaces and Practices of Resistance
A comprehensive understanding of resistance is thus necessary to include both, subversive *and* sensational appropriations of public spaces. Hence, a great variety of actors serve as research subjects, ranging from people using spaces in unintended ways e.g. by doing trend sports (skating, bouldering etc.) or the dropping off 'seed bombs' to physical occupations of city spaces by protest marches (cf. Paxson 2007: 3f., Tan 2011: 278). Bayat (2012) also emphasizes 'non-movements', namely the sheer physical presence of urban masses in public places, such as streets and parks, as a means of resistance, particularly in Middle Eastern cities. Accordingly, the causes of resistance are complex and various. At the local level spatial interventions may directly affect everyday contexts – e.g. missing bicycle paths or the construction of a retail store – triggering resistant practices. At the global level increasing neoliberalization, national energy policies or combat missions can trigger resistance (e.g. the occupy movement). As a consequence resistance impacts on society by various forms of appropriating space.

Because of their density, size and diversity, cities are considered to be the birthplace of social tensions and movements (cf. Uitermark et al. 2012: 2546). Urban public spaces

play a major and decisive role in this context. Contrary to private spaces they are regarded as visual and physical open and accessible spaces (cf. Siebel/Wehrheim 2003: 4). Public spaces are considered as spaces "where a great number of daily practices take place" (McCann 2010: 240), thereby enabling encounters with 'the other' or 'the foreign', facilitating exchange (cf. Paxson 2007: 32; Wiegandt 2005: 9f.). However, since de facto there is no general accessibility of public spaces, urban spaces have to fulfill certain minimum requirements to deserve the label 'public'. These consist of absent physical, legal, and monetary entry barriers, demands that are mostly met by non-private ownerships. As a result public spaces are a contested area where „[…] the dialectic of contention and control within cities" (Uitermark et al. 2012: 2546) materializes and thus becomes visible (cf. Naegler 2013: 197). Both government and private enterprises try to strengthen the production and reproduction of social and political orders with the help of different techniques and power technologies. In this regard they use special construction methods to prevent certain types of use as well as surveillance strategies, arrangements of ownership relations, application of marketing tools, urban restructurings or the fueling of urban fears (cf. Janoschka/Sequera 2011: 154; Naegler 2013: 201f.; Siebel/Wehrheim 2003: 6f.; Tan 2011: 272, 279). Resistant individuals oppose those developments by conquering public spaces in their very own ways (cf. David 2011: 23; McCann 2010: 241).

Approach and subjects of investigation
Our study focuses on two groups: On the one hand on the urban youth who – because of their innovation and mobilization potential are referred to as *social shifters* (Durham 2000) or *social breakers and makers* (Honwana & DeBoek 2005), respectively. On the other the investigation takes a great interest in other committed persons who, cross-generational, look for new supporters, join forces and actively use public spaces. We comprehend actions of both groups as *practices*, composed by arrays of (generally human) activity or sets of doings and sayings (cf. Schatzki 2001: 11; 2002: 73). Hence resistant practices form sequences of *processes of resistance* (cf. Grießler/Lehner 2011: 109). These are united by the challenging of social order – understood as reified social and institutional barriers (cf. McCann 2010: 249).

Two specific protests movements in Leipzig serve as examples: The participatory art project 'PROtest' that took place on the Lindenauer Markt from Mai to October 2012 and the annual musical protest spectacle 'Global Space Odyssey' (GSO). (1) 'PROtest' came into being in response to the disputed construction of a huge retail food store at the Lindenauer Markt. To reflect the developing process, the association 'Stadtteilverein Lindenau e.V.' organized a competition for the equipment of ten showcases at the façade of the store (cf. Schilling 2012: n.pag). The artist Diana Wesser, who won the contest, decided to give attention to the "critical, extending, and creative treatment" of the retail park '(cf. Wesser 2013:3) by inviting the residents to participate actively in the discourse on urban spaces (cf. Walden 2012: 11). (2) Since 2001 GSO-demonstrations are organized by persons from the cultural sector. They join forces against the vanishing open spaces for noncommercial cultural projects as a part of urban upgrading and gentrification processes in Leipzig, demanding a stronger involvement in the city's development and enforced sustainability (cf. a/o Puppe/Nößler 2012: n.pag.; GSO 2012: n.pag.). Over the last years the GSO widened its social and political understanding, including the battle against xenophobia. In 2014 the parade will thus be entitled "Diversity Delights" (cf. GSO e.V. 2014: n.pag.).

With the help of narrations (qualitative interviews) off different participants and organizers of the two presented projects a formal and motivational catalogue shall be created, providing linking points for international comparisons of subversive and sensation causing daily practices of resistance.

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