



Street Art and Public Space: A Digital Archive

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Background

- ❖ Street art is a new form of art and activism of uncommissioned and unsanctioned artifacts.
- ❖ Street art includes paintings, murals and various kinds of stencils, posters, and stickers applied in any public surface.
- ❖ Street art is not synonymous with graffiti (Lewisohn 2008).
- ❖ Street art is a sociocultural practice (Bengtson 2014).
- ❖ Street art is performative, ephemeral, and site specific based on geographical space and sociocultural context (Bengtson 2014; MacDowall 2008).
- ❖ Public space is creative, communicative, and changeable.
- ❖ The street artworks create public dialogue.



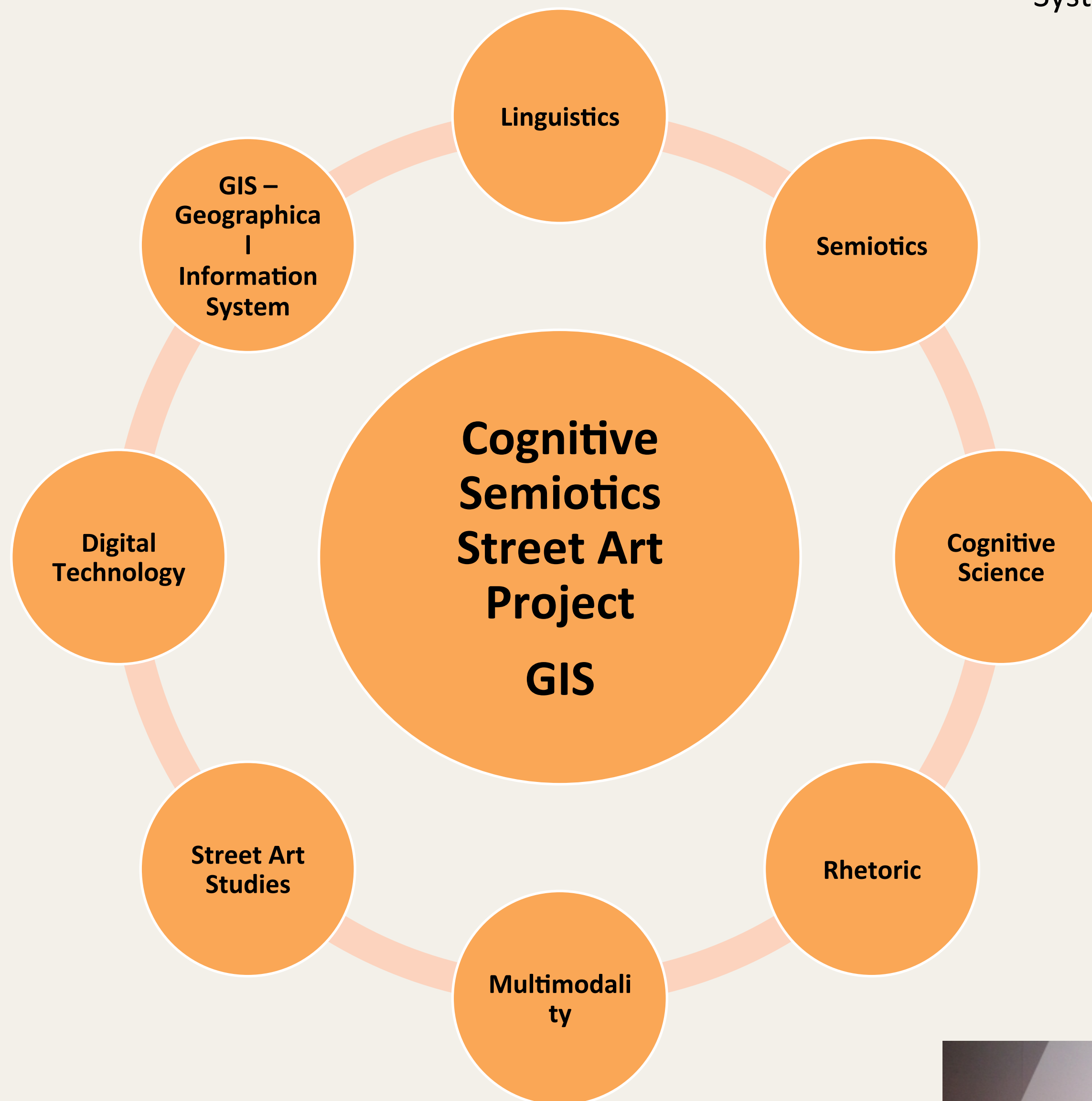
Project in Cognitive Semiotics

Research Questions

- ❖ Has street art the potential to actively transform the public space into a communicative and dynamic sociopolitical arena?
- ❖ Has street art sociocultural significance as part of our intangible heritage?

If YES:

- ❖ How the ephemerality of street art could be overcome with the application of digital technology?



Research goals

- ❖ Creating a corpus of street art pictures with rhetorical deviation (convention, selection, artfulness).
- ❖ Developing new theories and methodologies from a cognitive semiotic angle.
- ❖ Building up an explicit and reliable taxonomy of multimodal verbopictorial rhetoric on street art.
- ❖ Constructing a georeferential online digital archive for gathering, analyzing and visualizing data with the implementation of GIS (Geographical Information System) technique.



Street Art



Discussion

- ❖ This pilot study may lead to alternative interpretations of the multimodal verbopictorial genre of street art, and thus to a potential re-evaluation of the datasets.
- ❖ Open and changeable database.
- ❖ Subjectivity issue is a weakness; the interpretations are strongly dependent on personal intuitions emerged from the observation of the picture.
- ❖ Inter-coding process and agreement could be reliability equivalent.
- ❖ More datasets may be in the process of expansion or change.
- ❖ The datasets will be publicly available and downloadable, including functions for downloading XML and JSON files.

Conclusions

- ❖ Street art is site specific, locational oriented.
- ❖ Verbal and pictorial integration based on various semiotic modalities is a visual testimony, in order to establish a spiritual bridge with the Greek society.
- ❖ The interpretation of street art requires shared sociocultural pragmatic knowledge – Lifeworld.
- ❖ The sociocultural and political changes give birth to a wave of popular sociopolitical wall commentary.
- ❖ Redefined signs and symbols, intertextual references, and culturally related subjects reconstruct the current Athenian public landscape.
- ❖ Complex multimodal verbopictorial nature of street art.

References

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