



# Educational City Walks in Culture- and Diversity-oriented Teacher Education

Suggestions and future visions from German-Georgian Dialogue

*Christian Hoiß & Lea Tanner (Eds.)*



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# Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| <b>Foreword</b>   | 5  |
| <b>Urban Encounters</b><br>Introductory thoughts on the transformative potential of City Walks in educational practice<br><i>Christian Hoiß, Lea Tanner</i>       | 6  |
| <b>The method of educational city walks</b><br><i>Natalie Gamtsemlidze</i>  | 9  |
| <b>Un-Dreamed Utopias</b><br>Developping educational utopias in pedagogical City Walks<br><i>Christian Hoiß, Lea Tanner</i>                                       | 13 |
| <b>Un-Heard Voices</b><br>Recognizing discrimination and inequalities through in pedagogical City Walks<br><i>Christian Hoiß, Lea Tanner</i>                      | 15 |
| <b>Un-Told Stories</b><br>Focusing on postcolonialism in pedagogical City Walks<br><i>Gvantsa Davitlashvili</i>   | 18 |
| <b>City Walks in practice</b><br>Walking, experiencing, and exploring street names in the Munich city area<br><i>Christian Hoiß, Lea Tanner</i>                   | 21 |
| <b>Criticizing street names</b><br>On Ludwig-Thoma-Straße in Munich<br><i>Isabelle Frielinghaus, Maximilian Holm, Katrin Geneuss</i>                              | 24 |
| <b>Un-Read Stories</b><br>Postcolonialism and street names<br><i>Hannah Kreuzinger, Eléonore Otto</i>   | 27 |
| <b>“Club of Discoverers – experiencing literature outdoors”</b><br>Literary Walks for students<br><i>Katrin Geneuss</i>   | 30 |
| <b>City Walk in Kutaisi</b><br>Discovering Jewish and Catholic roots<br><i>Nana Kupreishvili, Ana Shalikiani</i>  | 31 |
| <b>City Walk in Tbilisi</b><br>Protest and demonstration as a form of political participation<br><i>Kristine Gongadze, Irina Jvarsheishvili, Sophia Bachilava</i> | 34 |

# Table of Figures

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Changing perceptions of cultural differences during the encounter between people from Georgia and Germany (courtesy of Jana Costa, University of Bamberg) | 7  |
| Figure 2: Sequence of an educational City Walk (independent illustration based on Eberhardt et al. 2021)  | 11 |
| Figure 3: Street sign of Ludwig-Thoma-Straße in Munich  | 24 |
| Figure 4: View of Ludwig-Thoma-Straße   | 25 |
| Figure 5: Bus stop at Kolombusplatz in Munich   | 27 |
| Figure 6: Crossed out street sign at Kolombusstraße in Munich   | 27 |
| Figure 8: Children’s playground at Kolombusplatz in Munich  | 28 |
| Figure 7: Green area at Kolombusplatz in Munich   | 28 |
| Figure 9: Method “Inside-Outside-Circle” (own representation)   | 28 |
| Figure 10: An excerpt from the Mapping Postcolonial website on decolonization (courtesy of Philip Zöls, Mapping Postcolonial)                                       | 29 |
| Figure 11: Stations of the City Walk through Tbilisi (adapted from OpenStreetMap, open source)  | 36 |

# Foreword

For societies which embrace (cultural) diversity as a central value, intercultural education is of enormous importance as a cross-curricular and interdisciplinary educational goal. Teachers and learners alike need fundamental knowledge of other cultures, religions, and spaces of dialogue with various people of a pluralistic and globalized society. They need to develop a culture sensitive behavior to understand their own cultural identity and to get to know cultural identities of the people around them. Similarities and differences must be discovered, stereotypes and prejudices reflected on and overcome.

From October to December 2021, the project "Encounter needs Movement: MEET UP! Pedagogical City Walks for Georgian and German teachers" intended to face this challenge in the field of teacher education. Throughout the project, the intercultural dialogue between teachers and teacher training students from the regions of Tbilisi (Civic Education Teachers Forum (CETF)) and Munich (certificate program "*el mundo* – Education for Sustainable Development in Teacher Education" at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich) and the University of Siegen was promoted. At the same time, the participants of the workshops worked thematically on diversity-oriented topics as part of educational City Walks: *un-read stories, un-seen art, un-heard people, un-dreamed utopia*.

Based on a first orientation workshop at the educational conference "Bildung.anders.machen – Tage der Bildungsalternativen" in Munich from 14 to 16 October 2021, the participants developed educational materials in the course of five further workshops. The materials were tested in practice with the participants' students (in school classes and university seminars) and then discussed and further developed with the peers during the digital and hybrid workshops.

The result is a collection of theoretical and conceptual considerations, methodological recommendations, and practical examples, which are not only intended to document the project results, but also to serve as an idea for (inter-) cultural diversity-oriented educational work. The reciprocal translation into the languages German, English and Georgian should contribute to the widest possible reception and multiplication of the findings in the project.

We would like to thank all those who took part in this intercultural learning journey in the autumn of 2021, especially the following people, whose commitment contributed so fundamentally to the success of the project: Samira Nilius, Georgina Philips, Dr. Katrin Geneuss, Isabelle Thaler, Dr. Jana Costa, Verena Schneeweiß, Julia Brandes, Dr. Tamar Karaia, Tobias Verbeck, Clemens Abert, Mareike Wenzel, Günter Stöber.

We would especially like to thank our Georgian colleagues Gvantsa Davitlashvili and Natalie Gamtsemidze for the joint organization of the workshops and the dedicated implementation of the project. Special thanks goes to Martin Thalhammer, who took the initiative for this project, and to Stiftung Erinnerung Vergangenheit Zukunft (EVZ) for financially supporting this project within the program "Meet up! Youth for Partnership" and the pleasant support during the project. Last but not least, we would like to thank Evgeny Farber and Anian Kindlinger for their careful assistance with revising the handbook.

Munich, July 2023,  
Christian Hoiß and Lea Tanner

# Urban Encounters

## Introductory thoughts on the transformative potential of City Walks in educational practice

*Christian Hoiß and Lea Tanner*

Cities and urban areas are places for encounters on many levels. This is where social change begins, this is where utopias take root, and this is where our common future will be shaped. People from a wide variety of contexts live here together on a very small space which is why their values, attitudes, and interests very often literally collide there.

At the same time, we are united by the fact that we all have desires for our immediate surroundings and that we bring with us a variety of dreams for a future that is worth living in. However, these visions of the future can never be implemented independently. They are always tied to prevailing cultural, social, economic, and ecological contexts, existing institutions and structures, applicable norms, and power relations, as well as social stereotypes. At the same time, cities have their own histories and must therefore find their own ways of dealing with their past and the design of their future.

The interplay of these factors makes cities attractive and a complex subject for education. Particularly in school education, it is difficult to establish long-term partnerships and systematically connect teaching to the urban environment. We see great potential for transformation regarding our educational work because through participatory encounters with our cities students<sup>1</sup> can negotiate their own social, cultural, political, ecological, and economic living spaces. Take part and discover a new side of your own city!

With this manual we want to appreciate and create awareness for people whose voices and views are often being neglected in public spaces. We want to discover places and paths in urban areas that often remain below the surface of our everyday routines. Pedagogically conducted City Walks are particularly suitable for this goal – this method can take you on a discovery tour beginning with your own school environment to your urban surroundings and ultimately to yourself.

A special feature of this manual: It was developed during an intercultural exchange between educational actors in Georgia and Germany over the course of a six-part series of workshops. The encounters between the countries have made a significant contribution to become aware of our own perspectives and thought patterns, reflect them, and put them in a global perspective. Such culturally reflexive approaches can support teachers in developing a culture sensitive attitude and didactic approaches in the classroom (cf. Scheunpflug, Timm, Costa, Kühn & Rau 2020, pp. 41–54).

In terms of culturally reflective didactics (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 55–72), teachers should be aware that cultural diversity can only be perceived if they consider their own socio-cultural approach “as Christian, Muslim or atheist, as a man, woman or gender diverse person, living in a family or living alone, as an interested or not interested person, as a native or non-native speaker [etc.]” (*ibid.*, p. 55) and, for example, recognize

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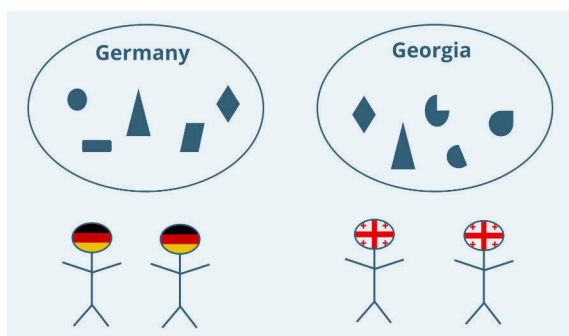
<sup>1</sup> The various educational formats which were developed in the City Walks project have aimed at different kinds of learners (e.g. elementary schools, high schools, higher education). Therefore, we will use the term “students” as a general term for all kinds of learners in this manual.

their own privileges. Thinking about one's own understanding, perception, and interpretation of culture itself or culturally determined structures is an essential part of this process (for example, whether one regards one's own cultural practices or current values and norms as superior to others etc.). The intercultural exchange between countries and cultures, but also within one's own society, can make a decisive contribution to this reflection process, sharpen perception, and revise misjudgements and stereotypes. The intercultural exchange helps to question the foundations of one's own culturally shaped perception, to change them if necessary and to adapt them to one's own utopias and values.

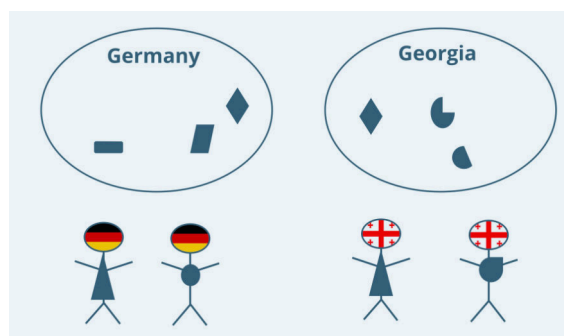
Figure 1 illustrates these processes of change regarding perception and overcoming of cultural differences. At the beginning, participants in our City Walks project from the countries Georgia and Germany (cf. picture 1) face each other largely without any previous intercultural

encounter. However, cultural differences must be thought beyond national cultures and ethnic affiliations. Intercultural learning does not (any longer) aim at the general differences between two cultures (cf. picture 2), but the focus shifts towards the individuals from the cultures with their differences and similarities (cf. picture 3). It is assumed that individuals combine individual cultural reference points that are never identical, even within a culture. Culturally determined patterns are also never accessed by all members of a culture in the same way, instead they are being developed individually. These processes need to be highlighted in intercultural learning and accordingly Figure 1 shows a shift from contrastive thinking between cultures towards the emphasis of individual reflection on culturally mediated values, behavior, and approaches to the world. These reflection processes can lead to overcoming cultural boundaries and an attitude that allows people to see themselves as *global citizens* (cf. picture 4).

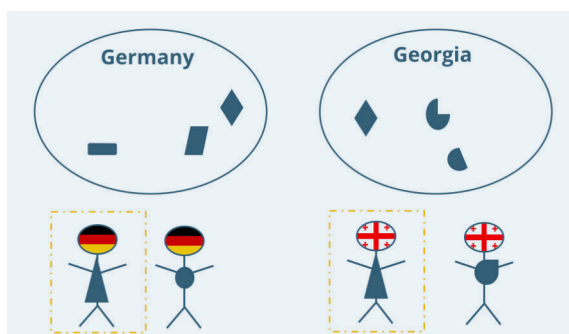
Picture 1



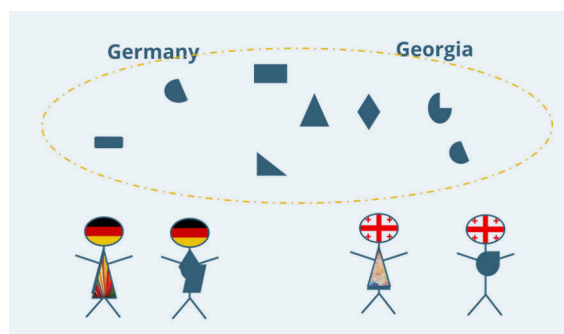
Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



**Figure 1:** Changing perceptions of cultural differences during the encounter between people from Georgia and Germany (courtesy of Jana Costa, University of Bamberg)



“

*“It is exciting to discuss various aspects, formats and implementation options of city tours in an international exchange and to exchange ideas about differences and similarities in the particular contexts.”*

Verena Schneeweiß, Commit e.V.

“

*“It was very enriching and motivating to exchange ideas with other young people and feel their interest in the same topics.”*

Hannah Kreuzinger, student at LMU Munich

“

*“The differences that have emerged during the workshops have once again made my privileged environment clear to me, while the similarities in our thinking and perceptions of our cities were a strong connecting element. Especially the encounters in breakout sessions intensified the exchange.”*

Eléonore Otto, student at LMU Munich

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# The method of educational City Walks

*Natalie Gamtsemlidze*

In the recent decade, educational City Walks emerged from the political education movement (cf. Emde 2020). They aim to enable new perspectives on the city as an alternative way of expressing and experiencing crucial life events and/or stories behind the scenes. The methodology itself is designed to meet the needs of learners and achieve different learning goals. Educational City Walks allow participants to explore – after critical analysis and a reflexive judgement – how they can intervene, question, and even disrupt socio-political landscapes to change the world that they are living in and basically learn through the encounter with the city. In this way, City Walks point to room for action, make visions tangible and shape utopias (cf. Eberhardt et al. 2020).

Intersectional experiences and issues of social justice can be reflected as City Walks can integrate current topics, marginalized voices, and perspectives, show contradictory and conflicting viewpoints and multiple layers of a topic or a site. The urban space is a conflicting educational site that constantly moves between peripheries, margins, centers, and in-between spaces, where the boundaries of society become blurry (cf. *ibid.*). City Walks also enable more in-depth cooperation between schools/teachers and extracurricular educational organizations and activists through “field trips”. These can build a bridge between theoretical classroom knowledge and connecting paths to socio-historical traces with people’s everyday experiences in the interstices of urban environments (cf. *ibid.*).

The City Walk concept discussed throughout this manual uses the urban spaces designated for learning, action and reflection. A City Walk can be guided by teachers or other civil society actors. The field of City Walk providers is just as diverse as the formats and their educational interests. In addition to associations, initiatives, NGOs and movement organizations, there are artists, art, and cultural mediators, and also students who design City Walks and offer them to participants (cf. *ibid.*).

Typical educational City Walks should consist of several important phases starting with the preparation at school. Teachers prepare and map the City Walk’s thematic frame and conducts lessons or seminars around the topic. That way everyone joining the City Walk shares at least a basic understanding of the topics the City Walk addresses. While planning a City Walk teachers should bear in mind the different phases during a walk – stops at stations and walking to a station. While visiting exemplary locations, political or civil phenomena can be illustrated on a case-by-case basis; the excursion to specific locations, including historical ones, enables teachers to involve local actors and stakeholders who can provide an activity at a station. Teachers are free to use additional materials such as pictures, quotes, audio, and video guides that link one’s experience with other dimensions of space and time. For an in-depth experience with peers during the encounter it is important that the City Walk is guided, especially when teachers aim to achieve complex learning goals. It is important

that teachers find a perfect balance between talking and mindfulness whilst walking. Sometimes it can be useful to give participants time to walk mindfully to process information they received during a station. It can also be very beneficial for achieving the learning goals to involve passers-by and locals for additional exchange and encounter.

An educational City Walk guide (teacher) must be mindful and prepared for question-and-answer sessions throughout the walk.

A key element of the City Walk are multiple deliberations before, during and after the City Walk. The role of reflections becomes more important firstly for the experience to be transformed into long-lasting knowledge and secondly, for forming an informal network between peers who share the same experience.

#### Info Box

### **Stations**

Stations of walks not only illustrate content but are places that are closely related to everyday life and the real world, i.e. places that participants already know or have heard of and make the spots subjectively meaningful for them. This enables “the transfer of what has been learned into the living environment” (Baltzer et al. 2014, p. 188) by re-experiencing the familiar environment through certain lenses and at the same time opening new spaces for encounter and learning. Thereby, the design and spaces for participation for the learning are expanded and a change of perspective is possible through getting to know other worlds, which promotes empathy and mutual understanding (cf. Eberhardt et al. 2020).

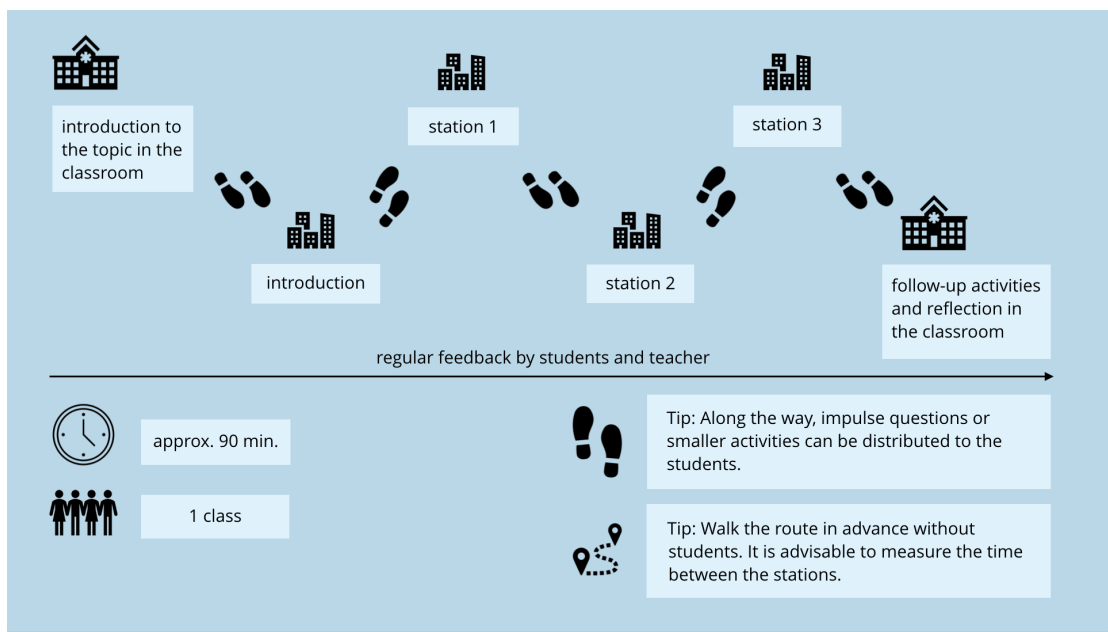


Figure 2: Sequence of an educational City Walk (independent illustration based on Eberhardt et al. 2021)

The most important tip for designing a walk is to be creative and open-minded when mapping City Walks and experiment with methods which can be applied during walking and stopping at stations. The method itself enables teachers and participants to think outside the box and brings them to a kinesthetic experience.

This little checklist can help teachers to bear in mind important things that need to be considering during mapping and implementing this method (cf. Phillips & Nilius 2021)

### Who is the target group?

- distance
- refreshing points (public toilets)
- food and refreshments
- weather
- accessibility
- walking/transportation between stations
- other special needs

### What is the purpose?

- number of stations
- encounter with people
- which methods to use
- where to apply the different phases (stations and movement)

- mind a balance between walking and stations
- take care of the time-management during the City Walk
- respect the needs of all the participants

## Inspirations for possible stations and content of the City Walk<sup>2</sup>

- Statues or memorial plates
- Street names
- Talk to marginalized people like the elderly, migrants, hear their voices
- Metro stations (urban styles, show history and future)
- Visit an archive
- Listen and talk to different people whose voices are often overheard (e.g. Soviet past..)
- Cultural places
- Documentary materials regarding street names, statues, architecture, artwork
- Historical buildings
- Journaling Diaries
- Visit exhibitions
- Visit places where major colonial events happened
- Do interviews
- Visit museums
- Do the research and follow up reading on the places objects

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<sup>2</sup> The inspirations for mapping a City Walk were collected by the participants of the City Walk project 2021.

# Un-Dreamed Utopias

## Developping educational utopias in pedagogical City Walks

*Christian Hoiß and Lea Tanner*

Challenges such as global justice, the climate crisis and its social consequences, the loss of biodiversity, excessive consumption of resources or digital change have long ceased to be regarded as purely technologically solvable issues of science. Quite on the contrary, they also fundamentally affect the cultural, social, and political areas of life. There are questions about a good way of life and a sustainable and globally just future that need to be answered and intensively thought on from a present point of view for future generations – also in education.

These global questions require pedagogical and didactic reflection and reaction. At the same time educational actors must not presume to be able to know what this future will look like. A so-called *defuturization* of the students (cf. de Haan 2014, p. 376) is not only to be avoided for democratic reasons, but also because there is always a political dimension inherent in our ideas of the future as they are shaped by our values, attitudes, and norms in the present. According to *Futures Literacy*, it appears much more plausible to speak of “futures” in the plural in pedagogical-didactic contexts. Using the concept of “futures” opens a space of possibilities in which *un-dreamed* or *not yet dreamed* utopias of a more just and sustainable world can be thought of and discovered, discussed, and put into practice in educational work.

In the local (pedagogical) processing of global problems our perception of problems is also strongly influenced by culture. Postcolonial issues strongly differ, for example, in Germany and Georgia due to their historical backgrounds;

they are differently remembered, processed, and discussed in the media, their approaches to solutions are negotiated in different ways. The intercultural exchange seems essential because learners and teachers can become aware of their cultural ties and can broaden their horizons from the interplay between local and global utopias.

Info Box

### **Utopias**

Classically, utopias are understood as “images of a collective desire or fear that go beyond individual, subjective dreams” (Maahs 2019, p. 22). They need to be understood as fictional counter-concepts and time-critical alternatives to the real world. Through utopias, models of society can be created that solve today’s problems. As a representation of social tendencies they are characterized by optimism, hope, and the ability to act for the future (cf. *ibid.*, p. 22 ff.).

The encounter between students and civil society actors, who deal with global visions of the future and anchor them locally (e.g. in urban areas), can stimulate these educational processes in a special way.

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# Un-Heard Voices

## Recognizing discrimination and inequalities through pedagogical City Walks

*Christian Hoiß and Lea Tanner*

Transformative educational work that aims to promote critical and systemic thinking (e.g., within the frameworks of Education for Sustainable Development, Global Learning, or Global Citizenship Education), actively deals with the prevailing social foundations, structures, norms, values, and their circumstances. In this context, it is important to not only refer to directly visible power relations but to actively find access to people who are pushed away from society and the public discourse. By visiting institutions that help marginalized groups more of their voices can be heard in (urban) society.

These social structures and assumptions which are also negotiated in urban areas appear on different levels and affect a wide variety of people. In contrast to discriminatory situations in public space, which occur frequently (cf. Beigang, Fetz, Kalkum & Otto 2017, p. 212 ff.) and are also characterized by “volatility, impersonality and anonymity” (Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2021), structural power imbalances in the city are expressed differently. They are not only fleeting but omnipresent and almost unchangeable and can be seen in

spatial planning, the naming of streets and squares, limited access to public buildings, and in means of transport. It is important that the students get to know their own living environment in this regard and develop an understanding and awareness of discriminatory conditions rooted in an asymmetrical distribution of power within the city. Since public spaces should be accessible to everyone, new approaches (e.g. in urban design) need to be found so that everyone can participate in them.

In order to counter this power imbalance in the city of Munich, organizations such as [Commit e.V.](#), [Places of Change](#), and [Eine Welt Haus München e.V.](#) are specifically committed to reach an anti-discriminatory society. In Tbilisi, for example, the organization [SOVLAB](#) is campaigning for this cause as well.

These organizations are also suitable to be visited as stops during a City Walk. Opening schools to the outside world helps students to hear firsthand from actors how they try to tackle the existing power imbalance and get to know options how to act for an anti-discriminatory society.



*“In order to recognize discrimination and social inequality we have to learn to ‘see’ in a new way. This works even better in the urban environment than in the classroom! That’s why I would definitely integrate City Walks into my lessons.”*

Tobias Verbeck, teacher



In this context, anti-discriminatory educational work includes seizing and revealing various discourses that deal with social problems such as racism, discrimination, intersectionality, or postcolonial structures. It advocates values such as diversity, equality, women's rights, and participation. At the same time, anti-discriminatory educational work actively promotes the participation of all (i.e. especially marginalized) students in the societal discourse. Students recognize the importance of their own (political) voice and view it as an essential part of the diverse voices in society. Through different experiences of participation and self-efficacy they learn that their own voice is louder and more meaningful than generally assumed. Students also learn to actively use their voice for a non-discriminatory society.

Furthermore, anti-discriminatory educational work also focuses on discrimination in school life itself. At all levels, the risk of being discriminated against is also extremely high in everyday school life. To counteract this, structurally embedded intercultural education, the demonstration of power structures and dynamics, as well as the emphasis and preoccupation with diversity in the classroom and in school life in general are necessary (cf. Lüders & Schlenzka 2016). Therefore, it is essential to enable a diverse and participatory discourse in class. Students should learn in a non-discriminatory and empowering atmosphere and look at the world from different perspectives. This enables them to critically question existing structures and not just hear a single, often very privileged "[single story](#)" (Adichie 2009).

However, to reach this goal in class all other stories must first be given space too or sometimes they must be created first. The goal of anti-discriminatory education is to see the diversity among the students but also the diversity of voices in subjects such as languages, history, art, or music. But, this only works if the entire school family is aware of discrimination and promotes a school of diversity.

#### Info Box

### ***Discrimination***

In abstract terms, discrimination can be understood as "the use of categorical, i.e. supposedly unambiguous and selective distinctions to create, substantiate and justify unequal treatment with the consequence of social disadvantages" (Scherr 2016, p. 3). In contrast to what is widely assumed, this is not only a matter of individual statements or actions. Discriminated people are systemically denied equal status in society. The resulting de facto disadvantage is not perceived and classified as unjust by the majority of society, "but is regarded as an unavoidable result of their otherness" (ibid.).

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# Un-Told Stories

## Focusing on postcolonialism in pedagogical City Walks

*Gvantsa Davitelashvili*

History can be seen as a living organism, which keeps our past and, at the same time, influences our present and future. It is interconnected with time, people, and places. It does not have a physical shape, but it is easily presented in books, in paintings, and with the architecture and environment we are living in. History is a very sensitive concept; it can be well-written, re-written, interpreted, forgotten, and also *un-told*. Global historical processes sometimes cause stories of people to fade away, so they are not told or even lost. Colonialism and its impact on our present have produced and washed away a multitude of such voices and *un-told stories*.

There are two main actors in the process – one who colonized and one who was colonized. Therefore, especially when discussing this topic, it is important that not only the voices that colonized have their say, but that both different perspectives are considered and reflected upon – in our workshops Germany and Georgia stand exemplary for these two sides. Germany – being a colonial empire, the third largest in the world at its height of expansion around 1900 – and Georgia as a Post-Soviet country, which was occupied by the Red Army of the Soviet Union from 1921 to 1991 (cf. Kobakhidze 2021).

In both cases, the historical context and its consequences were quite impactful on each country and the people living inside and outside. However, the remembrance of the events is a matter of concern. Remembering colonialism in Germany today is characterized as *Colonial Amnesia* – by historian Jürgen Zimmerer.

## What is colonialism and postcolonialism?

Info Box

### **Colonialism**

Colonialism can be defined as “control by one power over a dependent area or people” (Blakemore 2019). It takes place when one nation subjugates another and conquers and exploits its population. Oftentimes these conquerors forced their own language and cultural values upon the conquered people (cf. *ibid*).

Info Box

### **Postcolonialism**

Postcolonialism can be seen as the historical period or the situation after Western colonialization had taken place (cf. Ivison 2015). This term “can also be used to describe the concurrent project to reclaim and rethink the history and agency of people subordinated under various forms of imperialism” (*ibid*).

Georgia also faces unstructured memory politics and lacks knowledge and understanding of its history. Therefore, the main questions are: What is the role of formal and non-formal education in this process? How can related knowledge and so far untold stories be transferred to future generations?

There is no doubt that the methodology should be selected well in order to reach this goal. In this particular case, the City Walks with their multidisciplinary approach are a great opportunity to do that. While applying City Walks

educators are able to research *un-heard* narratives and places connected to colonialism and its victims. They can be found in street names, metro stations, cultural places, museums, archives, etc. The methodology itself gives us an opportunity to discover, maintain, and revive these untold stories – digitally or physically. In both cases, tools like storytelling, small questionnaires, pictures and paintings can be used to refresh and enhance the knowledge of young generations and open up the possibility to remember.



*“With our educational city tour format ‘Places of Change’ we want to make people, spaces, and initiatives visible and tangible who practice different approaches towards a sustainable city of Munich, who contribute to a socio-ecological transformation and who try alternative forms of living and different economic models within the city. We combine a workshop, city tour, and discussion rounds to make our walking tours an interactive format which enables participants to have a direct exchange with change agents at each station.”*

[Orte des Wandels Munich](#)



*“Commit e.V. Munich is an educational platform for global justice. It carries out educational work on global politics in various formats and projects to develop sustainable change in thinking and acting with the motto ‘think global, act local’.*

*We use interactive methods and references to everyday life, critical thinking, and a change of perspective to raise awareness of structures of social inequality and global injustice. We also promote taking just and sustainable action.”*

[Commit e.V. Munich](#)

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# City Walks in practice

## Walking, experiencing, and exploring street names in the Munich city area

*Christian Hoiß and Lea Tanner*

The following ideas for City Walks were developed in a participatory manner and exemplify the educational potential in the encounter with societal futures. During the workshops, the participants developed parts of a City Walk and chose their theme around the topics *un-read stories*, *un-seen art*, *un-heard people*, *un-dreamed utopia*. This participatory process of developing a City Walk should also be used by teachers when designing the City Walks in class.

Exploring one's own city should go far beyond simply describing the places and squares. The goal should be to look behind stories of places, street signs, monuments, etc. from multiple viewpoints so students gain a critically reflective perspective of their own city.

Through the impulses on postcolonialism during the workshop on *un-read stories*, the group decided to take a closer and critical look at Munich street names. Street names can be seen as traces of history that reflect the "hegemonic values and norms of a particular time and place" (Hintermann & Pichler 2015, p. 287). At the beginning of the discussion on street names, many questions arose from the participants: Who are streets named after? Who names streets? How can the naming of streets be interpreted in terms of contemporary his-

tory? Which people and stories are not depicted on the street signs? Which groups of people are excluded from the discourse? (cf. *ibid.*).

Street names have always had far more than a mere orientational function. They reflect the time period during which they were created. In recent years, they have increasingly become the focus of critical debates in urban spaces. One result of this increasing awareness is, for example, a catalogue with eleven criteria developed by the *Munich City Archive* with the goal to analyze and critically reflect in depth on Munich street names (cf. Stadtarchiv München 2021, p. 4). Currently, there are 45 street names which are classified in the category "increased need for discussion" (*ibid.*, p. 3). This means that the person on such a street sign is classified as very critical because "their actions could be in blatant contradiction to fundamental and supra-temporal humanitarian and democratic basic values" (*ibid.*). A wide range of information on street names in Munich can be found on the pages [Stadtgeschichte München](#), [mapping postcolonial](#) or the homepage of the [City of Munich](#).

”

*“In my opinion, the education of the future should enable holistic learning experiences. Students should experience, feel, exchange, reflect and thereby learn for themselves. In this sense, City Walks are a very suitable method for teaching and addressing a wide range of interdisciplinary topics, such as economy, social coexistence, politics, global interrelationships, and much more.”*

Georgina Phillips, Orte des Wandels Munich

“

*“With City Walks you can engage external partners of all kinds, perhaps even sometimes more easily than in school/or class itself.”*

Isabelle Frielinghaus, student at LMU Munich

“

*“Through the City Walks I was able to get to know a new method of learning and addressing topics, for which I am very grateful. I consider the City Walks to be a good opportunity to learn actively and explore topics intensively. Especially the joint creation of such a workshop is something I would like to remember. Creating opening spaces for all participants and being open to developments during the workshop. I also find the idea of intentionally irritating and reinterpreting urban spaces exciting, for example through performances or unusual walking.”*

Hannah Kreuzinger, student at LMU Munich

“

*“It's great to incorporate even more interactive methods and small actions into the City Walks. Such as drawing on the ground with chalk to point out a specific issue or distribute seed bombs during the City Walk. This way, participants get directly involved and experience the feeling of being able to make a difference in their environment.”*

Lea Wiser, Green City e.V. Munich

“

*“The method generates exciting and individual experiences, that are applicable to everyone in the room.”*

Eléonore Otto, student at LMU Munich

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# Criticizing street names

## On Ludwig-Thoma-Straße in Munich

*Isabelle Frielinghaus, Maximilian Holm, Katrin Geneuss*

Ludwig Thoma was a 19th century Bavarian writer who is still held in high esteem for his works (e.g. the *Lausbubengeschichten* (1905)). Throughout Bavaria, many streets have been named after him because of his importance to Bavarian culture. However, it is little known that Ludwig Thoma also produced antisemitic and racist statements and writings (cf. Egger). For this reason, Ludwig-Thoma-Straße in Munich, which was named after him in 1947,

also falls into the category of “increased need for discussion” (cf. Stadtarchiv München 2021, p. 4) and there are efforts to rename it. Instead of the name Ludwig Thoma, renaming the street could create space for up to this point *un-heard voices*.

For the City Walk we suggest spreading the stations alongside the entire Ludwig-Thoma-Straße.

## Arriving at the station: Ludwig-Thoma-Straße



**Figure 3:** Street sign of the Ludwig-Thoma-Straße in Munich

### **Brainstorming:**

The students think about who Ludwig Thoma was and what they associate with him. (Tip: Possibly Ludwig Thoma is no longer too familiar to many students. Teachers should then provide the appropriate materials or information.)

### **Reading aloud an excerpt of the author's work:**

To get to know the author's work and to understand its significance for Bavarian cultural memory, which has been devoted to him so far, the students read for example the *Lausbubengeschichten*.

## Continue walking to another location on the Ludwig-Thoma-Straße

It is important to take a differentiated look at Ludwig Thoma's ambivalent personality. During his lifetime he was known for his open anti-semitic attitude and at the same time he had a Jewish lover. This contrast is examined in more detail using group work and texts written by Ludwig Thoma.

### Group 1:

Reading an excerpt from an antisemitic pamphlet by Ludwig Thoma in the *Miesbacher Anzeiger*

### Group 2:

Reading an excerpt from the correspondence between Ludwig Thoma and his Jewish lover Maida von Liebermann

While walking to the next part of the street, students should discuss the following questions in pairs: Can one separate the "private" person Ludwig Thoma from his works as an author? Why did Ludwig Thoma come under criticism so late?

There is a small green area at the end of Ludwig-Thoma-Straße. Here the focus shifts from Ludwig Thoma towards *un-heard voices* in the discourse, for example writers whose writings were [banned or burned during the NS-regime](#). Students collect ideas for renaming the street and gain awareness that street names are constructed and can therefore be changed.

Afterwards students collect suggestions for writers to whom the street could be dedicated to instead. They write these with chalk on the street, justify and discuss whether their suggested person is better suited for the street name than Ludwig Thoma.

The students' suggestions can also be sent to the district administration department in Munich because citizens can actively submit suggestions for new street names. In this way, the students practice to politically participate at the local level.



Figure 4: View of Ludwig-Thoma-Straße

Other ideas for City Walk stations with the topic of artists would be: Elly-Ney-Weg, Emil-Nolde-Straße, Richard-Wagner-Straße or Richard-Strauss-Straße. A longer [list of the 45 streets with an increased need for discussion](#) can be found on the Website of the City of Munich.

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# Un-Read Stories

## Postcolonialism and street names

Hannah Kreuzinger, Eléonore Otto

During the *Black Lives Matter* movement public attention worldwide was brought to decolonizing public spaces. Protesters in the United States and Great Britain toppled statues and monuments of racist people or painted over them. In Germany, too, there is a growing awareness to deal adequately with German colonial history. It is, however, problematic that the stories of people who colonized are usually more visible than those who were colonized and oppressed. A critical debate and reflection can contribute to bring the long overdue attention to *un-read historie(s)* of those people who were oppressed and colonized.



**Figure 6:** *crossed out street sign at Kolumbusstraße in Munich*

Among other places, Kolumbusplatz in Munich is a good place for such a discussion. Efforts to rename Kolumbusplatz have been underway since the 1990s but have so far not been successful. The following pages present impulses



**Figure 5:** *Bus stop at the Kolumbusplatz in Munich*

and examples on how to practice postcolonial criticism with students and how to initiate reflection processes.

On the way to Kolumbusplatz, students associate in pairs who Columbus was. At Kolumbusplatz, these results are collected and discussed in the group.

The following method, a role play, requires more space, so it is suggested to carry it out on one of the green areas (Figure 7) at Kolumbusplatz. The students read parts of Christopher Columbus' ship diary and act out the descriptions in small groups. Drawings showing the conquest can also be used as impulses and inspiration for the role play (cf. Strong et al. 1992).

In the next step, another perspective is examined, namely the one of the colonized people who lived in America before Columbus arrived and whose stories are hardly known. Since there are hardly any sources from witnesses (cf. Janik 1992, p. 132), it makes sense to listen to the voices of the descendants and try to reconstruct history to gain a better understanding of postcolonial structures nowadays. For this, the students read about

how colonialism still affects the Caribbean today (cf. Keppeler 2021), discuss their findings and compare them with Columbus' view.

After this historical insight, there is a change of location to the playground (Figure 8). There, the students discuss how streets are named, which criteria there might be and how these names reflect on our society. Afterwards, the students collect ideas for renaming Kolumbusplatz in small groups.

These results are then discussed using the method "Inside-Outside Circle" (Figure 9) (cf. bpb 2012). For this, the teacher asks impulse questions about the group work. The group then chooses their favorite new name. The students then put their proposal on sticky notes with a short explanation underneath the street signs on Kolumbusplatz or write their idea with chalk on the ground.



Figure 8: Children's playground at Kolumbusplatz in Munich

At the end, there is a discussion about whether the students want to become active in renaming the street and, if so, in what form this is possible. It is important to show students how they can actively use their voice and help shape their city. For example, they could write a letter to the district administration department and share their suggestion for a new name because society can also submit suggestions for new street names.



Figure 7: Green area at Kolumbusplatz in Munich

You can find more streets and places for post-colonial criticism in Munich on [Mapping Post-colonial](#). The archive and education project makes colonial traces, places, and narratives in Munich visible and tries to shift the focus towards *un-heard stories* and *un-seen places*. Through different ways of looking at issues, through individual approaches and different perspectives, the project allows a closer look at (post)colonialism in Munich. The often-times unnoticed parts of history are brought into the focus of discourse.

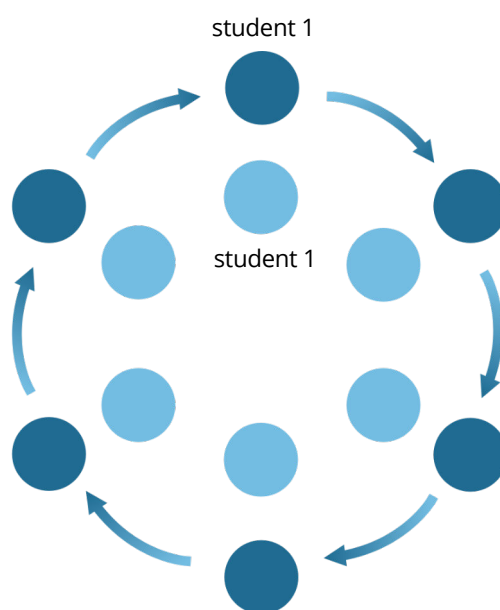
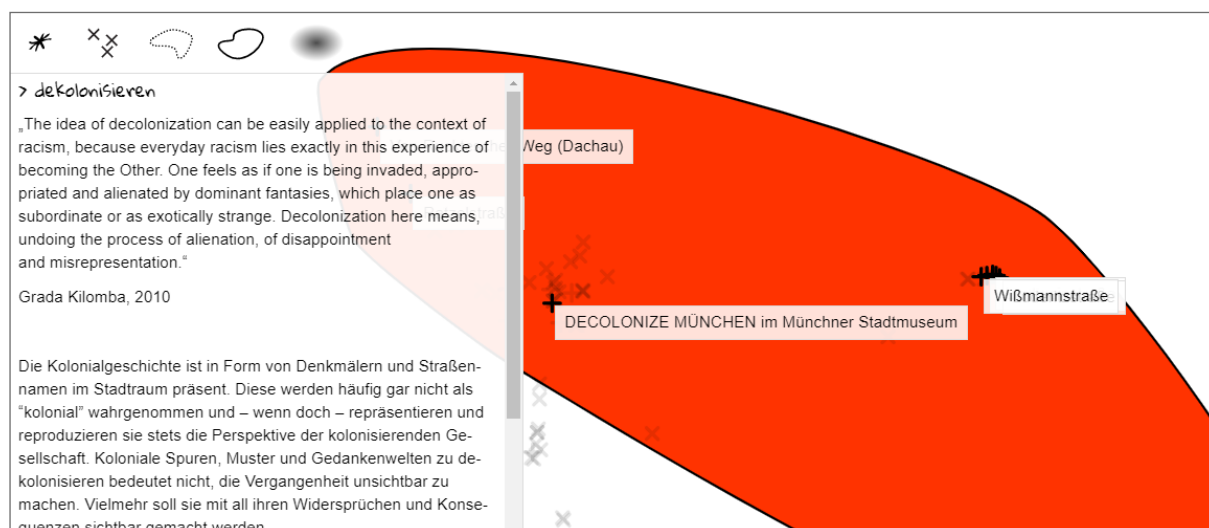


Figure 9: Method "Inside-Outside-Circle" (own representation)

On the website (Figure 10), the colonial traces (represented by an X) of the past in Munich, that are still visible today can be followed. These traces are not independent of each other and need to be considered in context. These connections can be linked through narratives which are marked on the maps with dashed outlines.

Under the heading there is the category “layers” (represented in orange) which enables another way of looking at (post-)colonialism. Topics such as racism, decolonization, migration, etc. are the starting point for the research and are later linked back to the topic colonialism.



**Figure 10:** An excerpt from the Mapping Postcolonial website on decolonization (courtesy of Philip Zölls, Mapping Postcolonial)

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# “Club of Discoverers – experiencing literature outdoors”

## Literary Walks for students

*Katrin Geneuss*

The students of the German-didactic research colloquium at the University of Siegen “*Literary Walks for Primary School Students*”, taught by Dr. Katrin Geneuss, were invited to take part in the workshops of the German-Georgian City Walks project in the winter semester of 2021/22. One student describes the workshop as follows: “From the exchange and reflections [...] I got a first and more precise picture of a City Walk. This [...] certainly served [...] as a basis for my own planning.” It quickly became clear to all students that the goals of City Walks and *Literary Walks* are: to experience, to experience together, and actively interact with the surroundings. Conversely, it became clear to the participants of the City Walks workshops, that every City Walk can always be designed entirely or in parts with the help of literary texts. The topics of the City Walks workshops (see above) are also central themes of literature. By opening up the schools to the outside world, the students’ living environment is also emerging into the context of schools. *Literary Walks*, which integrate the method of the City Walks, can be seen as a kind of *un-dreamed utopia* in which education is rethought. Meaning the city provides new impulses for learning and opens new perspectives for the students.

The first step in the seminar was to methodically develop *Literary Walks*. They can be seen as a participatory teaching-learning arrangement and theoretical impulses from the field of outdoor education and scenic performances can be used.

The students then developed an example of a *Literary Walk* based on a text or children’s book of their choice. This first draft went through several feedback loops including peer-to-peer feedback and feedback from the lecturer. In the spirit of inquiry based learning, the students carried out their independently developed *Literary Walks*, in libraries, schools, lunch centers or scout groups, with a group of children and evaluated them. After conducting, the seminar participants discussed their experiences in class and revised the walks for the last time.

The guiding principle for creating a *Literary Walk* is the premise that a literary work or certain aspects of it should be actively experienced. By actively experiencing the walk and interacting with each other, the children develop ideas about the plot and characters, adopt their perspective and learn to deal consciously with fiction. In addition, by involving the environment, this holistic experience increases the children’s perception. One participant in the colloquium describes how this is related to literary learning: “Getting to know books in a different environment, in the best case in the environment in which they are set (e.g., the forest), is a great advantage of a *Literary Walk*.”

# City Walk in Kutaisi

## Discovering Jewish and Catholic roots

*Nana Kupreishvili and Ana Shalikiani*

The main goal of this City Walk is to raise teachers' awareness regarding the multicultural nature of the city Kutaisi by reviving Jewish and Catholic community traces.

Within the method of the City Walks, information was gathered about statues, churches and

other locations, proving Catholic and Jewish traces. Based on this information the route and timeframe of the City Walk was defined.

The target group of this City Walk are pupils from year 8 to 10.

### **Station 1**

*Kutaisi, St. Nino Str. #17,  
Meliton Balanchvadze,  
National Theatre of  
Opera and Ballet of  
Kutaisi, Memorial statue  
of Zakaria Palisashvili.*

Innovator, composer, teacher, folklorist, and public figure – Zakaria Palisashvili was born in Kutaisi, in the family of the Catholic sacristan Petre Palisashvili (cf. Taktakishvili et al. 2021). He travelled all around Georgia to collect more than 300 folk pieces. Zakaria played a big part in developing Georgian classical music. He created Georgian style classical works like: *Abesalom and Eteri* and *Daisi*. Zakaria's name is connected to the professionalization of music including systemizing and developing musical work and musical education. Due to his importance to Georgian culture, the Tbilisi opera, and ballet academic theatre, many streets, and musical schools were named after him. In addition, the Palisashvili Prize has been awarded to him for outstanding contributions to the development of music. Interesting to know: Palisashvili's picture was depicted on a 2 GEL national currency banknote, which is currently out of circulation.

### **Station 2**

*Kutaisi,  
Felix Varlamishvisi Str. #25*

According to Zakaria, musical instruments were not played in his parents' home. Nevertheless, both Zekaria and his siblings were musically gifted. The reason for this might have been the influence of the Catholic Church and the organ. The Paliashvilis were Catholics and their children sang in the church from early on. Zakaria also sang and wrote about himself that he had the clear soprano until the age of 18 (cf. Topuria 2021).

The Paliashvili family lived in the French Quarter near the Church of the Annunciation which was considered a Catholic church until 1989 and where service was conducted in a Catholic manner. It was in this particular church where little Zakaria was immersed in the Catholic musical instruments and choral art.



### Station 3

*Kutaisi,  
Felix Varlamishvili Str. #7,  
The Annunciation Church*

Western European Catholics settled in Kutaisi in the 17th century. Later, King Solomon II deported Georgian Catholic merchants from Akhaltsikhe. In 1819, the construction of a stone church on this site at Kutaisi began. The construction which had been suspended for a while was resumed in 1846 at the initiative of the leader Don Anton Glakhashvili. In 1856, the construction once again continued with Kutaisi's regional architect Vasiliev. The church was consecrated in 1862 in the name of the Saint Virgin Mary. After 1939, the building was used as a warehouse and later as a concert hall.

This church is unique by its architecture in Kutaisi, both in its exterior and interior. The temple's domed building was built on two pillars that distinguishes it from Orthodox temples, as does the temple's inner gallery where visitors can see a small gallery adorned with plaster statues of four trumpeted angels (cf. Liparishvili 2020). In 1989, at the request of the Georgian Patriarchate the church was transferred to them. This decision was followed by a legal dispute although today the church retains the status of an Orthodox monument.

### Station 4

*Boris Gaponov,  
Kutaisi,  
Boris Gaponovo Str.*

Boris Gaponov is the author of the Hebrew translation of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin* (Georgian Poem, XII Century). Among other translations of this poem, the Hebrew version is the most artistic translation, with refined rhythm and translated very close to the original. This translated version is called *Tiger Conqueror* and in the memoirs of his contemporaries Gaponov is referred to by this very name. Boris Gaponov lived in rather difficult economic conditions and worked on translations. His family found him in Kutaisi in the 1940s after World War II. Boris graduated from Ninth School with honors and then received his higher education in Moscow. Gaponov learned Hebrew in connection with his Rabbi grandfather and the Jewish community. Gaponov left for Israel in the late 1960s, quite young and already very ill. The news of his death spread very quickly in 1972 (cf. Tkeshelashvili 2019).

### Station 5

Kutaisi,  
Boris Gaponov Str. #10,  
Synagogue

The history of Jews in Georgia dates back centuries. The first official information about their settlement in Kutaisi is reported in 1644. The Jewish quarter is still in the central part of the city and there are three synagogues in this area. The largest synagogue in Kutaisi and the second largest in Georgia was built in 1886. The second one, which dates back to 1912, is surrounded by additional buildings where Hebrew was taught and various Jewish rituals were performed.

There was a bakery where *Matsa* (Passover bread) was baked. The Jews of Kutaisi made a great contribution to the development of the city. During the repatriation of Soviet Jews to Israel in the 1960s a large part of the local community left the city. In 2014, a statue of Boris Gaponov, the Hebrew translator of *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*, was erected at the entrance of the main synagogue (cf. Georgian Travel Guide 2022).

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# City Walk in Tbilisi

## Protest and demonstration as a form of political participation

*Kristine Gongadze, Irina Jvarsheishvili, Sophia Bachilava*

In modern democracies the law provides several mechanisms for citizens to make decisions and engage in political processes. Citizens can use protests and demonstrations to assert their position and put pressure on the state. Unfortunately, the Georgian society has witnessed many harmful situations related to this form of participation in the past. This City Walk draws attention to important events that have led to the citizens' high interest in the recent history of Georgia in order to democratize the

country and engage in political processes through demonstrations. The topic of the City Walk targets the age group 15 to 17 years.

This City Walk combines six locations and it is not surprising that it covers the central part of Tbilisi, the capital of Georgia. During the walk, in addition to the oral delivery and exchange of information, participants can also look at photos or watch videos related to the topic.

### **Station 1**

*Dedaena Park*

The first station is Dedaena Park, home to the so-called mother-tongue monument erected by Elguja Amashukeli. It should remind visitors of the growing protest of citizens against the decision to abolish the state language status for the Georgian language in 1978 and the victory over the Soviet government.

### **Station 2**

*close to Dedaena Park,  
near the Kashweti  
Church*

The second station is not far from Dedaena Park, near the Kashweti Church. It is well known that this place is closely connected to the events of April 9, 1989 when peaceful demonstrators were mercilessly beaten by the armed forces of the Soviet government. Kashweti Church was the place where the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia asked the demonstrators to enter and offer prayers a few minutes before the raid. However, the protesters were not afraid of the impending danger and chose to continue the demonstration. The Soviet army turned out to be ruthless and special airborne units surrounded the protesters. They used shovels and tear gas to disperse peaceful protesters. 21 of them were killed, thousands were injured and poisoned during the brutal retaliation. Because of this, April 9 is considered to be one of the most tragic but at the same time most important dates in recent Georgian history.

**Station 3**  
*area of the Parliament of Georgia*

The third station is the nearby area of the Parliament of Georgia. This is where most of the manifestations have taken place. Therefore, a number of examples can be used for a City Walk. For this City Walk, two of them were selected: the 2003 Rose Revolution, which is an important historical event from the recent past of Georgia and a demonstration of solidarity in 2018 with workers who died due to a lack of safety regulations at work. Safety helmets were placed in front of the parliament to draw attention to the problem.

**Station 4**  
*Government Chancellery*

The fourth station is the Government Chancellery. This is where the citizens of Georgia held a concert manifestation in 2016 to protest against the government's negotiations with the Russian company Gazprom.

**Station 5**  
*Freedom Square*

At the fifth station of the City Walk – Freedom Square – the large-scale action *Peace is more than war* was held in 2018, during which citizens protested against the seizure of Georgian territories by Russia. Also, the body of Archil Tatumashvili, a Georgian citizen killed by the occupation regime was handed over.

**Station 6**  
*Pushkin Square*

The sixth and the last station of the City Walk is Pushkin Square near Freedom Square. This is one of the places where LGBTQ+ activists held a manifestation against invisibility, for which dozens of pairs of shoes were placed on the square to remind the public of their existence. Pushkin Square is also the place to end and discuss the City Walk.

This walk is about 2 to 3 hours long, however, if desired and necessary, it is possible to adapt its route or add further stations focusing on other issues.

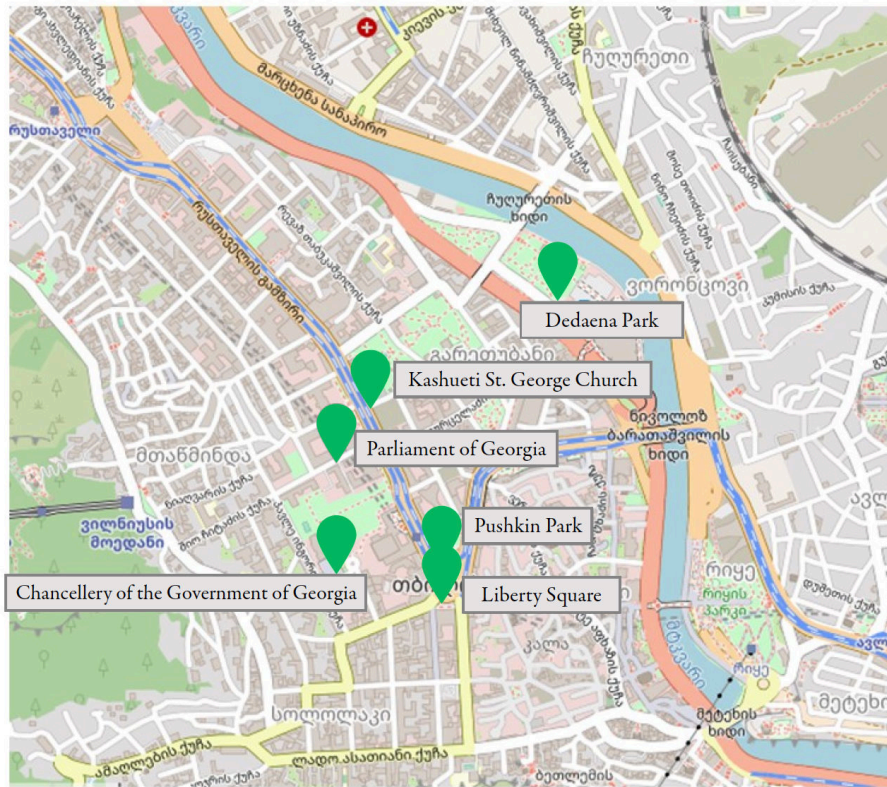


Figure 11: Stations of the City Walk through Tbilisi (adapted from OpenStreetMap, open source)