

This video is a transcript of a conversation focused on the historical analysis of urban management and renaming of streets in Shanghai post-1949, particularly under the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime. The speaker, a historian specializing in communist China, discusses their research motivations, which revolve around the social and cultural impacts of the 1949 revolution and the transformation of Shanghai.

The speaker explains that much of the historical scholarship has focused on political events and harsh realities, such as mass campaigns and consolidating power. However, their work aims to uncover a new perspective that looks at people's lived experiences during these transformative times, particularly regarding urban management, and the significance of road naming as a representation of societal power dynamics.

The discussion reveals that after the revolution, there was a complex interplay between the desire for radical change (a cultural revolution) and the need for stability and modernization. The speaker mentions efforts to rename streets as part of broader modernization and production priorities rather than purely ideological motives.

Key historical moments discussed include:

- The initial gradualism in policies post-revolution.
- The dramatic shift towards radical policies during the Great Leap Forward.
- The chaotic street renaming campaigns led by Red Guards during the Cultural Revolution.

The speaker concludes by emphasizing the need for future research on how urban naming affects people's experiences in cities and how the management of city names reflects broader governance issues in contemporary China, which houses a vast and populous urban landscape.