**Commemorative cityscapes: spatio-temporal patterns in street names in Eastern Germany and Poland**

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At the most mundane level, street names provide the daily spatial framework for human activities, allowing cities to function. But beyond their indexical importance as spatial reference landmarks, street names are inevitably loaded with history and ideology, reflecting the present and commemorating the nation’s heroic past (Rose-Redwood, Aldermann and Azaryahu 2010). Street names are thus 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). We report on a project that explores changes in street naming in two large cities: Leipzig in Eastern Germany (2800 streets) and Poznań in Poland (2700 streets). Both nations have undergone several shifts in state ideology in the past 100 years which are manifested in sequential waves of commemorative choices in the semiotic cityscape. By integrating insights from linguistic landscape research, collective memory studies and geographical information systems, we propose a combined methodology that 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.

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