In the public imaginary Athens has both a famous and an infamous identity. A city immersed in history and philosophy, as locus of social and political struggles, famous for its high density, pollution, ugly buildings and depicted as chaotic metropolitan everyday life.

Athens is also a well-known tourist destination, though mostly visited as a transit to the famous Greek islands. Few visitors come to Athens to stay (although this might be changing since Athens is visited as a transit to the famous Greek islands). Few visitors come to Athens to stay (although this might be changing since

Athens has a centralized planning system and this is even more so in the case of Athens (given its size and centrality). State regeneration projects have mostly an arbitrary role, coming ex post to take advantage of market trends or trying to mobilize private investors, rather than being integrated (multisectoral, coordinated etc) interventions. A process of institutional restructuring the local administration is under way, aiming to create a regional - powerful (?)- level of political representation. The 2004 Olympic Games were the closest attempt of applying the NIMBY discourse in Athens, with the intention to "place Athens on the global competition map" and exciting the imaginary both of its inhabitants and of specialists (architects, urbanists, artists...). The Olympics provided the context for basic infrastructure improvements (Attica highway, new airport, public transport, reconstruction of central squares etc), but also the pretext for wasting many "urban reserves" (urban land or public infrastructure) and economic resources over other urban and social investments needed.

A positive legacy of the Olympics was the proliferation of local movements and active citizens groups around issues of public opinion, very much needed in an environmentally very downsized city. Urban everyday life in Athens, that follows the "mediterranean outdoor living model", has been revitalized lately by the presence of different migrant communities in public spaces of the centre.

The recession period the country is entering is expected to bring significant changes for the city. On one hand, the financial crisis will be the motive for further privatization of public assets and on the other, poverty, inequalities and social exclusion will increase, with many implications for the city life. The other side of neoliberal urban policies is harder repression and control. December's 2008 uprising maybe gave us a glimpse of the future social reality.
Description/Reason for this Choice/Background Context

Initially Athens project involved the development of an upgraded stadium and a hiking trail along the Mt. Hymettus to enhance the tourism and the environmental value of the area. However, the project was never carried out due to the lack of funds and the political instability of the period. In the end, the hiking trail was never implemented, while the stadium was eventually turned into a multifunctional sports complex.

In summary, the Athens project was an attempt to create a new urban area in the outskirts of Athens, involving the use of new technologies and sustainable practices. However, due to the lack of funding and political instability, the project was never carried out and the area remains underdeveloped to this day.

Flagship Project: Unification of Archaeological Sites (UAS)

Description/Reason for this Choice/Background Context

The aim of the Unification of Archaeological Sites project is to integrate the archaeological sites of Athens and to create a new archaeological park that will be managed by a single body. The project aims to preserve the cultural heritage of Athens and to create a new tourist destination.

In summary, the Unification of Archaeological Sites project was an attempt to create a new archaeological park in Athens that would preserve the cultural heritage of the city and create a new tourist destination. However, due to the lack of funding and political instability, the project was never carried out and the area remains underdeveloped to this day.

Synthesis over all four projects and outlook

Urban regeneration policies have been implemented in Athens over the past decades, aiming at improving the city’s image and attracting tourists. However, these policies have often been criticized for their lack of sustainability and for failing to address the real needs of the city’s inhabitants. The projects discussed in this article have been developed in different contexts and with different objectives, but they share a common goal of improving the city’s environment and quality of life. Despite their varying levels of success, these projects have shown that urban regeneration is possible in Athens, and that it can be achieved through a combination of public and private initiatives.

In conclusion, the projects discussed in this article have shown that urban regeneration is possible in Athens, and that it can be achieved through a combination of public and private initiatives. However, more efforts need to be made in order to ensure the sustainability and long-term success of these projects.

Architects: various authors

Advisers: INURA Athens

Authors: INURA Athens

Name of project: Athens Urban Renewal Project

Flagship Project: Unification of Archaeological Sites

Project costs: 230.000.000 €

Purpose: to highlight and control the excavated and for heritage management and preservation.

Dimensions: approximately 5000 acras

Projects Costs: 230.000.000 €

In summary, the Unification of Archaeological Sites project was an attempt to create a new archaeological park in Athens that would preserve the cultural heritage of the city and create a new tourist destination. However, due to the lack of funding and political instability, the project was never carried out and the area remains underdeveloped to this day.

Conclusion

During the last decades, many significant urban interventions took place in Athens, aiming at improving the city’s image and attracting tourists. However, these interventions have often been criticized for their lack of sustainability and for failing to address the real needs of the city’s inhabitants. The projects discussed in this article have been developed in different contexts and with different objectives, but they share a common goal of improving the city’s environment and quality of life. Despite their varying levels of success, these projects have shown that urban regeneration is possible in Athens, and that it can be achieved through a combination of public and private initiatives.
ed trendy neighbourhoods fall into two categories. First, a set of inner-city areas where young, primarily white migrants and students live; these areas have a close and visible connection with the students of higher education and are part of Athens’ cultural imaginary as a long lasting party, a continuous event with an end date (like all nice things). They have a distinctive cultural identity, and are part of the student and cultural scene of the city. The second category consists of gentrified areas. They have a distinct cultural identity, they can be considered as urban ‘urban villages’. The high travel costs to Athens.

Areas of Intense Neighbourhood Upgrading

Exarcheia, with its strong political identity, represents a particular case since it is often described as a ‘restricted area’ due to the immense surveillance and frequent stop and searches to ‘suspicious looking’ people. The adjacent municipalities and citizens’ groups ask for a large metropolitan green area.

Areas of State-Led Reinvestment / Areas of Urban Regeneration

The plans for the extension of the Peripherical road of Ymittos with long tunnels through the urban mountains in 2007 that a huge “propaganda” - by the media and government - was made about the extension of the Peripherical road of Ymittos with long tunnels through the urban mountains in 2007.

Flagship Projects

Urbanisation and Regeneration of former Aeroport of Eliniko

The urban life around the acropolis.

Failed and Grounded (large) Projects

The plans for the extension of the Peripherical road of Ymittos with long tunnels through the urban mountains in 2007 that a huge “propaganda” - by the media and government - was made about the extension of the Peripherical road of Ymittos with long tunnels through the urban mountains in 2007.

Important Events and Festivals

The Olympic Games.

Other Significant Events

The Athens Marathon. The first modern Olympic Games were held in Athens in 1896 and the marathon race was the most memorable event of this first modern Olympic Games. The marathon race is a long-distance foot race with a distance of 42.195 km (26.2 miles). The race starts in the Panathenaic Stadium and ends on the Marathon Road.

Notes

Some of the most significant events in Athens are the Olympic Games, the Athens Marathon, and the Athens International Film Festival. The Olympic Games are held every four years and are the world’s most important sporting event. The Athens Marathon is held every year on the last Sunday of November and is one of the most prestigious marathons in the world. The Athens International Film Festival is held every year in October and is one of the most important film festivals in the Mediterranean region.