

Title: Urban inscription is not only about counter-culture; new voices spread through a whole country

Subtitle: The case of *Yellow Stars* as a legalized protest against deadly traffic accidents in Argentina

This presentation focuses on a specific type of urban intervention: the painting of Yellow Stars in highways along the whole of Argentina, wherever a mortal car accident has occurred. In the year 2008, a civil association began to protest in this specific way against how people drive in Argentina and painting under this cause became legalized.

The aim of attending to this case is to present a form of expression that is spreading, one that represents not a subculture but a larger social group: occupying the streets to claim a political or social debt from society, and that unifies the whole country under a single flag. Between 2008 and 2017, over 10500 Stars have been painted all over Argentina.

In the past 40 years, graffiti has been associated to a myriad of themes, most of them counter-cultural, at least in their beginnings. The main topics graffiti goes around include art, street culture, political protest and even anarchism. However, lately graffiti has become so ubiquitous that it causes a certain normalizing effect: the public already acknowledges that graffiti exists, and that it points city dwellers in a certain direction: creating different types of subcultures and counter-cultural movements.

Urban signage on the other hand, has in general been controlled by the state. The social innovation in this case is how citizens take hands in the matter to literally change what freeways and streets look like. Each time a driver or a passer-by goes past a non-state "Yellow Star" he, or she, may act differently than if there were no signage at all. The presence of painted "Yellow Stars" is a public's claim for order, in an orderless environment. Hence, it is an urban intervention --a graffiti-- that goes beyond the classical political contents against specific government administrations, beyond art, and occupies the streets to defend an idea for a different society, with fewer deaths by car "accidents".

Urban inscriptions can impulse social change, adaptation, new ways of driving and walking on a large scale as well.

1. Details of the session to which the abstract is submitted: session title, session number and session convenors.

2. Street art, graffiti, and urban interventions: Inscriptions of 'crisis' in public space

Myrto Tsilimpounidi, Institute for Sociology of the Slovak Academy of Sciences myrtotsil@gmail.com

Anna Carastathis, Independent Researcher acarastathis@gmail.com

2. The focus:

- Themes: urban interventions, urban signage, deadly traffic accidents, civil association.
- Underlying hypothesis. Urban inscriptions can impulse social change, not only for a subgroup, but on a large scale.
- Empirical and/or theoretical basis. The case of Yellow Stars in Argentina 2008-2017
- Structure of the paper.
 - Yellow Stars: the specific case
 - A specific form of expression that unifies across the country
 - Different unfoldings of urban interventions along the past decades
 - The normalizing aspect in graffiti
 - The grey area between street culture and state inscriptions
 - The new area of inscription by a civil association
 - The widening of scope that the previous implies for urban studies

3. Word count: 300-500 words [366].

4. The contact of the author(s): Name(s), affiliation(s), address (including postcode), a phone number (will not be made public) and an e-mail address.

Benjamin Juarez.

Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios sobre Cultura y Sociedad,
CIECS-CONICET, Córdoba, Argentina.

Crisol 305 6º B,

+54 9 351 310-4043,

benjij_1980@yahoo.com