

Graffiti, street art and the divergent synthesis of place valorisation in contemporary urbanism

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Place valorisation and divergent synthesis

What is the role and function of graffiti and street art in the context of larger contemporary urban transformations? In the course of the last fifteen years or so, graffiti art has received unprecedented attention from mainstream cultural institutions, ranging from local municipality arts services and grant schemes to major contemporary arts museums. At the same time, street art – or what is sometimes referred to as ‘post-graffiti’ (Manco 2002) – has moved closer than before to the contemporary art system. To various extents and not without contradictory or even paradoxical outcomes, both graffiti and street art have been increasingly associated with thrilling lifestyles, urban creativity, fashionable outfits and hip neighbourhoods. The value attributed to these expressions as well as the urban places where they occur has changed accordingly (e.g. Dickens 2010). Rather than merely value-neutral (invisible) or necessarily value-detracting (supravisible) as before, now graffiti and even more pronouncedly street art can be value-bestowing (visible). Visibility means they have turned into recognisable and in some cases much sought-for items in the urban landscape. Yet, because visibility is never straightforwardly linked to value (Brighenti 2010a), some additional considerations are needed to make sense of the dynamic at stake.

The notion of ‘place valorisation’ could be usefully developed. Valorisation is the process whereby entities – places included – are bestowed a certain *value*. This notion can be traced back to Marx, who employed the term *Verwertung*. In the first volume of *The Capital*, Marx (1867: §§3–7) outlines three different money-commodity (M-C) circuits, namely C-M-C, M-C-M and M-C-M’. While the first circuit represents pre-capitalist economy (i.e. money only appears as a link between commodities: One sells a commodity only to purchase another one), the second represents early modern mercantilism (money frees itself from any absolute dependence on commodities and turns into a universal circulatory medium, into ‘exchange value’). But, Marx notices, from the point of view of the merchant who buys and sells, it would not make sense to let money go into a purchase if not in order to have it back in *increased*

measure through a sale. This realisation (the coming about of the third circuit, where $M' > M$), marks precisely, passage to actual capitalism. For Marx, the exchange-based view of classical economic theory cannot really explain what he calls the ‘trick’ of value increase entailed by $M-C-M'$. The circulatory exchange paradigm fails to explain the creation of value because it is inherently based on a principle of generalised equivalence, while in fact value is created in ‘the background’ of circulation, that is, in the process of *production*.

Two essential ideas can be retained from Marx in this regard: First, value *changes*, and cannot but change (prices, incomes and profits go up and down); second, value *metamorphoses*, and cannot but metamorphose (even bare economic value always necessarily incorporates additional social dimensions, such as labour). What the above points to, is that *value* functions as a ‘polymorphous magical substance’ – to borrow a phrase Michael Taussig (2009: 40) uses to elaborate an anthropological take on *colour*. Although the economic side of value is the easiest to grasp, the anthropological phenomenon of value is far from being a merely economic one. In fact, there cannot be a valorisation which is only economic. Valorisation processes are complex, multifaceted, inherently unstable dynamics of *production, circulation and transmutation*. In the case of urban places, the sheer economic side of value (building prices and land revenue) actually precipitates and condenses a number of scattered, *convergent or divergent*, social forces which include discourses, repertoires, representations, imaginaries, reputations, judgments, position-takings, conflicts, negotiations, resistances, justifications and so on. In the valorisation of a place such as a neighbourhood, a square, a park, a building, an alley or a metro station, the production, circulation and transmutation of all these items is as important as the production, circulation and transmutation of material commodities in the analysis carried out by Marx in the mid-nineteenth century.

‘Convergent or divergent’ is an essential qualification, too. Indeed, at the outset, an apparent progressive ‘integration’ of graffiti and street art into the mainstream has been highlighted. But this is at best only part of the story. More precisely, the hypothesis I am submitting is that, presently, with graffiti and street art we are facing different, *impossible (i.e. mutually exclusive) yet simultaneous* processes of place valorisation. The notion that may help to understand this is ‘disjunctive synthesis’ (Deleuze 1969). Perhaps, the term *diavolution* (Brighenti 2008) could also be employed, although it would call for a longer explanation which is not possible to unfold here. In his ‘logic of sense’ Deleuze observes that we usually imagine disjunction as merely negative, that is, as synonymous with the reciprocal exclusion of the alternatives. This is because we associate affirmation with identity and the suppression of difference. But, Deleuze suggests, *affirmation* may also proceed *through difference*, that is, without being subsumed under identity. In this case, we do not have simply a coincidence of the opposed terms (*coincidentia oppositorum*), rather,

we are faced with a positive distance of different elements [*des différents*]: no longer to identify two contraries with the same, but to affirm their distance as that which relates one to the other insofar as they are different [*ce qui les rapporte l'un à l'autre en tant que « différents »*]. The idea of a positive distance as distance (and not as an annulled or overcome distance) appears to us essential, since it permits the measuring of contraries through their finite difference instead of equating difference with a measureless contrariety, and contrariety with an identity which is itself infinite [*une identité elle-même infinie*].

(Deleuze 1969: 202; English ed. 1990: 172–73)

Instead of ruling each other out, assimilation and deviance proceed hand in hand, precisely thanks to a sort of ‘positive distance’ – where ‘positive’ carries no moral or axiological

signification and rather hints at a certain possibility of practical commensuration. Applied to social reality, the disjunctive synthesis stands in opposition to what is usually referred to as 'integration', regardless of whether we understand it as social (agent) or system (structural) integration (Archer 1996). The disjunctive synthesis, in other words, excludes the 'measured' yet for some reasons insipid and unsatisfactory recipe of integration – insipid and unsatisfactory according to current social practice, not to the theorist's taste. Properly speaking, graffiti and street art are not being integrated, tolerated, accepted or recognised by the cultural and economic establishment. Rather, integration is surpassed in both opposite directions, i.e. simultaneously towards expulsion *and* capture, or re-inscription.

Expulsion, capture, re-inscription: Urban eventfulness as a counter-measure of valorisation

On the one side, attention on the part of cultural institutions such as museums and festivals has not turned graffiti into an accepted practice. Quite on the contrary, in many instances graffiti continues to be banished from the range of acceptable conducts. This is particularly evident if we consider teenage graffiti writers and the production of a series of 'excessive events' (Pavoni 2013).¹ Since the mid-2000s, for instance, emergency brake graffiti writing 'attacks' on metro and commuters trains have appeared and risen. These actions, carried out by teenager crews have spread all over the world by copycat effect – from Melbourne, through Moscow, to Milan (e.g. Kobyscha 2013; Ten News 2013; Santucci and Stella 2014). Such spectacular actions performed by stopping trains in operation with passengers on board can be even watched online, filmed as they are by writers themselves or captured by CCTV security systems and leaked to the media. The hedonistic thrill of emergency-braked train writing would be framed by criminologists as a 'seduction of crime' (Katz 2008), or as 'ungovernable desires' (Halsey and Young 2006). Meanwhile the mainstream media present the perpetrators as 'extreme vandals', if not 'enemies of society'. It is noteworthy that these actions are met not only with the usual indignation traditionally raised by graffiti, but with an outspoken hatred which makes the 1980s–1990s US climate of the 'war on graffiti' (Austin 2001) now understandable to the European public. The language used in the news media coverage of these events not only includes words like 'hooligans' and 'gangs', but stretches to the paramilitary 'commando'. In Italy, the politically-charged term 'squadrisimo', with reference to the punitive squads of early 1920s Fascism, has been evoked by media commentators (even though these writers do not have explicit political motivations whatsoever, and the content of their graffiti is not at all political, least right-winged). In Germany, to provide another example, the pragmatic attitude of Deutsche Bahn, Germany's national railway company, has been to apply a warfare frame, testing flying drones capable of catching train writers on the spot (BBC News 2013).²

On the other side, as anticipated, street art – or 'post-graffiti' as it is sometimes referred to, remarking its descent (albeit a nonlinear one) from traditional graffiti – is increasingly ingrained in the official presentation of urban places. London for instance can no longer be imaged globally without Banksy. Not only have this artist's images become an unmistakable component of tourist paraphernalia, but his actual artworks have undergone instant museification (the artist, who is a communication genius, has also played skilfully with this). As well documented by Alison Young (2014: 147–50), Banksy stencils on the street have been put under Plexiglas to shield them, stolen from their original locations (sometimes removing the whole wall, as one would do in the case of an ancient fresco) only to be sold illegally on eBay and/or at art auctions, and even in some cases restored *qua* common heritage. From this point of view, the relation London entertains with Banksy is not so dissimilar from the relation Padua entertains with Giotto. Even

market targets need not be different, considering that street art tours appear to have turned into a settled form of ‘territorial marketing’. Additionally, cities around the world have sanctioned street art with festivals, urban events, special projects, exhibitions, calls, collections, conservation programmes and so on. To mention just one case, a graffiti collection is present at the recently inaugurated Mediterranean Civilisations Museum in Marseille which, as the website proudly states, was started ‘before the market craze of art [sic] for this type of works’ (Mucem 2013).³ Even apart from devoted collections, increasingly major contemporary art museums have at least one piece of street art in their collections.

How can we explain the coexistence of such synthetically diverging valorisation circuits? The ‘positive distance’ between the two circuits can be related to a certain entwining of *excess* and *measure* that is inherent in current valorisation processes. In the early 2000s, for instance, the excitement about the latest generation of street art – the one that actually ‘made it’ out of the underground – was due to its being unexpected, provocative, disordered, proliferating. Like graffiti in the early 1970s, early 2000s street art positioned itself and was received as an ‘excessive event’ capable of changing the established measure of urban space. Graffiti was excessive because it refused to be contained within the allotted places for art (Austin 2001). But, excess also appears to be a more general feature of contemporary urbanism (Pavoni 2013). Taking capitalist production and consumption into account may explain why. Following Deleuze and Guattari (1972), capitalism works on the *fringe of decoding* where previously coded social relations are untied and made immanent.⁴ It is from this point of view that excess holds a function and has a place in the valorisation process. In its attempt to attain always higher quantities of profit and attest always new levels of valorisation, the capital must also pass through a series of transmutations. In the terms introduced above, (quantitative) change cannot happen without (qualitative) metamorphosis. Excessive disorder manifests one such metamorphosis. Consequently, there exists an undistinguished zone between the imperative of ‘performativity’, the rhetoric of the ‘cutting-edge’, the celebration of ‘urban creativity’, the aesthetic of the ‘gritty’ or ‘dodgy’ area, the flow of ‘grime’ music⁵ and the alternative aesthetic of ‘subversion’. Clearly, these phenomena are different: There is a positive distance between them. Yet, simultaneously, it is impossible to draw a sharp line between them. Precisely, they form the environment or milieu of a divergent synthesis.

The ‘event’ embodies a challenge to established social relations and, inherently, lies at the origin of every valorisation, due precisely to the metamorphic nature of value described above. In the case of urban space, street art can be seen as a movement that has inscribed such ‘eventfulness’ into the city. The specific territorialisation processes at play can be observed only through in-depth ethnographic studies. With their ‘spot theory’, Ferrell and Weide (2010) have captured perfectly the logic of visibility that regulates the micro-spatial choices of writers and artists. Similarly, street art aficionados are sensitive to the specific location and emplacement of the pieces. For instance, Young (2014: 96–97) has described beautifully the sense of loss she felt when she realised that a specific situational artwork she was heading to had been buffed. She states:

Several years later I’m still struck by the depth of the loss I experienced. It was more than a momentary than a momentary flicker of disappointment, more than a sense of annoyance at my objective being thwarted. I actually felt quite disoriented – I found myself looking around, as though the image might have migrated somewhere else. I felt saddened by its disappearance, and the same feeling resurfaces now, when I think about those blank panels.

The situatedness of street art, its ‘territoriality’ (Brighenti 2010b), turns the modern city into a multiplicity of unique intensive encounters. Nonetheless, place valorisation applies to not only

the specific spots where graffiti is placed. Just like in the case of music scenes, when it comes to the larger valorisation circuit, the concerned spaces involve those streets, neighbourhoods and districts perceived as the ‘authentic places’ of the movement. Eventually, these areas tend to coincide with the places where street art shops, cafes, gatherings and venues are. In the mid-term, one might expect that the zones valorised as street art districts are not necessarily those where cutting edge street art pieces currently are. The networked online circulation of images also contributes to such multiplication of territories. In this sense, Zukin (2010) has outlined a ‘paradox of authenticity’: It is the yearning for authentic places – often identified with ‘original’ places endowed with strong local identity, a ‘hip’ or even ‘gritty’ aesthetic and a specific ‘vibe’ – that leads to ‘upscaling’, the rise of local real estate prices, the progressive eviction of earlier inhabitants and, ultimately, to a radical transformation of the neighbourhood itself – that is, to the destruction of its original ‘soul’. But before such paradoxical effects become fully visible, authenticity functions as a means to up the value and attractiveness of certain neighbourhoods, usually former working class, immigrants or minorities areas whose local culture had been shaped through economic hardship and the experience of domination. The progressive colonisation by artists, cultural entrepreneurs and young audience attracted by the phenomenon progressively turns those places into recognised tourist attractions for the Lonely Planet guide, showcasing major fashion stores and food chains.

Chiasm points: Some cases . . .

Contemporary graffiti and street art provide us with a number of ‘points of reversal’ in the divergent-synthetic field of urban authenticity. We might also call these ‘chiasm points’, where convergent series begin to diverge and vice versa. Since the 1985 death of graffiti artist Michael Stewart on a Manhattan subway platform by the hand of police officers (Austin 2001), similar utterly nonsensical episodes have been sadly recurrent across the world, despite the fact that graffiti prevention might not be a real priority from the point of view of the police (Ross and Wright 2014). In 2011, in Bogotá, for instance, Diego Felipe Becerra, a young graffiti artist, was shot dead by a patrol policeman while he was tagging his Felix-the-cat signature in an underpass (Brodzinsky 2013). The ‘enemies of society’ frame seems to be fully working. In this specific case, not only did the civil society and the local community react loudly, but a police cover-up attempt to portray Becerra as a suspected armed robber was also discovered, and two police officers were arrested. Such was the popular outrage that the whole municipal policy with respect to graffiti changed dramatically. In February 2013, the mayor of Bogotá, Gustavo Petro, issued a decree to promote graffiti and street art as valuable artistic and cultural expression, while a spatial plan to identify tolerated and interdicted façades was released. In *the Guardian* article covering this story, a key informant enthusiast about this alleged sea-change is the Bogotá-based street artist DJ Lu. In fact, however, one cannot overlook that the fifteen-year-old Diego Felipe Becerra was drawing pretty conventional hip hop graffiti, while DJ Lu is a representative of much more refined and stylish stencil art. Under the new policy which seems to have turned the city of Bogotá into a Mecca destination for street artists from all over the world, it is both city authorities and street artists who are caught in a divergent-synthetic situation. As DJ Lu himself admits, ‘being told where you can paint goes against the spirit of graffiti’.

The point is that the ‘spirit of graffiti’, just like the spirit of capitalism, has uncertain edges. And it is not to demonise street art recognising that these two spirits may overlap. In this sense, more successful and commercially-oriented street artists who have devoted themselves to extensive merchandising of their ‘products’ (as their artwork is referred to on their very

websites) have but brought to the linear consequences a specific ‘alignment’ in the ‘event of street art’. Such a trend belongs to a series that neatly diverges from that of the unlucky Diego Felipe Becerra. A successful artist like INSA, for instance, presents himself as follows:

[INSA] has done work on commission for such famous companies as Sony and Nike [. . .] The store is a reflection of INSA’s best known ‘Heels’ image that merges black and white patterns that wave and distort the space, causing the viewer to question today’s popular culture of consumerism.

(INSA 2013)

One might wonder how an artwork commissioned by Nike or Sony can lead anyone to question consumer culture. Especially if compared with traditional graffiti writers and their focus on a certain minimalism of means (graffiti is based on limited technical equipment and a well-defined set of techniques), a widespread characteristic among contemporary post-graffiti artists seems their extremely *eclectic* approach (including a multiplication of styles and techniques). And a similar ‘eclectic’ attitude might be detected as concerns ethics. The fact that street art turns into a profession and that, as every other profession, it activates a whole economy, is certainly not scandalous (contrary to the Romantic myth portraying the artist as an exceptional human being who is severed from everyday matters). Nonetheless, reading several biographies of street artists, one cannot escape the impression that, for some reasons, street artists cannot content themselves with just being ‘integrated professionals’, as Becker (1982: 232) would call them – that is, established professional artists who dominate the scene by producing large amounts of conventional artworks everyone from the audience can understand and appreciate.

There seems, in other words, to be a deliberate attempt on the part of street artists – or, on the part of the authors of such biographies, perhaps art critics or gallerists – to establish a certain ‘street credibility’. In other words, their valorisation circuit is tied to their being ‘street’, and therefore necessarily ‘excessive’ vis-à-vis the image of the integrated professional artist. Unsurprisingly, it is rather uncommon to find a bio profile which reads: ‘X is a street artist and has never made an illegal piece in the streets’, although such a description would fit for several street artists currently displaying their work in galleries, given that those who have a background in graffiti are only a part of those who are into post-graffiti nowadays. This proves that the *Verwertung* in street art still hinges upon a type of transgressive and unsettling attitude which is the original mould of graffiti culture, illegality being the ‘zero degree’ of graffiti writing (Brighenti 2010b). In this sense, the legal graffiti group documented by Kramer (2010), that only paints ‘with permission’ (or maybe even ‘by commission’), is really a street art avant-garde. When graffiti is reduced to urban ‘decoration’ it turns into something ‘decent’ which has lost its peculiar street resonance.⁶ Recent heated debates within the street art community are illuminating in this respect. For instance, an insider to the culture and prolific blogger, DJ Rushmore (2013) has commented:

There’s a nagging suspicion floating around that all of this work supposedly made for people walking down the street is really just being used in a massive game of who can get the most hype for their next print release, and that the importance of nonpermitted interventions in public space has been diminished.

In this vein, and even more radically, the French artist Christian Guémy (2013) has lamented that the new generation of street artists (since the 2000s) has sold out the original spirit of graffiti:

Nowadays, the substance and form of ‘street art’ are conditioned by the standards of the Internet and its new modes of cultural diffusion. So, these new street artists have borrowed the graffiti form and transformed it [*en la détournant*] to better spread it on the Internet, their own sites, specialized blogs and, ultimately, social network audience.

Statements like these testify to the presence of an inner tension that shapes two radically divergent series inside the practice of street art (let’s not forget that Guémy a.k.a. C215 is a renowned stencil artist). Certainly, the legal/illegal code alone is insufficient to understand the complex topologies of valorisation at play. In the 1950s, the situationists contemptuously labelled as ‘recuperation’ all the forms of co-optation of countercultural practices into the system. Their method consisted in exactly the opposite: Take fragments from the mainstream and reassemble them so as to turn them into subversive messages. Such a technique they called *détournement*. But, as noted with bitterness by Guémy himself, street artists are now doing a double *détournement* to re-inscribe their work into the art system.

To social scientist, however, it is likewise insufficient to oppose good old-time original graffiti writers on the one hand and bad bamboozling sell-out street artists on the other.⁷ A poignant example of the complexities associated with the positioning of contemporary graffiti and post-graffiti in the cultural economy is the European Central Bank (ECB) case (Neate 2013). In 2012, during the construction of its new €1bn headquarters in Frankfurt, the ECB/EZB bank supported a number of graffiti artists to ‘decorate’ the building site fence. The event organiser, Stefan Mohr, who is a Frankfurt social worker, made a point of honour in securing for the artists’ absolute freedom as concerns subjects. This almost reads as an answer to Guémy’s concern about self-censorship and compromising choices. Indeed, the final pieces have been described as ‘highly political, [including] caricatures of ECB president Mario Draghi and German chancellor Angela Merkel’. The evil face of money and how capitalism has spoiled the earth and bred the current economic crisis feature prominently among the subjects of this wall. Also, the shift from social work to urban art appears fluid since Stefan Mohr, who was initially only looking for a recreational activity for kids in a context where almost no legal graffiti spots had remained in town, ‘had no idea that some of the world’s most famous graffiti artists would help turn the fence into one of Frankfurt’s biggest tourist attractions’ (Neate 2013). As a result, the EZB fence has turned into a *Freiluftgalerie* (open-air gallery) ingrained in the official presentation of the city of Frankfurt. The fact that the largest majority of pieces are actually by graffiti writers,⁸ only a tiny minority of which are represented by art galleries, problematizes a bit Christian Guémy’s trenchant reconstruction.⁹ On the top of it, several of the fence pieces containing derogatory representations and anti-capitalist visual stories have been bought by banks and money managers. We tend to assume that to portray contemporary, crisis-ridden capitalism as, say, two cocks fighting is defiant or oppositional; but maybe bankers actually like to picture themselves this way, or in any case they don’t see this as particularly harmful to business.

Conclusion

The Frankfurt EZB headquarters case contains a number of thorny issues concerning graffiti and post-graffiti urban valorisation processes, beginning from the position of cultural producers. Certainly, the image of the artist who works in freedom and isolation from the market is a myth inherited from Romanticism, as well as reconstructed by art historians Kris and Kurz (1981). But the kids who originated hip hop graffiti in the North American inner city in the 1960s did not study art history, nor were they asking for permission to write on walls – least looking for galleries to represent them. Despite socio-economic hardship, or maybe because of that

hardship, they managed to start something new. Simultaneously, their position – precisely due to lack of educational and career options – was easier than that of subsequent artists who grew up in the graffiti culture and contributed to develop it. The latter have found themselves operating in a different topology of valorisation and, as seen above, in an uncomfortable position vis-à-vis the figure of the integrated professional. It is as if they still need to keep an – albeit implicit – association with the packs of emergency brake vandals because, despite the great diversity of means and ends, their own valorisation hinges on that environment and attitude.

Today, the urban visual ecology is tied to a whole economy of visibility crossed by complex valorisation circuits, in which not only artists, but virtually all citizens are caught up in. Everyone who, in various ways, makes uses of public space (prototypically, the street) is affected by the coming about of synthetic-divergent series of expulsion, capture and re-inscription of cultural productions – graffiti and street art representing just one case among others, albeit a very peculiar one. Consequently, to social scientific analysis, the point is not so much to tell who gains and who is fooled at the graffiti game, as it is to trace the dynamics of production, circulation and transmutation of value that emerge through the entwinements of excess and measure in contemporary urban space. To understand which urban spaces are valorised, which valorisation circuits are activated, with which outcomes, this text has submitted the hypothesis that value is not only an economic phenomenon, rather, a phenomenon that enables acts of creation and conversion across different social domains (or fields, or subsystems). The task for future social research is to draw the maps of the new valorisation trajectories and circuits as they are not simply projected onto pre-existing space but, in turn, topologically shape it. Because, as observed, valorisation operates at the level of places which may not correspond to (post-) graffiti spots themselves, the mismatches illuminate larger urban trends. Similarly, the temporal scale matters, given that for instance a building site functions like a ‘temporal interstice’ which will eventually disappear. In this case, *where* precisely the produced value ends up, remains to be ascertained. In conclusion, the economic process of *place valorisation* in the current transformations of capitalism needs to be studied in conjunction with the social and cultural *significance* of graffiti and street art in the changing cityscape and the unfolding urban process, the new political processes of urban *governance*, control and discipline as well as, ultimately, the new emerging measures and political models of *citizenship*.

Notes

- 1 More precisely, Pavoni’s argument is that all urban events are in some ways excessive. While accepting his argument in full, we do not think it rules out the possibility of some events being more *visibly* excessive than others.
- 2 On the other hand, New York street artist Katsu has designed a drone that *paints* graffiti (Wainwright 2014). This opens the chance that graffiti wars evolve into drone wars.
- 3 The Martin Wong Graffiti Collection at the Museum of the City of New York is another obvious case. In 2014, the exhibition, *City As Canvas* has presented ‘over 150 works on canvas and other media, along with photographs of graffiti writing long erased from subways and buildings’ (MCNY 2014).
- 4 Deleuze and Guattari (1972: 170; Eng. Ed. 1983: 153) write that capitalism is ‘*the negative* of all social formations’. Perhaps, ‘the obverse’ would be a more accurate term for the dynamic they describe. The idea that capitalism begins with a generalised deterritorialisation is a motif in Marx, although Deleuze and Guattari’s discussion also engages anthropology and psychoanalysis.
- 5 Style initially made popular in the East End of London.
- 6 ‘Decoration’ derives from the Latin impersonal verbal form *dēcet*, ‘to be appropriate’, from which the term ‘decency’ also comes. Decoration cannot simply be defiant.
- 7 On the other hand, Guémy’s declaration helps explaining at least why several cutting-edge street artists have more or less implicitly disassociated themselves from such a label. The quintessential global iconic

- street artist Banksy, for instance, consistently defined himself 'graffiti artist', while the Italian Blu laconically stated 'I make walls', thus siding with muralists.
- 8 With the notable exception of Andreas von Chrzanowski a.k.a. Case, an aerosol artist who however has a most respectable graffiti pedigree from Maclaim Crew.
 - 9 More generally, in his critique of subcultural theory, Gregory Snyder (2009) has rejected the image of graffiti culture as a purely symbolic form of 'resistance through rituals' and as necessarily disconnected from all sorts of economic valorisation and career opportunity: 'What – he has asked – if today's subcultures are a path toward future success?' (Snyder 2009: 165).

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