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## Wrocław and Ust-Kamenogorsk at the turn of XX-XXI centuries: historical memory and urban space

**Abstract.** *The disintegration and disappearance of the socialist camp (Eastern bloc of the pro-Soviet countries) from the political map in Europe gave impetus to the creation of a new format of inter-state relations. Similar processes took place on the territory of different republics of the former USSR. The disappearance of communist ideology led to a revival of national interests, which ended in a sovereign parade and the creation of independent state entities, including Kazakhstan.*

*The aim of the research is to show the reflection of the change of communist ideology in the toponymical space of Wrocław (Poland) and Ust-Kamenogorsk (Kazakhstan) as a farewell to Soviet history.*

*The objects of the study are the cities of Wrocław (Poland) and Ust-Kamenogorsk (Kazakhstan), the subject of the research is the transformation of the visual and toponymical urban space. Particular attention has been paid to the street names with anthroponymic content.*

*As a result of the analysis, the authors came to the conclusion that, despite such a geographical distance between chosen cities and states, there is a common past between them. The connecting thread uniting Wrocław and Ust-Kamenogorsk was the "Soviet era" and the processes of eradicating Soviet social constructs. The toponymy of both cities was formed – to some extent – by the political ideology of the Soviet state. The processes of decommunization and de-Sovietization included the ideology of renewal and transformation, the destruction of the visual memory of the USSR. The toponymical space, both in Kazakhstan and in Poland, has acquired new names, reflecting the milestones of historical events previously not included in the national histories.*

*The authors believe that the urbanonyms of the city should cause only positive reactions, reflect the historical content, carry a functional, educational value.*

**Keywords:** *toponymy; urban space; ideology; communism; national idea; historical memory; memory politics.*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32523/2616-7255-2021-135-2-10-25>

Received: 10.03.2021 / Approved: 15.04.2021

## Introduction

The socialist camp (Eastern bloc of the pro-Soviet countries) of Europe that existed from the mid-40s to the 90s of the 20th century disappeared from the political scene. The collapse of the socialist camp in Europe gave impetus to the intensification of the political opposition and the creation of a new format of relations of states outside of communist influence. These mega-processes have influenced the internal policies of the post-socialist camp, causing the total eradication of elements that directly or indirectly reflect and have a connection with the communist past.

Similar processes took place on the territory of the USSR, the disappearance of the communist ideology led to pro-national interests, which ended in a sovereign parade and the creation of independent state formations, including Kazakhstan.

The relevance of the proposed study lies in the fact that the countries of the Eastern bloc and the former republics of the USSR went their own way, taking as a basis the implementation of the state strategy for the formation of a nation and a national idea through national historiography and the formation of a national memory. The uniqueness of the newest history of the Eurasian continent is in the large number of states that simultaneously declared independence and a change of political course. The turn of the XX-XXI century put a fat point on the ideologies of socialism and communism, which became a distinctive feature of the transitional era. Since 1917, the whole world struggled with the first state in the world, which announced the construction of a new socialist system. In the late 80s – early 90s of the twentieth century, the era of the USSR went down from the political scene without a single shot or any military actions.

Poland and Kazakhstan, being in completely different geographic coordinates, in the past century belonged to a single political bloc of socialism, and both countries to some extent experienced the processes of Sovietization, repression, Russification, empty counters, etc. The consequences of the collapse of the socialist camp

for Poland and Kazakhstan were the processes of de-communization and de-Sovietization. The geographical remoteness of the two states did not prevent them from having a common Soviet past and implementing a policy of eradicating the semiotics of Soviet history. In the Polish-Kazakh space, the transformation of historical memory carries a political connotation. Surprisingly, but the Soviet past is being exterminated by a new generation that did not know it. These are children and, for the most part, grandchildren of those who have experienced a totalitarian regime, Stalinism, repression and deportation, including the Polish operation, the famine in Kazakhstan, the Great Terror, etc.

The trend of post-memory is typical not only for Poland and Kazakhstan, but also for all countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, as an attempt to reconcile the historical narrative with the communist past. This is consistent with the opinion of Agnieszka Wolf-Powęska: “The historical narratives that ordered the historical imagination became significant. These narratives for decades were denied to have a voice, at a time when both the ideological-political and class-social paradigms were in force. In the case of Poland, the Soviet state and communist Poland memory was released, particularly memory of the victims of the Stalinist crimes” [1, p. 12].

The ideology of the Soviet past with the taboo history of the country came into conflict with the democratic principles of the sovereign parade of the new republics in conjunction with the archival revolution, determining the explosion of opportunistic publications, generating interest in the past. The result was the overthrow of the mythical heroes of Soviet history from the pedestals of historical memory, the emergence of new ones with ideologies of independent development.

The fourth power has become a political tool, forming public opinion, creating new semiotics of historical space, new cults and traditions. The state programs are being launched with the aim of forming historical consciousness of the Kazakh society, create cultural identity markers, etc. To some extent, current processes ties with the theory of “imaginary communities” [2].

At the same time, the proposed topic is about “imaginary historical trauma”, for the older generation parting with the past reflects the variety of problems related to the current “social processes” [3].

Such programs as “People in the flow of history” [4], “Historical and cultural heritage” [5], “Mangilik El” (The eternal nation) [6], new priority programs “Modernization of public consciousness” [7], “Seven facets of the great steppe” [8] were adopted in Kazakhstan. New history textbooks are written everywhere, distorting the past and forming a negative attitude to Soviet history. The states of Central Asia, including Kazakhstan, are characterized by the scale of anniversary events related to the state semiotics, the antiquity of their own history, significant events of state construction, personal history, etc. We are witnessing the formation of historical politics and its transformation, which, in our opinion, can lead to the politicization of historical memory, the selectivity of its content.

It is assumed that the adoption of such programs at the state level in the context of globalization of the world process will preserve the ethno-cultural code, strengthen the ancestral roots, the call of the Motherland, which will result in the modernization of consciousness and the transformation of historical memory.

In Poland, there are processes of politicization of memory. With the coming to power in 2015 of the Law and Justice Party, there is an extreme interest in history and enhanced processes of decommunization. The Law and Justice party seeks to build the “Rzeczpospolita IV” by cleaning Poland from the Communist heritage of the Polish People’s Republic. The party calls for the declassification of secret documents of this period. According to the current ruling party, the period of the previous government (Civil Platform) was actually still a Communist period. School curricula, literature lists and exhibitions in museums are changing again. The new historical study begins, which is even reflected in the advertised films or theatrical productions. Again, the Institution of national memory becomes an instrument of struggle against selected characters and at the same time an active instrument of

historical policy, as stated by the Law and Justice party politicians [9].

Repeated interest in history, historical memory can be used as a tool to legitimize power [10, p. 68-86; 11, p. 53-56]. The general background of political events unites Poland and Kazakhstan. The current stage of development demonstrates the inconsistency of the dialectics of memory, opposing what is no longer exists, which is confirmed by the transformation of the visual, toponymical space, the emergence of the semiotics of sovereign history.

## Methods

The aim of the study is to show the reflection of the change of Communist ideology in the toponymical space of Wroclaw (Poland) and Ust-Kamenogorsk (Kazakhstan), as a farewell to Soviet history. The objects of study are the cities of Wroclaw (Poland) and Ust-Kamenogorsk (Kazakhstan), the subject of study is the transformation of visual and toponymical urban space.

We have gone through a period of traditional history based on possible mythological schemes of Soviet ideology. The current stage of postmodernism involves an interdisciplinary approach to the actual problems of modern history.

During the Soviet period, the toponymical space reflected socialist ideologies and political constructs. The history of Soviet place names at this stage is not the subject of research, and its transformation is reflected in the periodical press. The ongoing change of names, both in Poland and in Kazakhstan, the media perceives as the eradication of the consequences of Russification. Perhaps the foreign policy factor was the determinant of renaming; the twentieth century was extremely rich in mass changes of geographical names, the underlying motivation of which is the desire to emphasize the nationality of the objects of the nomination [12, p. 11].

The evolution of toponymical space of Kazakhstan is reflected in the collective article «Creating a specialized toponymical GIS for areas of de-Russification, de-Sovietization and

de-communization», which refers to active de-Russification of the toponymical system in post-Soviet Kazakhstan [13, p. 17-26]. The authors appeal to statistical data: «During 1991-2005, 3 regions, 12 cities, 53 regional and 7 city districts, 43 railway stations and sidings, 957 small settlements, and about 890 institutions of education, culture, healthcare and sports were renamed. According to the reports of officials, by 2005 renaming of geographical objects had been completed by 55-60%, with the main share accounted for the regions with predominantly Russian-speaking population -Northern, North-Eastern and North-Western». Further, the authors point out that «as a rule, decisions on changing geographical names in the Republic are taken on the basis of the opinions of the population, the conclusions of local and regional onomastic commissions and the Republican onomastic Commission under the Government of Kazakhstan. Most recently, N. Nazarbayev, the President of Kazakhstan allowed the possibility of changing the name of the whole country. One of the options he called was «Kazakh Eli» («country of Kazakhs» or «Kazakh people»)[13].

The main research method was the comparative method, which served to assess differences and similarities of historical narratives in the urban spaces of Ust-Kamienogorsk and Wrocław. The comparison focused on the street names with anthroponymic content. The analysis had mainly qualitative character, however, the authors made also a quantitative comparison based on the available statistical data.

Discourse analysis has been used in the paper to describe the social context of toponymical changes. There is no one generally acceptable definition of discourse analysis. A. Holzschneider defines it as follows: “In its essence, discourse analysis is an engagement with meaning and the linguistic and communicative processes through which social reality is constructed. Discourse can therefore be defined as, basically, space where intersubjective meaning is created, sustained, transformed and, accordingly, becomes constitutive of social reality”[14, p. 144]. There is also no acceptable test method within

this approach, as pointed out by A. Holzschneider: “In fact, any overview of the field must come to the conclusion that there are probably as many methodological frameworks as there are case studies” [14, p.159]

The paper is based on the literature and statistical data. The observation was of considerable importance, due to the fact that the authors were (or still are) living in the cities chosen for the analysis.

## Discussion and results

Political or regime transformation leads to changes in the scientific research approaches to history. The new politics of memory puts different accents, on the one hand, emphasizes the events that have so far been omitted or forgotten, on the other, humiliates the former heroes and elevates the «wrongly» forgotten. One of the most notable manifestations of the creation of a new vision of history are the new toponymical names.

Wrocław – is the fourth largest city in Poland, which is home to about 640 thousand inhabitants. Over the past few decades, it has undergone two major and several small street-renaming processes.

Wrocław is the capital of the Lower Silesia region, the history of which should be presented in a brief summary, which will better explain the main subjects of the next part of the article. In the X-XIII century, it was the area of the powerful dynasty of Silesian Piasts, even one of the main cities of the early monarchy (*sedes regni principales*). In the following years, Wrocław and the region were successively under Czech rule, from the 16th century onwards became part of the Habsburg monarchy, from the mid-eighteenth century onwards - under Prussia and then Germany. In 1945, when the city was captured by the Red Army, it was a German city under the name of Breslau.

After capturing Wrocław, the Polish authorities began a resettlement campaign. The population arrived from Central Poland, as well as residents of the Eastern Borderlands of pre-war Poland, mainly from the outskirts of Lviv and Vilnius. In



1945, Polish settlers entered the city with German names, which they often did not understand or associated with the nightmare of occupation and fascist ideology. Similar transformations took place in many cities from the belt of the Western lands connected with Poland, from Walbrzych and Wroclaw to Szczecin, Kolobrzeg and Gdansk. The geographical names of rivers, lakes, etc. were also changed. Cities and regions needed a Polish color. In Wroclaw, this process was very fast and almost closed in 1945-1946.

After 1945, the authorities of the Polish People's Republic tried to «polonize» Wroclaw and give it only a Polish character [15]. This policy had influenced the renaming of streets, squares and parks. The first decision in this area was made by Boleslaw Drobner, the former President of the city who renamed the pre-war Castle square to the square of Wolnosci (Freedom), because Victory Parade was to be held in this place in May 1945. In June 1945, a Commission was appointed to change the names of the streets. About 1500 streets and squares have received new names in the last two years. Some were simply translated into Polish, for example, Ring – Rynek (Town Square), Neumarkt – Nowy Targ (New Marketplace), Schuhbrücke – Szewska (Shoemaker Street). Streets named in honor of the neighboring towns, which after the war remained in Poland, were not renamed, for example: Grabiszynska, Swidnicka and Opolska.

The above-mentioned streets were politically indifferent and did not cause negative associations. A completely different group were the streets, which names were associated with German history and ideology. Adolf Hitler Strasse, which then was one of the most important communication arteries of the city, disappeared from the city maps in the first phase. In 1945, it was named after Adam Mickiewicz, the great poet and author of the national epic «Pan Tadeusz». In turn, Strasse der SA was renamed to the street of Powstancow Slaskich (Silesian Uprisers), Otto von Bismarck - to Boleslaw the Brave, and Marshal Blucher (commander of the Prussian army in Waterloo) - to Jozef Poniatowski. It should be noted that on the wave of the changes, the names associated with outstanding figures of

German culture, such as Schiller, Bach, Mozart or Gutenberg were also removed [16, p. 285-328]. In 1946, most of the streets and squares of Wroclaw had Polish names, but the progressive political changes in Poland led to the fact that soon the streets got new names.

The next wave of changes took place in the 1950s and was associated with socialist, Communist ideology and the phenomenon of Sovietization. The names of Communist activists or the names related to the Soviet Union and its allies appeared on street signs. Only a few years later, some of them would be removed in the process of «de-Stalinization», especially those that originated from the name of Joseph Stalin.

In the 1950s, there were names related to the labor movement, dedicated to socialist and communist activists. It was the time of Sovietization of place names. At that time, one of the main streets in Wroclaw was named after Stalin; there were squares of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Such traditional names as Swidnicka street (renamed to Stalingradzka), Katowicka (renamed to Stalinogrodzka) or Walbrzyska (renamed to the Polish-Soviet friendship) were changed. It should be noted that Vladimir Lenin never had his street in Wroclaw. Admittedly, there was a proposal to give his name to one of the representative streets, but the idea was not implemented [17, p. 156-157].

In 1953, after the death of Joseph Stalin, came the so-called «Polish October» - a period of liberalization of the political system, changes in the structures of power and domestic policy. The period of de-Stalinization began, which meant the immediate removal of the symbols of the previous period and, consequently, the subsequent renaming of the streets. The streets related to J. Stalin ceased to exist, e.g. Stalin Street. Instead, there appeared the Street of National Unity (the name exists up to now); Stalingradzka Street and Stalinogrodzka were given their old names (Swidnicka, Katowicka) [17, p. 93-95, 156].

The nomenclature of street names according to the political priorities defined in 1945-1956 lasted for more than 30 years until the profound changes and political transformations of 1989. In the period of 1956-1989, new names appeared, but

they were associated either with the expansion of the city or with the desire of the local population who wanted to perpetuate the memory of the outstanding inhabitants of Wrocław. It should be noted that the residents of Wrocław sometimes came up with social initiatives: in the 1980s, for example, the streets were named after Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński and Ignacy Paderewski [17, p. 120-123]. However, those were minor renaming, they did not have a systematic character, although had a symbolic dimension.

Toponymical space changed radically in 1989. Deep political and regime changes led to a new approach to understanding Polish history. At the same time, the deputies of Wrocław appointed a Commission on the street Nomenclature, which work in the coming years led to the change of names of several dozen squares and streets. The new nomenclature was aimed, first, at removing the symbols of the previous period, especially the activists, who were in any way connected with the Communist or socialist movement. It is impossible to describe all these changes, so we just need to look at examples. Marshal Józef Piłsudski square (former Clemens Gottwald) appeared in 1989; in the same year, Felix Dzerzhinsky square changed its name to Dominican square. Friedrich Engels square received the name of St. Matthias, and Karl Marx square was renamed in Strzelecki square. Names popular in Soviet times, such as Clara Zetkin, Karl Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, as well as Gamal Nasser and Patrice Lumumba were eradicated from the streets of Wrocław. The names associated with the Soviet Union were removed, for example, Radziecka Street (Soviet), the Street of Polish-Soviet Friendship or the Soviet Army Street. The streets named after such Soviet personalities as Ivan Konev, Ivan Michurin, Maxim Gorky and Ilya Ehrenburg lost their names. The street names after the Polish activists associated with the Communist movement or government were changed: Wanda Wasilewska, Marian Buczek, Marcei Nowotko, Hanka Sawicka, Julian Marchlewski and many others [18].

The new names are intended to mark events and outstanding figures that have so far been excluded from circulation for

objective or subjective reasons. The streets got names after the Armia Krajowa (People's Army), as well as its commanders and generals - Kazimierz Sosnkowski, Stefan Rowecki, Tadeusz Komorowski, Leopold Okulicki. In the toponymy, there appeared a reflection of past historical periods: Ignacy Daszyński Street, Square Legionów (Square of the Legion), Maciej Miechowski Street, Henryk Probus or Henryk Brodaty Street [17, p. 129-155].

The renaming described above, which took place in the early 1990s, was quick and did not cause any protests. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the history of some renaming, because their modifications have become amazing. The street of Krajowa Rada Narodowej was to be called «Pernikowa» (from the word Piernik – gingerbread), and the Armii Radzieckiej street (Soviet Army Street) was to be renamed to Sezamkowa. Based on some free associations, some deputies stated that on one of the neighboring streets, there was a television building, and then a very popular children's program was called «Sezamkowa Street». Finally, however, the majority voted to rename the Soviet Army Street to Karkonoska<sup>1</sup> [19].

The nomenclature of the streets of Wrocław, approved in the early 1990s, remained until 2017, although for twenty years there were individual renamings. It can be noted as an interesting fact that until 2000, there was a Red Square in Wrocław. One could notice an immediate analogy with the Red Square in Moscow, but the etymology of the Wrocław name is quite vague. This name was probably connected with the color of the bricks from which the buildings on this street were built. Currently, this name no longer exists; more than a dozen years, this has been Plac Solidarności (the Square of Solidarity).

It would seem that the period of de-communization and de-Sovietization in the toponymical space of Polish cities came to an end, but a new ruling party, Law and Justice, which came to power in 2015, brought new changes. In April 2016, the Polish parliament adopted the law on prohibition of propaganda of communism

<sup>1</sup> Karkonosze - nearby mountain range, also known as Krkonose or Giant Mountains

or other totalitarian system in the names of buildings, objects and premises for public use [20]. It obliges cities and municipalities to remove the symbols of the previous system; de facto, it also means the need to change the names of some streets. Local authorities had received time until September 2, 2017 to implement the Law. If they had not fulfilled their duties, then the decision could have been taken by the appropriate Governor.

In some cities of Poland, the implementation of the law has caused a lot of controversy. There are many proposals that cannot be called otherwise as funny or even absurd. During the interview, the city councilman of the Law and Justice Party in Krakow stated that it was important to discuss the renaming of Dworcowa Street (from Polish Dworzec – station). This is one of the most popular street names in the whole country and is usually close to the bus or train station. The need of renaming, as councilman explained, was the fact that Dworcowa street might cause association with the name of Nikolay Dvortsov, the Russian writer, the member of the CPSU (the Communist Party of the Soviet Union).

In Biąka-Nyska in the Opole Voivodeship, the advisers proposed a change of the Czterech Pancernych street (Four Tankmen street), dedicated to one of the most popular Polish TV series («Four Tankmen and a Dog»), arguing that the series promoted a totalitarian regime [21]. However, local protests helped to keep the old name. Similar events took place in several Polish cities.

In Wroclaw, there were few streets covered by the law, but even here, not all renaming took place without controversy. Zygmunt Berling Street was renamed to Helena Motykowny, the Street of May 9 - to May 8, Kujbyszewska Street - to Brzuchowicka Street, and the Armia Ludowa Street (People's Army) - to Danuta Siedzikowna. In December 2017, the Lower Silesian Voivode decided to change Leon Kruczkowski Street to Tadeusz Gajca, and Stanislaw Kulczynski Boulevard to Profesorów Lwowskich Boulevard (Lviv Professors). As in other cities of Poland, in Wroclaw a lot of discussion arose about the

renaming of the Army Ludowej Street [22]. Too controversial was the issue of renaming the Boulevard named after Professor Stanislaw Kulczynski. In 2017, the Institute of National Memory recognized him as a person associated with the totalitarian regime. The academic community of Wroclaw tried to keep the name of the Boulevard. Professor Kulczynski was the first post-war rector of the University of Wroclaw, an outstanding scientist and organizer of scientific life [23].

Kazakhstan has not escaped the processes of active change in the toponymical space. Recent events regarding the speeches of Russian deputies about the territory of Kazakhstan prompted the Kazakh community to recall the lost administrative geographic names. The processes of formation of the national state and nation appeal to the language, history, cultural memory, create new state symbols and new formations. The need to maintain a unified state and the loyalty of the Kazakh society allowed avoiding centrifugal tendencies, while somewhere the ideology of nationalism was born, and there were armed conflicts or civil war.

Kazakhstan is going through the process of self-identification: who are the Kazakhstani, the titular ethnic group or the ethnic minority? In the Kazakh ethnos, there is a hypothetical terminology that can be taken as an identifier: «Nagyzy-Kazakhs» literally means «real Kazakhs», «Shala-Kazakhs» may be interpreted as «half-Kazakhs» and «not real Kazakhs». The difference between them is the level of knowledge of the native language, which does not cause any conflicts. The paradox of the situation is that in the 30th year of sovereignty, we have Kazakhs who do not speak Russian at all, and there are Kazakhs who do not speak Kazakh. However, more and more often we meet ethnic groups living in Kazakhstan, who speak the state language fluently. The Russian language sometimes evokes a negative attitude, it is perceived as a Soviet heritage. At the same time, intra-ethnic stratification does not cause problems; tolerance at the level of mentality is the peculiarity of the Kazakh society. Ethnic groups that live in Kazakhstan, with the prospect of the

future educate their children in Kazakh-language kindergartens and schools.

Sustained state policy on the one hand, and the processes of lingua-spatial globalization on the other, led to the implementation of the Kazakh program of multilingualism. This program does not cause much admiration in society: some people, in view of the implementation of the three-stage Bologna process program, foresee the segregation of society. Reformation of the educational process, according to public officials, should contribute to the formation of cross-cultural and multilingual personality as the basis of a competitive state. At the same time, in the educational sphere there is a trend of decrease in the number of Russian-speaking students. In our opinion, this can be explained by the quote of E. Hobsbawm: «the need for a national language is manifested when ordinary citizens become an important component of the state» [24, p. 51].

It is also important that in Kazakhstan so far all government meetings have been held in Russian, it is very difficult to explain the reason for this fact. The current situation demonstrates that Kazakhstan is making a gradual transition to the Latin alphabet. The first President N. Nazarbayev said: «The process of transition to the Latin alphabet is historically important for our people. At the same time, it is necessary to continue work to improve the status of the Kazakh language. The activities of the Parliament and the government shall be carried out in the state language...» [25]. The phrase of the President caused a dual reaction of the community; on the one hand, the people supported, on the other hand, the apparatus of officials who do not know the Kazakh language perfectly felt uncomfortable. Obviously, political trends are reflected in the toponymic space of Kazakhstan, which is shown below on the example of the city of Ust-Kamenogorsk.

The city of Ust-Kamenogorsk has the status of the regional center of East Kazakhstan with the features inherent only to it.

1) An important factor was the presence of industrial facilities in the city, which in Soviet times had Union significance and, accordingly, Union subordination bypassing the government of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic.

2) With the population at the beginning of 2016/2020:

Total-333026/346127 (city administration);

Among them:

Kazakhs -134898/158097;

Russians-186231/176600;

Germans – 2687/2557;

Tatars -2574/2539;

Ukrainians – 1,734;

Other - all remaining ethnic groups-less than 1,000.<sup>2</sup>

Ust-Kamenogorsk has always been considered a Russified city, the Russian population has always prevailed over the Kazakh population. Public opinion continues to maintain the residual mood of the previous time, and even in the conditions of sovereign development, Russian-speaking residents of Ust-Kamenogorsk do not feel infringement of their rights. This naturally left its mark on the history of toponymical space.

3) Kazakhs, the indigenous people of Ust-Kamenogorsk, do not speak their native language sufficiently; the majority of citizens communicate in Russian.

4) Among the Kazakh population living in Ust-Kamenogorsk, there are hidden contradictions between local urban Kazakhs, rural Kazakhs who moved from rural areas and Kazakhs repatriates (oralmans); in contrast to the latter group, the first two are united.

The trend of nation building in Kazakhstan was the change of toponymical space in favor of historical personalities of khans, biys, batyrs, and political leaders. In the historical, geographical and territorial space of Kazakhstan, one can see the elements of historical and toponymical tribalism. On February 6, 2014 year N. Nazarbayev, the Head of the state announced the idea of renaming Kazakhstan to «Kazak Eli» - «the country of Kazakhs» [26]. The idea carried only an element of discourse, but caused a stir in social networks.

History is being created before our eyes through the formation of a memorial identity, where we attribute the memorialization of

<sup>2</sup> Note: Statistical data are given from the Bulletin of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan of the East-Kazakhstan region.



national dates and memorable places. However, the formation of civil-memorial identity is not reflected in the toponymical space, as previously observed in the Soviet period.

The first toponymical and visual changes concerned the names bearing the political history and ideology of the Soviet time; first of all they were associated with the name of Lenin.

Modern Ust-Kamenogorsk is no exception of total renaming of the streets; the problem of urban names is typical for all Kazakhstan cities. Soviet reality has left identical names, reflecting the history of the Soviet past, particularly in all towns and cities there were streets named after Lenin. In Ust-Kamenogorsk, there are many place names testifying to the turbulent revolutionary events – the street named after Ya. Usanov, first Chairman of the Soviet of Deputies (former Nicholskaya), now Kazakhstan Street. It is amazing, but by 2017, the city kept streets named after K. Voroshilov, Dzerzhinsky, Sergei Kirov, and Ordzhonikidze. They were renamed in 2018.

The lexical and semantic content of the streets in Ust-Kamenogorsk to some extent reflected the epoch-making events and high-profile names. In the city, there is a side street named after A. Vyshinsky, but few people know that it was the chief Prosecutor in the political processes of the 30s of the last century; there were streets of K. Marx, Komsomolskaya, Krasnopartizanskaya, etc. The names reflected the essence of the revolutionary ideology: the document defining the attitude of the Soviet government to the content of urban and rural place names was the decree «On the monuments of the Republic», published in 1918. It indicated the need to replace the inscriptions, street names, changing emblems and coats of arms to new, «reflecting the ideas and feelings of revolutionary laborist Russia» [27, p. 96].

The names of the streets carry a historical, geographical, professional, technical and anthroponomical content. Given that Ust-Kamenogorsk is an industrial city, in the names of streets present the working-factory color, such as, Zavodskaya (Factory

Street), Mashinostroiteley (Engineering Street), Kuznechnaya (Blacksmith Street), Industrialnaya, Promyshlennaya (Industrial Street), Metallurgist Street, Motovoznaya, Ballisticheskaya, Greidernaya Street; there was a Metallurgist Village. Some streets reflect the history of agriculture: Kolkhoznaya (Collective Farm Street), Sovkhoznaya (State Farm Street), etc. It can be noted while comparing the street names that there is a very small percentage of the so-called educational and cultural streets – Muzeynaya (Museum Street), Festivalnaya (Festival Street), Uchitelskaya (Teacher Street), Khudozhestvennaya (Art Street), Solnechnaya (Sunny Street).

In 2005, the government of Kazakhstan adopted the «Concept of state onomastic work in the Republic of Kazakhstan», according to which the old historical geographical names were to be restored and the endless replication of the same names in the names of streets and villages would be excluded.

It can be mentioned that the transformation of names carries a political character, relates to events and personalities. The first two intersect to some extent, complementing each other, which is clearly noticeable by the appearance of the streets of Kazakhstan, Astana, and Independence.

In November 1958, a monument to Lenin was erected in Lenin square. It is worth noting that in 1991, there were about 500 monuments to Lenin throughout Kazakhstan. In 2009, the vacant place was given to Abai Kunanbayev, the national poet from East Kazakhstan, who is especially revered among the people. One of the central streets of the city, which started from Ushanov Square up to the crossing with Bazhov Street, named after the Great Russian writer Leo Tolstoy, was renamed to Lenin Street. In 2007, the street received a new name, reflecting the history of sovereign Kazakhstan – it became known as Independence Street.

In 1918, the Soviet power was established in Ust-Kamenogorsk. The first Chairman of the Soviets was Yakov Ushanov. The street and the square got his name; the latter retained its name, but the street became known as Kazakhstan Street.

Along the flow of the Ulba River, which divides the city into two districts, there was a street with a poetic and absolutely neutral name, far from politics – Solnechnaya (Sunny Street). To the general discontent of the residents of this street, it was named Astana Street.

New street names reflecting the past of the city are not connected with politicization and old Soviet ideology. The history of Ust-Kamenogorsk is connected with many people who made a special contribution to its development, such as Alexander Protozanov, former first Secretary of the East Kazakhstan regional Committee of the Communist party. The embankment of the Red Eagles was later named after him. In the city there was Patrise Lumumba Street, named after the national hero of the Congo; today it is called Potanin Street in honor of the former Director of the UMZ (Ulba metallurgical plant), and the Irtysh embankment - in memory of E. Slavsky, the Soviet Minister of medium engineering.

There appeared the street of Kasym Kaysenov, in honor of the hero of the Great Patriotic War from East Kazakhstan. The Avenue of Textile workers was named in honor of Kanysh Satpayev, the first Chairman of the Academy of Sciences of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic; Ermak Street, after the conqueror of Siberia was renamed in honor of Zhakypbek Maldybayev, the first Kazakh pilot.

Ust-Kamenogorsk also has the street named after Batyr-Kabanbai, who defended the independence of the Kazakh khanate in the fight against Dzungars.

The visual space of Ust-Kamenogorsk is gradually changing; it reflects the ideology of the sovereign period and carries ethnic semantics, which is quite natural on the one hand, and contradictory on the other.

## Conclusion

The problem of new street names and the change of old ones is typical for the entire post-Soviet space; it is a natural phenomenon, the consequence of national freedom and democracy. The boom of renaming covered not only Wroclaw,

but also Ust-Kamenogorsk. The concept of a toponym is so dynamic that today it sometimes lacks semantic content and meaning.

The toponymical space of Wroclaw and Ust-Kamenogorsk overly diverse; the nomenclature of the streets carried the geographic or topographic characteristics, there were names associated with the plant or animal world, with the events, personalities, professions and other spheres of society and state.

It is impossible to consider all toponymical names and draw parallels from the past to the future. Particular attention was paid to the names with anthroponomical content. Perhaps they best illustrate the attitude to history, note the characters important to the nation and to the local community. In this group in Wroclaw, the most numerous are people of science, then poets and writers, former rulers, soldiers and generals. In Ust-Kamenogorsk, most of the names have sovereign symbols, sovereign stage, or relate to historical personalities of the distant and close past. If in the names of the streets of Wroclaw you can see a confessional shade, i.e. there are names of priests and saints, in Kazakhstan there is no religious semantics, although the Catholic and Muslim faith is a traditional phenomenon in the social life of both Polish people and Kazakhs. It is gratifying that the Polish and Kazakh people are united by respect for people of art, personalities who have made a significant contribution to the development of the city, which is reflected in the commemorative plaques. Anthroponyms constitute almost 25% of all of the names of streets and squares in Wroclaw [28], and about the same amount in Ust-Kamenogorsk.

In our opinion, the urban names should only cause positive reactions, reflect the historical content, bring functional, educational value. If in the Soviet period of history our streets reflected political ideologies, now streets are often named after people – bearing the shade of tribalism, i.e. they have anthropological function. At the present stage of development of the urban names of Ust-Kamenogorsk, administrative motivation prevails in renaming.

The connecting thread that unites Wroclaw and Ust-Kamenogorsk was the «Soviet era» and

the processes of eradication of Soviet ideologies and constructs.

The toponymical and visual space of these cities is sometimes a theater of absurdity: the desire to abandon the Communist heritage is so great that the administration does not notice the personal toponymy. As, for example, a resident of Wrocław, passing through the streets of the city of Ust-Kamenogorsk, would probably be very much surprised by the existence of such streets as K. Voroshilov Street, S. Kirov Street, G. Ordzhonikidze Street, G. Dzerzhinsky Street, M. Gorky Street, Stakhanovskaya or Oktyabrskaya Street.

If you look more broadly at the toponymical space, not only through the focus of street names, but through monumental culture, you can see completely incomprehensible monuments for a Wrocław resident, such as the monument to S. Kirov or the alley of monuments of the Soviet period (including the monument to Lenin) in the left-bank part of the city .

Poland is characterized by a radical solution to the struggle with the Soviet monumental culture: the government decided to demolish the monuments of the Soviet era, including plaques, columns, sculptures and statues. The Polish Foreign Ministry stressed that the country wants to break with the symbols of the totalitarian regime, which brought «a lot of suffering» to both the Polish and the Russian people [29].

Old street names still exist in the public sphere of Ust-Kamenogorsk: in daily conversations or on old plaques (for example, the aforementioned Lenin). In opposition to this example, the existing German inscriptions on old apartment buildings would probably surprise a resident of Ust-Kamenogorsk in Wrocław.

In both cities, in the process of renaming streets, administrative zeal sometimes prevails; the process of renaming streets is often initiated from the top down, rather than from the bottom up. Sometimes residents accept it with reluctance. An example is the already mentioned Boulevard of Professor Kuchinsky or the Street of the People's Army in Wrocław, and in Ust-Kamenogorsk – Krasnyh Orlov Embankment

(the Embankment of Red Eagles) or Solnechnaya Street.

In both cities, some streets received new names by translation into national languages. In Wrocław, or more widely in the Western lands, the so-called process of «polonization» took place already in 1945-1946; many street names were transferred from German to Polish. The authorities tried to maintain their original meaning.

In Ust-Kamenogorsk and the East-Kazakhstan region, some of the streets and names of nearby cities and towns were Kazakhized much later, in the 1990s. It is interesting, however, that the translation in both cases took place with incidents and problems. In Wrocław, there are still streets, e.g. Penkna, which were probably the result of a lack of understanding of the real source of the name. Penkna is the former Schönstraße, in honor of Heinrich Theodor von Schön, Prussian minister [30, p. 188-189].

In turn, in Ust-Kamenogorsk, there are names that only old-timers can explain, such as for example Ablaketka, KShT (Silk Fabric Factory), and the appearance of new street names does not prevent anybody from using their old names. The city has amazing names, nicknames, such as the «Gemini Tower».

We are witnessing the trend of renaming Ust-Kamenogorsk to the Kazakh version of Oskemen, which is not very popular with the locals, as well as the renaming of the city of Semipalatinsk to Semey.

Cinema names once existed in Ust-Kamenogorsk were given to the bus stops located nearby: «Kazakhstan», «Orlyonok» and «Mir» («Peace»). Now, respectively, they bear other names - «Auezov», «Altai», except for «Kazakhstan».

Thus, cardinal changes occur in the toponymical space of Wrocław and Ust-Kamenogorsk. Soviet history, visually reflected in the names of streets, monuments, and public gardens disappears. We are witnessing an active process of de-Russification and ethnicization of toponymy: we bid our farewell to the Soviet legacy. Poland and Kazakhstan finally parted ways with the Soviet past.



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### **Вроцлав және Өскемен XX– XXI ғасырлар аралығында: тарихи жад және қала кеңістігі**

**Аңдатпа.** Еуропадағы социалистік лагердің саяси картадан (кеңестік елдердің Шығыс блогы) ыдырауы мен жоғалуы саяси оппозицияның жандануына және коммунистік ықпалдан тыс мемлекеттердің қатынастарының жаңа форматын құруға серпін берді. Осындай үдерістер КСРО аумағында орын алды, коммунистік идеологияның жойылуы ұлттыққа дейінгі мүдделерге алып келді, мұның өзі егеменді ше-румен және тәуелсіз мемлекеттік құрылымдардың, соның ішінде Қазақстанның құрылуымен аяқталды. Ұсынылып отырған зерттеудің мақсаты кеңестік тарихпен қоштасу ретінде Вроцлав (Польша) және Өскемен (Қазақстан) топонимикалық кеңістігіндегі коммунистік идеологияның ауысуының көрінісін көрсету болып табылады.

Вроцлав (Польша) және Өскемен (Қазақстан) қалаларын зерттеу объектісі, зерттеу пәні визуалды және топонимикалық қалалық кеңістікті трансформациялау. Антропонимикалық мазмұны бар атауларға ерекше назар аударылды.

Зерттеу нәтижесінде авторлар қалалар мен мемлекеттер арасындағы қашықтыққа қарамастан, олардың арасында ортақ өткен нәрсе бар деген қорытындыға келді. Вроцлав пен Өскеменді біріктіретін байланыстырушы жіп «Кеңестік дәуір» және кеңестік идеологемалар мен конструкторларды жою процестері болды. Қалалардың тарихи топонимикасында Кеңес мемлекетінің саяси идеологиясы, оқиғалардың өзіндік белгілері, коммунистік режимнің қалыптасуының тұлғалары болды. Декоммунизация және десоветизация процестері жаңару мен трансформация идеологиясын, Кеңес империясының визуалды жадын жойды. Қазақстанда да, Польшада да топонимикалық кеңістік жаңа есімдерге ие болды, бұрын ұлттық тарихтан сызылып тасталған тарихи оқиғалардың кезеңдерін көрсетті. Егер Қазақстандағы топонимикалық революция егемен мемлекетті бейнелесе, онда Польшада бұл тарихи– мәдени реңк болғанын атап өткен жөн.

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Авторлар қаланың урбанонимдері тек оң реакциялар туғызуы, тарихи мазмұнын көрсетуі, функционалды, тәрбиелік мәні болуы керек деп санайды.

**Түйін сөздер:** Топонимика; кеңістік; қала; идеология; коммунизм; ұлттық идея; тарихнама; жад; саясат.

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### **Вроцлав и Усть-Каменогорск на рубеже XX– XXI веков: историческая память и городское пространство**

**Аннотация.** Распад и исчезновение с политической карты социалистического лагеря (Восточный блок просоветских стран) в Европе послужили толчком к активизации политической оппозиции и созданию нового формата отношений государств вне коммунистического влияния. Аналогичные процессы произошли на территории СССР, исчезновение коммунистической идеологии обусловило национальные интересы, что завершилось суверенным парадом и созданием независимых государственных образований, в том числе и Казахстана. Цель предлагаемого исследования видится в том, чтобы показать отражение смены коммунистической идеологии в топонимическом пространстве городов Вроцлав (Польша) и Усть-Каменогорск (Казахстан) как прощание с советской историей.

Объект исследования - города Вроцлав (Польша) и Усть-Каменогорск (Казахстан), предмет исследования - трансформация визуального и топонимического городского пространства. Особое внимание было уделено названиям с антропонимическим содержанием.

В результате проведенного исследования авторы пришли к выводу, что, несмотря на столь удаленное расстояние между городами и государствами, между ними существует общее прошлое. Связующей нитью, объединяющей Вроцлав и Усть-Каменогорск, явилась «советская эпоха» и процессы искоренения советских идеологем и конструктов. В исторической топонимике городов лежала политическая идеология советского государства, своего рода маркеры событий, персоналий становления коммунистического режима. Процессы декоммунизации и десоветизации несли в себе идеологию обновления и трансформации, уничтожения визуальной памяти советской империи. Топонимическое пространство как в Казахстане, так и в Польше обрело новые имена, отразило веки исторических событий, ранее вычеркнутых из национальной истории. Важно отметить, что если топонимическая революция в Казахстане отражала суверенное состояние, то в Польше это был ярко выраженный историко-культурный оттенок.

Авторы полагают, что урбанонимы города должны вызывать лишь положительные реакции, отражать историческое содержание, нести функциональное, воспитательное значение.

**Keywords:** топонимика; пространство; город; идеология; коммунизм; национальная идея; историческоеписание; память; политика.

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