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## **THE LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF CROATIAN AND SLOVENIAN COMMEMORATIVE STREET NAMES IN THE BEGINNING OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: CONTESTING, REPRODUCING, AND REDEFINING *TITOSTALGIA*<sup>1</sup>**

**Keywords:** semiotic landscape, discourse analysis, street names in Croatia, street names in Slovenia, historical revisionism.

### **ABSTRACT**

The most recent changes in commemorative street and square names (odonyms) in Croatia (after 2013: Zagreb, Šibenik, Karlovac, Zaprrešić, Velika Gorica, Varaždinske Toplice, Mursko Središće) and Slovenia (after 2010: Ljubljana, Radenci) are the research subject of the paper. The localities were selected as a result of a press inquiry, combined with a qualitative analysis of the discovered materials with the help of discourse-historical approach. The analysis revealed that the argumentation of actors engaged in naming controversies was interdiscursively linked to topoi of the cultural memory in the two countries (totalitarianism, anti-fascism). Methods from linguistic landscape studies placed the contested names in a broad spatial context and revealed attitudes of under-represented social actors: a top-down character of the renamings and the social response, often characterized by an inert acceptance of the changes. The research demonstrated the diversity of responses in the renamed spaces, and their general use, depending on the size of a locality. The capital cities (Zagreb, Ljubljana) are locations of intense bottom-up semiotic activity, also connected to naming conflicts. The activity is also strong in the cities of regional importance (Karlovac, Šibenik), however, although it is sometimes ideological in content, it does not seem to have much connection to the current naming controversies. Semiotic activity is also high in metropolitan satellite towns (Velika Gorica, Zaprrešić), but its content is far less ideological. Provincial towns and villages (Mursko Središće, Radenci, Varaždinske Toplice) are much more semiotically austere and the name changes seem to have a top-down character, modelled after the national capital cities. In sum, the renamed streets and squares tend to be scenes of intensive bottom-up and top-down semiotic practices – on the other hand, they rarely engage directly in the conflict around the meaning-making of naming. In this respect, the Zagreb case seems exceptional.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2017 Zagreb, the capital city of Croatia, was the scene of a heated debate resulting in the renaming of the square dedicated to the former president of the socialist Yugoslavia, Josip Broz Tito. However, such changes were not limited to the capital cities, as Zagreb's decision was echoed by Šibenik, Karlovac, and numerous other localities.

Both street names and the underlying ideologies can be grasped through critical insight into linguistic landscapes where naming is physically emplaced. Specifically, linguistic landscape research takes into account “any (public) space with a visible inscription made through deliberate human intervention and meaning making”. (Jaworski and Thurlow 2010, 2)

On the other hand, the naming of public places is indispensably intertwined with hegemonic and counter-hegemonic ideologies, as well as the politics of national memory, and thus should be perceived as a prototypical example of *lieux de mémoire* (Nora 1989; Milo 1997). For this reason, discussions about commemoration and de-commemoration by means of naming (e.g. Azaryahu 1996) are an intrinsic part of the meaning-making of the names themselves. In order to reconstruct the practices of meaning-making, a discourse-historical approach to textual sources documenting such debates is invaluable (Reisigl and Wodak 2009; in the study of street naming: Fabiszak and Rubdy 2021).

Analysing a corpus of sources will assist with a number of the goals of this paper. First of all, the actors in the street naming controversies in Croatia and Slovenia should be precisely determined. They become involved in discursive practices by employing recurring arguments, which must be recognized and interpreted as *topoi* for or against street (re) naming. Mostly, these schemes of argumentation are engaged in interdiscursive relations with broader discourses (macro-topics) of national memory – it is not only these linkages, but also their correlation with the concrete political agendas that must be taken into account in answering the research questions.

Importantly, these textual data must be confronted with the material offered by physical linguistic landscapes created by an even broader array of actors. In dealing with this evidence, one must cautiously consider whether it resonates along or against the previously revealed discourses legitimizing the name change or retention.

## 2. CONTEXT

Sweeping changes in the commemorative semiotic landscapes of Central and Eastern Europe were brought about by the failure of the socialist order after 1989. In the post-Yugoslavian space, breakthrough events began in 1990, with the first multi-party elections in socialist Yugoslavia, followed by the declarations of independence by Slovenia and Croatia. In the latter case, changes in the commemorative symbolism of the public space began in 1990, culminated in 1993, and had significantly slowed by the end of the

War of Independence in 1995 (Stanić et al. 2009, 104). The renamings in Southeastern Europe during the 1990s and 2000s were dynamic enough to generate a sizeable body of research (cf. e.g. Kodrnja 2006; Stanić et al. 2009; Karačić et al. 2012; Radović 2013).

The controversies driving these changes can be well understood through the prism of the ambivalence provoked by the figure of Josip Broz Tito, a long-time leader of socialist Yugoslavia. For many he evoked anti-fascist resistance, but also the Yugoslavian socialist statehood, with its real and alleged authoritarian tendencies, as well as suspicions about Serbian dominance (Potkonjak and Alempijević 2018, 196–200).

In parallel, since the end of the 1990s and 2000s, discourses of historical revisionism gained institutional foothold throughout Central and Eastern Europe, and new renaming campaigns were eagerly launched, often by governments displaying certain illiberal tendencies, e.g. in post-2010 Hungary (cf. Palonen 2017) and post-2015 Poland (cf. Różycki 2019). These efforts are closely related to the ideological concept of ‘residual communism’, which they associate with the *status quo* of the previous post-socialist governing actors (cf. e.g. Kopeček 2021, 28–83).

These initiatives in Central and Eastern Europe inspired similar movements in South-eastern Europe. One of the most vital organisations of this type emerged in Croatia in 2008: known as the Circle for the Square (*Krug za trg*), it “mostly attract[ed] individuals from the right wing of the Croatian political scene” (Potkonjak and Alempijević 2018, 205).

Although initially rather ineffective, the movement succeeded after the 2017 Croatian local elections. A long-serving Zagreb mayor and a former social democrat, Milan Bandić, formed a coalition with the handful of far-right city councilors, on the condition that Marshall Tito Square be renamed. Eventually, in September 2017, the location was officially renamed as Republic of Croatia Square. As capital cities are often a commemorative model for smaller towns and cities, this change triggered a number of similar moves in other localities – a phenomenon that remains drastically understudied.

### 3. METHODS AND MATERIAL

The first type of sources used in this paper was a small corpus of texts collected from Croatian and Slovenian press, as well as other internet media (*Dnevnik.hr*, *e-Podravina.hr*, *Mladina*, *RTL*, *Siol.net*, *Telegram.hr*, *tportal.hr*, *Varaždinski.hr*, *Večernji list*, *Zadarski list*). It comprises 16 articles reporting various stages of the renaming process, published between September 2014 and May 2020. The instances of street name controversies in Radenci in Slovenia, as well as in Šibenik, Karlovac, Zaprešić, Varaždinske Toplice, and Mursko Središće in Croatia, are covered by an exhaustive press review, while the renamings in Zagreb and Ljubljana are represented by pieces of exemplary discourse. The changes in the capital cities are, on one hand, relatively well researched; on the other hand, they may demand more detailed future study with the aid of corpus-assisted methods.



Map 1. Localities in Croatia in Slovenia where naming controversies or renamings occurred in the most recent period (since 2010 in Slovenia, 2013 in Croatia).

The collected material was subject to a number of procedures indicated by the method of discourse-historical approach (DHA), which considers discourse as “socially constituted and socially constitutive”, “[a] cluster of context-dependent semiotic practices that are situated within specific fields of social action”, “related to a macro-topic”, and “linked to the argumentation about validity claims such as truth and normative validity involving several social actors who have different points of view”. (Reisigl and Wodak 2009, 89)

Voices that were absent from the media discourses were then reconstructed, using the analysis of the semiotic landscapes of the localities investigated, focusing on the interdiscursive connections of the spatialized semiotic practices with the macro-topics identified in the media. Initially concerned about the modes of presence that characterize various speech communities, linguistic landscape analysis studies signage in public space, such as road signs, billboards, or shop windows (Ben-Rafael, Shohamy, and Barni 2010, xiv). Nonetheless, such insights need not be limited to the spatial presence of languages and language varieties, and so general ideological polyphony (Bakhtin 1984) can be understood with the help of this method. In particular, the linguistic landscape

is an indicator of social hegemony, witnessing social “conflict, exclusion and dissent” (Rubdy 2015, 1).

Photographic documentation of the renamed streets was produced from the 20<sup>th</sup> September until the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2022, in most cases early in the morning. It encompasses all exhibits of semiotic practices involving written texts along the analyzed streets and squares, complemented by the documentation of semiotic landscapes along the routes leading from the analyzed places to the centers of the localities in question (cf. Plan 1–9). This procedure resulted in an extensive collection of 1658 pictures (in the renamed streets and squares: 123 from Karlovac, 71 from Ljubljana, 188 from Mursko Središće, 48 from Radenci, 80 from Šibenik, 88 from Varaždinske Toplice, 31 from Velika Gorica, 199 from Zagreb, 168 from Zaprrešić). The data was then analyzed: signs were delimited according to the textuality criteria (Bartmiński and Niebrzegowska-Bartmińska 2009, 22–75) and classified using the usual typology of signage employed in linguistic landscape studies (i.e., with respect to language, status, translation, directedness, layering, dominance, state, and discourse type – cf. Scollon, and Scollon 2003; Backhaus 2007; Ben Rafael et al. 2006).

#### 4. ANALYSIS

##### 4.1. Metropolitan friction

After the Croatian local elections in 2017, the new city council coalition of Zagreb decided to rename Marshall Tito Square. A far-right politician Zlatko Hasanbegović described the square name as a “moral and civic disgrace” (Rimac Lesički 2017), while his colleague, Bruna Esih, associated the namesake with totalitarianism, its criminal practices, and their incompatibility with democratic values (Radoš 2017). Eventually, in September 2017 the square was officially renamed the Republic of Croatia Square.

No material traces of the old name remain: the top-down signage is replaced. Interestingly, the new street name plaque seems to be unique: in Zagreb, practically all such signs provide a short explanation about their namesakes. In this case, the authorities decided it would be superfluous. In the end, the only trace of the former signage is created by cracks around the plaque on some buildings, witnesses to the process of the change.

The bottom-up semiotic landscape of the square is extremely opulent, mostly consisting of transgressive texts.<sup>2</sup> Another element of the landscape – commercial bottom-up signage – rarely contained the square name. In one case, there was a visible trace of renaming with the new name stuck over the old one (Fig. 1). Elsewhere completely new stickers with business addresses were obtained, mostly because it did not present any financial difficulty for the owners.

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<sup>2</sup> A transgressive sign is defined as “a sign which is in place but which is in some way unauthorized” (Scollon, and Scollon 2003, 146).

However, this is a space where ideas and ideologies are performed and confronted by each other more than elsewhere in Zagreb, with the exception of central Ban Jelačić Square. Semiotic performances related to various strains of subcultural, urban, and (self-perceived) progressive movements dominate: stickers and posters referring to the fight against sexual harassment, feminism in general, cycling, or the general idea of radical social change. Inscriptions referring to the far-right imaginary are only incidental.

Even though the name change was very much contested, few references to the renaming occur in the semiotic landscape. During the coronavirus pandemic, stickers bearing an inscription “Square of the Civil Defence” occurred at least in two places – it is rather difficult to interpret whether they constitute a sincere homage to the public service, or they are intended ironically (Fig. 2). Finally, on the corner with Andrija Hebrang Street, there is a red graffiti inscription “Tito – hero” (Fig. 3).

Ljubljana has been, for more than two decades, the scene of extensive transgressive semiotic practices, while also being a natural setting for the commemorative practices of the national authorities. However, both are concentrated in the city center, radiating from the central Town Square, with a parallel epicenter of transgression in a legalized squat in Metelkova Street.

Therefore, it is important to note that former Tito Road (2009–2011) was quite far from the city center, in the vicinity of the Žale Cemetery and the city by-pass road. Its new name (Styrian Road) is marked by a few self-standing street signs, however, no house numbers are present along its whole length. Most of the semiotic practices along the street have commercial character; however, especially on the overpasses, one can observe an abundance of transgressive graffiti: they consist entirely of ‘tags’, lacking any ideological message.

Nonetheless, as a meaningful co-occurrence, the Monument to the Fallen in the 1991 War of Independence was erected at the western edge of the Žale Cemetery, very close to the former Tito Road, suggesting a revisionist reading. Another commemorative text located directly adjacent to former Tito Road is a bust of Peter Božič, a writer and Ljubljana city councilor, who in 2009 initiated the naming of the newly opened thoroughfare after Josip Broz Tito. In this way, otherwise invisible, traces of the naming controversy remain inscribed in the city space around this peripheral highway.

#### 4.2. Smaller centres, smaller frictions

In Croatian Šibenik, Marshall Tito Garden (*Poljana maršala Tita*) was to be renamed at the demand of the far-right Hrast political group. In May 2015, Ivica Poljičak, speaker of the city council from the local HDZ<sup>3</sup> branch, approved the idea, adding to a list of negative associations of Tito, including “dictatorship, the political processes of Andrija Hebrang and Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac, Yugoslavia’s being an unfree regime

<sup>3</sup> I.e. Croatian Democratic Union, a mainstream right-wing party.

and having an unfree market, lacking freedom of speech, and the persecution of the so-called Croatian Spring". (B.V. 2015) This attack was met with mild opposition from the center-left Reformists, whose local representative, Petar Baranović suggested that deceased historical figures should be left in peace. Social democrats protested silently (B.V. 2015).

The spatial meanings of the former Marshall Tito Garden are largely determined by the City Library, the City Theatre, and a newly built underground car park. For this reason, there is not much space left for other, smaller semiotic practices. Quite strikingly, there is no top-down name signage, signaling the name of the square. However, some of the plaques with house numbers still display the former toponym, most probably due to pragmatic reasons (Fig. 4).

Nonetheless, the semiotic landscape of the Šibenik Garden remains mostly passive in these controversies. On the other hand, local public opinion is quite divided (as shown by the 2016 opening of a museum dedicated to the Tito-led Partisan movement); youth political counter-culture related to anarchism is still active in some segments of the urban semiotic landscape, so this inertia does not exclude broader ideological polyphony.

Karlovac did not experience a change in power after 2017; however, the influence of lobbying by local veteran organizations played a significant role in renaming the city's Marshall Tito Square. This, combined with the effect of the change in Zagreb, resulted in Damir Mandić, mayor of Karlovac, publicly identifying Josip Broz Tito with "totalitarianism" and "disrespect for human rights" (Bičak 2017). This approach was criticized by a local social democratic politician, Darko Janković, who argued that "Tito was respected by the right-wing Croatian president Franjo Tuđman" and stressed Tito's anti-Stalinism (Bičak 2017), implicitly accepting a number of premises also held by the opposing side.

Former Josip Broz Square in Karlovac, now known as the Square of the Croatian Defenders, is dominated by the presence of a market hall. Therefore, in accordance with its function, the local semiotic landscape is predominantly commercial. In some cases, traces of the renaming remain visible, mostly recognizable by different lettering or the color of the signage, simultaneously witnessing the pragmatic approach of the business-owners to the name changes.

As for transgressive texts, the largest number are located under the southeastern arcade facade of the market hall, where the pillars provide a surface for the semiotic practices of local youth. Among the haphazard inscriptions, symbols for anarchism and the communist movement can be found there, scribbled clumsily (Fig. 5). However, this might still be interpreted as a provocative exhibit of a certain worldview, rather than a reference to the former square namesake.

Top-down signage is much less present: no building has a house number sign. There are three signposts with a street name, two at its south-west, and one at its north-eastern end, close to the building of the Misdemeanor Court. The latter has a small plaza at the front, a part of the square where a monument to the Defenders of the Homeland

War is located with flag masts adjacent. The square turns out to be an arena for competing semiotic practices. Nonetheless, they rarely relate to the square name and, as house number signage is completely absent, there is little room for inertia, nor for resistance.

### 4.3. Inert suburbia

In Zaprešić, Marshall Tito Street was renamed in February 2018, also without a change in power, but clearly inspired by the capital city. Here it was mostly through the efforts of a local councilor Ljiljana Popovački Račić, a former HDZ member. Again, she associated Josip Broz Tito with “Yugoslavism, totalitarianism, negation of democracy”, and “changing one totalitarianism for another”, stressing that the “uncontroversial and brightest points of Croatian history and heritage should be namesakes” (Hina 2018).

The central, former Marshall Tito Street is now divided into the Avenue of the Croatian Defenders, a part of the town bypass, and Cardinal Aloysius Stepinac Street, which comprises a more urban part of the thoroughfare. Top-down signage is present in some places, as a reminder of the new names. Conversely, there is only one house with a trace of a plaque bearing the old name (Fig. 6).

The semiotic landscape of the street is dominated by commercial signage, with transgressive texts mostly consisting of tags, and stickers devoted to football clubs and tags. Therefore, the street is not a preferred area of semiotic confrontation. Among the commercial signage, there are some visible advertisements revealing the old name, possibly left in place due to reluctance to invest in new ones (Fig. 7).

In the town center, the Square of the Victims of Fascism, a direct continuation of former Marshall Tito Street, has a commemorative value due not only to its name. Two monuments dedicated to the Homeland War and its veterans were erected there, adjacent to two monuments from the Yugoslavian era. The latter give an impression of slight neglect, adding to the unintentional passive resistance of the remaining ghost signs.

Neither does the semiotic landscape of former Marshall Tito Square in Velika Gorica demonstrate great semiotic diversity. The new name – Square of the Town of Vukovar – is announced by one free-standing street sign, close to the bus stop by the main street adjacent to the square. Houses on the north-west side of the square all have number plaques with the new name. The south-east side remained unchanged, as almost all houses sported plaques without any names, save the first, which still reveals the former name. Interestingly, the name was also visible on the obligatory plaque documenting the use of the EU funds for thermal insulation of the buildings.

### 4.3. Provincial inertia

In Mursko Središće, the 2017 renaming was a post-electoral initiative by the local HDZ politician, Dražen Srpak. In his public utterances, he associated Tito with “disrespect for human rights” and stressed the importance of avoiding “ideological names sparking



controversies” (Beti 2017). Due to opposition in the city council, the proposal eventually failed.

The town on Mura river, from a semiotic point of view, is strikingly austere: even in the town center, between the Ban Jelačić Square and Brothers Radić Square, the density of signage is much lower than in the busier streets of regional or national centers. The town center hosts a rather unusual commemorative complex. Next to the main thoroughfare leading towards Slovenia, a monumental 1953 socialist-realist sculpture depicting a miner dominates the space. It includes a citation from Josip Broz Tito, located since 2015 on a separate pedestal visible only to a cautious passer-by, but with an added English translation (Fig. 8). At Brothers Radić Square, there is a small plaza with miniature obelisks devoted to the local veterans, adjacent to a new bust of President Franjo Tuđman. In this context, the old commemorative plaques honoring the local partisans and hostages located near the commune council building become marginalized.

Josip Broz Tito Street itself is marked with official street name plaques at several places. Only a few houses use number plaques displaying the street name; interestingly, some employ its older designation: Marshall Tito Street. On the other hand, sporadically, commercial signs refer to it as Josip Broz Street, omitting the Marshall's *nom de guerre*. It is this multitude of possible forms that gives the inhabitants of Mursko Središće an opportunity to frame their perspective on the historical role of Tito, but also on street naming.

In July 2019, Josip Broz Tito was effectively de-commemorated in Varaždinske Toplice. The change was proposed by the local veterans association and was carried out in the town council by the HDZ and its coalition partners. The media reported the objections of the county anti-fascist organization, warning about erasure of the anti-fascist heritage. On the other hand, the center-left Reformists pointed out the costs entailed by such changes (*Nema više Josipa Broza...* 2019). Finally, a local social democrat argued that such a small street is not worth renaming.

In the town's semiotic landscape, top-down signage is present at a few places, consequently displaying the changed names. However, the old names – especially Marshall Tito Street, but to some extent also Freedom Square – are visible due to retired and ghost signs, mostly on a large number of businesses in the small town that have closed (Fig. 9). Few commercial signs reveal the old names, sometimes only in the form of a stuck-over palimpsest.

The commemorative background of the local semiotic landscape may be of some interest. At the former Freedom Square, a monument to the National Liberation War Partisan is located, with a plaque renovated in 2014 by the local commune. A fresh wreath was laid under the monument. In contrast, the Homeland War is commemorated with a 2003 plaque, a small monument, and in a church, with plaques from 2016, devoted *inter alia* to the ‘victims of totalitarian regimes’. The emplacement of such commemorative practices give subtle hints as to the conflicting concepts of memory, which are not absent even from smaller localities.

In the Slovenian town Radenci, a new right-wing mayor, Roman Leljak, was elected in the 2018 local elections. In May 2020, he proposed renaming the local Tito Road, arguing that Josip Broz Tito was “one of the ten greatest criminals of the 20th century” and that “many directives recommend the erasure of totalitarian symbols from the public life” (I.M. 2020). A group of local inhabitants opposed, proposing a referendum, stressing in their petition both “Tito’s great role in protecting the Slovenian nation and language” and the significant costs of new documents (I.M. 2020). Since the petition was ignored by the new mayor, the Slovenian Constitutional Court responded, calling the renaming process to a halt (I.M. 2020).

The semiotic landscape of the Slovenian spa town is, nonetheless, quite sparse. A great majority of buildings display house number signs with street names, which are also marked at crossings with black-on-white signage. This sparsity contrasts with a number of top-down commemorative initiatives sponsored by the mayor, most notably a small monument to a civilian victim of the short-lived 1991 intervention by the Yugoslavian People’s Army, “established by Josip Broz-Tito”, as the inscription says (Fig. 10). In Tito Road, a calm, predominantly residential street, self-standing street signs bear witness to the tensions started by the mayor; the signs bearing the restored name of the contested road are newer than the remaining ones – also, interestingly, in a typeface resembling the Ljubljana signage.

## 5. INTERPRETATION AND CONCLUSIONS

Many of the cases discussed share similar traits in the argumentation employed. When opposing the naming of streets and squares after Josip Broz Tito, discourse actors typically resort to the topos of totalitarianism – this happened in Zagreb, but also in Šibenik, Zaprešić, and Radenci. Nonetheless, the argumentation is less uniform than countries where the renamings are state-sponsored, for instance in Poland or Hungary. To the list of arguments against the old naming practices, disputants sometimes add human rights violations (Mursko Središće, Karlovac), or Tito’s Yugoslavism (Zaprešić), but also appeal to the topos of avoiding controversies (Mursko Središće, Zaprešić).

Actors opposing the name changes frequently refer to anti-fascism (Zagreb, Šibenik), which may be regarded as a specialized topos in the debates about post-Yugoslavian memory. On the other hand, one also encounters arguments that engage with more nationalized reasoning—pointing out Tito’s anti-Stalinism (Karlovac), or his support for Slovenian nationhood and language rights (Radenci). In their attitudes, the (active) supporters of the names related to Yugoslavian memory may be cautiously associated with a phenomenon identified by Mitja Velikonja as ‘Titostalgija’, i.e., an abstract, non-restorative nostalgia, focused on utopian ideals and the general idea of a better future (Velikonja 2010, 171–173).

These leitmotifs in the discussion on toponyms suggest that street names can be usefully interpreted as *topoi*, referring to competing concepts of the cultural memory.

As a reminder, *topos* is traditionally defined as a formal “technique for considering problems” and a “procedure of looking for premises” (Kopperschmidt 1973, 140–141). Thus, the schemes of argumentation regarding national memory make use of either the topos of totalitarianism, or of anti-fascism (as well as a number of less frequent topoi) in order to argue for or against renaming, but also more broadly, to canonize and de-canonize elements of the (national) cultural memory.

These argumentation schemes are, in fact, interdiscursively linked to the overarching narratives defining the politics of national memory. For Croatia, anthropologist Vjeran Pavlaković demonstrated that the mainstream national right, even in the 1990s, did not distance itself from the anti-fascist legacy (Pavlaković 2008), demonstrating why it is such an effective topos. On the other hand, the experience of fascism is gradually relativized, at the expense of demonizing the Yugoslavian past by the label of totalitarianism (cf. Trošt & David 2021).

Discourse analysis also demonstrates that it is the heightened activity of social actors interested in (de)canonization that gives impulse to street name controversies. Very often, these are veterans organizations, which are not ideologically-profiled organizations *per se*, but, as a survey performed by Bagić and Kardov (2018) shows, many veterans define their political views as right wing (37%), and a significant share identify themselves as far-right (14%). As for the provenance of the discourse actors, all of the renaming procedures are initiated and performed at the level of local politics. In the period analyzed, they seemed to occur especially frequently in Central Croatia, which can be attributed to its historical legacy (without experience of fascist Italian rule during the 1920s-1930s, or of the liberation by the Partisans as in Istria, and with no direct warfare in the 1990s as in Dalmatia and Slavonia), as well as its greater political diversity.

The centrality of a renamed street or square does not seem to influence discourse on naming. However, it does influence spatialized representations of the national symbolic universe, especially during complex naming redesigns, as in Varaždinske Toplice or Zaprešić. This suggests that emplaced meaning-making does not need to be congruent with discourses about naming.

Simultaneously, the materiality of the linguistic landscapes proves that naming and commemoration is of primary interest mostly for official, municipal actors: this explains why the traces of the old names are absent in the top-down signage. The names appear in the background of the very rich, bottom-up semiotic landscape in large and medium cities (Zagreb, Karlovac, Šibenik), dominated by commercial and transgressive signs. Among the latter, while a visible share have ideological or activist character – with notable exceptions in Zagreb – they do not refer to the naming controversies. While it seems quite natural that businesses avoid controversies concerning memory, interestingly, so do actors from youth subcultures that are active in promoting various ideologies.

Instead, the contested names interact with the semiotic landscape in the broader context of commemorative practices in their surroundings (Ljubljana, Varaždinske

Toplice, Mursko Središće) and of whole cities and towns (Šibenik), independent of the size of the locality. In fact, meanings evoked by street and square naming are susceptible to these contextual redefinitions whether or not there is a name change involved. In the proximate linguistic landscape of a street or square, it is typically retired and ghost signs that refer to the naming controversies, offering passers-by an unexpected insight into the past.

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Fig. 1. A 'palimpsest' commercial sign in Zagreb.



Fig. 2. Transgressive signage at Republic of Croatia Square, Zagreb: 'Square of the Civil Defense'.



Fig. 3. Transgressive signs at Republic of Croatia Square, Zagreb: 'Tito – hero'.



Fig. 4. Pragmatic ghost signs at the renamed street in Šibenik.



Fig. 5. Ideological transgressive signs at Square of Croatian Defenders, Karlovac.

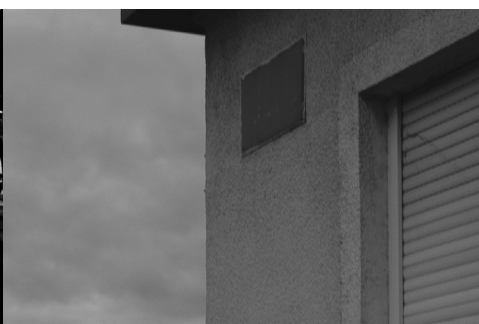


Fig. 6. Traces of the old naming in Zaprešić.



Fig. 7. Pragmatic ghost signs with a commercial character in Zaprešić.



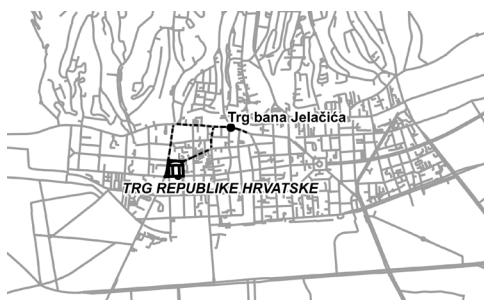
Fig. 8. Co-occurring commemorative practices in Mursko Središće (inverted colors).



Fig. 9. Commercial ghost signs in Varaždinske Toplice.



Fig. 10. Co-occurring commemorative practices in Radenci (inverted colors).



Plan 1. Zagreb<sup>4</sup>.



Plan 2. Ljubljana.



Plan 3. Šibenik.



Plan 4. Karlovac.

<sup>4</sup> In the Plans 1–9, capital letters signify streets or squares that were subject to controversies; with small letters central localities are marked.





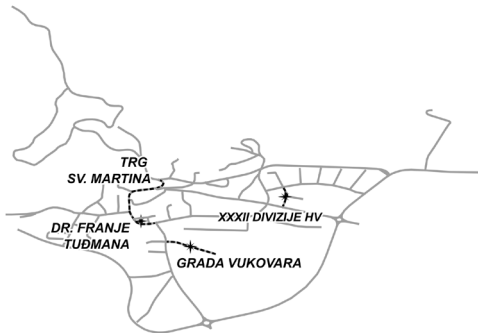
Plan 5. Zaprešić.



Plan 6. Velika Gorica.



Plan 7. Mursko Središće.



Plan 8. Varaždinske Toplice.



Plan 9. Radenci.

### **Chorwacki i słoweński pamiątkowy krajobraz językowy nazw ulic na początku XXI wieku: kontestacja, reprodukcja i redefinicja „titostalgii”**

Słowa kluczowe: krajobraz semiotyczny, analiza dyskursu, nazwy ulic w Chorwacji, nazwy ulic w Słowenii, rewizjonizm historyczny.

#### **STRESZCZENIE**

Przedmiot niniejszego artykułu stanowią najnowsze zmiany pamiątkowych nazw ulic i placów (odonomimów) w Chorwacji (spory toczące się po 2013 roku: Zagrzeb, Szybenik, Karlovac, Mursko Središće, Velika Gorica, Varaždinske Toplice) i Słowenii (spory toczące się po 2010 roku: Lublana, Radenci). Miejscowości zostały wybrane w wyniku przeglądu materiałów prasowych, połączonego z jakościową analizą znalezionych tekstów, która została przeprowadzona przy pomocy podejścia dyskursywno-historycznego. Analiza ujawniła aktorów zaangażowanych w kontrowersje nazewnicze, a ich argumentacja została interdyskursywnie powiązana z toposami pamięci kulturowej obu krajów (totalitaryzm, antyfaszyzm). Metody badań nad krajobrazami językowymi umiejscowiły sporne nazwy w szerokim kontekście przestrzennym, odkrywając nastawienia niewystarczająco reprezentowanych aktorów społecznych: odgórny charakter zmian nazw i reakcję społeczną, często nacechowaną bierną akceptacją zmian. Badania wykazały wielość reakcji w przemianowywanych przestrzeniach i różnorodność ich wykorzystania, zależną od wielkości miejscowości. Miasta stołeczne (Zagrzeb, Lublana) stanowią miejsca intensywnej oddolnej aktywności semiotycznej, również powiązanej z konfliktami o nazwy. Aktywność jest także mocna w miastach o znaczeniu regionalnym (Karlovac, Szybenik), jednakże, mimo iż czasem ma ona charakter ideologiczny, nie wydaje się ona odnosić do najnowszych kontrowersji nazewniczych. Wiele aktywności semiotycznych jest również podejmowanych w miastach satelickich metropolii (Velika Gorica, Zaprešić), lecz ich treść ma znacznie mniej zideologizowany charakter. Wreszcie miasteczka i wsie (Mursko Središće, Radenci, Varaždinske Toplice) są znacznie uboższe semiotycznie, a zmiany nazw zdają się mieć charakter odgórny, według modelu miast stołecznych. Ogólnie biorąc, przemianowywane ulice i place są przeważnie scenami intensywnych oddolnych i odgórnych praktyk semiotycznych – z drugiej strony, praktyki te rzadko angażują się bezpośrednio w spory wokół znaczenia nazw. Pod tym względem przypadek zagrzebski zdaje się pozostawać wyjątkowym.