



## **Semantic Function of Spatial Experiences and Memories in The Southern Elephant by Archil Kikodze and Zinka Adamiani by Ana Kordzaia-Samadashvili**

Salome Pataridze

Assistant-Professor, Ilia State University, Georgia

[salome.pataridze@iliauni.edu.ge](mailto:salome.pataridze@iliauni.edu.ge)

<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-1980-2131>

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### Abstract

Urban space is a specific public space that society creates and lives in. Mental states and material conditions are spatially regrouped in different historical phases and rewritten each time. The topic of this research is to determine the semantic influence of spatial experiences and memories on the construction of narrative identity. Urban novels by two Georgian authors – The Southern Elephant by Archil Kikodze and Zinka Adamiani by Ana Samadashvili-Kordzaia – were selected as research objects. These primary sources were analysed within the following methodological framework: 1. the space semantics of Juri Lotman, 2. Pierre Nora's sites of memory, and 3. Aleida Assmann's forms of forgetting. Using these theoretical approaches, it was possible to determine the role of spatial concepts in the construction of narrative identity, and the impact of changes in historical, social, economic, cultural, and worldview conditions on narrative identities constructed in the text.

**Keywords:** Spatial experiences, memories, forgetting, Tbilisi, les lieux de mémoire

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### Introduction

The notion of the place implies that each object, person, or event is located in a specific space for a certain period. Although, in the modern era, preference was given to the concept of time, postmodern culture is focused on the space. Since personal experiences are related to specific places (Walter Benjamin), each place forms knowledge related to it (place-based knowledge). In this knowledge, place and personal stories intersect. In this sense, such stories acquire historical and topographical indices and turn into places about which stories are told. Urban space is a specific city space created by society and where society lives. In urban fiction, the importance of the city is emphasized, which is reflected in the fact that the structure and style of the novel is determined by the city itself – if the action in the text takes place in a big city, characters are also represented in the city environment.

This study deals with the semantic function and the role of urban spatial experiences and memories in the construction of narrative identity based on the urban novels of two Georgian authors – *Zinka Adamiani* by Ana Kordzaia-Samadashvili and *The Southern Elephant* by Archil Kikodze. These primary sources are analysed within the following methodological framework. One, the space semantics of Juri Lotman. For Juri Lotman, spatial order is a central organizing element of the structure of a literary text. According to Lotman, the semantic field is represented in the spatial structure of the narrated world, which is divided into three opposing layers: topologic, topographic, and semantic. Two, Pierre Nora's sites of memory in which images of memory can include geographical locations, buildings, monuments, works of art, historical persons, symbolic actions, and philosophical and scientific texts. Sites of memory are signs where some event is executed. Nora distinguishes three dimensions of sites of memory: 1) the material dimension, 2) the functional dimension, and 3) the symbolic dimension. Three, Aleida Assmann's forms of forgetting in which memory is always contracted as it relates to the perspectives and experiences of an individual or group. In order to place something in any memory, a great deal of effort is required and it is a valuable process since memory creates a community. However, Assmann points out that this process is impossible without forgetting. Both remembering and forgetting are human characteristics and neither of them are bad or good, their function is more to subdue life.

## **Urban space**

Urban space refers to the city space itself combining physical and housing areas for society. The way of life and organization of a society in its daily activities, and the representation of its self-image, produce a characteristically designed space. The urban space is thus the interface between a city and society. It is a space that is physically material, abstractly social, concretely social, and subjectively experienced. The city is an extraordinary complex structure, a palimpsest on which mental attitudes and material conditions of different historical periods are especially described and overwritten.

The starting point of conceiving space as "urban" is the end of the 19th century when there was a clear paradigm shift, which was reflected in how aspects of the city were regarded. Enormous technical progress led to structural social changes manifested in city life and phenomena. In particular, big city life was reflected in the architecture and social sciences (Günzel, 2010, p. 266).

Urbanity describes the special way people live together in contrast to in the countryside. Cities are characterized by the prevailing physical and interactive density. This leads to the distinction of socially organized life and, thus, to the formation of public and private spaces in the city, which differs from the community-based life of the countryside. Everyday life in the city shows a tendency to polarization into interdependent public or private spaces. The public sphere shows an "incomplete integration", while the private sphere reflects a "complete integration", thus revealing an entire person. The communal life in a village or

family is regulated by shared norms, goals, and values, while the social life of a city is governed by anonymous laws.

The excess of multifaceted impressions of the city produces a certain indifference, making it impossible to pay indiscriminate attention to every detail leading to the rationalization of relationships (Günzel, 2010, p. 267). The European city is seen as a melting pot of different cultures (Georg Simmel) where the local and the foreign influence each other positively. According to Simmel, interpersonal interactions in a big city require stylization, that is, a clear, calculable, acceptable behaviour based on general rules with a clear sign language, which, on the one hand, forces individualization and, on the other hand, enables the integration of the foreign. These sociological and psychological components, as well as the division of labour and market differentiation characteristics of a big city, reinforce emancipation from narrow social controls, thus creating a specific form of urban freedom (individualization) for a person.

There are two forms of living together in the city, the distanced social world and the living environment of different social groups with their internal structure. The stronger the polarity and interrelationship between the private and public, the more “urban” the city (Günzel, 2010, pp. 267–268). The relation of the individual to society, the organization of the society, and the interaction between the private, collective, and public spheres are the social components that help determine a spatial system. In architecture, this is reflected in defining the boundaries among the private, collective, and public areas. Urban space has been characterized with a coherent city and its specific texture, an equally developed centre, and clear borders.

### **Sites of memory (les lieux de mémoire)**

The collective memory of Maurice Halbwachs, who investigated the social and collective framing of memory, paved the way for modern research into memory in France. In the introduction of his work *Les lieux de mémoire*, Pierre Nora noted Halbwachs’ contribution to the study of collective memory. Halbwachs was interested in how social institutions and context activated certain memories, encouraging certain recollections while discouraging others, while Nora examined how certain sites, through their ability to provoke emotional affect, came to embody and instil certain memories and views of the nation (Legg, 2004, p. 482). In contrast to Halbwachs, who came from the existence of collective memory, Pierre Nora claimed that the interest in memory is due to fact that the memory had withered away in modern society:

Our interest in lieux de Memoire where memory crystallizes and secretes itself has occurred at a particular historical moment, a turning point where consciousness of a break with the past is bound up with the sense that memory has been torn—but torn in such a way as to pose the problem of the embodiment of memory in certain sites where a sense of historical continuity persists. There are lieux de memoire, sites of memory,

because there are no longer milieux de memoire, real environments of memory (Nora, 1989, p. 7).

Since memory no longer exists, the site of memory should be considered as the object of observation, claimed the researcher. Whereas history is mainly concentrated on events, memory is focused on sites. Sites of memory belong to the realms of both history and memory and represent the signs that refer to themselves. Sites of memory are twofold because, on the one hand, they construct identity and, on the other hand, they are open to an infinite number of meanings, which is to account for the cyclical nature of symbolic signs that not only point to their original and initial essence but can also become carriers of new meanings. That is why Nora compared sites of memory with “Russian nesting dolls (matryoshkas)” who live by the ability of metamorphosis, with a continuous eruption of meanings (Behraves, 2006, p. 95).

Sites of memory can include geographical locations, historical persons, buildings, monuments, and ideological and symbolic places. Therefore, three dimensions of sites of memory can be distinguished:

1. Material dimension – includes paintings and school textbooks, as well as past events.
2. Functional dimension – such objectification must fulfil a particular function in society, for example, a history textbook.
3. Symbolic dimension – in this case, actions become rituals or places shrouded with symbolic aura (Nora, 1989, pp. 18–19).

Thus, any cultural phenomenon – whether material, social, or mental – that is consciously or unconsciously brought to the collective layer in connection with the past or national identity, can be marked as a site of memory. According to the author, national memory could create a collective identity during the Third Republic in the 19th century. However, the situation has changed in modern society, since in the 20th century society found itself in a transitional stage where the connection was lost with the living past that forms group and national identity. In this case, the sites of memory act as a kind of artificial substitute for the lost collective memory. The gap between the past and present is so great that the sites of memory can no longer give rise to adequate feelings in the viewer. Therefore, sites of memory are signs that not only remind people of events from the past of the country (France), but also reveal the loss of real memory (Erll, 2011, pp. 26–27).

### **Semantic Function of Spatial Experiences and Memories in *The Southern Elephant* and *Zinka Adamiani***

*Zinka Adamiani* by Ana Kordzaia Samadashvili opens with the story of Aleksis Adamiani. The period coincides with the Soviet era when Stalin published a new official history of the Communist Party in 1938, marking the end of a political purge, which had killed an entire generation of Soviet intellectuals. Thus, Aleksis Adamiani, who tries to escape

from an orphanage where caregivers abuse children to “eliminate deviation” in them, forgets his painful past and renames himself. This act reveals his urge to forget his traumatic past and build a new present, although he knows well that he must not forget the lame and alcoholic street sweeper who sheltered him, gave him an accordion and, thus, gave him life. In *Forms of Forgetting* [*Die Formen des Vergessens*], Aleida Assmann uses an ancient Egyptian expression that states, “A man is alive until his name is pronounced” and distinguishes seven forms of forgetting. The sixth and seventh forms of forgetting – constructive (konstruktives) and therapeutic (therapeutisches) forgetfulness – are uniquely positive and refer to forgetting the traumatic past (Assmann, 2018, pp. 67–68). Understanding is essential to overcome trauma. As already mentioned, therapeutic forgetting carries a positive connotation for Aleida Assmann. For her, in therapeutic forgetting, the function of remembering is to acknowledge and repent the past and, thus, overcome its burden. According to Aleida Assmann, therapeutic forgetting takes place in two phases: the first phase is the recollection when the past is recycled, resulting in the recognition and recycling of the past, while the second phase is forgetting, which means defusing, overcoming, and distancing from the past in terms of social peace to help create a new beginning (Assmann, 2018, p. 64). Thus, Aleksi Adamiani consciously forgets his name and tries to start a new life under a new name.

Aleks, who is homeless, meets the Georgians, Data and Kotiko, and moves to their hometown of Tbilisi, namely in “so-called damned revolutionary bandit square, number 1” (Kordzaia-Samadashvili, 2018, p. 23). This is a so-called “Italian” courtyard, where residents know everything about one other. Aleks Adamiani, who according to one of the neighbours, Lekvishvili, is a “bastard stranger” (p. 38), becomes “one of us”, a real neighbour, who is forgiven even for “distorting” the language of Rustaveli,<sup>1</sup> thus making Tbilisi an urban space where the local and foreign positively influence each other. Through this influence, the “stranger” becomes an integral, organic part of the space, “our stranger”.

This is proven by the fireplace in Aleks Adamiani’s flat, which is repeated throughout the text and is associated with cosiness and a native hearth. Similar to Aleks, Kotiko, once a partisan, and Data, who took part in the battle at Kerchi, try to forget the traumatic past, replace factual memories with fiction, and try to continue living life by forgetting the negative past. Thus, they manage to become “handsome cripples” creating such a space in the Italian courtyard, which has its internal structure with its own linguistic and moral paradigm. The space of the Tbilisi yard, which is characterized by bi- and multi-lingualism, also becomes a means of escaping from the Soviet reality in the text – Aleks’s heart sinks at seeing how a devoted neighbour, Tamriko, opens Soviet red flags in the yard when Zinka, Aleks’s granddaughter has chickenpox.

According to Estonian literary critic Yuri Lotman, for a schema consisting of addresser, addressee, and the channel linking them to become a working system, it has to be “immersed” in semiotic space and all the participants in the communicative act must be

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<sup>1</sup> Shota Rustaveli, a great Georgian poet and thinker of the 12th century, author of a masterpiece in world literature *The Knight in the Panther’s Skin*.

familiar with semiosis. Thus, semiotic experience precedes the semiotic act. A language, which is immersed in semiotic space, becomes functional only through the relation with the space (Lotman, 1990, pp. 123–124). In the novel, so-called “cultural space” is created in the Italian courtyard in Tbilisi, which is rich in oxymorons: “handsome cripples”, “our stranger”, “our outlander”. It reflects the events in Tbilisi, because the social, religious, political, and moral models of this world, with the help of which man defines the life around him at different stages of his spiritual life, is always manifested in spatial features.

When the Singers – a German family – sell their apartment in the Italian courtyard and return to their country, the disintegration of the native, familiar space begins. The residents of the courtyard realize that the stranger (чужой) has invaded their space, who creates a threat, and plans to dismantle the old hearth and build a new one. With the departure of the Singers, another change is taking place in the courtyard, which is related to the 1991–1992 armed conflict between President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and members of the opposition, which caused great material and moral damage to Tbilisi. In parallel with this historical event, a broken “Moskvich” car standing on the bricks in the courtyard symbolizes a transitional period, saying farewell to the Soviet Union and the transition into a new, fragile present. The residents who witnessed April 9, 1991<sup>2</sup> are especially frightened of a foreign woman who is interested in buying flats in the courtyard. Aleksi Adamiani exclaims, “Goodbye, beloved city” (p. 71), which makes it clear that the disappearance of identity markers has led to identity disruption.

The war in Abkhazia<sup>3</sup> turned out to be devastating for the country. This is shown in the text where the courtyard is empty of men, the barber Gaioza is left with old and bald men, and the house of Zinka and Aleksi, which was a symbol of cosiness and protection, is locked to protect it from the frequent robberies in the city. A once cheerful yard is destroyed, and children are no longer born. Due to this situation, the urge to move to a better space is described in the novel, echoed by the epigraph of the subtitle *I want to be in Nice*.<sup>4</sup> Although it is difficult for Zinka to leave the space that constitutes her grandfather’s (Aleksi Adamiani) and her identity, she realizes that she is losing her home and sings the Nina Simone song, “Ain’t got no home, ain’t got no shoes; Ain’t got no money, ain’t got no class...”

Particularly sensitive in the text is the notion of home, which is associated with socio-cultural security and family cosiness. As already mentioned, the city space is characterized by the division of space into public and private spheres, although for Zinka the public space existed only with Grandpa Aleksi, who, together with the house, is an integral part of Zinka’s identity. After losing her grandfather, the second threat to her identity is the possibility of losing (selling) her house, so she seeks new support and a new home with her lover Abo, who lives in another part of the city, and who also has a tiled fireplace with the figure of an archangel in his house. Having discovered that she does not belong to the other side of the

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<sup>2</sup> Tragic events of April 9, 1989 in Tbilisi, when a peaceful anti-Soviet demonstration demanding independence from the Soviet Union, was violently dispersed by the Russian Army.

<sup>3</sup> War in 1992–1993 between Georgian Government Forces and separatist ethnic Abkhazians lasted 13 months.

<sup>4</sup> From the novel *Paliashvili Street Dogs* by Aka Morchiladze.

city and the new century any longer (2000), she retells the outline of Kotiko's imaginary world in Abo's house. In the creation of the ideal/imaginary city, the areas of greatest importance for semioticization processes are the boundaries of the semiosphere. The notion of boundary is an ambivalent one – it both separates and unites (Lotman, 1990, pp. 136–137). Similarly, Zinka Adamiani standing at the river Mtkvari, which divides the city into two parts, distances herself from the new, changed Tbilisi, to which she no longer belongs, because her identity, memorial narratives, and objects have become sites of memory – cultural and historical artefacts displayed on Dry Bridge, which evoke memories in some visitors, and are exotic for others. Therefore, before going to Abo, Zinka plays her accordion – the symbolic representation of the last site of memory surviving in her. Playing it and singing is a ritual that unleashes memories defining her identity and personal stories.

The generating power of the imaginary palace in Kotiko's story (retold by Zinka at the end) is the mother (pre-oedipal, precultural). There is a ball in this palace and the air is filled with the music of Handel's "Saramanda". This space becomes her "own" space for Zinka, the description of which coincides with that of the iconic space (Lotman). It is an anti-space and Zinka crosses the border to enter it. The anti-hero Zinka (Zinka speaks anti-language, curses, and spits) finds herself with infernal forces and humans – before the death of Aleksi Adamiani, Melek Tavus crosses the sky, and Kotiko finds a home in the sea with mermaids, whales, and stars of southern seas.

In *The Southern Elephant* by Archil Kikodze, the narrator begins to walk the streets of Tbilisi, recalling the stories of countryside and city and the past when his best friend, Tazo, asks him to let him stay in his apartment alone for a few hours so that he can meet a woman. Tazo is an inseparable part of the life of the narrator, "I", despite the fact that they have hardly met each other in recent years. Having met again after many years, Tazo's silence provokes memories in the narrator. Pierre Nora also points out that one of the aspects of the material dimension of the site of memory is the minute silence because it emphasizes the symbolic aspect. It is a material crack in temporal unity and serves to periodically awaken the memory (Nora, 1989, p. 18). Consequently, Tazo's silence is a symbolic act forcing the narrator to analyse the events and experiences related to the space of Tbilisi. That is why, as the narrator walks the streets of the city, images from the past emerge in his mind, explaining his spatial isolation in the present.

Unlike the text of Anna Kordzaia-Samadashvili, *The Southern Elephant* describes distanced forms of coexistence; characters try to distance themselves from each other as well as from public spaces of the city due to specific historical and social changes reflecting on the existence of its inhabitants. Against the background of political and historical changes, the characters of the novel show nostalgic moods and complain that there is stagnation in Tbilisi. They have no plans, they move without orientation, just like the narrator, I, who walks from one street to another without any intention. This loss of meaning and a kind of nostalgia and nihilism are reflected in the daily life of the city dwellers – they have lost their personal integrity and inner faith.

By the 20th century, however, nostalgia had been demilitarised and de-medicalised, coming to refer to the incurably wistful modern condition. It can be considered as sadness without object. The yearned-for object only ever existed as narrative and, thus, is always absent. It is experienced as a haunting feeling of lack. The real essence of this lack (desire) is in fact the absence that is the very generating mechanism of desire (Legg, 2004, pp. 485–486). According to Nora, while before, the present was a reworked past, in the new, modern era it is more and more radically alienated from the past, becoming increasingly invisible, creating a need for conscious archiving and remembrance, which gives rise to nostalgic waves of memories (Nora, 1989, p. 16). In Kikodze's novel, the narrator's apartment maintains memories of the old city. The urban space reflects the Tbilisi micro space perceived by the narrator, which is full of nostalgic feelings. In particular, in the apartment, there are paintings of Tbilisi created by the famous artist Tengiz Mirzashvili (Chubchika), a poster of the film directed by the narrator, a photo of his mother at the site of archaeological excavations, and a photo of the narrator and Tazo as children taken against the background of the skeleton of a prehistoric elephant in the courtyard of the State Museum. Attached to the museum exhibit is the following inscription, "Archidiskodon Meridionalis – Southern elephant found in the Tariban Valley". The items displayed in the room reflect the narrator's nostalgic mood and his urge to consciously archive the past and to activate memory by exhibiting disturbing items.

According to Yuri Lotman, the evolution of culture is quite different from biological evolution. Biological evolution involves species dying out and natural selection. The researcher finds only living creatures contemporary to him. In the history of art, however, works passed down from remote cultural periods continue to play a part in cultural development as living factors (Lotman, 1990, p. 127). The photo taken with the southern elephant is the site of memory for the narrator, which, on the one hand, defines his identity and, on the other hand, acquires a new meaning – the Tariban field becomes a dream space for the self-determination and peace of mind of the narrator and Tazo. That is why he wants to buy the photo of the Tariban valley and reminds himself of the elephant. However, the cyclical significance of these memories is indicated by Tazo's remark, "I have been to the field of Tariban, on the business trip to insure crops ... it is an ordinary place ... nothing special" (Kikodze, 2016, p.11). For Tazo, the semantic perception of the Tariban valley is different from that of the narrator, who identifies himself together with his friend with the southern elephant, as if they were museum exhibits displayed in the Tbilisi space and are inert, static parts of the city. Tbilisi is portrayed as a "high-security prison" that evokes ambivalent feelings in the characters. They want to escape from it, but at the same time love it and cannot leave it, so this hesitation is characteristic of the characters throughout the novel and is often conveyed by conditional sentences, for example, "If I had stayed in Europe and not returned to Tbilisi, if I had made a film, if I had not let Neli go if I had saved a marginal boy", etc.

The end of the 20th century, Georgia was full of tension, contradictions, and dissension, which have not been expressed and analysed for generations. Similar to *Zinka Adamiani*, *The Southern Elephant* also describes a car parked in the yard, but here it is a symbol of a



new era, a BMW car that has become a local myth in the city, a product of civil unrest and a new moral paradigm in the streets of Tbilisi. It is the reflection of the rampage of “bandit authorities”; therefore, it is the site of memory of the civil war, which is being suppressed in modern Tbilisi.

Unlike the countryside, individuals confined to the city have no opportunity to integrate socially, which in turn complicates communication across generations and children’s rebellion remains incomprehensible for parents. Likewise, the message does not reach the addressee, uncle Rostom, who has not stepped out of the house since the Civil War. He listens to Chopin’s *nocturnes* in his home space and cannot understand his daughter’s anger. The narrator manages to have a frank conversation with his mother only a few minutes before her death. Tazo, who could not forgive himself the indifference to a marginal boy in the underground passage, now cannot protect his son from bullying because he knows nothing about it, even though his son posted a photo of his injured hand on Facebook. The impediment to establishing communication is insufficient recognition.

This is not some Bergman movie. Everything is much simpler and banal for us than in the crumpled masterpieces of the son of a Lutheran priest. Here, outraged Swedes fire honest accusations and confessions at each other ... they spare neither themselves nor their closest people (Kikodze, 2016, p. 25).

The residents of Tbilisi do not consciously understand the past and, consequently, they find it difficult to integrate into the present. This is illustrated by the thoughts and memories of the narrator walking in the streets of Tbilisi. At the beginning of the text, on seeing the Bagrationi monument, the narrator mentions that Tbilisiers never show that they notice any equestrian monument; that is, they (monuments) cannot evoke emotional affect in a viewer. The graves of public figures resting in the courtyard of Tbilisi State University do not arouse feelings in the narrator, and it becomes clear that the narrator’s generation is in transition and has little to do with the identity-forming past.

That is why, in 1994, the narrator and Tazo are indifferent to the material representation of the site of memory of the ruined Locomotive Stadium, where Alexandre Chivadze scored a goal against Liverpool at the Champions League on October 3, 1979. Remembering and reviving only the moments of victory at the “defeated” Locomotive stadium, which is now in ruins, means a fragmentary recollection of the past and shutting out of many defeats of the 20th century, resembling the repressive forgetting and, thus, impeding social reconciliation between groups. Repressive forgetting refers to a situation in which the wrongdoings of the past have not been historically analysed and victims of the violent system are deprived of the right to recall and retell stories (Assmann, 2018, pp. 49–50). Years ago, Tazo’s father attended this Champions League match, and he was amazed by the behaviour of Liverpool Football Club supporters after their team lost. They did not shy away from the loss but admitted it and supported their team, thus, motivating them to win in the future.

In Archil Kikodze’s novel, Tbilisi is represented as a dichotomous space in which there are Chekists – patriots, collaborators – rebel heroes, Zviadists – Putschists, boys who had

fought in Abkhazia, and businessmen who had made a fortune in Moscow. In this dichotomous space, it is difficult for people to find themselves. The metamorphosis of the restaurant “Tbilisi” and Kiacheli Street reflects the processes taking place in Tbilisi, in which the parents of the English teacher of the narrator were repressed and the person who had reported them occupied their flat. The mulberry tree planted in the yard by her father became the reminder of her lost parents for the English teacher. To describe evil, she uses pronouns of there, this, one of them. The first secretary of the Central Executive Committee, Lavrenti Beria, “the Cannibal”, as well as the great Georgian writer Mikheil Javakhishvili lived in Kiacheli Street. Lavrenti Beria did not manage to enslave Javakhishvili and shoot him. Over time, whispers and pronouns replacing evil at Kiacheli Street were replaced by noise, banners, and shouts, a mulberry tree was cut down, and information about Beria’s house was forgotten. A memorial plaque appeared on Mikheil Javakhishvili’s house in recognition of the special importance of this place to Tbilisi and the country.

The restaurant Tbilisi was a gathering place for young students who had witnessed the Second World War and Stalin’s death. However, the situation changed when the restaurant was taken over by the so-called “Artelshchiks”<sup>5</sup> who then legalized their way of life: “They hit someone by car and their chauffeur would go to prison, their son murdered someone and someone else, someone bribed would serve a sentence” (Kikodze, 2016, p.118).<sup>6</sup> The narrator was also Artelshchik’s son but his father never acknowledged his relationship with an archaeologist and his son. As the time changes, the father – the former Artelshchik – runs into the narrator when he brings an icon to Tbilisi to wash away his sins. After the meeting the narrator is convinced that he has nothing to do with this man.

After the narrator has roamed the central streets of Tbilisi and analysed his life against the background of new and most recent historical events of Georgia and personal stories, he returns to his micro-space of Tbilisi, his apartment; hence, he fails to integrate into public space. However, the final scene of the novel indicates that recognition and analysis can have healing powers. The narrator becomes interested in Kintsugi (the Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by mending it with glue mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum) and shares this method with his daughter. This can be seen as a way of finding peace and the reconciliation of generations.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the analysis of the novels of Ana Kordzaia-Samadashvili and Archil Kikodze, we can conclude that the characters, who live in the rapidly changing and difficult period of the late 20th and early 21st centuries of Georgia, face identity disruption. This is indicated in the texts by the disappearance of signs related to the past and their turning into sites of memory. These self-reflective sites of memory define the memories that people, robbed of the past, have been able to identify themselves with. The change of urban space follows the

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<sup>5</sup> Social circle that engaged in illegal activities during the Brezhnev period.

<sup>6</sup> The translations of original texts have been undertaken by the author of this article for the purposes of text analysis.

social and political processes and reflects the inner feelings, fears, and aspirations of the characters and vice versa. In both of the texts, the protagonists try to preserve the urban space in their memories, in the symbolic and material dimensions of memory and, thus, do not to lose the sense of security, nativeness, and familiarity pointing to the thirst for integration and preservation of identity in the changed urban space. In order to find support, Zinka Adamiani goes to another part of the city, to a space which is less familiar to her. Having realized that this courage and path could not bring her home, she chooses an alternative path and moves to an anti-space. However, the protagonist of the novel by Archil Kikodze returns to his micro-space and does not lose the hope of constructing a disrupted identity.

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