

**A cognitive semiotics approach to the analysis of graffiti  
implementing GIS technique.  
The case of Athens 2014 – 2017**

**Abstract**

This paper is part of my ongoing PhD research project “Rhetorical Figures in Graffiti” at Lund University. In this presentation, I focus upon the role of graffiti and street art creating the image of Athens. A diachronic approach is followed, focusing on the influence of digitization on the practices of graffiti. The data used in this preliminary case study is derived from two periods: Athens 2014-2015 (Stampoulidis 2016) and contemporary Athens 2016-Spring 2017. Within this context, I propose to discuss two questions: 1) What are the most usual types of rhetorical figures (Sonesson 2008) in the two graffiti corpora, and 2) Whether the change in the nature of the economic and sociopolitical crisis has affected the types of figures found. Some concrete examples indicating these attempts will be discussed and analyzed semiotically.

The main methodological contribution of this study is to build a database for gathering, analyzing and visualizing the data with the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) technique (Longley 2015). By plotting the photographs geographically on a digital map with filterable categories, I will be able to show how the different tag categories such as language, colour, type of dominant sign relation - iconic, indexical, conventional (Peirce 1958; Sonesson 2013b), and rhetorical figures (Sonesson 2008) coexist.

**Keywords:** graffiti, visual rhetoric, semiotics, GIS, Athens

**References**

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**Bionote**

Georgios Stampoulidis is a PhD candidate in Cognitive Semiotics at Lund University, Sweden. Starting out from Greek philology and general linguistics, the last years his research interests are in the fields of semiotics, multimodality, and GIS methodology. He has been concerned with Athenian graffiti and street art as a verbovisual medium of inter-communication. During his PhD studies, he is going to study visual rhetoric in graffiti through the prism of “The Crisis of European Identity” considering graffiti a genre of sociopolitical discourse. His publications include “HOPE WANTED. Wall Writing Protests in times of Economic Crisis in Athens” (Lund University Press 2016) and “Rethinking Athens as Text: The Linguistic Context of Athenian Graffiti during the Crisis” (Journal of Language Works 2016).