



Memory and local Identity: the Persistence of Colonial-Era Street Names in Hong kong after 1997

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Abstract:

The critical study of toponymy has paid considerable attention to the renaming of streets following revolutionary political change since 1980s. Such renaming is intended to institutionalize a new political agenda through shaping the meanings in everyday practices and landscapes. For example, after taking back the foreign concessions in 1943, the Wang Jingwei government eradicated all the streets of Shanghai named after foreign figures. The same case as post-colonial Singapore after 1965, where naming streets served to erase the colonial past and assert national independence. Nevertheless, the most of Colonial-Era Street Names still persisted in the city after Hong Kong's reunification to China in 1997.

This research seeks to advance the critical toponymical study through the history and spatial changes of Hong Kong's street names to explore the street naming operations of Colonial governance with different block spaces in different periods. And further discusses about memory, local identity and the persistence of Colonial-Era street names after 1997.