Urban Discourse: City space, city language, city planning

Eco-semiotic approaches to planning urban sustainability (with a look at the current transformation of the Tempelhof airport into a refugee camp)

Humanities Research Centre Seminar
Tuesday 29 November 2016, 4.15 – 5.30pm

Speaker
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Sustainable urban planning is to be understood as a communicative process, which interlinks city architecture, technology, city district management and social infrastructure of neighbourhoods. The focus on sustainability brings up the question of under which discourse conditions architects and city planners can get into conversation with other urban actors, citizens, local administrators and politicians, and which cultural heritage should be preserved. Looking at the style of discourse in urban communication brings also its socio-cultural modalities into focus. In the intersection of communication and discourse studies, urban ecology and sociology, this paper picks up on the new interest in architectural communication and, taking current approaches as a starting point, seeks to clarify which conversational maxims and discourse requirements by mediation, moderation, and integration are promising for achieving a new urban quality. It concludes by taking a look at the current transformation of the historical Tempelhof airport (once planned as the largest airport in the world) into a refugee camp.

Ernest W.B. Hess-Lüttich is Professor Emeritus of German (Language and Literature) at the University of Berne (Switzerland), Hon. Prof. at the Technical University Berlin, and Hon. Prof. Extraordinary at the University of Stellenbosch (South Africa). His main areas of research are dialogue analysis and discourse studies in various fields of theory and application. He has published some 60 books and more than 350 scholarly articles in journals and books.

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