An onomasiological perspective on semantic change

The regularity of semantic change - the existence of substantive patterns in the semantic evolution of expressions - is a central topic in contemporary diachronic semantics. Originating in lexical research (as in Sweetser 1990, *From etymology to pragmatics*), it currently appears in different forms in grammaticalization research, diachronic conceptual metaphor theory, lexical typology, and computational diachronic semantics. Against the predominant tendency to formulate the 'laws of semantic change' from a semasiological perspective, I will suggest that the explanation of semantic change and the detection of regularities may be better served by an onomasiological orientation. This will include a.o. a discussion of the Invited Inferencing Model of semantic change (Traugott & Dasher 2005, *Regularity in semantic change*), and an overview of the onomasiological lines of research that I developed with my associates in the wake of Geeraerts 1997, *Diachronic Prototype Semantics*. The talk will focus on lexical issues, with a brief excursion to alternation studies in construction grammar research.