Greek Society in the Making, 1863 - 1913

Realities, Symbols and Visions

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14

Regularization and Resistance: Urban Transformations in Late Nineteenth-Century Greece

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Introduction

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries both new and well-established nations called upon urban planning and civic architecture to define their national identities, mark progress, and underscore their commitment to modernity.[1] While the same design principles, and often the same accompanying civic architecture, were employed throughout Europe and the colonies, they came to assume unique, nationalist interpretations in each country, especially among the newly-established ones. In the kingdom of Greece, which I shall examine more closely here, the drafting of a new plan for Athens in 1833 represented more than a physical urban plan; it symbolized the country's rebirth, classical orientation, and modern national identity.[2] Furthermore, I shall explore the modernity evoked by such plans and their effects on the life of the inhabitants.

Trained at first as an architect, I had always assumed that space shaped not only our view of the world at large, but, more intimately, our very own lives, our daily routines, and family and social interactions. One day, however, as I was thinking about my aunt Fofo's apartment in Thessaloniki, I came to realize that she had recreated, as closely as she possibly could, the layout of the one family home she had lived in as a

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[1] This essay is based on my forthcoming book on nineteenth-century planning and civic architecture, *Modern Athens: Planning the Myth*. I remain indebted to the participants of the King's College conference and to Mark Forte for their comments and suggestions. Special thanks are also due to my family who came along to London: Mark, Marcello, and (then) five week old Mario. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are mine.

[2] See Papageorgiou-Venetas 1994; Bastéa 1994.

young bride and up to the 1960s. Most of the furniture from the old house, designed for larger, high ceilinged rooms, came into her new apartment, crowding its efficiently designed rooms. A large, round table dominates the sitting room which is also the dining room for all but the most formal of occasions, when the large *saloni* (living room) and *trapezaria* (dining room) are ceremoniously opened. I know that the homemaking tastes of my aunt Fofo – who is in her seventies – do not provide hard scientific proof about the uses of space. After discussing this personal story with my architecture students, who agreed that their apartments in St Louis resemble their own bedrooms in their family homes, I began searching for other examples of resistance to imposed spatial changes, resistance to the efforts of urban modernization.

The connection between modernity and the new, regularized town plans is not, of course, unique to the modern Greek case. Baron Haussmann's extensive urban projects in Paris (1853–70) created an irreparable rupture within the traditional city.[3] 'The streets, our streets, are where modernism belongs,' remarked Marshall Berman in his study of modernism.[4] 'Part of Haussmann's purpose was to give modernity a shape,' wrote T.-J. Clark.[5] Most of the writings on modernity and the city stem from the work of Charles Baudelaire, who described how the modernization of a city's physical fabric brought about the modernization of its citizens' souls.[6]

In focusing on late nineteenth-century Greece, I shall question this premise regarding state-initiated, wholesale and radical modernization of space and daily life. Were the citizens involved in the planning process? Did they initiate, support, or resist the changes? Was the break with the past as clear as it is usually presented? Can spatial change accelerate social change? Can we measure the recalcitrance of people holding on to old patterns of life? Can we document the memory of urban space? Writing about the making of modern Greece over a century later, is it still possible to hear the dissenting voices in the patterns of words and stones, in the archives and buildings, in the streets and the marketplace? My aim is to provide an armature for understanding space in an historical context, integrating it into the modern Greek studies discourse which has traditionally focused on language and history.

In Greece, in accordance with the prevailing design theories of the time, one of the main intentions behind the urban projects that were undertaken, or completed, during the reign of King George I was the

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[3] See Pinkney 1958.
[4] Berman 1988: 12.
[5] Clark 1984: 66.
[6] Berman 1988: 147.

establishment of unified and rational guidelines for urban design. The newly-planned cities, adorned with neo-classical structures, were seen as tangible symbols of progress towards 'enlightened' Europe, of internal political and cultural unity, and of the break from Ottoman rule.[7] For the first time a centralized system of civic design was instituted whereby all planning decisions originated in the capital. Despite dramatic domestic and international political events that marked the administrations of Ioannis Kapodistrias (1828–31), King Otto (1833–62), and George I, one observes a remarkable degree of continuity in the formal solutions and implementation processes which characterized major planning and architectural projects. These projects also suggest the internal momentum inherent in architecture and urban design that is inevitably affected by political crises, yet does not necessarily veer off course because of them.

Rebuilding after the devastating years of the War of Independence (1821–28) carried strong messages of regeneration to the wretched population. Many inhabitants, forced to flee during the war, were eager to return and reclaim their towns. Furthermore, an increasing number of refugees had to be immediately accommodated in the new state. Members of the French *Expédition scientifique de Morée*, who had supervised the withdrawal of the Egyptian army from the Peloponnese in the late 1820s, offered valuable technical services to the young Greek state. Kapodistrias took a personal interest in rebuilding Greek towns, often visiting the sites himself, and giving encouragement to the local inhabitants. In 1829, he founded the *Soma ton epi tis ochyromatopoiias kai architektonikis axiomatikon* (Corps of Officers in Charge of Fortifications and Architecture), which placed all new buildings under its jurisdiction.[8] This policy was also adopted by his successors. Nine new towns were designed during his rule, while the plans of thirteen more were under preparation.[9] Moreover, his administration set out to restructure existing street patterns, which hitherto lacked the geometric layouts of pre-planned settlements. Straight streets, town squares and public spaces were proposed for existing towns, while the design of new ones was based on orthogonal grids of different degrees of complexity. In coastal towns the orientation of the grid usually followed the shoreline. The grid plan had practical advantages with respect to surveying and establishing new settlements, but it also underscored the

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[7] Reflecting the modernizing efforts of its administration, the Ottoman Empire was also undertaking urban transformations according to western European principles; see Çelik 1986. These changes, however, were hardly acknowledged in the contemporary Greek press, which adapted the West's image of the Ottoman Empire as backward and frozen in time. This view, nationalist and Orientalist at once, justified, internally, the War of Independence and underscored Greece's progress towards modernity and the West.

[8] Kokkou 1985: 360.
[9] Durovinis 1985: 288.

new state's independence from Ottoman rule. In the words of S. Bulgaris, the Corfiote engineer of the French army who designed a plan for Nauplia (with T. Vallianos), Tripolis (with Garnot) and Patras, the new plans designated the passage 'from barbarity to civilization'.[10]

One of the most important planning documents of the time, the decree 'On the Hygienic Building of Towns and Villages', introduced at the beginning of Otto's rule in May 1835, established general planning guidelines and placed local authorities in charge of its execution.[11] Inspired by contemporary town-planning practices, the decree encouraged and facilitated urbanization in a nation that was still primarily agrarian. It described the proper location of new settlements, the advantages of the orthogonal street pattern, the creation of squares, 'divided symmetrically, but not of excessive size', and the need for paving and street decoration. Public buildings, 'that is the church, the school, the hotel, the Town Hall', etc., were to be located in the centre of the town, with private houses around them. Stables, slaughterhouses, cemeteries, hospitals, and prisons had to be sited outside the city limits, while various industries were required to obtain a police permit to operate within or outside the city. Concerns with decorum were not absent, either: 'The areas around and near the cities and towns should be provided with promenades and alleys of fruit-trees or, at least, shady ones'.[12]

Many of the early nineteenth-century plans envisaged elaborate entrance gates, tree-planting around the city perimeter, ubiquitous tree-lined avenues crossing the towns, and wide squares with symbolic names: Piazza Nazionale, Place d'Othon, Place de St Dimitriou. This large-scale building activity carried multiple messages to the Greek population. It demonstrated in concrete terms the reorganization that the country was undergoing, the centralization and increased control assumed by the government, and, in return, the government's responsibility for the well-being of the people. While celebrating the imported institutions of nationalism and the monarchy, urban planning also aimed at preserving religious traditions and showcasing the country's archaeological treasures and glorious past. In 1866, E. Manitakis, the director of public works at the Ministry of the Interior, proudly reported on the country's reconstruction: 'Greece,' he wrote, 'when she came out of the War of Independence, was literally a pile of ruins.' After the liberation and within a third of a century, 'twenty-three old cities

[10] S. Bulgaris, *Notice sur le compte Jean Capodistrias, suivi de l'Extrait de sa correspondance avec le capitain au corps royal d'Etat-major Stamati Bulgari* (Paris 1832), cited in Tsakopoulos 1985: 322.

[11] *Efimeris tis Kyverniseos* (15 May 1835).

[12] Cf. Hastaoglou-Martinidis 1995: 105, 119, wherein it is noted that the decree remained in force until 1923.

were rebuilt and ten new ones were founded'. He was especially proud of new Athens, with its

large and well-aligned streets, [its] beautiful houses built according to Italian taste, the oldest of which date only to 1834, [its] numerous public structures, [and its population] which, in its manner of dressing, living, and thinking is so well identified with the great family of the civilized nations of Europe.[13]

His pride reflected the general position at the time. It was, indeed, the new buildings, the well-aligned streets, and the 'manner of dressing, living, and thinking' that championed national progress.

While the drive towards the modernization of the Greek landscape continued throughout the nineteenth century, after the 1850s proposed town plans began reflecting more directly the limited resources of the new state, placing priority on expediency and practicality, rather than extravagance and baroque grandeur. Planning efforts in the last decades of the nineteenth century were often limited to the adjustment and implementation of earlier designs and the extension of existing settlements. Meanwhile, neo-classical civic and domestic architecture began to define new streets and squares. The newly-aligned, straight or straighter streets became not only the locus but also the testing ground and proof of the country's cultural progress. In the course of the nineteenth century, over 170 plans were approved for the foundation of new towns and the regularization or expansion of old ones. Approximately thirty-five of these towns had a population of over 5,000 inhabitants each.[14]

The proposed plans were either based on simple, utilitarian grids, or on baroque designs of varying degrees of elaboration. The designs for new towns were always based on a regular, geometric grid pattern, while those for old towns varied. In some cases, a regular grid pattern was imposed on the plan of an existing town, with little apparent concern for the existing street layout; in other cases, the existing streets were only slightly altered and widened, while the town's extension was laid out on a regular grid. Of the town plans designed during George I's reign, those of Kyllini (1864) and the minor port of Diakoptis on the island of Kythira (1871) are examples of simple grid designs (figs 1 & 2). The plan for Aegina, approved in 1898, did not impose a regular grid on the existing town, but only on its extension. Two rows of trees were intended to mark the

[13] Manitakis 1869: 14, 17.

[14] Hastaoglou-Martinidis 1995: 110. A comprehensive exhibition of these plans was held in Athens in September 1984, on the occasion of the international conference *La ville néohellénique: héritages Ottomans et état Grec*, organized by the Greek Ministry of Culture. See Ministry of Planning, Housing, and Environment 1984 (no illustrations).

expanded town (fig. 3). Filiatra (1876) is a good example of a regular plan imposed on an existing town. Some straight streets were opened through the existing fabric, many of the existing streets were widened, while the town's extension followed a regular grid plan (fig. 4). Finally, a comparison of the plan of Athens before liberation with the proposed design by S. Kleanthis and E. Schaubert (1833) and the actual plan of the city in 1877 illustrates the changes effected on the urban fabric, and the distance between proposed and implemented designs (figs 5, 6 & 7).

Many of the plans for nineteenth-century towns are now kept in the archives of the Ministry of Planning in Athens, and have become the subject of several noteworthy studies by a group of scholars in the Faculty of Architecture at the University of Thessaloniki.[15] Outlining the directives behind the extensive urban planning efforts, in a recent article on the subject it is maintained that

> the modern city was viewed... [as] an instrument that would homogenize
> a population of different origins, a laboratory to create and inculcate the
> new social order's patterns, norms, and values – as the mold, in other words,
> capable of converting the peasant into the bourgeois, the inhabitant into
> the citizen of a new national state... The main purpose of the centralized
> state established in Greece was to remove from civil society the initiative
> for all actions deemed to concern public interest, and to reduce these
> actions to objects of state authority and control.

While these planning principles were in concert with contemporary practice, financial constraints on the Greek state, lack of public control of most of the land, insufficient infrastructure, and the government's weak hold on domestic and international politics spelled a drastic compromise on the ambitious town plans, now scaled down to the Greek reality. By the end of the nineteenth century, the article concludes,

> the traditional town had been remodelled, homogenized, and unified. Its
> construction was more or less rationalized by the new relationships between
> public and private domains, and its fabric was opened up and regularized
> through alignments, civic squares, and public spaces.[16]

Nevertheless, while the principles of rational, orthogonal design were broadly supported, especially since they signalled a clear break with the era of Ottoman rule, the methods and extent of urbanizing efforts were frequently resisted by the citizens.

The state's centralized and bureaucratic approach to urban design certainly represented a radical break from the tradition of local autonomy in the pre-1821 period. However, the state did not disregard the right to
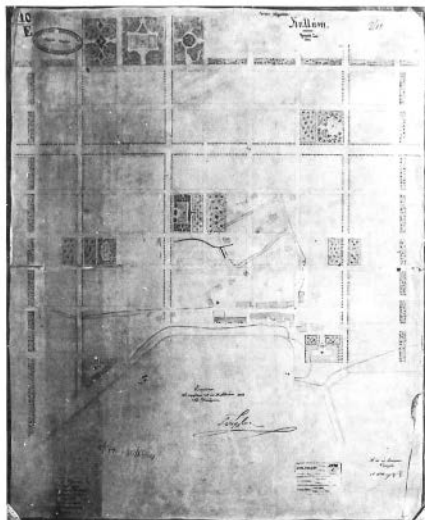

Fig. 1. Plan for Kyllini (1864). Scale: 1/1000. Archives of the Greek Ministry of Planning. Population in 1879: 220 (Kafkoula et al. 1990: 185).

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[15] See Kafkoula et al. 1990; Praktika 1985.
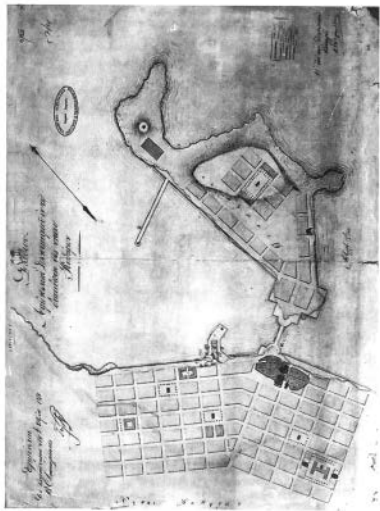[16] Hastaoglou-Martinidis 1995: 102–3, 104–5, 110.

Fig. 2. Plan for the port of Diakoptis on the island of Kythira (1871). Scale: 1/2500. Archives of the Greek Ministry of Planning. Population unknown.

Fig. 3. Plan for Aegina (1898). Scale: 1/1000. Archives of the Greek Ministry of Planning. Population in 1879: 2,917 (Kafkoula et al. 1990: 140). Population in 1896: 485 (Ministry of Planning, Housing, and Environment 1984: 30).
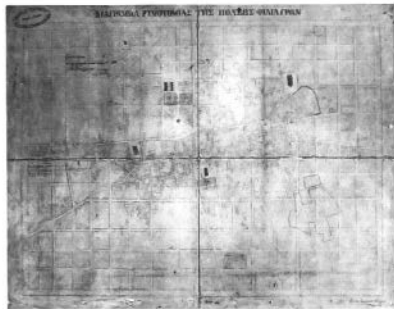

Fig. 4. Plan for Filiatra (1876). Scale: 1/1000. Archives of the Greek Ministry of Planning. Population in 1879: 5,632 (Kafkoula et al. 1990: 226; Ministry of Planning, Housing, and Environment 1984: 28).

Fig. 5. Map of Athens by L.F.S. Fauvel (c. 1780). Bibliothèque Nationale: Cartes et Plans No. Inv. Ge. D. 17297; reprinted in the exhibition catalogue Ἀθήνα: εὐρωπαϊκὴ ὑπόθεση, Ministry of Culture, Athens 1985: 20–1. Population in 1775–95: c. 13,000 (Travlos 1960: 222).

Fig. 6. Proposed plan for new Athens by Stamatios Kleanthis and Eduard Schaubert (1833). Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich. Population in 1831: 3,000 (Travlos 1960: 234).
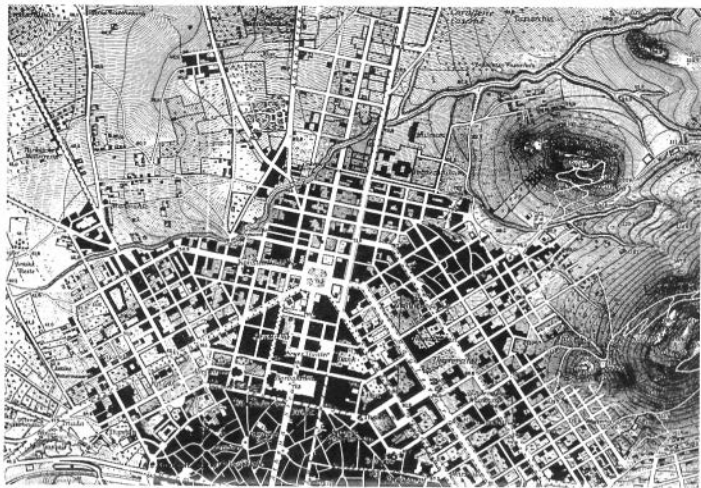
Fig. 7. Map of Athens (1877). E. Curtius and J.A. Kaupert, *Atlas von Athen*, Berlin 1878. Population in 1879–81: 65,499 (Leontidou 1989: 60).

private property, nor did it prohibit the citizens' involvement in local planning matters. The participation of citizens ranged from enthusiastic support to active resistance and ridicule of official positions and actions. I shall now examine more closely the citizens' involvement in these extensive planning efforts, and the impact of the alleged spatial homogenization on their lives. Generally speaking, public involvement in urban design took the following three forms: a) input into the design process; b) critique of the designs; and c) resistance to urban changes.

Input into the Design Process

Citizens gave direct input to the government regarding both large-scale plans, such as the establishment of new towns, or small-scale interventions, such as the realignment of a street or widening of a square. Soon after the first planning efforts took effect under Kapodistrias, Greek citizens began to associate wide streets and public squares with 'good' design, and encouraged the state to regularize all settlements. Residents had expressly requested a *taktikon* (orderly) plan for the rebuilding of their towns.[17] Many of the reports which they submitted are quite articulate, sophisticated, and persuasive, exhibiting an awareness of contemporary planning principles. Initiated by the town council, the town elders or the lone landowner who disagreed with a given planning decision, they were usually taken into consideration by the state, and often acted upon as resources permitted.

Thus, in March 1828, the residents of Tripolis reported to Kapodistrias that they were determined to inhabit their city again, 'rebuilding it with the help of the government, and bringing it back to its earlier or, if possible, better state'.[18] 'And may this little town', wrote the inhabitants of Elis two years later, 'which nature adorns with the most enjoyable vistas, as it is getting built, be regulated with architectural lines for the eternal pleasure of the residents and the sweet curiosity of the beauty-loving passers-by.'[19] In their 1835 letter to the government, the residents of Karystos requested the building of a new town next to the old harbour, arguing that the new site by the sea would facilitate commerce, and the existing rivers would promote local industry. Their request for an engineer to design their town was granted by the government. A committee appointed by the Karystians to oversee the erection of the first church

[17] Dorovinis 1985: 295. It should be pointed out, however, that for the residents the idea of an orderly town was vague and general and did not necessarily correspond to a specific design.

[18] T. Gritsopoulos, '*Ἱστορία τῆς Τριπολιτσᾶς* (Athens 1976, vol. II, 40), cited in Tsakopoulos 1985: 313.

[19] Cited in Loukatos 1978: 185.

collected the necessary materials and was 'waiting to begin as soon as the plan of the city arrives'.[20] Similarly, in March 1829, the inhabitants of Mystras voiced their determination to leave their town and rebuild the famed city of Sparta. They requested that the government send an architect to create the plan of the city so that they could build accordingly. Their buildings ought to be simple, they wrote, like those of the ancient Spartans, and in accordance with the limited resources of the new state. In modern Sparta they planned to erect a church for the praise of God, a hospital for the needy, and a school 'for the search for light'.[21]

This tradition of civic involvement in planning matters continued during the reign of George I. Frequently, for example, the town council of Athens successfully recommended to the prefecture of Attica and Boeotia extensions of the approved city plan. In June 1871, it brought up an earlier decision to establish 'farming suburbs' that would allow those residents who were farmers to have barns for storing animal food, as that provision was not included in the city plan.[22] It also attempted, though unsuccessfully, to reassign Liberty Square its original name, Ludwig Square, after King Otto's father, in appreciation of his philhellenism and support of the Greek kingdom.[23]

The planning process incorporated a number of checks and balances, and the citizens were aware, at least in general terms, of building legislation. For example, in a letter to the police authorities dated 16 August 1871, a group of concerned Athenian citizens objected to the construction of an anatomy building and a chemical laboratory by the University near the municipal hospital, pointing out that, within city limits, such uses were expressly forbidden by the 1835 decree 'On the Hygienic Building of Towns and Villages'. Concerns over public health, fire safety, and the emission of noxious fumes, especially near a hospital, were among the issues raised. The police forwarded their letter to the Minister of the Interior who, after consulting with the state medical council, decided that work on the two buildings should continue undisturbed, since what was being built was not a chemical factory but rather a teaching laboratory for the students.[24]

Use and decorum often went hand in hand in the numerous petitions that dealt with planning matters. In January 1874 the Athenian town council voted to widen the square in front of the church of St Konstantinou since, although it had already been widened once, its size

[20] General State Archives (Athens), Ministry of the Interior (GSA/MI), Otto's Archive, file 229.

[21] Cited in Loukatos 1979: 292–4.

[22] GSA/MI, City Plans, Athens, file 20.

[23] Ibid., file 18.

[24] Ibid. The medical council was affiliated to the Ministry of the Interior.

was still not adequate 'in relationship to the magnificence and the size of the church, and especially since during royal ceremonies infinite crowds will gather'. In the event, the council's request was approved by the government.[25]

It is important to notice that input into the planning process was not only the result of personal or local initiative. Several building and planning decrees presupposed the involvement of local governing bodies in planning efforts. According to the 1867 decree 'On the Execution of Plans for Cities and Towns of the Kingdom', while the government set the overall standards, building proposals originated at the local level:

> The minimum dimensions of area, façade and depth of building lots facing streets or squares in cities or towns are determined once, specifically for each city and town, by royal decree, *following consultation of the town council in charge*. The minimum such dimensions can not be larger than those of Athens, nor smaller than those of Hermoupolis [my italics].[26]

Consequently, a number of local proposals were forwarded to the government for approval. For example, an 1868 royal decree reads in part:

> ... taking into account the submitted act of the town council of Falara, we approve the naming of the squares in the small town of Stylis as follows: a) the central [one to be named] Olga Square, after the name of the Queen and Our dear spouse; b) the one on the site of Stamos Vrysi Diakos Square; and c) the one near the boys' elementary school Odysseas Square.[27]

When the new town of Eretria was established in 1870 to accommodate refugees from Psara, a five-member local committee, consisting of the mayor, the president of the town council, an engineer officer, and two of the town's *prokritoi* (elders), was put in charge of the settlement and land allocation.[28]

In the aftermath of the Greek War of Independence, a centralized framework, spelled out in a number of decrees, was put in place, directing the planning of new and existing settlements. While large-scale planning proposals were usually carried out by state engineers in Athens, local committees regularly initiated the process, urged the government to facilitate a settlement, and, after a plan was put in place, proposed any minor changes, adjustments, dedication of town squares, etc. When financially feasible, the government usually approved the requests. Therefore, within the centralized and bureaucratic machinery that was established for the reordering, urbanization and, ultimately, the

[25] Ibid., file 20.
[26] *Efimeris tis Kyverniseos* (3 May 1867).
[27] Ibid. (28 May 1868).
[28] Ibid. (20 January 1870).

modernization of the Greek countryside, avenues were created for registering citizen input. Obviously, the government could not possibly regulate all planning details nationwide. Even if the government's original intent was to remove all civic initiative, as has been suggested in the recent literature,[29] both practical and political reasons allowed, and even encouraged, local participation. In fact, the extent of local involvement in the planning process from the early 1830s onwards would indicate that at least during the last stages of Ottoman rule there already existed a tradition of small-scale building and planning management initiated by the town elders at the local level.

Critique of the Designs

Although there was, in general, broad support for regularization and modernization, criticisms of the methods of implementation abounded. This I consider to be another form of citizen involvement in the planning process. While, of course, we will never know the opinion of the man on the street, much less of the woman in the house, we have a wide array of opinions recorded in the press of the time. In their irreverent, critical and often humorous tone, continuously scrutinizing the work of the experts, they establish a dialogue of sorts between the authorities and street culture. By and large, both the press and private individuals were behind the planning efforts. Straight, wide streets, well-lit and safe, were what everyone wanted.

In December 1863, a certain K. Platis from Athens, owner of a house he had built ten years earlier, criticized the fact that sidewalk levelling did not happen all at once. As a result, he had been forced, twice, to lower the ground level of his house, at his own expense, on the occasion of the building of the Parliament, even though he had originally acquired an approved building permit. 'It is Parliament that should comply with the [legal] decision, even with a minor distortion, and not my own house, which has a value of 250,000 drachmas,' he asserted in his letter to the Ministry of the Interior.[30] The editor of the Athenian daily *Aion* (5 August 1881) deplored the condition of the streets and sewers, complaining about the lack of adequate amounts of water and about the slaughter of sheep and goats in basements and not in the designated places outside the city. Such deficiencies and practices, it was maintained, contributed to the capital's unhealthy situation which required immediate attention. On 20 July 1882, *Aion* published a two-page letter signed by 'Ch B., doctor, in Volos', which methodically criticized the plan of Volos. 'Although I am not an engineer,' the anonymous commentator argued,

[29] See above, notes 15 and 16.
[30] GSA/MI, City Plans, Athens, file 14.

the basis of any city or town plan built anew or redesigned and rebuild should, I believe, be: a) health; b) open transportation; c) straightness of streets and regularity of squares, from which come the beautification of the city in general; and d) incorruptible economy in the design of private and public structures.

And on 23 June 1883, *Aion* published a detailed article by M. Melas, a mayoral candidate, on the deplorable urban conditions of Athens, obviously a topic of general concern. Although these letters and articles were written by the educated few and not the proverbial 'man in the street', their publication in a newspaper with a healthy circulation helped to disseminate their authors' ideas, and widen the public discourse on planning.

Resistance to Urban Changes

The issue of public resistance to these planning efforts is more complex. Firstly, there was the time-honoured tradition of disregarding the directives and the established procedures for getting something built. Many buildings went up without the appropriate permits, some on lots that were reserved for future excavations or designated as public land for squares, etc. In the Greek State Archives there are several letters from the Athens city engineer I. Yenisarlis to the Ministry of the Interior, deploring this culture of lawlessness.[31] 'It is not my responsibility to determine whether foreigners consider those who build on archaeological sites barbarians,' he maintained on 21 August 1868, while calling for better co-ordination between the city authorities, the police and archaeologists. On 31 March 1869, he argued that:

> There is a mistaken belief among certain landowners, who think that they can create roads inside the approved squares and close them off with gates from the approved streets. This idea took hold when the ministry ordered to allow citizens to build in the interior of their lots before they build on the facade of the approved street. That should not be allowed.

On 27 April 1872, he condemned the widespread practice of building without permits. On 30 June 1872, writing on the same issue, he reprehended the apathy of the police in enforcing the law. Yenisarlis did not have an easy job, though he was not alone in deriding the existing situation. One finds these very same criticisms voiced in numerous articles and letters published in the contemporary press. Planning deviations, of course, were not unique to Greece. Planning is often carried out on contested space and all but the most autocratic of governments have tolerated a certain degree of unauthorized building.

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[31] Ibid., files 15, 19.

Society's resistance to the alleged homogenization of space is harder to document. Although the flat, two-dimensional plans of cities bespeak, in fact, a wholesale regularization of historical space, they tell only part of the story. A closer study of the documents and mentality of the time reveals that residents, while living in newly-aligned streets and newly-designed towns, continued to use spatial references that were based on the previous history and special use of each site. In the course of her ongoing research on nineteenth-century Athens, I. Fatsea located a hand-written note in the archive of a prominent Athenian intellectual, a sort of address book, dating from around 1850. In part, it reads as follows:

> Professor Saripolos near the University in the newly constructed residence, colour rose-pink.
>
> High school director Gennadios, opposite the *Philekpedeftiki Etaireia* [Phil-Educational Society] under construction, in the house with the grapevines...
>
> Professor Vassilios Ekonomidis near the Cathedral, newly under construction, at the back side of the square, where [there is] a bakery...
>
> I. Spiliotakis, Hermou Street, near the palm tree.
>
> Professor Kotzias, near the residence of Leonardos the postman...

'There is little doubt,' Fatsea comments, 'that Koumanoudis's list perpetuates a tradition of space mapping familiar to most of his fellow citizens from their experience of inhabiting pre-modern environments before the Greek Revolution.'[32]

Similar spatial descriptions are also found in the official planning decrees of the time. For example, an 1876 decree on the minimum area of the buildable squares of the town of Filiatta reads in part:

> In the commercial part of the town, that is from the house of Efstathios Gombakis to the workshop of N.K. Antonaropoulos, and from the workshop of the brothers G. Metropouloi to the house of P. Tzarou, and from the house of G. Barberis to the house of C. Vorras, the [minimum buildable] area [will be] twenty square royal *piches*, the [minimum buildable] façade four *piches*, and the [minimum] depth four *piches*.[33]

While the decree specifies the building dimensions in terms that are common to all newly-planned cities, it also acknowledges the existing history of the town and marks space accordingly. This strongly suggests that in the late nineteenth century the Greeks conceived of space

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[32] Fatsea n.d. The translation is by Fatsea, and tries 'to catch some of the awkward syntax of the original'. I would like to thank the author for generously sharing her research findings with me.

[33] *Efimeris tis Kyceruiseus* (5 June 1876). A *piche* is about 25 inches or 63.5 cm.

simultaneously in modern and pre-modern ways, always negotiating between the two.

Conclusion

Most literature on the effects of modernization in Greece describes a dichotomous picture: some Greeks embraced modernity, others resisted it; some Greeks were equally comfortable in European circles, others criticized this attitude as anti-Hellenic. In an analysis of folklore and modern Greek ideology, it is argued that:

> There are, after all, two competing views of Greece. One built from the accumulated materials of European Classical scholarship... The other involves reflexive knowledge – a self-portrait that does not always flatter a Greek's understanding of what it means in practice to be Greek.

Moreover, the second view is 'more likely to dwell on the traces of Turkish values in everyday Greek life'.[34] Rather than considering these two traditions as 'competing', my research points instead to their simultaneous coexistence, often in the same person or the same era.[35] A French observer of Greece in the late 1880s remarked that:

> The Greek man wants to adopt European customs while holding on, simultaneously, to the uniqueness of his people. His pride urges him to imitate the manners and formalities of the West. At the same time, however, he maintains a special attachment to local traditions, from which he would part with difficulty. Among the cultivated Greeks this kind of duality is striking.[36]

It is precisely this simultaneity of belonging to the East *and* the West that characterized, and continues to characterize, the modern Greek condition. During the reign of George I this dynamic coexistence of modern and pre-modern mentalities was also exemplified by the opposing orientations of prime ministers Charilaos Trikoupis and Theodoros Diliyiannis who dominated Greek politics in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Trikoupis' impressive modernization efforts, which included the construction of 568 miles of railway, 4,000 miles of telegraph lines, and the opening of the Corinth Canal, drastically changed the face of the new state.[37] While Trikoupis, the messenger of progress and of a modern,

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[34] Herzfeld 1986: vii, ix.

[35] I have explored further this question of belonging to two worlds simultaneously in an essay on neo-classicism and architectural practice in Greece from 1830 to 1920 (Bastéa 1995).

[36] Deschamps 1892: 69. For a discussion of other foreign travellers' accounts of late nineteenth-century Greece, see Bastéa 1997.

[37] Clogg 1979: 91.

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industrialized and increasingly international way of life, has been favoured by later historians, Diliyiannis' attachment to local traditions and old ways of life, representing the 'resistance of the past',[38] helps to explain his popularity at the time. At least in the case of Greece, this resistance to modernity may in itself be considered part of the experience of modernity.

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[38] Svoronos 1985: 102.

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Index