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Editorial

Pedro Soares Neves 6

Articles

**What present-day diglossia in Arabic inscriptions
can tell us about the linguistic situation in the early Islamic period** 8
Ahmad Al-Jallad

Walls that speak: urban graffiti and alternative narratives in Rome 28
Diletta Haberl

Graffiti as an urban territorial and identity tool for branding 42
Asier Morán Fuertes

**Lefebvrian analysis of women lived experiences
of the quality of residential spaces Milad Complex, Golshahr, Zanjan** 52
Abolfazl Meshkini, Leila Hashmi , Kamran Jafarpour Ghalehtemouri

**From Isolation to Integration:
Assessing the Impact of City Diplomacy on Small-City Development in Iran** 70
Niloufar Eisalou
Zohreh Fanni, Kamran Jafarpour Ghalehtemouri, Asma Mehan

Review of Graffiti Expressionism DARE | Sigi von Koeding in Basel 88
Pedro Soares Neves

Working paper

Graffiti as Guerrilla: Contemporary Street Art, Memes, and the Visual Diary in the War on Ukraine 96
Elena Korowin

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Editorial

Pedro Soares Neves

This second issue of EGI – Epigraphy, Graffiti, Iconography is published under the title *Common Grounds: Graffiti, Identity, and the Production of Urban Space*, and continues the journal's commitment to exploring writing beyond its formal, institutionalized boundaries. Bringing together historical, linguistic, visual, and spatial perspectives, the issue investigates how unofficial inscriptions—ancient and contemporary—function as modes of expression, documentation, and negotiation of meaning within shared environments.

At its core, this issue seeks to establish common analytical ground between epigraphy and graffiti studies, treating informal writing not as marginal residue but as a central component of script culture. From carved inscriptions to sprayed walls, from linguistic variation to visual intervention, the contributions highlight writing as an embodied, contextual, and socially embedded practice.

Several articles engage directly with questions of language, script, and inscriptional practice. The study on present-day diglossia in Arabic inscriptions offers valuable insights into linguistic stratification and script use, demonstrating how contemporary informal inscriptions can illuminate historical language situations in the early Islamic period. In a different historical and cultural context, *Walls that Speak: Urban Graffiti and Alternative Narratives in Rome* foregrounds graffiti as a form of counter-epigraphy, revealing how unofficial urban writing constructs parallel narratives alongside dominant historical discourses.

Other contributions extend the discussion toward the production of urban space and identity through writing and marking practices. Articles addressing graffiti as a territorial and branding tool, as well as graffiti as guerrilla expression through street art, memes, and visual diaries, examine how contemporary inscriptional practices operate within regimes of visibility, power, and authorship. These studies underscore graffiti's role in shaping urban semiotics and negotiating collective and individual identities.

The issue also includes contributions that situate informal writing within broader socio-spatial frameworks. Analyses grounded in Lefebvrian theory explore how lived experience, spatial quality, and everyday practices intersect, while research on city diplomacy and small-city development expands the discussion toward the political and infrastructural dimensions of urban space. Though diverse in method and scale, these articles collectively reinforce the idea that writing—whether textual, visual, or symbolic—is inseparable from the social production of space.

Complementing the research articles, the book review of *Graffiti Expressionism: DARE* | Sigi von Koeding in Basel offers a critical reflection on contemporary graffiti practices and their articulation within artistic, linguistic, and urban contexts. The review situates the publication within broader debates on style, authorship, and the documentation of ephemeral writing, reinforcing the issue's concern with how graffiti circulates between street, archive, and scholarly discourse.

Taken together, this issue advances EGI's aim to foster interdisciplinary dialogue across epigraphy, linguistics, archaeology, visual culture, and urban studies. By examining unofficial inscriptions as meaningful cultural artifacts rather than peripheral anomalies, *Common Grounds* invites readers to reconsider how writing—scratched, carved, painted, or digitized—participates in the ongoing negotiation of identity, language, and space.