

Materiality, Architectural Re-figuration and Identity

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Abstract

Although the state appeared to possess autonomous power in the representation and materialization of architectural products, the practice and processes of (re)naming them were not necessarily one-way traffic. Thus, politically inspired toponymical changes can often unfold in a rather incoherent, inconclusive, spatially diverse and protracted manner. There was an unstated assumption that renaming the urban landscape for political ends was effective, as the ordinary citizens would naturally accept the new names and quickly absorb them into their everyday life. Although examples of “toponymical cleansing” shown in this chapter indicate the influence of political power on new forms of re-figuration, there is also evidence of some resistance. There is also the danger of portraying the implementation of street name changes as reflecting the aspirations of homogenous political elites.

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