

25th INURA CONFERENCE

# TRANSFORMATIVE URBAN POLITICS HOW CAN WE?

## **Fieldtrips & Panels**

30th August - 6th September 2015

Athens, Greece



---

**T**HE 25TH INURA CONFERENCE RETURNS to Athens seven years after it tried to reflect on “Non/De/Re-regulation” ([inura08.wordpress.com](http://inura08.wordpress.com)) and while the city has been at the whirlwind of glocal crises.

Since 2007 the words crisis, debt, austerity, economic depression became commonplace around the world. From 2009 Athens became the prominent association with these notions; notions that have also strong spatial manifestations and implications for the city and those living in it. As a new “guinea pig” Athens became a territory for implementing harsh neoliberal measures under the pretext of the “exceptionality” of the crisis. Since this exception was anything but temporary, these past years reflect a “normalization of exception” in everyday life, in the introduction of urban politics and policies and in the (re)production of urban spaces.

On the other hand, these same years have been marked and – to a great extent shaped – by numerous mobilizations and contestations against the exceptional measures. Moreover, they have been shaped by the voicing of claims “beyond the crisis” and by the emergence of al-

ternative practices wishing to counter the adverse repercussions; practices involving social solidarity networks, alternative economies, barter systems and cooperative initiatives and networks of social support. These mobilizations and alternative practices brought Athens, once again, to the media spotlight and raised questions not only about the potentialities for transforming urban politics but also for establishing transformative urban politics.

The coming to power of a left government brings these questions to the central political arena. Yet, at the same time, and considering the broader geopolitical terrain, this also problematizes the possibilities and limitations of actually implementing transformative urban politics and the implications it may have for grassroots movements.

For these reasons, the focus of this conference is on praxis; claimed, contested, implemented, real-politik, ideal, wishful... On praxis but also on the challenges, limitations and opportunities that arise in this conjuncture for transformative urban politics...

---

## MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015

---

**10:00-10.30**     **Registration** @NTUA (entrance from Stournari str)

---

**10.30-13.00**     **Introductory Session\_context and conjunctures**

---

**13.00-14.00**     **Lunch** @ NTUA

---

**14.30 - 18.00**     **Fieldtrip 1\_ Alternatives for urban development: the case of Peiraeus Port neighbourhoods**  
**1A.** Municipality of Keratsini-Drapetsona: urban development of a historical refugee settlement  
**1B.** The port of Piraeus: institutional changes, political and economic stakes and the local movement  
**1C.** Municipality of Perama: life in a neighbourhood with more than 80% of unemployment

---

**18.30 - 20.30**     **Public event 1\_Challenges and conflicts in the western Piraeus**  
@ Keratsini-Drapetsona City Hall

---

**21.00 - 23.00**     **Dinner**

---

---

## TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015

---

**9.30 - 13.30**     **Fieldtrip 2\_City centre: competing imaginaries and everyday lives**  
**2A.** Plans for the regeneration of the city centre  
**2B.** Behind the image of the touristic, historic downtown: contested interests and multilayered city  
**2C.** Facets of an escalating housing crisis in the centre of Athens: housing struggles and policies  
**2D.** Antifascist initiatives in inner-city neighbourhoods

---

**13.30 - 14.30**     **Lunch** @ Bread and Roses

---

---

<b>14.30 - 18.00</b>	<b>Fieldtrip 3_Social solidarity initiatives</b> <b>3A.</b> Social solidarity initiatives at Vyronas and Zografou neighbourhoods <b>3B.</b> Social solidarity initiatives at Kypseli neighbourhood <b>3C.</b> Refugee crisis in Greece: solidarity and policies <b>3D.</b> The occupied refugee housing complex at Leoforos Alexandras
<b>18.30 - 20.30</b>	<b>Public event 2_Commons and solidarity economies: trasformative potentials</b> @ theatre EMBROS
<b>21.00 - 23.00</b>	<b>Dinner</b>

---

## **WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

<b>9.30*-14.00</b> *Fieldtrip 4B departs at 9.00	<b>Fieldtrip 4_What alternatives to neoliberal privatizations and big investments?</b> <b>4A.</b> The former international airport of Hellinikon: the process of privatization and the struggle for a Metropolitan Park <b>4B.</b> Solid waste management <b>4C.</b> Olympic assets 10 years after <b>4D.</b> Local conflicts and challenges over a football stadium development plan
<b>14.00-16.00</b>	<b>Free time</b>
<b>16.00-18.30</b>	<b>Public event 3a_Round table on INURA's collaborative project on real-existing NMM</b>
<b>18.30-19.00</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
<b>19.00-21.00</b>	<b>Public event 3b_Challenging austerity urbanism</b>
<b>21.00</b>	<b>Party</b>

---

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015**

---

**Introductory session: context and conjunctures**

---

TIME: **10.30-13.00**

---

**INURA in Athens seven years later**

Penny Koutrolikou, Dimitra Siatitsa, Maria Jaidopulu-Vrijea (INURA Athens)

**Political time space densification, spatial politics, conflicts and potentials**

Andreas Karitzis (Nikos Poulantzas Institute)

Maria Kalantzopoulou (encounter Athens, AnalyzeGreece.gr)

Discussion

---

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015**

---

**Fieldtrip 1\_Region of Piraeus**

---

TIME: **14.30-18.00**

---

---

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 1A. Municipality of Keratsini-Drapetsona: urban development of a historical refugee settlement**

---

ORGANIZER: **Eleni Kyramargiou** (historian, municipal councillor), **Eleni Kapetanidou** (municipal councillor) and **Christos Karagiannakis** (vice mayor for Culture and Sports).

CONTACT: **+30 6944 339 506** and **+30 6973 036 932**

DEPARTURE: **at 14.30 from NTUA - main entrance [42 Patission st.]**

---

**D**RAPETSONA IS SITUATED ON THE WEST-ern coast of Piraeus, the most important Greek port closely associated with Athens. It was developed as a refugee settlement for newcomers from Asia Minor in the early 1920s. Its proximity to the port and the industrial plants (the Power Plant, an Oil Refinery and the Fertilizer Plant) created favourable conditions for a process of urbanization that rapidly transformed the surrounding area. More than 30,000 inhabitants were concentrated in 0.7 square miles. The settlement was divided in seven neighbourhoods representing the different localities from their common Asia Minor heritage. The vast majority of the inhabitants lived in makeshift homes, shacks and hovels –with no running water, individual lavatories or electricity– that did not follow any plan of organized settlement. Drapetsona was a slum.

A major stake in the area is the recuperation and regeneration of the Brownfield of the Former fertilizer Plant, an area situated in the west entrance of the Piraeus port near the neighbourhood of Drapetsona. It was found in 1909 and back then more than 109 buildings were created and more than 4,000 workers, employees and scientific advisors worked there. It was one of the largest industries in Greece. It produced fertilizers, chemical acids and glass. The production started falling from 1970 onwards until it

was permanently closed in 1999. In 2003 most of the industrial units and buildings, except from 5, were demolished. The local society including the recent left-wing municipal government claims the expropriation and regeneration of the area with green spaces, cultural and sport infrastructure for the local community, against plans for the real-estate development of the area into an economic and maritime centre promoted by the landowners. A regulatory reform is pending by the current government in order to restrict uses.

The urbanization and transformations of Drapetsona reflect broader social and economic developments. Contemporary social conditions in Drapetsona reflect the disintegration of every-day life in the post-2008 financial crisis. The low-income inhabitants witness the terminal demise of the small-scale industries that had substituted the large industrial plants of the past. This process is interwoven with the collapse of the welfare state resulting thus in large numbers of houses with electricity shortages, unemployment and limited access to health services.

The field trip will first visit the brownfield of the former fertilizer at the southwest end of Drapetsona and will walk through the neighbourhood towards the City Hall, situated in the centre of the largest refugee housing complex.

---

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 1B. The port of Piraeus: institutional changes, political and economic stakes and the local movement.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Vivian Gleni** (Piraeus Municipal Network “To Limani tis Agonias”),

**Vasiliki Daskalaki** (Citizens’ initiative for the public spaces of Piraeus).

CONTACT: **+30 6936 472 848**

DEPARTURE: **at 14.30 from NTUA - main entrance (42 Patission st.)**

---

**T**HE PORT OF PIRAEUS IS THE BIGGEST PORT of Europe, offering multiple services. It is a port situated in the heart of the city and has held an important role in the history and development of Piraeus. During the past few years, several transformations are taking place there, with a local and national impact. More specifically, there is an increasing detachment of the port from the broader city area, as well as gradual loss of its public character, due to institutional changes but also due to management policies. Namely, during the past 15 years more or less, the port is being transformed to a société anonyme, under the trade name “Piraeus Port Authority S.A.”, which has entered the stock market. In 2008, the biggest part of the container transport, the most profitable of the port’s activities, is divested to the Chinese state company COSCO, while in 2011 the Greek State transfers the company’s shares to the newly founded, by the government at that time, “Hellenic Republic Asset Development Fund”, for the repayment of the country’s public debt. Today, on the other hand, the revival of an international competition for the sale of the majority stake of the

PPA S.A., currently owned by the state, is being discussed, in the framework of the creditors’ demands regarding Ports and Airports privatizations. The city’s organizations and movements are standing up for the port’s public character, asserting its manifold development for the city’s, the country’s and the citizens’ benefit.

There will be a guided tour of the port authority premises.

We will discuss with representatives from the adjacent municipalities and specifically with the municipal authority of Keratsini – Drapetsona and the civic movement “To Limani tis Agonias” about the future of the port, as well as alternative policies and proposals regarding its operation and planning.

We will also come in contact with members of the Union of Permanent/Probationer Dockworkers of PPA, so that they get to inform us regarding the working conditions, the problems and the proposals of the Piraeus Port employees.

We will also visit archaeological and industrial sites situated within the port authority zone, regarding which, there have been proposed gentrification and reuse plans.



---

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 1C. Municipality of Perama: life in a neighbourhood with more than 80% of unemployment.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Dimitra Siatitsa** (INURA Athens), **Paschalis Samarinis** (encounter Athens),

CONTACT: **+30 6977 913 876**

DEPARTURE: **at 14.30 from NTUA - main entrance [42 Patission st.]**

---

**T**HE FIELD TRIP WILL VISIT THE SHIPBUILD-  
ing and Repair zone of the Port of Piraeus, which has been the main economic activity (and employer) in the area, gradually falling in decay the last decades and was especially hit by the current economic crisis. As a result, unemployment in the area reaches double and triple rates and people are facing an extreme humanitarian crisis. We will meet with members of the workers unions as well as members of the municipal council of the newly elected left-wing local government. We will then visit the social centre of the popular assembly of Perama to discuss about the efforts made to develop solidarity networks and initiatives, as well as to fight rising xenophobic and fascist attitudes leading to growing popular support to the fascist party.

Finally we will visit Ano (upper) Perama, an initially informal settlement by post war II and post civil war interior migrants on publicly owned land (70's-80's), incorporated in the city plan in 1993. Important mobilisations took place during the period of democratic transition in 1972-1974 that prevented the demolition of the initial shantytown and allowed the settlers to access to housing and ownership by regulating the informal settlement and allowing the upgrading of the building stock (see documentary on post-dictatorship labour and popular struggles, for Perama min 33 until 46 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koj1zfPSTZ4>). The neighbourhood grew however with very important problems, such as lack of proper infrastructure, facilities and public spaces.

---

**MONDAY 31ST AUGUST 2015**

---

**Public event 1\_Challenges and conflicts in the western Piraeus**

---

TIME: **18.30-20-30**

---

Discussion at the Keratsini-Drapetsona City Hall

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**Fieldtrip 2\_City centre: competing imaginaries and everyday lives.**

---

TIME: **10.00-13.30** [Please check departure and time for each field trip]

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 2A. Plans for the regeneration of the city centre.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Evangelia Chatzikonstantinou** [INURA Athens], **Maria Kalantzopoulou** [Encounter Athens], **Konstantina Theodorou** [Koino Athens], **Loukas Triantis** [NTUA] and **Kostas Vourekas** [NTUA],

CONTACT: **+30 6976 818 853**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.30 from Victoria Square (at the entrance of Victoria Metro Station)**

---

**U**NTIL THE MID 90S, THE CENTRE OF ATHENS had rarely been an issue on the social and political agenda. From the mid-90s, and especially during the preparation of the 2004 Olympic Games, there has been a renewed interest in the city centre, closely related with the important public investments on urban space and infrastructure. At that period the gradual degradation of the urban environment had contributed to the move of population from the center to the suburbs, a process that, together with the inflow of immigrants from the Balkan countries and Eastern Europe, changed in a few years the social geography of the city. But, shortly after the 2004 Games, the economic downturn became visible and the aspirations about inner city regeneration and development seemed to move further and further away. The Greek debt crisis, started in 2010, and its effects and manifestations are noted more intensively in the city centre and especially in the densely populated areas that surround it, where the new socio-spatial problems are adding on to long-standing processes of urban decline.

In this fieldtrip we will visit central neighborhoods of Athens and discuss the urban policies promoted in the context of the crisis. Since the beginning of 2010, a number of committees were formed and numerous reports were published with analyses, evaluations and proposals for the problems the centre was facing. We could

say that the centre of Athens became the stake and the terrain of regeneration projects, specific measures and plans that were focusing on interventions for improving the physical environment, tax incentives and policing.

SOAP (Plan of Integrated Urban Intervention) of Athens, the latest and most thorough urban strategy for Athens approved in January 2015, is an uneven collage of repression policies, unrealized ideas from older plans, and ongoing (and wishful) private development projects. Through incorporating a trendy urban vocabulary – city branding, creativity hubs, creative entrepreneurship – it rather seems like a wish list, which facilitates private initiatives and is unable to come up with real solutions to the problems of an impoverished population.

We will start from Victoria Sq. (near the North border of SOAP) and walk towards Omonia Sq. This route runs through the most deprived area of the SOAP district and exhibits different challenges and problems that the city centre is facing. We will visit Metaxourgio, a working class neighborhood of Athens that attracted during the 2000s an important number of cultural and entertainment uses and households of more prosperous socioeconomic positions. The area combines diverse and conflicting land uses; former warehouses, traditional shops, brothels, and wholesale or retail Chinese businesses that coexist with expensive restaura-

rants, theaters, and ethnic delicatessens. The area was declared in 2011 as a 'Zone of Special Regeneration' and important economic incentives for the renovation of derelict or abandoned buildings are provided to private investors. We will stop at Omonia Sq., an entry point for migrants and refugees in the city and a nodal place where the deprived part of the city center meets the edge of the historic and touristic triangle of Athens. In Omonia we also come across another

flagship project "Rethink Athens", an image related redevelopment project for the city centre that proposed the pedestrianization of Panepistimiou Str (along with other uses) in order to connect Acropolis to the National Archeological Museum. Finally, we will walk through Panepistimiou to "Rethink Athens" info point where we will discuss the impact and the necessity of such projects, questioning the diverse perspectives of a gentrified Athens center.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 2B. Behind the image of the touristic, historic downtown: contested interests and multilayered city.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Katerina Polychroniadi** [INURA Athens], **Eleni Kallimopoulou** [University of Macedonia, sonorCities], and **Panagiotis C. Poulos** [University of Athens, sonorCities].

CONTACT: **+30 6946 507 358**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.30 outside Kerameikos metro station (exit Technopolis)**. By metro: Take red line from Sygrou-Fix to Syntagma square, then blue line to Kerameikos (approx. 20 minutes including walk). You can also walk from the hotel [see map]. Approximately 30 minutes

---

**A. Constructing and selling images of downtown Athens**

- Touristic economy: itineraries and narratives of the downtown
- Which story of the city?

**B. Sensorial conflicts**

- Leisure, housing and the senses
- Old and new markets and the commercial exploitation of the senses

**T**HE FIELDTRIP WILL explore the downtown part of Athens, also known as its “historic center” (a concept grounded in the “archaeological discourse”) and consequently its touristic center. This area is also one of the most important commercial and leisure parts of the city while at the same time retaining residential areas and cites.

On the pretext of the Olympic Games of 2004, downtown Athens went through a series of small-scale, public-space renovations aimed at making it attractive for tourists (and claiming regeneration for Athenians). At that time those

projects were contested by different groups and collectivities in ways that foregrounded the tensions between cultural heritage, touristic economy and everyday life. Ten years later, the arising disputes appear to have been settled, with no important urban issues at stake. Yet, behind what is seen, one senses the presence of a series of different narratives about the city’s past and future, which partly arise from the conflicting interests and stakes of the various actors implicated in the life and the production of the city.

During the fieldtrip we will stop at selected points of interest, in order to meet and talk briefly with people who experience the city in their everyday life and/or are implicated in the construction or marketing of the image of the city. Our encounters with diverse locations, contexts and testimonies will help us piece together some of the multilayered versions and opposed visions of the city.

Brief description and more info at our website

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 2C. Facets of an escalating housing crisis in the centre of Athens: housing struggles and policies.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Dimitra Siatitsa** (INURA Athens)

CONTACT: **+30 6977 913 876**

DEPARTURE: **9:45 at metro station Metaxourgio [red line]**

---

**H**OUSING BOTH IN TERMS OF PRODUCTION (real-estate and construction bubble) and consumption (private debt) has not been closely related to the causes of the current crisis in Greece, as in the case of Spain. Nevertheless, since 2010 it has emerged as one of the most dramatic side effects of the consecutive implementation of austerity adjustment programmes. Greece is today facing a severe and escalating housing crisis affecting broader parts of the population, as housing precarity, deprivation and exclusion have multiplied. The housing problem has to be acknowledged as primarily an income and labour problem, rather than a problem occurring from the function of the housing market. It is mainly related with people's inability to pay monthly housing expenses, also due to the increase of costs of basic utilities such as electricity and the overtaxation of income and property – a pillar of the structural adjustment programmes which disproportionately burdened low and middle incomes.

As a consequence the private debt of households towards banks, the state and social security funds has been culminating expanding an invisible precariously and inadequately housed population whose needs can be hardly met by the current social protection system. The housing crisis landscape consists also of rising housing deprivation and homelessness, increasing needs for transitory emergency shelter for thousands of refugees arriving from the war

zones of the Middle East and Africa, and the further marginalisation of vulnerable groups. This is coupled by a steep recession in the housing market and construction sector, the destabilisation of previous economic and societal arrangements for access to housing and the total absence of tools and means for the implementation of housing policy – especially since the abolition of the Workers Housing Organisation in 2012 by the second memorandum of agreement with the Troika.

The field trip will first visit a Day centre for homeless that has been operating in the centre of Athens since 2012 (managed by a social NGO, supported by the municipality of Athens and funded by EU funds and private donors) to discuss with social workers about the changing profile of users, the growing demand and the difficulties faced, as well as potentials and shortcomings for the development of a coherent strategy to cope with rising homelessness and housing deprivation.

We will then walk in the centre of Athens and discuss about policies and practices to dwell the empty and abandoned housing stock of the city centre. Including the potential of mobilising small-scale fragmented housing stock that belongs to small property owners within the context of the current real-estate market downturn, as well as using the abandoned building and housing stock (both private and public) in the framework of a low-cost social housing pro-

gramme and supported housing schemes.

Finally, we will meet with members of the Stop Auctions platform to discuss about the problem of over-indebtedness of households, the mobilisations in front of local courts to block

auctions, the demands of the social movements and the flaws and potentials of the new policy framework negotiated by the left-wing government with Greece's debtors.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

FIELDTRIP 2D. **Antifacist initiatives in inner-city neighbourhoods.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Penny Koutrolikou** [INURA Athens, NTUA] and **Dimitris Ioannou** [NTUA]

CONTACT: **+30 6946 513 772**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.30 from Victoria Square (at the entrance of Victoria Metro Station)**

---

**I**N THE PAST YEARS, APART FROM THE DEBT crisis and its repercussions, Athens also became infamous for the rise of the far-right; both in formal politics but also – and crucially – in terms of practices. While the far-right / neo-nazi party of Golden Dawn started rising into power, firstly in the 2010 municipal elections and later on in the national parliament, groups of its members and/or affiliates ventured the streets of Athenian neighbourhoods, attacking mostly racialised migrants (but not only).

For a long time, elected officials as well as the media, tried to ignore or even justify the attacks. Although these actions took place in several neighbourhoods throughout the city, certain

neighbourhoods were ‘classified’ as Golden Dawn strongholds; either due to a strong presence of the party and its affiliates there or due to the increased number of attacks that took place.

Nevertheless, actions were taken by different group in order to challenge the dominance of the fascists. These actions varied both in terms of ideology and means and they are the main focus of this fieldtrip.

This fieldtrip will discuss about the anti-fascist struggles in neighbourhoods. It will focus on the neighbourhoods of Victoria square, Attikis square and Ag. Paneleimonas square, where we will meet and discuss with people involved in anti-fascist actions.



---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**Fieldtrip 3\_Social solidarity initiatives**

---

TIME: **14.30-18.00**

---

**A**LREADY FROM AFTER THE 2008 INSUR-  
gencies in Athens, but mostly after the  
signing of the Memorandum of Understanding  
(2010) and the Squares mobilizations, a num-  
ber of grassroots initiatives emerged in sev-  
eral neighbourhoods of Athens as well as in  
the broader Attica region. Focusing mostly on  
issues of immediate support in terms of caring  
for the basic needs of those most in need, they  
established local solidarity networks which  
included initiatives such as soup kitchens and  
food provision, barter systems, social pharma-  
cies and – at times – medical centres and provi-  
sion of classes. Yet, they also provided social (or  
even emotional) support for local people and be-  
came a ground for further politicization.

These solidarity networks differ in terms of  
ideologies, organizational forms and provisions  
and they reflect the needs as well as the potential  
of the neighbourhoods in which they operate.  
Rather than being a central coordinating organ-  
isations, they tend to form networks of different  
initiatives and associations that altogether (and  
not without tensions) form these local solidarity  
networks.

The aim of these parallel fieldtrips is to dis-  
cuss with people involved in such networks in  
different city neighbourhoods in order to reflect  
on the potentialities, limitations and differenc-  
es of such networks, and see what we can learn  
from their experiences.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 3A. Social solidarity initiatives at Vyronas neighbourhood.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Maria Mantzari** [INURA Athens], **Penny Koutrolikou** [INURA Athens] and **Dina Vaiou** [NTUA]

CONTACT: **+30 6973 018 343**

DEPARTURE: **Bread and Roses, 64 Panepistimiou (El. Venizelou) str and Patission (28is Oktovriou) str.**

---

**T**HE SIGNING OF THE MEMORANDUM OF Understanding in 2010 marked the “official” beginning of the debt crisis but also of a period of intense mobilization, clashes as well as of the emergence or solidification of numerous neighborhood assemblies and solidarity initiatives.

Although the Municipality of Athens has received most of the attention concerning such initiatives, many of them are located in other municipalities and neighborhoods, both nearby and far-way from the city centre.

Vyronas is one such municipality, at the north-east part of Attica.

It became the home of refugees from Minor Asia after 1922 but it also witnessed another

building boom later, in the 1990s. Currently it has around 130.000 residents and it is considered as a middle / lower-middle income area. As with many similar neighborhoods, its residents have been affected by the economic crisis (to varied degrees).

As a response to the repercussions of the crisis, but also as an effort for different politics, the social-cultural centre of Vyronas “Lambidona” was established in 2011. This centre will be focus of this field trip. There we will meet with people involved in this initiative and will discuss how such initiatives and solidarity networks emerge and evolve, what are the opportunities but also the limitations of such initiatives and where do they see themselves in the future.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

FIELDTRIP 3B. **Social solidarity initiatives at Kypseli neighbourhood.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Dimitris Balampanidis** (Encounters Athens), **Lina Sipitanou** (Solidarity Network of the 6th Municipality District of Athens - Mirmigi), **Eleni Fine**, **Iris Polyzos** (Group of Oral History of Kypseli - OPIK)

CONTACT: **+30 6979 362 337**

DEPARTURE: **Bread and Roses, 64 Panepistimiou (El. Venizelou) str and Patisision (28 Oktovriou) str.**

---

**K**YPSALI IS A VERY CENTRAL AND HISTORIC Athenian neighborhood, located north-west of the city center, in the 6th Municipal District of Athens. Following the process of intense urbanization during the 1960s and 1970s, Kypseli was transformed into one of the most densely populated areas of the city. The continuing process of urbanization and the lack of urban planning generated several problems in the urban environment, such as high density, near absence of green spaces, traffic congestion and parking difficulties, noise and air pollution etc. At the same time, in this context of urban development, Kypseli turned into a mixed-use area, a vibrant and attractive neighborhood, as well as a neighborhood of high social mix. But, since the 1980s and due to the gradual degradation of the neighborhood's spatial resources, a part of the local population (mostly middle and upper class households) moved to the newly-constructed and "green" suburbs, in search of improved living conditions. Thus, at the beginning of the 1990s, when the massive immigrant flows started arriving at Athens, Kypseli was a neighborhood with a large and empty apartment stock, available in affordable rent prices and in proximity to the city center, creating the appropriate conditions for their settlement. Nowadays, Kypseli is one of the most multicultural neighborhoods of Athens, remaining not only socially

but also ethnically mixed.

In the dominant public discourse, migrant residents in Kypseli have been accused of being collectively responsible for problems of urban and social decay and the neighborhood has been stigmatized as one of the most dangerous "ghettos" of the city center. This xenophobic rhetoric favored many racist and violent practices against immigrants and cultivated a fertile ground for the increase of the political influence of the extreme right-wing party "Golden Dawn", especially after the outburst of the economic crisis. But, at the same time, local grassroots solidarity initiatives emerged, in order to confront intolerance and address a wide range of increasing socio-spatial problems, such as precarity, unemployment, impoverishment, homelessness, degradation of public infrastructure etc.

During the fieldtrip in Kypseli, we will refer to the historic processes of urban development and social transformations of the neighborhood, and discuss about the multiple effects of the current multi-faceted crisis, the difficulties of social cohesion and the "challenge" of multi-ethnic coexistence. We will also meet and discuss with people involved in local initiatives emerging from below: people participating in the "Solidarity Network of the 6th Municipality District of Athens - Mirmigi", supporting direct trade and

markets, collecting clothes and food for those most in need, providing social support, organizing solidarity bazaars, open discussions and cultural events, as well as people participating in the “Group of Oral History of Kypseli - OPIK”, trying to discover and “write” the neighborhood’s history according to its residents’ direct

oral narratives. Last but not least, we will visit some other local initiatives’ projects, such as the reuse and self-management of an abandoned municipal market building (today evacuated by the police and recuperated by the municipal authorities) or the defense of a local public park against its transformation to a private parking.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

FIELDTRIP 3C. **Refugee crisis in Greece: solidarity and policies.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Maria Jaidopulu-Vrijea** [INURA Athens], **Olga Lafazani** [Migrants network] and **Haris Konstantatos** [INURA Athens]

CONTACT: **+30 6973 036 932**

DEPARTURE: **Bread and Roses, 64 Panepistimiou (El. Venizelou) str and Patisision (28 Oktovriou) str.**

---

**T**HE MASSIVE ESCAPE OF PEOPLE FROM western Asia war zones is recorded as the biggest refugee crisis of the past decades in the Mediterranean. In that context Greece constitutes the first European border towards a better future and a transit country for thousands of refugees. By the end of August 2015, more than 160.000 people had crossed the borders (45.400 in 2014). Public migration policies and available infrastructure are unable to respond effectively to the increasing needs. A number of solidarity initiatives have emerged in the islands and big cities

This summer in Athens, a solidarity structure emerged to respond to the needs of hun-

dreds of people, including families with small children that settled in the park of Pedion Areos in the centre of city in lack of other alternative. For almost a month, a self-organised solidarity network provided refugees with food, clothing and other goods, health services etc, actually covering the absence of state intervention. To respond to this crisis, the Government urged (within 15 days) the creation of an open accommodation structure in Elaionas area that can host around 700 people.

In the field trip we will have the opportunity to meet members of the solidarity network and will visit the Elaionas open accommodation center.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 3D. The occupied refugee housing complex at Alexandras Avenue.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Dimitra Siatitsa** (INURA Athens), **Stavros Stavrides** (INURA Athens, NTUA) and **Eleni Tzirtzilaki** (Nomadic Architecture Network).

CONTACT: **+30 6977 913 876**

DEPARTURE: **Bread and Roses, 64 Panepistimiou (El. Venizelou) str and Patisision (28 Oktovriou) str.**

---

**T**HE REFUGEE HOUSING COMPLEX AT ALEXANDRAS Avenue was built in 1935 as part of the state programme to house Minor-Asia refugee population that had settled in Athens since 1922. It comprises of eight apartment blocks with a total of 228 appartments of around 50sqm each, privately owned by refugee families. During the years, a number of plans have been elaborated for the regeneration and/or demolition-redevelopment of the area, given its prominent location next to the court of Athens, several hospitals, a big stadium etc, but also adjacent to the neighbourhood of Ampelokipoi.

In the 90's citizens mobilisations with the scientific support of the Achool of Architecture managed to prevent the demolition of the complex and to have it declaired a modern architecture monument (secured only in 2009). In 2007, 147 appartments were aquired by the Public Immobile Properties Company and added to 40 appartments already expropriated by the state in the 90's, while only 50 remained to private owners. In 2014, 137 appartments were transferred to the HRADF (Hellenic Republic Asset

Development Fund, see <https://encounterathens.wordpress.com/2014/03/11/sell-off-of-public-land-greece/>). The houses have been gradually left to decay.

Today, the complex is inhabited by few initial owners while most privately owned appartments are rented. The publicly owned appartments have been gradually occupied by a diversified population including migrants, regugees and other people without shelter. Since several years, an important efford is being made to create an organised community of inhabitants. A regular assembly is managing the space bringing together very different people, setting up mutual support infrastructure (collective kitchen, children's space etc) and organising resistance against redevelopment plans that ignore the current reality (see <http://nomadikiarxitektoniki.net/en/texts-en/urban-voids/>).

The field trip will discuss the history of the housing complex, the history of mobilisations for its preservation and the changing and conflicting claims and interests regarding its future.

---

**TUESDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**Public event 2\_ Commons and solidarity economies: transformative potentials**

---

TIME: **18.30-20.30**

SPEAKERS: **Myfanwy Taylor** [University College London], **Stavros Stavrides** [INURA Athens, NTUA], **Theodoros Karyotis** [Vio.Me Solidarity Committee]

COORDINATION: **Christy Petropoulou** and **Penny Koutrolikou** [INURA Athens]

PLACE: **Self-Managed Embros Theatre [2 Riga Palamidou st, Psirri]**

---

**I**N THE CURRENT PERIOD OF CAPITALISM, the accumulation by dispossession process absorbs many public commons in a very fast procedure (shock of privatizations). At the same time this process is legitimized and normalized in everyday life.

In the era of bio-capitalism, can solidarity initiatives propose alternatives for the self-management of the commons, and how? How can common urban space become Common? How can solidarity economy and solidarity initia-

tives transform everyday life?

We will discuss the potential transformative dynamics of such initiatives in different cities and peripheries.

The discussion will take place in the self-managed theatre Embros in Psiri neighbourhood (see the site <http://www.embros.gr/> and a poster presentation <https://sqekbcn.squat.net/wp-content/uploads/sqekbcn/2015/02/poster-embros.compressed.pdf>).

## **Fieldtrip 4\_What alternatives to neoliberal privatizations and big investments?**

---

**T**HE GREEK DEBT CRISIS HAS BECOME A vehicle for the acceleration and establishment of neoliberal restructuring in various policy areas, among which privatizations and large-scale investments take a first priority. In particular, the development patterns promoted by the new urban policy put great emphasis on privatization of state owned real property, public services and social housing and the construction of large-scale urban development projects, which impose, extend or consolidate

marketized, commodified forms of social life. The attempt to create new opportunities for the investment of over-accumulated global capital is also related with the (further) deregulation of space and the liberalization of spatial planning system. In this context, a wide variety of alternatives have been presented by local urban movements and groups which, apart from resisting to the dominant model of development, elaborate new ideas for urban policies.



---

**WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 4A. The former international airport of Hellinikon: the process of privatization and the struggle for a Metropolitan Park.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Polina Prentou** [Encounter Athens]

CONTACT: **+30 6946 498 907**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.30 from Ilissos Hotel**

---

**T**HE PROPERTY OF HELLINIKON, A 626 HA site, that includes the former international airport of Hellinikon that is inactive since 2001 and the Agios Kosmas beachfront area, is one of the last available, state-owned, large-scale and prime urban coastal sites of Europe. At the same time, Hellinikon constitutes the peak of the privatization program adopted by the Greek governments as a part of the agreement with the creditors and is implemented by HRADF (Hellenic Republic Assets Development Fund). The privatization of the site (including, among others, several Olympic facilities and the beach of Agios Kosmas that was re-appropriated by local urban movements in 2007) has been in process since December 2011, though yet not been completed. According to the call for tenders the project will consist of massive real estate development with shopping malls, hotels, office buildings and thousands of new housing units. Local urban movements resist to the privatization and the real-estate development of the site and struggle for years for the creation of a metropolitan park, as it was declared before the crisis by the central government.

In the fieldtrip we will discuss the privatization process and the possible alternatives with members of the 'Struggle Committee for the Metropolitan Park of Hellinikon' and members of the board of the local government.

We will also discuss with members of the 'Metropolitan Community Clinic of Hellinikon', which is located within the site of Hellinikon. It was established in December 2011 by volunteer doctors in order to support patients with limited or no access to the health care system. It provides free primary medical care and medication to all uninsured, unemployed and needy patients.

Finally we will visit the 'Self-managed urban garden of Hellinikon', which is also located within the site of Hellinikon. It is a grassroots initiative of urban farming that emerged in January 2011 as a response to the social, economic, environmental and educational crisis.

While driving along the waterfront of Athens to Hellinikon, we will discuss about the conflicts and challenges regarding the management and development of the waterfront of Athens.

---

## WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015

---

### FIELDTRIP 4B. **Solid waste management.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Tasos Kefalas** (PROSYNAT - Initiative for Waste Management) and **Fereniki Vatavali** (INURA Athens)

CONTACT: **+30 6939 110 201**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.00 from Ilissos Hotel**

---

**T**HE PLANT OF FILI IS THE SITE where approximately 85% of the solid waste of the Region of Attica is disposed as well as all of the medical waste of the country which has to be burnt. The main functional element of the plant is the landfill, which is probably the largest landfill in Europe. During our visit at the plant of Fili we will discuss with the managers of the plant and members of the board of the waste management agency of the Region of Attica (ESDNA).

The plain of Thriassio in the western part of Attica and especially the waterfront of Elefsina is an area with high concentration of industrial units that produce steel, cement and ammunition, refineries, shipyards and waste treatment units. Furthermore, the plain of Thriassio is an area where extensive trafficking and treatment of waste takes place, in many cases illegally.

Apart from a tour through the industrial zone of the plain of Thriassio, we will visit a municipal plant of the Municipality of Elefsina

where a project for local treatment of part of city's solid waste is running, though not enough satisfactorily. We will meet representatives of the relevant office of the Municipality of Elefsina.

The fieldtrip will close with a discussion in a hall in Elefsina, in order to make an overall assessment of the fieldtrip and answer questions. Members of the citizens' initiatives PROSYNAT and ECOELEFSIS that will accompany the group will provide information.

#### **LINKS:**

*PROSYNAT- Initiative for Waste Management:*

<http://prosynat.blogspot.gr/>

*ECOELEFSIS:*

<http://ecoelefsis.org/>

*ESDNA - Waste Management Agency of the Region of Attica*

<http://www.edsna.gr/>

---

## WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015

---

### FIELDTRIP 4C. Olympic assets 10 years after.

---

ORGANIZERS: **Ion Sayas** (INURA Athens, NTUA) and **Dimitra Zigras** (NTUA)

CONTACT: **+30 6932 103 329**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.30 from Ilissos Hotel**

Directions to the Mall Athens (Trip Duration: aprx 45min): 1\_Metro Line M2 to Anthoupoli, 1\_Change at Attiki Station to M1, direction to Kifisia, 3\_Get off at Neratziotissa Station, 4\_Walk to the to the entrance

---

**T**HE AREA SURROUNDING THE MAIN ATHENS Olympic Sports center has seen a series of transformations as a number of projects and planning initiatives have developed around it. Long before Athens was granted the organization of the Olympic Games in 2004, the area previously characterized, up until the 1980s, by large scale industrial establishments, small scale manufacture, bus depots and garages, as well as a considerable area of olive groves has been transforming. Mainly along Kifissias Avenue, the main north to south route of Athens, the first suburban office towers and mixed-use shopping centres are being constructed as early as the middle 1980s. This 'tertiarisation' of land uses is clearly dominant by 1990, as both central and municipal planning acknowledge and reinforce these tendencies.

In the post-Olympic era a major initiative for the re-use, redevelopment of buildings associated mainly with the hosting of the Games is witnessed, as well as the restructuring and internationalisation of retail trade, and FIRE activities. In the area adjacent to the Olympic complex, two mixed-use leisure and retail centres are built: the "Athens Mall", which was built for retail purposes, and Golden Hall, as result of the re-development of the former International Broadcasting Centre for the Games. Both projects represent huge investments/mega pro-

jects which have all the characteristic marks of a 'cathedral of consumption', one being "a Shopping's Disneyland" and the other its upscale "Golden" equivalent.

Adjacent to the above and to the Olympic complex project we find the first purpose-built gated community in Greece. The Ilida project is a prestige residential community designed and marketed for use by upper-middle class strata. This major housing development project (approx. 50000 sq meters of housing) was also part of the Olympic Games infrastructure, 'the press village', and was built by the same developer of the former two projects.

Not long after the games, along the Kifissias avenue axis a series of entertainment establishments has mushroomed. Adjacent to the large office towers of high-tech firms and banks, a series of multiplex cinema halls and amusement parks have been built. All around and within these projects we see a spread of a vast array of cafes-restaurants retail shops, for employees and visitors, which has been transforming the area into a major 'festival market place'.

The (re)development of the area is also reflected in the changes of the housing/land values. The area adjacent to the Olympic complex is one of the most expensive areas of the municipality. The resulting transformation has all the landmarks of a 'developers' utopia', and is

actually attributable to some major real estate developers, aided by the Local Authority's development objectives and the comparatively large size of unused plots in the area.

As can be expected, the tertiarisation of land uses has had a profound impact on the job structure of the local economy, as well as on the journeys to work to the area, making the municipality, in 2001 the second major attraction pole following the central Athens municipality, with trips mainly generating mostly in the surrounding upper-middle class suburban areas. The (re) development of the area has also effected the socio-professional composition of the resident population, as mostly higher socio-professional groups have taken the place of a significant percentage of technicians and sales personnel formerly inhabiting the area.

In sum, the (re)development of the area and the growth of the new business centre has led to an idiosyncratic gentrification which has had a quite different impact, compared to the (re) development projects in the Athenian central cityspace.

Here gentrification affects both the socio-professional composition of the residents and mainly the creation of the new business centre and of the 'festival market place'. The aesthetics and the 'security' of the megaprojects, the prices of the goods and services provided, as well as the functional and spatial organization of this business and consumption place are aligned to the employment opportunities and the consumption patterns of higher socio-professional groups.

---

**WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015**

---

**FIELDTRIP 4D. Local conflicts and challenges over a football stadium development plan.**

---

ORGANIZERS: **Giorgos Patrikios** (Democritus University of Thrace)

CONTACT: **+30 6976 628 768**

DEPARTURE: **at 9.30 from Ilissos Hotel**

---

**P**HILADELPHIA IS A WESTERN ATHENS SUB-urb created since 1922 with the settlement of Minor Asia refugees. Contrary to other cases of informal urbanisation of such settlements, Philadelphia followed an urban plan according to the tradition of garden cities prominent at that time. A number of refugee housing complexes were built by the Ministry of Welfare following the low rise two storey double houses type. These are in many cases preserved until today despite the neighbourhood's growth especially since the mid 90's beginning of 00's.

The field trip will mainly discuss the conflicts that have emerged regarding the plans to rebuild the football stadium of the historical local football team AEK. The athletic infrastructure on the specific plot (granted by the Greek state to the historical football club since 1934) is included in the recent Athens-Attika regulatory plan. Nevertheless, the intention of the football club's owner and investor to increase the capacity of the stadium and build commercial facilities around it has mobilised reactions by local residents. The new plan requires more sqm to be

taken from the adjacent public grove, an important environmental and social asset of the area.

A number of local groups and stakeholders, as well as the recently elected left-wing municipal government, oppose to the ceding of valuable public land to entrepreneurial interests and propose the creation of a medium sized stadium and sports facilities which can fit in the existing plot. Further more, traffic engineers warn that the neighbourhood will not be able to respond to increased traffic loads caused by the stadium's function. On the other hand, there is great social pressure from the part of the football team's fans, which has very often led to serious and violent assaults to those opposing.

During the field trip we will meet with members of the municipal council and citizens groups to discuss the challenges and dilemmas arising due to this project in the area. We will also discuss about alternatives and policies promoted by the new local government in order to regenerate and activate the municipal grove. We will also meet with members of a self-managed social centre.

---

WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015

---

**Public event 3a\_Roundtable on INURA's collaborative research on real-existing NMM: process, results, starting points for conversation.**

---

TIME: 16.00-18.30

CHAIR: **Manuel Lutz** (INURA Berlin)

PLACE: **Greek Association of Archeologists (134-136 Ermou st.)**

---

**T**HE UNFETTERED ADVANCE OF MARKET-driven, neoliberal restructuring has changed cities world wide. Acknowledging the many similarities this process shows across cities since 2008 INURA members embarked on a joint collaborative research project to map what we termed the New Metropolitan Mainstream (NMM). Following this hypothesis teams from numerous cities produced maps and city portraits that document successful and failed strategies of urban upgrading, trends and patterns of urban restructuring, the exacerbating social inequalities and injustices, and how the NMM is contested and resisted locally.

This roundtable presents core findings of the

NMM research project that is to be published as a book soon. Sharing insights into the history of INURA's collaborative process of research we want to discuss the evolution from initial hypothesis to the mapping of variegated real existing metropolitan mainstream and give some examples of how the local mapping exercises were practiced. The aim of this roundtable is stimulate a joint conversation on how to make sense of the mapped and ongoing urban transformations: how can such a research project contribute to create academic as well as political interventions to counter the many exploitations and to move towards a "genuinely humanizing urbanism" as David Harvey put it?

---

WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2015

---

## Public event 3b\_Challenging austerity urbanism

---

TIME: 18.30-20.30

ORGANIZERS: **Daniel Mullis** [University of Frankfurt], **Paschalis Samarinis** [NTUA], **Dimitra Spanou** [NTUA].

SPEAKERS: **Margit Mayer** [Free University Berlin], **Maria Kaika** [The University of Manchester], **Sebastian Schipper** [University of Frankfurt] and **Michael Edwards** [University College London].

PLACE: **Greek Association of Archeologists [134-136 Ermou st.]**

---

**C**ITIES ARE THE PLACE WHERE AUSTERITY bites, however never equally, as Jamie Peck and others have argued. In the context of the unfolding economic crisis, cities around Europe have become strategic sites for the implementation of austerity, through various forms of urban management, described as 'austerity urbanism'. The starting point for this panel has been the two workshops held in Athens and Frankfurt in December 2013 and March 2015, where scholars from both cities came together to discuss and exchange experiences on "Austerity Urbanism in Greek and German Cities".

In Athens, harsh austerity programs have led over the recent years to an unprecedented urban crisis, which involves the collapse of welfare structures, significant rise of urban poverty, growing housing problems as well as rising xenophobia and racism. But, under the dogma of austerity, the gradual dismantling of social welfare has also been a central part of urban policies in the different context of German cities, leading yet again to the emergence of deep social segregations and spatial polarizations. Despite the different contexts, we were able to reflect on differences and commonalities, which transcend dominant national/ nationalistic narratives about the crisis and the imposed policies. Discussing topics such as the housing question,

social resistance, urban planning and changes in everyday life, deepened our understanding of processes that involve both global dynamics as well as local particularities.

As the workshops provided insights to the multiscalar mechanisms of imposing austerity, to the new contradictory social realities it produces and to the emerging strategies of resistance rooted in urban space, we wish to further reflect upon the very idea of austerity urbanism. In this INURA panel we wish to delve deeper to this open debate. By including more cases from around Europe, the aim is to trace the limits, range and perspectives of the concept of "Austerity Urbanism" as well as its helpfulness to current urban struggles.

### Questions for discussion

1. Looking through your research work, how would you define "austerity urbanism" and how has it changed over the last years? How is the fiscal notion of "austerity urbanism" related to broader changes (social, political etc) in urban realities and, more importantly, to the recent complex urban crisis? How can such a discourse be introduced productively in a transnational setting (Mediterranean, American, central-European cities, etc)?

2. Looking through your recent work, what is your view on the political perspectives - successful political practices that challenge austerity urbanism? Based on the main theme of this year's INURA conference, as stated in the central call: *"...these same years have been marked and—to a great extent shaped—by numerous mobilizations and contestations against the exceptional measures. Moreover, they have been shaped by the voicing of claims "beyond the crisis" and*

*by the emergence of alternative practices wishing to counter the adverse repercussions; practices involving social solidarity networks, alternative economies, barter systems and cooperative initiatives and networks of social support"*, what would be your reflections? What are the potentials and limitations of such practices? Do they have the dynamic to contribute to alternative—transformative urban policies?