

## **The Eastern German commemorative city-scape: Tracing ideologically motivated street naming patterns through time and space**

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Street names are particularly revelatory for tracing changes in representational politics as a result of successive political-ideological régimes (Arazyahu 2011). Over time, what for older generations was a revolutionary wiping out of old heroes and values they stood for, for the younger generation becomes a “natural order of things” (Fairclough 2003:2). The Eastern European nations are paradigm cases for radical upheavals in the political, economic and technological structures that impact upon and are reflected in the LL. Our talk focuses on the urban semiotic impact of continuous shifts in state ideology over the past 100 years the Eastern part of Germany. We explore changes in street naming in a large city (Leipzig, 2650 streets), where representational politics inform choices in the LL as opposed to a small town (Annaberg-Buchholz, 335 streets), where the processes that regulate the production, circulation and consumption of semiotic resources are more base-democratic in nature. Our approach is multidisciplinary, integrating insights from linguistic landscape research, collective memory studies and geographical information systems (Rose-Redwood et al. 2010). This combined methodology allows us to understand the locally negotiated and renegotiated ways in which memory and identity are enshrined in and exculpated from public space. The spatio-historical patterns that emerge suggest that commemorative renaming is a continuous struggle for representation in the cityscape, a barometer reflecting political changes and a tool for creating social identity.

### References

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