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## **Fly-posting in Prague as a form of street culture**

Černá reklama v Praze jako forma pouliční kultury

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I hereby declare that I wrote this thesis with my own hand, that I cited all the sources I used and that this thesis is not being used in any other academic contexts than the one that is declared on the first page.

12.08.2023

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Abstract: Although Prague is plagued with fly-posting (černá reklama), most residents don't give these a second glance, relegated in the mind of the viewer as nothing more than adverts. However, in major cities around the world, similar stickers are put up as political statements, advocating for any number of groups or theories or movements, reacting to current events, and being torn down or plastered over by parties that disagree with their message. It is the hypothesis of this paper that a similar scenario is playing out in the centre of the Czech capital. I wish to prove this hypothesis via on-site observation near the old town area (Staroměstská), and the tracking of fly-posters, their placement, message, and subsequent treatment.

In an age where access to the skills and equipment to make high-quality logos, images, text and layout are commonplace, it is time to stop viewing this area as merely the domain of advertising and media studies, and treat it as an expression of urban culture.

Abstrakt: Přestože je Praha zamořena letáky (černá reklama), většina obyvatel jim nevěnuje pozornost a v mysli diváka je považuje za pouhou reklamu. Ve velkých městech po celém světě jsou však podobné samolepky vylepovány jako politická prohlášení, propagující nejrůznější skupiny, teorie či hnutí, reagující na aktuální události, a strany, které s jejich poselstvím nesouhlasí, je strhávají nebo přelepují. Hypotézou tohoto článku je, že podobný scénář se odehrává i v centru českého hlavního města. Tuto hypotézu chci prokázat prostřednictvím pozorování na místě v blízkosti staroměstské části (Staroměstská) a sledováním fly-posterů, jejich umístění, sdělení a následného ošetření.

V době, kdy je přístup k dovednostem a vybavení pro tvorbu kvalitních log, obrázků, textů a grafické úpravy běžnou záležitostí, je na čase přestat vnímat tuto oblast pouze jako doménu reklamních a mediálních studií a přistupovat k ní jako k projevu městské kultury.

Keywords: illegal stickers, black advertising, Prague, graffiti, Urban, Streetscape.

Klíčová slova: nelegální nálepky, černá reklama, Praha, graffiti, Urban, Streetscape.

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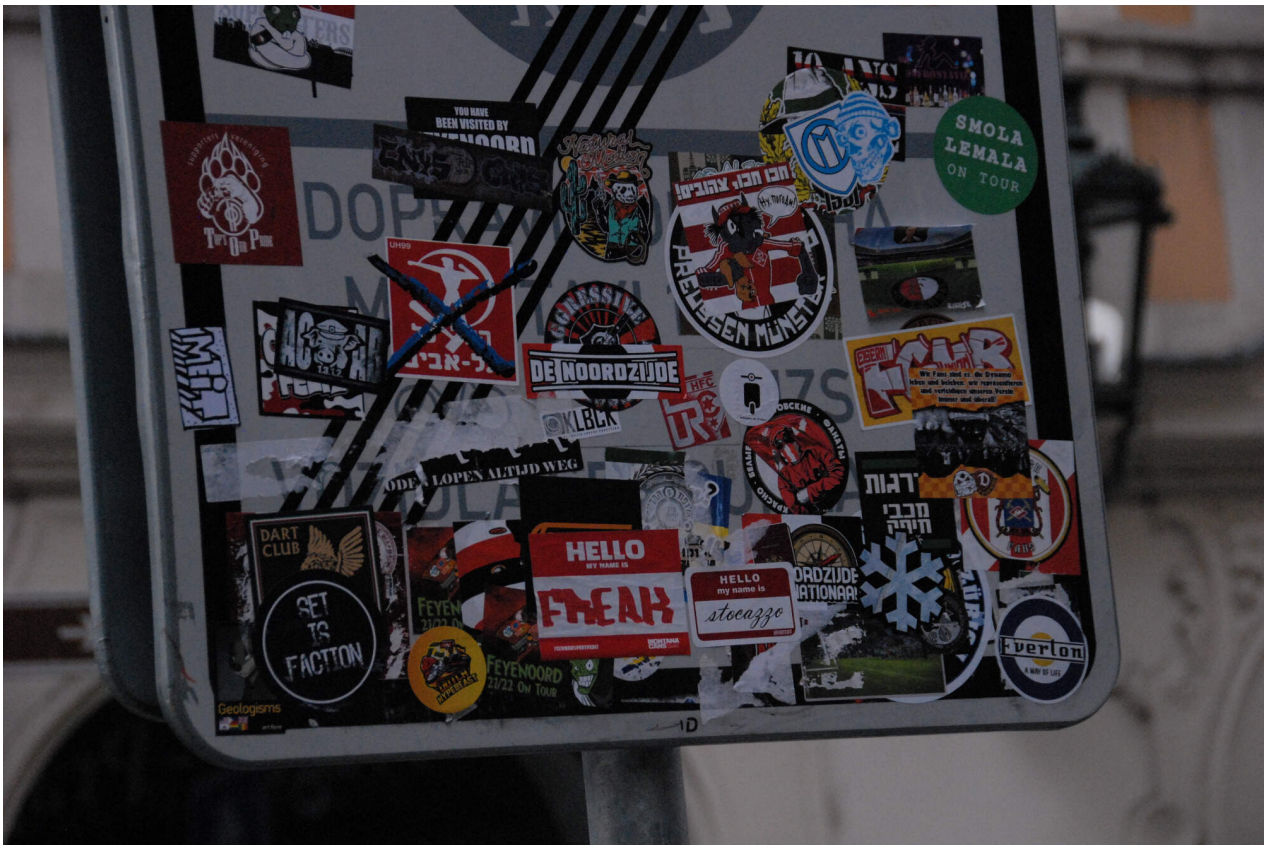
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## Introduction

It is, without a doubt, one of the least observed major form of expression in a public space. No one gives the small army of various stickers covering every lamppost, sign and fusebox throughout Prague's city centre a second glance. Even in academia, it is a field rarely studied or given much thought, even though similar forms of expression, such as graffiti, latrinalia, tags, and so on have gotten their due. *“Although bill posting, also known as fly-posting, has been used for centuries to spread information or stir up trouble, it has received very little attention from academics who have recently become interested in graffiti and wall art”* (Hicks, 2021). To a certain degree, this is somewhat unsurprising. Unlike most forms of street art, flyposting exhibits very little in the moment input from the actual author, stepping down from a drawn symbol or scribbled message, to a mere sticker placed in a public area. What is less obvious, especially to academia wishing to further study street culture, is that all the effort in place was done beforehand, creating or buying the sticker, moving the moment of input back, and stretching it over a much larger frame, creating a form of street-art that is much more planned out and intent-driven. I am of the opinion that exactly this sort of expression is just as, if not more, key to understanding taboo expression via vandalism than more standard methods in our current year. I'd say that the fly-posted sticker is analogous to the internet image meme, a repeatedly reproduced image that resonated with an original author that may or may not be several layers of abstraction distanced from the specific example we see, which has been placed into a public space by either the author, or some third party, pushing that message forwards. *Online memes in particular need to be catchy and simple to understand to become well known and spread quickly, just like any folklore, memes can have a variety of meanings and functions for communities and individuals alike* (Heimo & Koski, 2014). It is a wilful step down from creating your own message or image, or from recreating a message or image in the zeitgeist.

Despite all this, flyposting is generally considered as little more than a small nuisance in public areas, and not given nearly any analysis. In Czech, a relevant language considering the area that this paper is focusing on, it is called “Black advertising” (černá reklama), or advertising that is not done through legal channels. And whilst adverts do make up a large quantity of flyposting, this is the blanket term that is meant to cover the myriad other things done through this method, such as political or religious rallying, artistic projects, and the actions of specific cultural subgroups. The aim of this paper is to go into detail on this otherwise largely ignored form of street art, using collected examples from the Prague centre area.

## what IS flyposting?



Taken on the twelfth of January, 2022, at 12:42, in the walkable zone in Old Town Square, this street sign has been utterly covered in stickers, to the point where the sign itself is illegible. Note how there are more near the very bottom, where it is easier to reach, but stickers reach out across the entire surface, including the very top.

*“Despite its widespread use since antiquity, mural writing is frequently seen as a contemporary urban form of expression that contributes to the degradation of public space... This has undoubtedly hindered the analysis of graffiti in the past...however, a number of noteworthy more recent works..“(Depau, 2022).*

Flyposting, as I alluded towards in my introduction, is the action of putting up stickers in public areas, for any reason. To further specify, it is the intentional dissemination of a sticker throughout an area. Generally, if someone had a sticker on hand, and randomly decided to put it on a bench on a whim, I would consider it exempt from the term, if not legally, then in intention. The intention behind flyposting is, usually, to get eyes on whatever your sticker says or shows.

Speaking of the legal angle, it's also handy to note that, at least in Prague, flyposting is illegal (*“advertising disseminated in publicly accessible places outside the establishment in a manner other than through an advertising or promotional device established pursuant to a special legal*

regulation 5b) shall be prohibited, if the municipality so provides in its regulation issued under delegated powers 5c), to the extent referred to in paragraph 5,” (Zákon č. 40/1995 Sb. § 2 odst. 1 písm. d)), and carries a small fine, in keeping with its public image of small time vandalism.

## Other terminology

“Street Culture refers to the attitudes, ideologies, unwritten laws, customs, fashions, signs, and values that are shared by, adopted by, and practised by people and groups who spend a disproportionate amount of time on the streets of major cities.” (Ian Ross, 2020). Of course, street culture is a term that is massive, and which encompasses many things, and the term can, in fact, be quite unwieldy. Since I’m primarily discussing the visual subsection of it as it relates to the streetscape, I use the term “Street-art” for most of this thesis. Street-art is, in essence, any art that appears in urban, public spaces, “on the streets”, but focuses more-so on art that is illicit in some manner, as opposed to official decorations. And yet, this term is also not quite accurate, as flyposting, as we’ve seen, can frequently hold meanings other than artistic.” *Some claim that the distinction between street art and graffiti is merely one of semantics, while others assert that there are distinct cultural distinctions*” (Clough, 2010).



Taken on the twenty-eighth of March, 2023 at 13:44, near Platněřská, this Priority Mail sticker has been used as the canvas for a detailed stencil spray of a cat. In this way, artists frequently use otherwise normal labels and stickers, and use them as a canvas for their creation. This process could be equated to “Culture Jamming”: or transforming common media into commentary on itself. “While not a perfect illustration of culture jamming, the addition of the word “visual” to the term seems to adequately describe many stickering activities, particularly the use of appropriated stickers from political, anti-drug, and/or community service campaigns as well as USPS, UPS, and FedEx name badges and “Hello My Name is...” name badges” (Keys, 2008).

I also make use of terms such as Streetscape throughout this work. “The visual components that make up a street’s character, such as the

road, neighboring structures, sidewalks, street art, trees, and open areas, are referred to as the streetscape” (Thryduulf, 2008). Here, though, when I use the term Streetscape, I focus on specifically the aspects of a street that are not built by official forces, but by citizen expression within the city itself, as it can literally be seen. This term is similar to, although not quite synonymous with, the term “Urban Fabric”, which is literally the physical elements of Urbanism.

## Methodology

I began this project by delineating a general area around Old Town Square (Staroměstské náměstí), about the size of 5 city blocks, which would be the focus of my efforts. I chose this location because it was very close to the centre of the city, and because, being near several University buildings, I figured that students would be a steady stream of new stickers to study and analyse. From mid-2022, to 2023, I periodically travelled the area, in a route starting at the Staroměstská metro station, circling through the area and returning to it, and took pictures of the stickers present, noting their placement, damage to stickers, age, and density around areas.

## Flyposting as a form of street art: differences and similarities

As mentioned, flyposting is very different from standard street-art in the moment of its creation. All forms of graffiti are, by their nature, taboo, and to some degree, criminalised. Sticker-art stands out from this, however, in the fact that the process of actually placing it into the streetscape is incredibly simple-merely placing the sticker down, making sure that it’s attached properly, and walking away, in a process that takes seconds. Compare this to engraving, spray-paint, murals, and so on, which take time and must be done outside the sights of any authorities present. In terms of size and mechanism, stickers are the fastest form of adding art to a streetscape. Flyposting is also used in different, more varied ways than other forms. It includes a dimension of advertising, which isn’t usually present in other forms, as well as existing for artistic and cultural purposes.

However, thanks to their size, stickers also carry a crucial difference to other, standard forms of graffiti, sans perhaps, tagging or latrinalia: how difficult it is to notice. Stickers are often noticed, but not as individual pieces, but rather, as a piece of a collage in the environment. As such, one can travel throughout Prague, or any large city, daily, and not be aware whatsoever of the messages surrounding them, having tuned them out without issue. It often isn’t a matter of legibility, as much as it is that flyposting does not stick in the mind unless one actively seeks it out. *“Even though*



*sticker art is typically present in ever-increasing quantities throughout urban environments worldwide, those who are not a part of the subculture rarely notice it; instead, sticker art is blocked out for them; perhaps it becomes one of the many types of visual media that registers in their peripheral vision but which is not further investigated” (Clough, 2010).*

## Bought or homemade: The place of origin for sticker art



Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:15, near Alšovo Nábřeží, this picture has two stickers that look to be intended as stencils. The upper is a stylisation of the character Blinky the three-eyed fish, from *The Simpsons*. Note the shape of the sticker, as well as the large white outline, indicating that this was cut from a larger sheet.

*“There is definitely a demand for this product, which is why so many sticker shops have opened in recent years, according to eRank, which tracks trending products on the online marketplace Etsy. “Stickers” was one of the most searched keywords on the website” (Qayum, 2022).*

Sticker art does not spawn into urban environments on its own, nor does it begin its creation when it is placed onto an object in the streetscape. There are, in general, three options for how stickers are made: People make custom stickers at

home using publicly available guides, buy them in large amounts from a sticker creating company, or use stickers that were never intended for this purpose. When the concept of a handmade sticker is brought up, it’s enticing to imagine an old-fashioned strip of regular paper, with a layer of glue lathered onto the back before being placed, but it is not difficult, with access to a cricut machine. Although most online sources suggest using this for personalising your electronics, or selling your stickers on an online marketplace, we also see it used here, in the public space.





Taken on the twenty-eighth of March, 2023, at 13:52, on Žatecká street, the sticker on the left is a product sticker, warning the user about the nicotine

content inside in Slovak. This is a clear example of someone taking a sticker that they had on hand for whatever reason, most likely taken off of the product in question, and placing it somewhere in the streetscape.

Taken on the twenty-first of march, 2023, at 13:26, near Mikulášská street, this postage stamp depicts a Tawny Mining Bee, As well as its Latin and Gaelic name. “Self-adhesive stamp from a booklet produced for business use in April 2019 that was initially only available in bulk is now being sold as individual booklets by An Post as of early July 2019” (*Tawny Mining Bee (Andrena Fulva)*, n.d.).

The third category is, perhaps, one that has the least context to uncover, as the sticker in this case was never intended for use in the streetscape, usually existing for purely functional reasons, such as product labels, postage stamps, supermarket stickers, and so on. Nevertheless, it is worth mentioning, as this sort of sticker can also be put up with intent, rather than as a means to get rid of it in lieu of any bins nearby, and it can also give insight on the person who put the sticker there.



## How flyposting looks in a city: geography of public space

Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 14:39, near the entry to Celetná street, this photo illustrates the density of stickers on a storm drain, but more importantly, the general placement of them on it. Notice the gap below the first sticker, mostly reserved for tags, whereas stickers stretch from waist height, to well above it (See person on the side of the photo for scale.) As space is taken up, new stickers are added higher and higher, with few going lower to take up the available space there, because it is no longer at eye level.

*“The "street art" genre, generally speaking, includes adhesive art, which is more commonly known as stickers, paste-ups, stencils, and spray painting. Street art activities have become more and more popular over the past 20 years”* (Clough, 2010). When walking through any large city, chances are that stickers will be present, even though the vast majority of people will pay them no mind whatsoever.





Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023, 14:26:22, this sign on a traffic island by Dlouhá street is much lower than most signs, making it an attractive spot for flyposting. Note the density on both the back of the sign, and the pole to which it is attached. Most of these stickers are rectangular or circular, with a few outliers that take on the shape of the object depicted.

It is perhaps unsurprising that flyposting spikes in frequency along streets that are travelled more frequently. It is especially common in streets that lead into larger, public areas, crowding the space afforded to them. Since it relies on physical stickers, sticker art often can be found on surfaces that are easier to stick to, such as metal or glass, as opposed to plaster or stone. Stickers tend to be common on the backs and fronts of signs, on the sides of poles and drains, and along the casings of electrical fuseboxes, to name a few common areas. In places like these, it is not uncommon to see large swathes of stickers, fighting for space: On drainage pipes, it is not uncommon to, if the more accessible parts of the pipe are very dense already, see stickers be placed up to eight feet high, to make use of the free room at the top of the storm drain.

On the topic of signs, it is important to note that whilst it is not uncommon to see stickers on the front or on the pole, the ideal location is on the back of the sign, where there is no other information



to fight for space with, and where the sticker is high up enough to catch a passers-by's attention. *"Because stickers placed on inappropriate surfaces will eventually peel away due to this selective surface adhesion, sticker patterning is not solely the result of the artist's intention, but also of external environmental and material factors that ultimately take control and determine which stickers remain, resulting in obvious patterning and clustering of stickers in urban environments"* (Clough, 2010).



Taken on the fourth of May, 2022, at 15:03, on Kaprová street, This sticker stands out on account of its unique placement: on the ground. Stuck to the cobblestone street below, it is little wonder that this cannabis advertising sticker didn't last long before it got damaged to nigh illegibility. Note the center of the sticker, where you can see the canyon between the two cobblestones as a fracture in the sticker: The natural outcome of repeated and constant stepping on it.



Taken on the sixth of June, 2023, at 17:20, this sticker (Left) advertises [artfueltattoo.com](http://artfueltattoo.com), and is tastefully placed on top of an existing, legitimate advert for Alza, an electronics provider, creating the appearance that this sticker is the information on the phone in the original ad.

Taken on the twenty-seventh of June, 2023, at 10:48, on Týnská ulička, this sticker (Right) utilises its shape to find a unique space for itself on a sign, overlapping the O on the Kodak Express photography shop sign. The sticker itself advertises a German football club, a topic which will be discussed in greater detail later in the work.

A special mention, however, should also be made of situations where the location of the sticker is clearly a part of the intended meaning. Flyposting has the benefit among street-art that it is very quick and easy to place, often being possible to do in plain sight. As such, it is not uncommon to see stickers used transformatively, to add meaning to public spaces and fixtures.

## Delineations of flyposting

With the sheer amount of different stickers covering the streets, it quickly became obvious that it would be quite impossible to write this work without dividing the different stickers I found into categories to discuss them individually. To that goal, I split them up into several broad groups, boiling down to 3 main motivations I found when I first started for flyposting: To advertise, for political agitation, or with artistic intent. Quickly, I realised that this delineation is a bit too simple for the sheer variety present in flyposting, leading to me adding several more categories to this list.

### 1-Advertisement



Taken on the twentieth of January, 2023 at 10:30, inside the entrance to the Metro on Kaprova street, by the stairs down, this sticker advertises Cerny Petr Tattoo, or Black Peter Tattoo. Hidden away from the elements on the electric panel inside, it has lasted far longer than most.

This is, far and away, the most common use of bill posting. It is perhaps more challenging to find meaning behind adverts than the rest of the examples on this list, but remember that these

ads are not those put out by large companies; it is the fringe, the small tattoo parlours, bars, bands and artists that utilise these stickers. As such, I think that there is cultural significance to be found here, significance that hasn't been obscured by layers of bureaucracy, created by executives in



advertising companies, and that it would be disingenuous to discuss the effect of stickers on a streetscape without touching on one of the most prevalent and common to see.

According to Hicks, “Fly-posting is an antiquated method of disseminating views that are outside the mainstream, but some groups still engage in it despite digital media's current dominance in terms of reach” (Hicks, 2021). Advertising in the street has its advantages over more standard, traditional methods.

### 1.1-Fringe economics

I would like to preface this section with a request that you don't use the QR codes on any of the stickers I show here, as there's no guarantee that all of these stickers are genuine advertisements. It is generally safer to look up the company, if listed. For all the advantages that advertising “Off-grid” has, there's no denying that stickers that anyone can put up have no real quality control methods, meaning that some of these could be scams in disguise.



Taken on the fifteenth of July, 15:25, By the Franz Kafka statue, (Top left) and on the Fifth of May, 2022, at 15:06, on Haštelská street, (Top right) these two financial ads are pretty common examples of adverts you can see on stickers. The left advert, which includes a QR code for ease of use, offers investment advice, while the other offers a virtual wallet for digital currencies. Other stickers, such as the one taken on the twenty-first of July, 2023, at 15:11 on the intersection between Salvátorská, and Dušní street, (Bottom right), direct viewers to getmonero.com, while others are so well known that they don't even need to include their name, such as the bitcoin symbol (Bottom left), taken on the twenty-sixth of May, 2023, at 16:20, on Jan Palach square. Although they had a large boom in the past few years, digital currencies are still seen as newcomers to the financial world. “Firstly, the price of cryptocurrencies is still subject to wild price swings,

and secondly, this relatively new—and relatively unregulated—financial ecosystem has its fair share of con artists looking to take advantage of unwary newcomers” (N26, 2022).



Perhaps it is accurate to say that, while some of these are aiming to direct viewers to use their services, some of these stickers simply advertise the CONCEPT of cryptocurrency. One must be curious what, if any, financial incentive exists behind such an act.

## 1.2-Tattoo artistry

*“Tattoos were considered illegal after the communist coup in 1948, interrupting the tradition in the country. However, with the borders reopening came the opportunity for people interested in body art to develop their craft, which causes the second tattoo renaissance to arrive to the Czech Republic, several decades delayed”* (Truksová, 2014). Although you’d be hard pressed to find anyone who still considers a tattoo to be some underground, criminal indication in Prague, body art can still be considered a somewhat non-mainstream thing, and as such, it is no surprise that it appears in the streetscape in the form of sticker advertisements. In fact, one of the stickers that first made me take note of stickers in general, included at the start of the Advertisement section, was a tattoo advert.





Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:17, on Platněřská street, (Top left), on the twenty-first of March, 2023, at 14:12 (Top right) and on the fifteenth of June, 2023, at 14:29, on Linhartská street, (Bottom), these stickers all advertise independent tattoo artists, or small studios. Note that only the bottom one uses a website, [orderandmovement.com](http://orderandmovement.com), while the others use Instagram links. It is perhaps unsurprising, seeing how Instagram accounts are easy to set up, free, and focus on showing images, which would be very important for a tattoo artist looking to advertise their work.



### 1.3-Event advertising



Taken on the twenty-eighth of March, 2023, 13:43, this sticker (Above) depicts an advert to “Morphing Fest”, along with a date and website. “The Morphing Fest is devoted to underground bands and their own metamorphoses, hoping to give them a distinctive platform to express their music and message. It also serves as a gathering place for all heavy metal music fans to mingle and share their passion for the genre” (Carlo & Ambrogio, 2023).

Taken on the same date at 14:00, this larger sticker (Right) has been heavily damaged, leaving most of it illegible, sans the name and date of the event. Note the combination of Czech and English in the name of the event. Crossišťe was a charity oriented market in 2017, making the fact that any part of this sticker is still legible a small miracle considering its age, but visiting the Facebook community page reveals what the entire sticker would have looked like.



In the modern age, if you want as many eyes and ears on your work as possible, it’s no doubt easier to advertise and build a brand online. But of course, events frequently can’t benefit from this as much, because they rely on people physically travelling to it. As such, advertising in and near the area in question becomes far more useful than other, more common advertising forms. “For instance, posters promoting live performance venues serve as both an incentive for people to attend particular performances, and a reminder that these venues are a part of the area’s mix of attractions” (Hicks, 2021).



## 1.4-Musicians and bands

One of the more common uses of stickers that I saw, is by smaller musicians and bands, but also music labels, DJs, and individual songs, albums or mix-tapes. ...



Taken on the twenty-sixth of May, 2023, at 16:33, (Top left) is an advert for Dan Lyxzo, a DJ. Note the use of a QR code, a common component among music advertising that is rare elsewhere, except perhaps the economic adverts. Possibly because music can be enjoyed entirely online, and getting people to a site can be a goal instead of a mid-step in the advertising process? Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023, at 13:31, on Štuparská street, this sticker (Top Right) is an advert for the band Punch Drunk Poets, a Germany-centered band, focusing on University festivals and touring their home country.

Taken on the twelfth of January, 2022, at 12:59, on Mánesův bridge, this sticker (Bottom left) again uses a QR code to encourage passers-by to check out a rap mix-tape by Throw.

Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:15, this sticker (Bottom middle) advertises 6IAS, a German singles musician. Note the use of the logo and colour scheme of the music streaming site Spotify, as well as an included Instagram. Note the location, placed on a glass surface covering instructions behind it.

Taken on the eighth of March, 2022, at 14:32 on Old Town Square, this sticker (Bottom right) was placed on a metal bollard, and lacks any links or information beyond the name, Pointzero, which is a Brussels based label focusing on minimalist dark tempo music. As such, the small sticker size and minimal information present makes a lot of sense.

## 1.5-Fashion

Just as stickers contribute to the streetscape, so do the clothes people wear. Street fashion is a little outside this paper's purview, but the advertising of it is not. Small clothing and fashion brands use the streets and flyposting to advertise their work as well, and we can get some clue of what exists on the fringe in Prague clothing by examining who puts these stickers up, and how they contribute to the streetscape itself.

Taken on the sixteenth of March, 2023, at 13:47, this sticker (Right) depicts an ad for "Alien DNA", a Czech brand that draws on a "fusion of influences, such as free tekno culture, cyberpunk, urban street art, and comic books" (*Alien DNA*, 2018). As usual, note the water damage and torn edges, as well as the tag underneath.

Taken on the Seventh of February, 2023, at 13:35, on Celetná street, this sticker (Bottom) Advertises the brand Seventh Life, an Italian Minimalist brand. "Our philosophy, which derives from the English "seventh life," is reminiscent of the well-known Latin expression "memento mori," as we are all considered to be "cats" who are experiencing their seventh and final life" (*About Us*, n.d.).

Taken on the twenty-first of December, 2021, at 19:35, this sticker (Bottom right) is for Salvatore, a Czech clothing brand heavily inspired by American prohibition gangsters.





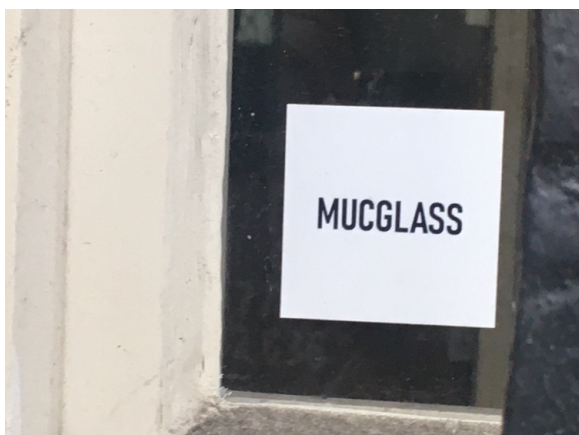
## 1.6- Cannabis product advertising

The legality of Marijuana in the Czech Republic is a complicated matter, something that sits between being outright banned and fully legalised, with a variety of rules and stipulations. (“Whoever unlawfully cultivates a cannabis plant in a quantity greater than a small amount for his own use shall be punished by imprisonment for up to six months, a fine or forfeiture of the property.” (§285 Zákona 40/2009 Sb.)) “The Government has agreed on the interpretation that possession of five or fewer cannabis plants will be treated as a small quantity and will be a mere misdemeanour, not a criminal offence. Similarly, possession of less than twenty marijuana cigarettes or less than fifteen grams of marijuana is a mere misdemeanour (Marihuana a Zákony, n.d).” As such, it is perhaps unsurprising that stickers offering services related to cannabis cultivation, sale, or usage tend to offer a wider range and stick to plausible deniability. Nevertheless, there are a number of stickers relating to it, or advertising a service that also dabbles in creating products related to cannabis.



Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:26, at Old Town Square, this sticker (Top right) advertises the website, and physical location and phone number, of Grow-shop, a store that sells specialist plant-care equipment, as well as smoking essentials.

Taken on the same date at 14:39, this sticker (Top left) advertises Nageia, a Spanish store-front specialising in CBD essential oils and other skincare and cosmetic products.



Taken on the Seventh of April, 2023, at 13:34, this minimalist white sticker (Right) is an advert for Mucglass, a glass artist from Munich. Note the total lack of contact details, although searching their name finds their site which

only includes links to different social media. One of their advertised products on Instagram are terpballs, an item used in cannabis vaporising.

### 1.7-Other adverts

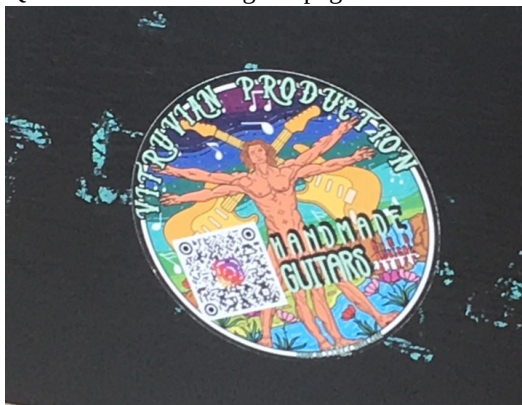
Although I've gone over all the categories in which I photographed several stickers in, there was also a wide variety of more niche, specialist offers plastered all over the street. I think that one major distinction between these, and the other offers, was the target audience. These are usually items or services that only a select few people would be interested in, or solutions to specific problems, such as pest control adverts or movers adverts. I never saw such a thing in my selected data collection area, but I believe that papers with sections with contact details that you're meant to rip off for yourself are a prime example of not only flyposting, but this specific section of advertising using flyposting.

Taken on the twenty-first of December, 2021, at 19:45, (Bottom left) this sticker advertises Cookie studio, an animation studio centered in London and São Paulo, working primarily in advertising.

Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:09, this sticker (Top right) is for a pest control firm. This is one of the only stickers I managed to photograph that had a telephone number, somewhat implying that it is an unpopular tool for contacts than websites and social media. As such, this is a somewhat more old fashioned sticker ad.

Taken on the same date, at 14:45, in the U Pavouka courtyard between Celetná and Štuparská, this sticker (Bottom right), this sticker advertises a pop-up restaurant, where you'd get a text after registering with the details of where it's taking place.

Taken on the twenty-first of March, at 14:26, this sticker (Top left) is for an Italian custom handmade guitar producer. Again, note the use of a QR code to their Instagram page.





## 2-political messaging



Taken on the twenty-seventh of March, 2023 at 14:10, this sticker is some sort of blank sticker, that an author added a caption to, “VÁLKA JE VŮL“, or “War is stupid.” This piece is as close to latrinalia art as sticker art can get, effectively bringing such scrawled messages outside the privacy of public restrooms and into the street space. Of note is the usage of the term “vůl“, which literally translates to “ox”, but is more generally used as an insult against a person, being used for a vague concept such as war itself.

One of the more common uses of sticker art was for outcry, or for presenting a set of ideals to try and influence the viewer. I have grouped all of these together under this category, to go over my findings. In general, it’s possible to see a wide variety of stickers voicing their opinion on things, from worldwide events and wars, to the niche and minute, causes heralded by the organisation that put the time and effort to put the stickers up. This is also the area where defacing, a topic that I will touch on in a later chapter, happened the most frequently, in a perhaps unsurprising turn of events.

### 2.1-LGBT+ discourse

*“The Czech Republic is regarded as one of the most accepting nations in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) for the LGBT+ community; for example, it was the first post-communist nation to legalize same-sex registered partnerships, setting a precedent for many other nations in Europe; however, local activists contend that Czech tolerance towards the LGBT+ community is an alluring narrative that does not accurately reflect reality, especially outside of the capital” (Zurzolo, 2017).* For many, the rights of queer people is a hot-button issue, and, lacking any better way to voice their discontent with the status quo, or their discontent with the people in question, take to the streets. Overall, I documented several more examples of stickers that were clearly against same-sex marriage and other rights, possibly indicating that actively being against LGBT topics is, especially in Prague, a minority, fringe opinion.



Taken on the twenty-third of February, 2022, at 13:18, at Old Town Square, by the entrance to Pařížská, this sticker (Left) appears to be homemade, and made out of simple paper, judging by the extensive peeling visible. It reads “Don’t be TRASH!” With a backronym equating every letter in Trash to a form of discrimination. The raccoon depicted is often conflated with garbage, hence the tagline of the sticker. Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 14:32, on Platněřská, this image (Right) shows the words LGBTQ, with a circle and line across it, indicating negative sentiment towards the movement. Of note is the material, which appears to be red and white striped hazard tape, placed on the glass of a bus stop. It is unclear if this tape was put up by the author, or if they wrote their message on an existing sticker, although I lean towards the latter, as Google Maps, as of day of writing this, shows an older image of this bus-stop with the sticker without the inscription. Also of note is the damage to the sticker, indicating one, if not several, attempts at removing or damaging it. A piece of tape has come off, and is covering part of the original sticker.



Taken on the twenty-second of November, 2022, at 10:45, on Celetná street, both of these stickers were present on some temporary fencing around construction in the area. The first carries the statement “Lesbian love is beautiful”. Note the marker-drawn heart around this message, a clear sign of agreement, although it is unknown if this was drawn by a different artist. The second sticker states “Transgender ideology is just *woke sexism*.” Here, note the peeled edge, a possible attempt at removing the label. These two statements may seem odd to be placed together, especially noting the identical sticker format and colours used, but it actually lines up well with the opinions of the Trans Exclusionary Radical Feminist (Or TERF) movement: “a



*supporter of radical feminism who is hostile to the inclusion of trans people and gender nonconforming people in the feminist movement and who believes that a trans woman's gender identity is not legitimate* (dictionary.com, n.d.)” Note the usage of terms like “Woke”. “The term, which has its roots in African-American Vernacular English (AAVE), has a long history in American street and youth culture...

but has evolved into a derogatory term that is frequently used by the alt-right and other politically conservative groups to refer to those on the left” (Ng, 2021).

## 2.2-Anti-meat sentiment

One of the rarer topics I saw featured, there were nevertheless a number of stickers advocating for some form of vegetarianism, veganism, or simply against popular meat-centric restaurant chains. I opted to talk about it separately, as it didn't quite fall into any other categories.



Taken on the twelfth of January, 2022, on Celetná, at 13:54, the sticker on the left is a typical example of anti-meat consumption stickers. Of interest is the sardonic tone taken by the sticker, as well as the fact that it is covering up an older sticker in the same place as it.

Taken on the fourth of April, 2023, at 14:02, on Veleslavínova street, this sticker depicts the Colonel, the fast food mascot of the KFC restaurant chain, demonised (Note the horns, glowing red eyes, and tie ends forming pointed devil tails,, snarling expression) whilst holding a cleaver and a realistically depicted chicken that's been prepared for cooking. He's coming out of a bucket that reads “FCK KFC”. This slogan is notable, as it is actually borrowed from actual KFC marketing, used as an apology after the 2018 UK supply chain collapse. “The chicken bucket's side was emblazoned with the near-expetive anagram of KFC's brand name, "FCK," before an apology was offered in clear, conversational prose” (Brownsell, 2018). However, no piece of advertising ever looked the way this sticker does, indicating one of two things: Either the author is using this phrase intentionally as part of their critique, or the anagram of KFC's name stuck around in the public consciousness, and got used here entirely incidentally, the author unaware that KFC themselves used it.



### 2.3-Responses to the Russo-Ukrainian war

“An increase in anti-war, more specifically anti-Russian and anti-Putin, graffiti and street art has been created in the weeks prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine and ever since tanks crossed the border” (Ian Ross, 2022). Whilst the conflict was in its infancy, it was not an uncommon sight to see Ukrainian flags hung from windows all across the area where I did my data collecting. In fact, I distinctly remember a public exhibit of the conditions that political prisoners that opposed Russia’s president’s politics faced, right in the centre of the square. As such, it is not surprising that street stickers also reflected the near universal public opinion on the war, and several pro-Ukraine, anti-Russian stickers could be sighted along the streets.



Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023, at 14:38, on Široká street, this sticker (Top left) declares support for Ukraine, as well as the phrase “Puck Futin”. This phrase, with its swapped first letters, appears in a lot of stickers, possibly originating from a site where the phrase needed to be censored.

The top right sticker, taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 14:40, shows a circle and line crossing out a pig with Russia’s colours. Whilst this could signify a general antagonism towards Russia’s government or the country itself, it could also be a reaction to Russian propaganda, literally stating that Russian influence is not allowed here.

Taken on the Seventh of April, 2023, at 13:36, the Leftmost sticker seems to be imitating the style of football stickers, reading “Fanatics Ukraine”, along with several of Ukraine’s state symbols and flag colours.

## 2.4- Organisations in the political sphere

One cannot refrain from mentioning the amount of more official stickers, belonging to actual political organisations, that can be found in the streets, people who aren't just putting forth their reactions and opinions as individuals, but as a group, a group that has a logo that they can put on their stickers, as well as links and a website. The majority of these were from the German branch of the Antifa movement, and other analogues, such as Linksjugend Solid, or the Czech anarchist federation.



Taken on the 22 7 2023 15:24 (Left and top right), these images both show stickers advertising the Antifaschistische Aktion, or German Antifa movement. “Although the original logo of the 1932 organization of Antifaschistische Aktion featured two red flags representing communism and socialism, contemporary Antifa logos since the 1980s have typically featured a black flag representing anarchism and autonomism in addition to the red flag:” (“Antifa (Germany),” 2021). Note the differences in logo present here, a black on black logo on the left combined with a faint “No borders” text on the bottom could point to a connection to the No Borders Network, whereas the use of an Israel flag on the other image could connect the sticker to the Antideutsch



movement. Alternatively, it is also possible that these were all bought and placed by an author that didn't consider the logos beyond their connection to the movement as a whole.

Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:24, the purple sticker (Bottom right) is a sticker that is advertising Linksjugen Solid, another antifascist group.

Of interest is the heavy German lean that was seen in not just stickers in general, but in this category especially. Among stickers relating to political organisations, only a few weren't German, and a large majority seemed to echo similar anti-fascism, anarchic sentiment.



Taken on the twenty-first of December, 2021, at 19:32, this sticker (Top left)

reads "Anti fascist action". Note, again, the peeling, which appears natural here, indicating that no one tried to remove it at any point, despite the sticker's age.

Taken on the twelfth of January, 2022, we see (Top right) a sticker advertising the anarchist federation, along with logo and website. This is one of the few Czech

language stickers promoting a large political movement that was collected.

Taken on the twenty-first of December, 2021, at 19:33, this sticker depicts a man kicking another man with a star on their chest down, with the words "Good Night, Left side" written in the ring around it. This is an edit of a common Antifa logo used primarily in America, Good Night, White Pride. This sort of direct reaction towards a political movement was quite uncommon to see.



So far, we have primarily seen leftist political movements and reactions to them in stickers, but there are also stickers that are upholding a specific goal of some sort, unrelated to the large movements discussed beforehand. I once again reiterate, this was a phenomenon that was near-unilaterally German, and aside from football stickers, a topic I will touch on in a later chapter, was one of the only topics that had such a heavy linguistic lean.



Taken on the twenty-first of April, 2023, at 14:30, (Top left) is a sticker made in remembrance of the victims of the attack in Hanau, that occurred on the nineteenth of February, 2020. It is adorned with the faces and names of the victims. “Please remember Gökhan Gültekin, Sedat Gürbüz, Said Nesar Hashemi, Mercedes Kierpacz, Hamza Kurtovi, Vili Viorel Păun, Fatih Saraçolu, Ferhat Unvar, and Kaloyan Velkov as the names of those who passed away on February 19, 2020 in Hanau” (#SayTheirNames, n.d.).

Taken on the twenty-sixth of May, 2023, at 16:36, this yellow sticker (Top right) is an advert for “the memory guerrilla”, a project aiming to make people more aware of their environment through posting questions aiming to provoke introspection.

Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:31, on Široká street, this sticker (Bottom) plastered on a pole appears to be concerned with the Latchkey kid phenomenon of leaving kids to fend for themselves at home for extended periods of time. Note the literal keys being held in the hand on the picture, a common symbol of this phenomenon.



## 2.5- Czech politics

Of course, German stickers were not the only ones to touch on politicised topics, and quite a few stickers in Czech also had a statement to say. In general, while German stickers often either belonged to a specific movement or organisation, Czech ones seemed a lot more spontaneous, complaints, observations and memes about current events in the world and at home, rather than dedicated causes and movements, although it's also likely that only the most dedicated movements leave their country, rather than it being some facet on Czech flyposting.

Taken on the twenty-eighth of March, 2023, at 13:58, on Maiselova street, this sticker (Top right) shows a cute ghost, along with the phrase “A spectre is haunting Europe”, the first line from the Communist manifesto.



Taken on the twenty-seventh of June, 2023, at 10:54, this sticker (Bottom right) has been heavily damaged, but the name “Andrej Babiš”, the name of the Czech Prime Minister from 2017 to 2021, as well as the word “Lies” can just be made out. This is a classic case of conflict over a sticker, with the original author's work being damaged extensively, in all likelihood by a supporter of Andrej.

Taken on the fifth of May, 2022, at 15:06, this sticker (Left) depicts Klaus Schwab, the founder of the World Economic Forum. The quote next to him comes from a deleted tweet by the WEF concerning proposed economic plans, which have garnered a lot of negative feedback, and become a source of a number of conspiracy theories. Note the monochrome, unflattering depiction, as well as the lack of intentional damage, despite heavy peeling. It is likely that most people don't parse the meaning behind this sticker.



### 3- Religious meanings

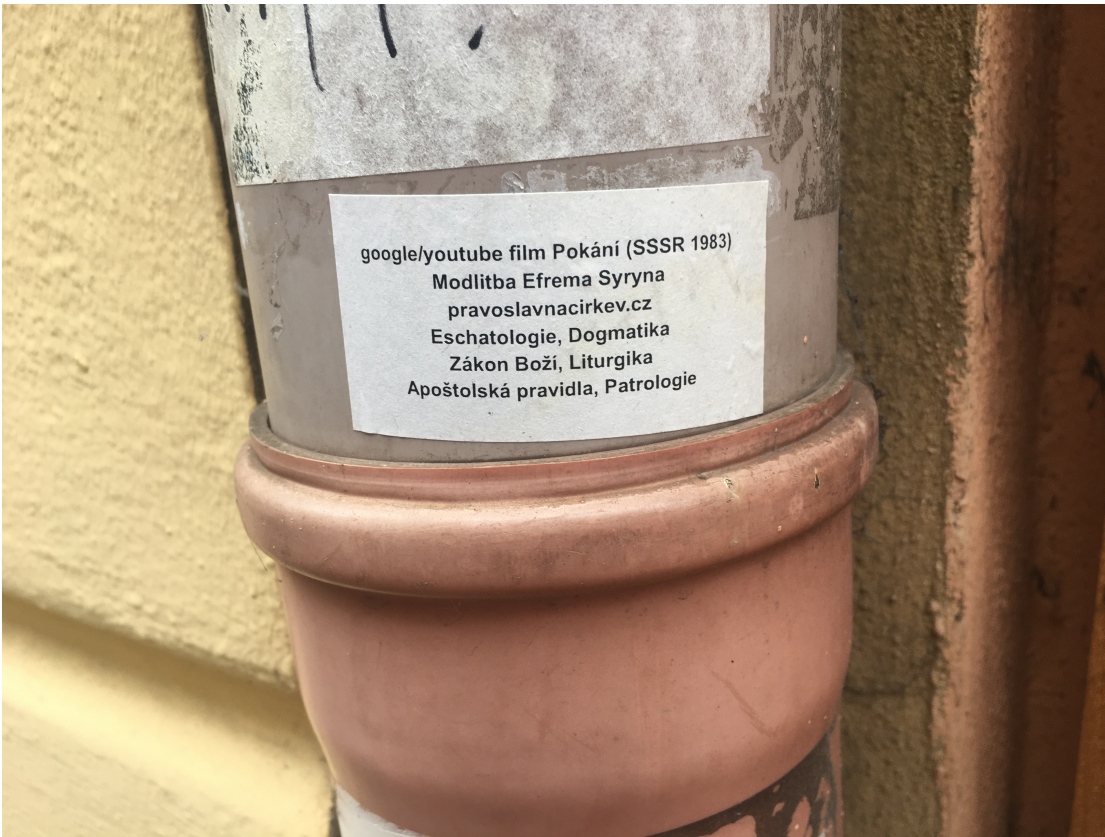


Taken on the twenty-seventh of June, 2022, at 17:58, at a bus-stop, this is an example of Dakini script. “These Symbols cannot be understood by everyone and are frequently written on yellow scroll paper. In essence, it is symbolic code that, once decoded, allows a treasure-revealer to download/unlock an entire hidden teaching (treasure).” (*DAKINI SCRIPT (Khandro Da-yig): Mysterious Symbolic Key to Hidden Treasures*, 2021). “The Tertön (Treasure-holder) can interpret this writing and reveal complete Teachings that have been hidden from a previous time or from another realm.” (*Archive of the Khandroling Paper Cooperative (2012-2017)*, 2012). The lack of any additional information, as well as the location, tucked under the rain cover, on the frame of the bus timetable, indicates that whoever placed these had no interest in helping others find out about the meaning behind this small strip of paper, rather, it’s meaning is meant for a select few who both know what it means, and are able to actually find or notice it.

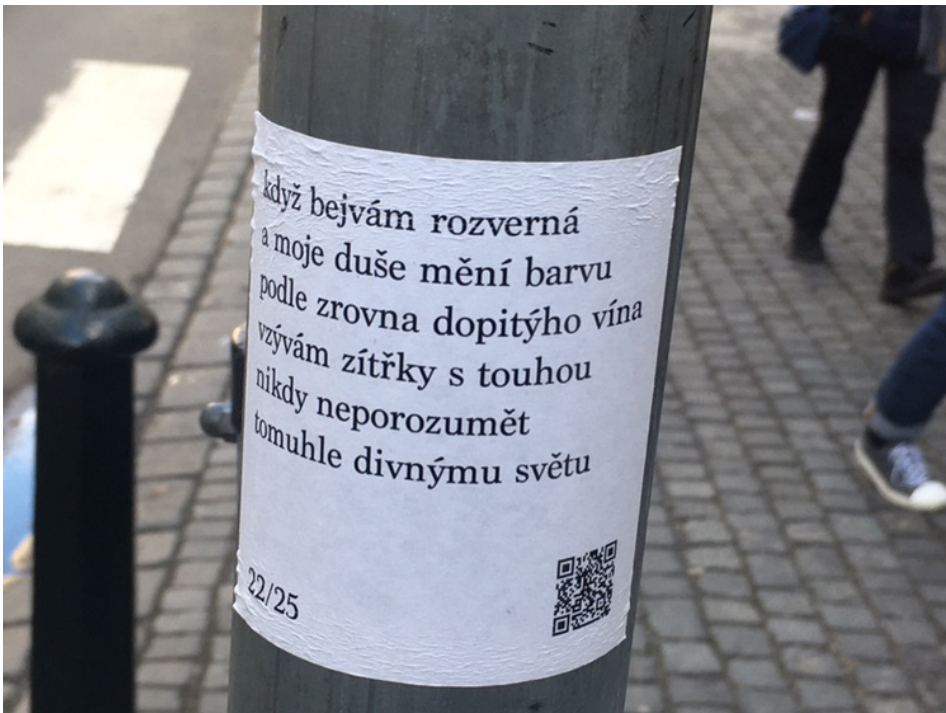
This is the category I found the smallest number of examples of in my research. Sticker graffiti is a form used by various peripheries, to communicate with people “in the know”, and induct new prospective members into “the know”. As such, although rare, it is sometimes used for religious purposes, by groups that aren’t in the spiritual majority.

According to some census reports, “With a non-religiousness rate of 78.40%, the Czech Republic currently holds the record for being the most atheist nation in the world” (*Least Religious Countries*, n.d.). Therefore, religions that are in no way in the minority on a world scale can also be found utilising flyposting.





Taken on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, 2023, at 14:28, this sticker sports sparse black text on a white background detailing instructions to find and watch a movie, as well as the website for [pravoslavnacirkev.cz](http://pravoslavnacirkev.cz), as well as other Christian terms. Based on appearance, this may not be a sticker at all, but rather a piece of regular paper stuck to the side of a storm-drain. Note that the film *Pokání* came out in 1984. “The film was finished in 1984, but it wasn't shown in theaters until its premiere in Cannes in 1987” (*Pokání* (1984), n.d.).

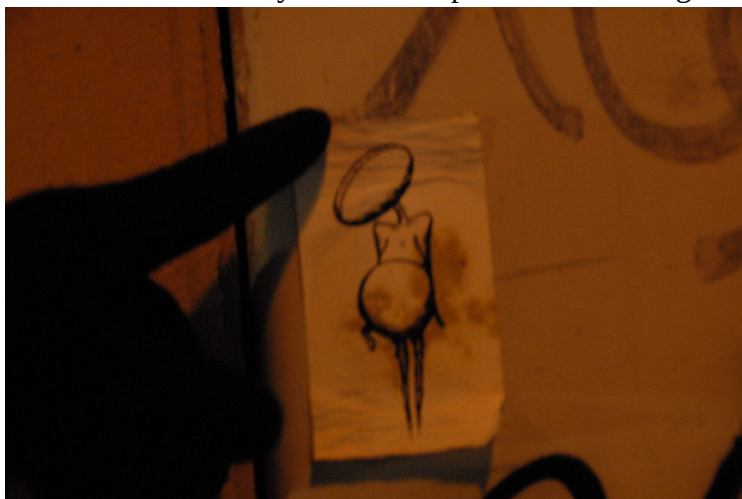


#### 4-Artistic expression

Taken on the twentieth of September, 2022, at 13:36, this sticker is a piece of poetry in Czech, as well as a number and a QR code, leading to a questionnaire on the [Prahoproject.cz](http://Prahoproject.cz) website, an artistic movement focused on connection and vibrancy of life. These stickers are some of

the most common forms of sticker art that can be seen in Prague at the time of taking this photograph. Note the water damage on the top and bottom of the sticker.

My work, on account of its nature, is very top down, with not much input from the actual sticker authors. Especially in the realm of street-art, it is difficult to track down who may have made or put up a piece, unless they're a part of a large art collective that has literally put their name or a link to their website on the sticker itself. As such, it can be difficult to ascertain what IS art, not in a theoretical, abstract manner, but quite literally, which of these stickers are intended to be part of an art-piece, and which are a tag, a whistle-call for a select few in the know, or an in-joke that's been put up on the street. So far, I've posted examples of stickers with text on them, sometimes a link, but what can one say about a sticker that is only an image, with no accompanying information? Sans some very brave attempts at reverse image search, there is little ways to learn more.



Taken on the twenty-first of December, 2021, at 19:36, the left image is a sticker depicting a gaunt figure, with a distended stomach and large, elongated head with no facial features sans a line going down it. Note the heavy water damage, which has caused the sticker to fold in on itself. My gloved hand is holding it up, so that it can be photographed.

Taken on the eleventh of January, 2022, at 15:29, the right image shows a larger sticker, covered in simple monochrome sketches with coloured details. There is a credit on the bottom left, but the heavy stylisation makes it difficult to discern.



Taken on the twenty-first of march, 2022 at 14:16 (Left) and on the twentieth of April, 2022 at 13:35 (Right),





these stickers are incredibly simple, monochrome, and depict a stylised bust of a figure. several of each were photographed.

Of course, not all artists were so coquettish about their authorial status, and I found quite a few stickers that advertised their artist, of proudly announced that they belonged to a larger art group.



Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:19 (Left), on the same date, at 15:26 (Above), and on the same date at 14:33 (Below), these are stickers created by the Los Angeles artist brand Waveyism(TM), by David Augustyn. Note the imitation of warning signs and travel stickers. In their catalogue, stickers also imitate the Hello My Name Is

format, Priority Mail stickers, stickers with return if lost instructions, stickers with instructions to handle with care, and others. Note the bottom sticker's peeling at the corner, and the material, as it appears far more handmade than the other, professional looking ones. It's not known if it was made and put up by the same author as the first two, or if the first two were put up by the same creator at all, or if they are actually affiliated in any way with the original artist, or are just big fans.





Taken on the twenty-first of December, 2021, at 19:56, (Right) and the fourteenth of January, 2022, at 15:10 (Left), these two stickers, reading “Je suis Partout” are staple designs from Thierry Jaspert, also known for their “J’Existe” stickers. “Born in 1986 in Eupen, Belgium, close to Aachen, Thierry Jaspert is known for his “Esoteric Andalltha” stickers, which can be seen all over the world” (Weinkauf,



2017).



Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 14:42, this sticker features the phrase “Anel has a posse”. X has a posse is a meme that originated in stenciling, with the viral “Andre the Giant has a posse” meme. “The images all feature a shaky black-and-white image of a famous person with their name replacing the X in the title, usually with stats in the top right corner somehow related to the person. The original image was created in 1989 by a pair of students at the Rhode Island School of Design named Shepard Fairey and Ryan Lesser while honing stenciling techniques” (Brucker, 2011). Note the difference in presentation, with the lack of stats and clearer background. It is possible that this is a third generation, non-ironic use of the meme.



Taken on the fifteenth of June, 2023, at 15:28 (Top left), and on the Sixth of April, 2023, at 14:46 (Bottom left), both of these stickers appear to be made using comic book panels. It is unclear if they're some sort of professionally made sticker made by the comic book company themselves, or if it's a fan that's printed out some panels and turned them into stickers to put up themselves, but I lean towards the latter due to the lack of any advertising information present, albeit it is possible that it has been destroyed or obscured by the damage to the stickers, the bottom one having large sections torn off at the top, while the first has remnants of a sticker that was placed over it.



Taken on the fifteenth of March, 2023, at 15:13, this sticker has the symbol of the Căng Tin, “The goal of Căng Tin, a research project on Vietnamese cuisine, applied arts, and craftsmanship, is to highlight expertise from Vietnam's various regions and provinces” (Căng Tin, n.d.).



## 5-Additional examples

### 5.1-Football fandom

One of the most common forms of sticker, bizarrely, ended up being different stickers from football fans, advertising their favourite team, or a small sports club. The majority of these were German, with one or two alternate examples, such as an Italian or Norwegian football team. *“There is clearly a territorial edge, with away fans purposefully placing “slaps” in spots to annoy returning home fans. Stickers are a perfect medium for devoted supporters to be creative and subtly spread their teams themes and emblems wherever they may roam”* (LDNGraffiti, 2010). This, perhaps, somewhat explains the massive imbalance in the number of foreign and domestic football teams represented.



Taken on the twenty-eighth of March, 2023, at 13:52, this sticker (Left) advertising the Berlin Sports club, or BSC for short, has been torn after being placed over another sticker. “The steamship “Hertha,” which had a blue and white smokestack, inspired the club’s name and logo (WE ARE HERTHA!, n.d.). Note that this logo appears several times in this thesis, as it was an exceedingly common sticker.



Taken on the same date, at 13:53, this sticker (Middle right) rather aggressively sports a skull and bones with text aiming it at “Those who do not support the SCP”. I believe this is related to the Spezia Calcio Popolare, an amateur sports team connected to the larger Spezia Calcio football club.

Taken on the twenty-sixth of March, 2023, at 16:36, this sticker (Top right) is a symbol of the Cherokees, an Ultras club in Pescara, Italy. CWY is actual Cherokee script.

Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 15:12, this sticker (Bottom right) is by the Baník Ostrava Football club, celebrating in remembrance of a dead member. As one of the few Czech football stickers, it takes on a somber tone compared to the boastful, friendly or aggressive tones we saw in other stickers.

Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023, at 14:26, this sticker (Bottom left) is for The Youth Face, the youth-targeted subgroup of the Bulgarian Ultras, connected with Professional Football Club Botev AD, commonly referred to as Botev Plovdiv. Note the logo, which imitates the logo of clothing brand The North Face. This is a classic example of intentional brand imitation, or “Jamming”.





## 5.2-Tagging

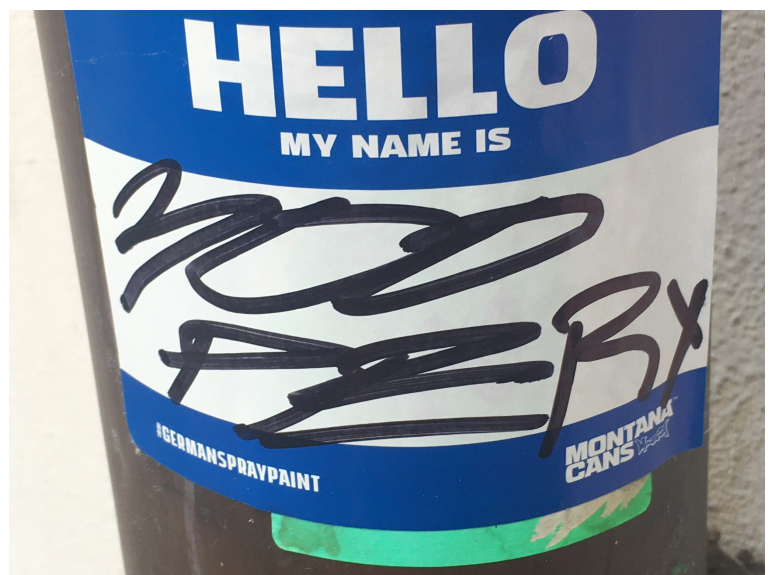
*“Tags are distinguished by being 2D, frequently smaller in size, and thinner lines that are the result of speed necessity due to the frequently illegal nature of tagging. Tags are frequently done in spray paint or markers” (Avramidis & Tsilimpounidi, 2016). “While tags are frequently written directly onto objects, they can also occasionally be written onto stickers (also referred to as “slaps”) and adhered to items, which is quicker and safer when illegally tagging” (“Tag (Graffiti),” 2022). This was a common theme I saw, especially using stickers with the Hello, My Name Is format. “Name badges are a recurring theme in sticker art and were first produced in 1959 by C-Line Products” (LDNGraffiti, 2010).*



Taken on the twenty-sixth of March, 2023 at 13:59, This sticker (Top left) features an inverted colour sticker, with Lena written on it with a silver marker.



Taken on the twelfth of January, 2022, at 13:56, on Malá Štupartská, we see (Top Right) a blank paper sticker, on which the words Antifa have been written with red marker, along with an arrow, star, and heart over the I. This tag, instead of using an individual’s name or moniker, uses the name of an organisation, as well as using cutesy modifications to the tag, possibly ironically, or to irritate any individuals who are predisposed against the group who see it.



Taken on the twenty-second of July, 2023, at 14:45, this sticker (Right) is a standard use of tagging, but of note is that it uses a sticker made by Montana Cans with the hashtag “GERMANSPRAYPAINT” on it in the corner. This sticker was made and sold with the intent of being used as a Slap, rather than being repurposed from an ordinary sticker, and wasn’t

the only sticker I saw that had that exact hashtag and manufacturer printed on it. It is perhaps not surprising that there exist forces aiming to monetise stickering.

### 5.3- Tourist stickers

*“Hotels would place a sticker of the city or country you were visiting, usually accompanied by the hotel's name as well, onto your luggage. Travel stickers or luggage stickers were designed as promotional tools by hotels so that people could show where they had been, and in modern times, people have been collecting and making their own custom travel stickers” (T.J.J., 2017).*

Of course, any sticker that exists for any reason has a decent chance of ending up on the street instead of its intended spot, and that includes these. Rather than travelers putting up stickers to where they've been, I think that some of these might be the result of travelers putting up stickers of their hometown. Either way, it is notable enough to examine in more depth.

Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023 at 14:26, this sticker (Left) is an advert for the city of Baden Württemberg. “Locals from the state of Baden-Württemberg are participating in this official advertising campaign by placing stickers all over the place” (mockelhaSi, 2022). The literal translation is “It’s nice here, but have you been to Baden Württemberg?”

Taken on the twenty-eighth of March, 2023, at 13:50, this sticker advertises the city of Eindhoven. This design is by an artist called “Lempke, and they’re the person behind the many stickers that can be seen all over Europe and the cheerful light-bulb murals” (de Natris, 2018). It is unclear if this is an original work, but in all likelihood, it is a fan’s creation.





## Destruction of stickers



Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023, at 14:34, this sticker exemplifies the meaning that can be added via destruction. The original meaning of this sticker is completely removed, leaving a message stating that it is “100% Anti \_\_\_”. It’s unknown if this destruction is part of the original design by the author, or if it was done by a second party.

Of course, it’s pretty common to see stickers to be damaged through various means. The most common is, of course, environmental damage, as the glue holding them to their surface weakens, or the colour washes out from repeated rain. Unlike forms like graffiti, flyposting is a form of street-art that comes with a relatively short inbuilt ticking clock until it’s inevitable destruction (Spray paint fades over time, especially in the full sun, but it does last for years, decades even. However, the same graffiti writer will paint over their own pieces to keep the paint fresh.(6)). That said, when the destruction is caused intentionally, it is worth noting. Unlike graffiti or latrinalia, where destroying a present message can only be done by cleaning it off (Which could require professional work in the case of graffiti), destroying a sticker is a simple task, albeit annoying if you’re trying to remove it completely with no traces.



Taken on the twenty-first of March, 2023, 13:30, this picture on the left has been damaged, leaving deep grooves in the sticker. Also note the peeled edge on the bottom left, indicating an attempt to rip it off wholesale.

Taken on the eighth of February, 2022, 15:42:18, the picture on the right shows two stickers, one on top of the other. Note the placement directly over the bottom sticker's central symbol by the upper sticker, advertising a German football club.

However, the complete removal of a sticker is not always required. The key is, more often than completely eradicating the original message, to show your response to it, by leaving the sticker intact, but clearly damaged to show your opinion for all to see. In the first image, we see a sticker that's been damaged using some sort of hard object, most likely a coin, leaving large scrapes in its surface. This, however, does not actually make the original sticker illegible. In the latter, the response is perhaps less direct, simply overlaying an existing sticker with your own. This is notable, as whilst most sticker artists generally try not to cover other stickers with their own, there does not appear to be any particular unspoken rule against it. *“Because stickers are typically so small, it is not necessary to cover up anyone else's work when placing them, a characteristic that may promote discourse rather than the emergence of a culture of one-upmanship, as is the case with graffiti tagging. Of particular note, it seemed bad manners in Berlin to cover over a sticker”* (Clough, 2010). Through this interacting with the stickers of others, silent conflicts can play out on the streets with no one else the wiser. *“It captures a two-way conflict that was occurring, with some posters being torn down or vandalized, and billboards responding by pasting new notices that denounced the vandals”* (Hicks, 2021).



## Conclusion

It is a world of colour and conflict that thousands see every single day, with most people not paying it any mind, beyond thinking of stickers as a minor nuisance that the city must deal with. Hopefully, I've done some work towards spotlighting the dizzying variety of flyposting for whoever's reading this, as well as the value it has for ethnographic study and further analysis, rather than being declared as little more than a niche advertising form that holds no academic interest. Not only is it a form of street-culture that has, up until now, remained mostly undisturbed, but it is also the method through which a myriad of smaller cultural groups attempt to reach out to other potential members, or spread their message, or so on, and as such, it is a nexus of different subcultures that clash and are reacted to by other people. And at the same time, it is incredibly niche compared to many different methods of connection available to us in a digital age, making it attractive to various peripheries that could otherwise very well go entirely undocumented. As such, I think it is quite necessary for stickering to be given the level of attention that other forms of street-art are granted, as this method of transforming the public space is open to a much wider variety of people than others, and stickers carry a degree of information that few other forms of graffiti can attempt to without legal repercussion.

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