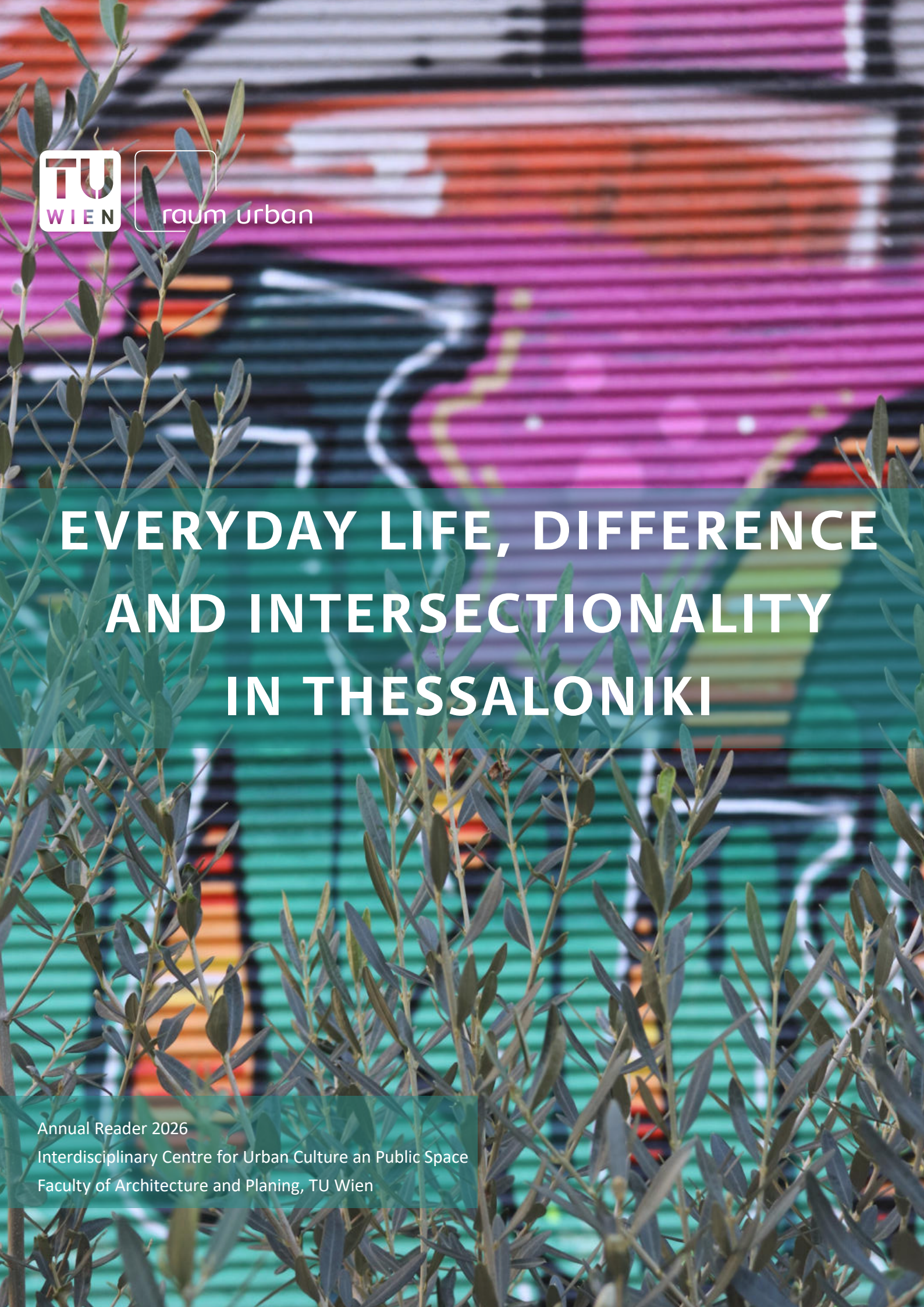

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EVERYDAY LIFE, DIFFERENCE AND INTERSECTIONALITY IN THESSALONIKI

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Fig. 1: Central Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

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PREFACE

Richard Pfeifer, Sabine Knierbein

This reader is grounded in an exploration of everyday life, dwelling, and difference as key entry points for understanding contemporary urban change. It approaches the contemporary housing crisis through empirically grounded fieldwork and understands dwelling not as mere shelter but as a socio-temporal node of inhabiting the city, embedded in neighbourhood relations and shaped by processes of inclusion and exclusion. In this sense, dwelling allows housing to be read as a practice and hence as part of social life, life courses and also as home-making.

Within this thematic framework, the reader emerged from a collaborative teaching and research-based excursion developed in cooperation with colleagues and students from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) and TU Wien's Institute of Spatial Planning in the Winter Semester 2025/26. The course Everyday Life, Difference and Intersectionality in Urban Research also relates to an ongoing institutional exchange between the AUTh and the International Building Exhibition Vienna (IBA-Wien 2016–2022) and its international programme How will we live tomorrow? – New Social Housing. This being said, the reader most of all is the great achievement of the collaborative work of six student groups, supported by their Greek colleagues.

Starting from shared thematic lenses: Everyday Life, Routines, and Rhythms; Dwelling, Difference, and Intersectionality; and Dwelling and Practices of Appropriation, and after a common introduction to qualitative urban research, the groups developed their own research questions, empirical strategies, and analytical approaches. Methodologically, this reader thus reflects a collective research process based on organised workshops, lectures and guided neighbourhood walks and the student-groups own field observations, mappings, informal conversations, interviews, and collaborative writing. While each contribution follows its own defined trajectory, all are grounded in close engagement with everyday practices of dwelling and neighbourhood life and with theoretical concepts introduced during the seminar. Empirical research was mostly conducted in two neighbourhoods of two distinct areas which both are densely built-up and characterised by a typical mix of residential, commercial, and service uses, structured in many cases around the dominant housing typology of the polykatoikia. Students worked in two field sites: Diikitiriou, a central area shaped by tourism pressures, mixed uses, and historically layered building stock reflecting refugee settlements of the 1920s and post-war reconstruction; and Analypsis, an off-centre eastern neighbourhood characterised by dense residential fabric, ageing buildings and population, and limited open public space. Despite their differences, both neighbourhoods are socially mixed and predominantly inhabited by low- and medium-income households.

Constructing and writing this reader became an extension of the excursion itself and of the learning journey undertaken by the students, peers and teachers, some of whom were engaging in urban field research for the first time. From initial observations and field encounters to collective debates and analytical reflection, this process was supported by students from Thessaloniki from the first day onwards.. Their kind hospitality, local knowledge and linguistic mediation were pivotal in enabling access to field sites and everyday contexts, and in fostering an intercultural learning process that shaped both the research and its interpretation as well as the friendly exchange between all students.

Looking ahead, this reader documents a moment of highly committed, exploratory urban research grounded in situated fieldwork and collaborative inquiry. While rooted in a specific course context, the contributions are intended to stand as empirically informed explorations of everyday life, dwelling, and urban change in Thessaloniki, and as an invitation to further research rather than as a closed account. In this sense, the reader points beyond itself by foregrounding questions, methods, and perspectives that remain open to continuation, comparison, and critical engagement.

Fig. 2: Central Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

EVERYDAY LIFE, DIFFERENCE AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Maximilian Holze

The elective seminar Everyday Life, Difference and Intersectionality in Urban Research is part of the broader module Society, Everyday Life and Space. The seminar addresses the social production of urban space and examines how everyday practices, power relations, and socio-spatial inequalities shape lived urban environments. Space is understood not only as a physical entity, but as something that is continuously produced through social, cultural, and political processes.

A key focus of the seminar lies on housing and urban space as situated and cultural practices. Using an intersectional perspective, the course explores how categories such as class, race, gender, and other forms of difference structure everyday urban experiences, access to space, and participation in urban life. The seminar combines theoretical preparation with empirical research and places strong emphasis on field-based and qualitative methods.

A central component of the seminar is the excursion to Thessaloniki, which constitutes the core of the empirical research. During several days of on-site fieldwork, we engaged with the city as a living laboratory. Thessaloniki provides a particularly rich context due to its complex historical layers, socio-political tensions, and visible forms of socio-spatial inequality. Working in small groups, we conducted ethnographic research combining participant observation, interviews, and spatial analysis. An important part of the field studies was the collaboration with students from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, a partner university of TU Wien. Under the guidance of Charis Christodoulou, these students supported us during the fieldwork and contributed local knowledge, perspectives, and methodological insights, making them an integral part of the excursion.

Following the excursion, we analysed and presented our findings in group presentations and develop scientific essays based on the conducted fieldwork. These contributions are compiled into a collectively produced reader, providing us with practical experience in academic writing, collaborative research, and publishing. Through this process, the seminar makes visible how everyday life, difference, and intersectionality are embedded in spatial practices, and how urban space can both reproduce and challenge social inequalities.

Fig. 3: Central Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

PARTNERSHIP TU WIEN AND THESSALONIKI

Sabine Knierbein, Charis Christodoulou

The institutional partnership between the Technical University of Vienna (TUW) and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTh) in the fields of architecture and planning had been launched in the '90s based on active academic relations and peer-to-peer joint projects and endeavours. Since 2015, we – Sabine Knierbein and Charis Christodoulou – have been the second generation to sustain mutual academic exchange and collaboration in teaching and sharing networks in fields of common interests of the urban. Professor Maria Kaika, academic peer to both and former Visiting Professor at the Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space at the Faculty of Architecture and Planning of TU Wien, suggested the match-making that proved successful and has lasted for more than ten years - an academic, and after all, a friendly relationship with many more colleagues and numerous student cohorts taking part in joint activities: The spectrum of activities incentivised by the existing Erasmus+ Mobility Cooperation for Students, Trainees and Teachers between both universities enabled three student excursions to Thessaloniki (2016, 2021, 2025) and one to Vienna forthcoming in 2026. It facilitated teaching exchange of doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and professors in local courses, joint engagement in activities of the Thematic Group of Public Spaces and Urban Cultures of the Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP TG PSUC) and shared conference visits and public lectures, both in Thessaloniki and Vienna, but also elsewhere, e.g. in Nicosia and Paris. Several readers have been published besides Special Issues and Book Chapters with mutual participation or co-authored. Student exchange also entailed Erasmus+ student mobilities for one or two semesters in Greece and Austria, thereby also allowing first master and phd candidates to thrive while exploring other grounds of urban restructuring. Also, mutual teacher participation in courses and phd colloquia at each institution has multiplied the fruits of our initial exchange. This greater group of colleagues and students who have been with us in this collaborative journey, have contributed in shaping a common academic and research culture.

What has been important to keep is the sharing, critique and contextualization of theorizing urban research and phenomena as well as processes and policies. In specific, public space transitions, both regarded from regional perspectives e.g. as in central- and south-European cities, but also situated in more international debates (e.g. about the post-political beach in Austria and Greece).

In a nutshell, all of these and even more activities make our enduring academic partnership through the Erasmus+ institutional agreement an outstanding and very much enjoyed one.

URBAN INFORMALITY THROUGH THE EYES OF A STRANGER

Charis Christodoulou

Through the eyes of a stranger, one can transcend the mundane and trivial of being part of an urban culture and resident of a city. For me as a cities' expert and professor, it is always very excitingly informative to tell the story of the making of Thessaloniki across centuries and guide foreign people in the city's distinct informality (Tonkiss 2019) that I suppose I know so well, and yet there's always more to discover. In the international students' gaze and queries, I re-focus on sites and spots to observe and evaluate urban practices and everyday life: the polykatoikia, the antiparochi, the vertical social networks, the sidewalk appropriation, the markets, the post-crisis vacancies in transformation.... Research about the city in several fields moves on and at the same time its everyday ground shifts to engulf change, new flows of people, and relational fields. Notions of public space in context, routines in place, socio-spatial instances, all light-up and gain their presence to be renegotiated in translation and fresh standpoints during a city walk.

Urban and housing policies officially declared or indirectly supported are legitimated upon hypotheses in architecture, urban design, and urban planning targeting livability and social mixing in urban places. But where and how is the impetuous informality in the public realm nurtured and sustained in 'typical' housing areas of Greek cities? Do the answers lie in the past or are there current new states of appropriation and dwelling processes to be recognized?

Students of different backgrounds (architecture and planning) and from different contexts come into dialogue and explore critical issues of immediate interest. Simply "engaging in informality" (Carmona 2021: 211-14) can highlight spatial interpretations of social relations in place (Christodoulou 2025). Employing an intersectional approach (Knierbein 2025) and qualitative conceptional and visual methodologies for researching the urban provides in-depth understandings of everyday life's intrinsic relational vigour as it unfolds in place.

Thanks to every single participant for walking together through Thessaloniki housing districts anew.

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Fig. 4: Students on city tour with Dr. Prof. Charis Christodoulou (Greta Kalmbacher)

RESEARCH PROCESS

Amelie Lucia Müller

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE URBAN FABRIC

This reader brings together the contributions of all student working groups developed during the excursion to Thessaloniki in November 2025. From a student perspective, the overall working process can be described as open and exploratory, strongly shaped by working directly within the urban environment of Thessaloniki. The starting point consisted of joint walks and field research. For this purpose, the working groups were spatially assigned either to the city centre of Thessaloniki or to the neighbourhood of Analypsis. This spatial allocation enabled the investigation and comparative reflection of different urban contexts.

Within this framework, the individual groups worked with diverse thematic focuses. While some groups concentrated on central urban structures, others explored social infrastructures and everyday practices in Analypsis. Despite certain thematic overlaps - such as questions of care, accessibility, or social participation - all groups developed distinct research questions and perspectives. This resulted in a plurality of approaches that reveal the urban space not as a homogeneous entity, but as a complex and relational fabric.

AN ITERATIVE PROCESS OF SHARED LEARNING

Methodologically, the course was based on qualitative and place-based research approaches; walks, observations, mapping exercises, as well as formal and informal conversations with residents, users, and local actors formed the foundation of the individual projects. A particularly formative experience was the realization that many insights emerged through unplanned encounters, spontaneous conversations, and situational observations in public space.

The research process was therefore less linear and more iterative: initial impressions were gathered on site, collectively reflected upon afterwards, and subsequently deepened or reframed.

The individual group projects assembled in this reader reflect this open-ended process. They document not only outcomes, but also research paths, moments of uncertainty, shifts in perspective, and learning processes. The diversity of approaches thus becomes a strength: taken together, the contributions create a multifaceted picture of Thessaloniki that addresses structural conditions as well as everyday practices, social relations, and spatial negotiations. This reader can therefore be understood as a collective document of a shared learning and research process emerging from diverse student perspectives.

THEMATIC LENSES

Elisabeth Schröer

As part of the course design, the fieldwork in Thessaloniki was structured through a set of thematic lenses that provided a shared framework for the student groups. During the preparatory phase in Vienna, students selected one lens according to their interests and formed research groups accordingly. By the time we began the joint city walks and fieldwork, each group was already approaching the urban environment through its chosen analytical perspective. The lenses served as tools to guide observation and reflection and enabled us to develop a critical awareness of how spatial forms and social relations shape Thessaloniki. They provided a conceptual ground for reflecting on Thessaloniki as a lived and contested urban environment, while allowing each group to explore the empirical complexity of their specific research focus.

EVERYDAY LIFE, ROUTINES, AND RHYTHMS

This lens focuses on the spatio-temporal organisation of everyday life in Thessaloniki. It examines how activities such as work, care, leisure, and rest are patterned across the city, and how they are mediated through housing, neighbourhoods, and urban infrastructures. Rather than treating the city as a static spatial form, this perspective emphasises the rhythms, circulations, and micro-practices that shape how people inhabit and move through urban space.

DWELLING, DIFFERENCE, AND INTERSECTIONALITY

This lens approaches dwelling as a socially and politically situated condition structured by unequal relations of power. Drawing on intersectionality, it considers how gender, class, age, migration background, and legal status interact. The lens encourages an inquiry into how belonging, visibility, and access are unevenly distributed, and how these inequalities become embedded in the social organisation of the city. Through this perspective, dwelling is understood not only as inhabiting a physical environment, but as a relational process embedded in broader socio-political contexts.

DWELLING AND PRACTICES OF APPROPRIATION

This lens explores how residents materially and symbolically make space their own in everyday life. It draws attention to small-scale practices through which people negotiate and reshape the thresholds between private and public space, for example around entrances, balconies, sidewalks, and shared areas. Through this perspective, dwelling is understood as an embodied, sensory, and creative practice that unfolds within, alongside, and sometimes in tension with regulatory, architectural, and institutional frameworks.

REFLECTIONS FROM GREEK STUDENTS

Despoina Athanasiou, Maira Konstantinidou

The framework of this research studio provided an opportunity to engage with the established functioning, the shortcomings, as well as the positive components of the Greek residential model and the public urban space, which both shapes and is shaped within its context. During this study, new knowledge, perceptual tools, and analytical methods were cultivated, not only for the visiting students but also for us, as architecture students in the city of Thessaloniki — internal factors and active subjects of the field of study.

The primary objective of our role involved guiding the visiting students through the socio-historical context across multiple scales, beginning with the contemporary Greek reality, moving on to its structuring of the urban landscape and the patterns of human interaction within it, and ultimately examining how these processes are materialized inside the specific study areas, while leaving space for deviations. Within this framework, it was essential to maintain analytical neutrality toward prevailing conditions, avoiding both blanket rejection and idealization, while also proposing methodologies and practices that we ourselves have used in analogous research within the city.

In line with each group's selection of a specific topic, we aimed to guide them based on the data at our disposal regarding the choice of spatial focus areas, the elements to be recorded, and the most effective research tools. We hope that our academic and lived knowledge of the subject matter enabled us to transform stimuli from the everyday experience of public space into explanatory continuities, decoding interactions, translating spatial images, and highlighting initially subtle elements for further investigation.

The practical implementation of these approaches in groups that chose to conduct interviews with residents or workers in the research areas required our involvement as a communication channel, in order to formulate appropriate questions and to overcome both linguistic barriers and the reluctance of local participants, particularly older individuals. This need was more noticeable in the Analypsis area, which compared to the city center, constitutes a more closed residential core, less exposed to external references and interactions.

Regarding the benefits of the overall project for the Greek students, it is particularly noteworthy that the selection of study topics and the specific research elements directed our attention toward phenomena and conditions of the public urban space that, due to our prior experience, we had treated as limiting or unremarkable. Through the collective need to analyze and interpret these data, we were confronted with a second level of reading, revealing aspects that might otherwise have been overlooked.

Furthermore, the structure of the studio provided us with the opportunity to step away from conventional architectural analysis of space and devote time to a more empirical field-based investigation, which included observation, discussion, interviews, and the collection of both standardized and non-standardized data. In doing so, we engaged with the needs and social components that constitute the character, structure, emerging relationships, and services present within the Greek urban public space. Consequently, an intangible network of interactions and formations was recognized, one that systematically yet subtly shapes the material form of space.

Finally, both the interaction with fellow international students during the field research and the exposure to the residential models of Vienna prompted an awareness of deficits, dysfunctions, positive aspects, and most importantly directions for the study and design of the contemporary Greek urban environment.

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

Richard Pfeifer, Sabine Knierbein

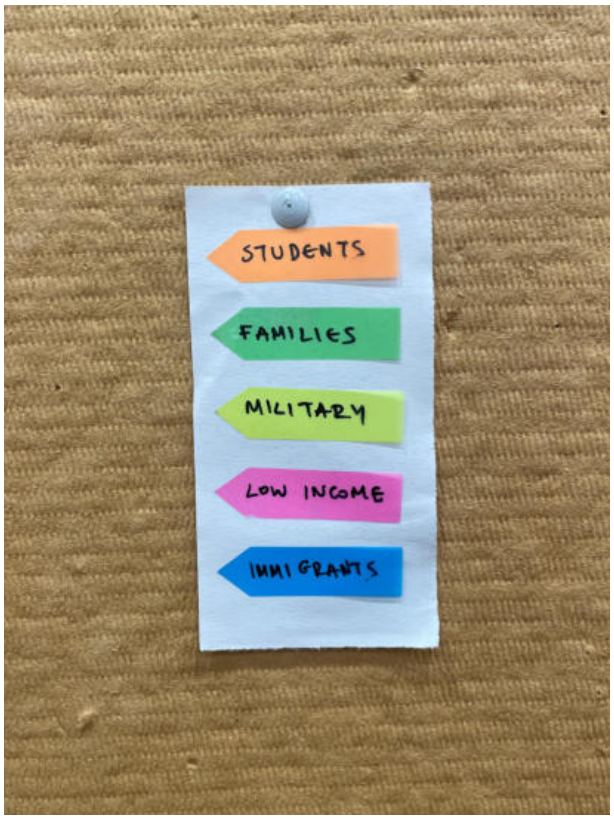

Fig. 5: Introductory workshop exploring social groups and intersectionality in everyday urban space (Greta Kalmbacher)

The seminar Everyday Life, Difference and Intersectionality in Urban Research, offered by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Urban Culture and Public Space (Team Urban, E280-09) was part of the Master's curriculum of the Master Program in Spatial Planning at TU Wien. It was conceptualised as a practical encounter between an introduction to urban field research with the analysis of housing rooted in everyday-life and practice-theoretical perspectives. The course thus aimed to position housing not primarily as a technical or policy object, but as a socio-spatial field and as socio-cultural practices of dwelling in which everyday practices, power relations, and forms of inequality are (re)produced and negotiated. A central aim was to enable students to analyse housing compounds and surrounding open space through an explicitly intersectional lens, attending to differentiated experiences of dwelling shaped by class, gender, age, migration, education, and caring relations, among other aspects.

Methodologically, the seminar was designed to support students to make use of previously acquired or newly learned qualitative urban field research methods. Empirical work relied primarily on ethnographic methods, including observation, conversations and interviews, complemented by mapping as well as walking interviews (e.g. go alongs) and other mobile research methods, particularly during the joint excursions. Students were also asked to critically reflect on and communicate their research results in Thessaloniki. Through the cooperation between TU Wien and Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the seminar further aimed to productively link inter-institutional and intercultural perspectives and to foster comparative or contrastive reflection between Vienna and Thessaloniki.

HISTORY OF PLANNING IN THESSALONIKI

Elisabeth Schröer

Thessaloniki has long occupied a distinct geopolitical position at the crossroads of the Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean, and South Eastern Europe. As a port city shaped by trade, migration, and empire, it has constantly absorbed external influences while also negotiating local forms of urban life. This multiplicity is reflected in its planning history, which is marked less by linear development than by moments of rupture, reconstruction, and adaptation.

Founded in 315 BCE, Thessaloniki developed during the Roman and Byzantine periods as a major administrative and commercial hub of the Eastern Mediterranean (EBSCO, n.d.). Urban structure during this era was characterized by a relatively clear street hierarchy, monumental public spaces, and strong fortifications. These early layers are still somewhat visible in the contemporary city, embedded within later, denser urban fabric, as seen in Figure 1. Under Ottoman rule from early 15th century to 1912, Thessaloniki evolved into a multi-ethnic port city with a largely organic urban structure (Yerolympos, 2007). Neighborhoods developed incrementally around religious, commercial, and communal institutions, characterized by narrow streets and high-density residential quarters.

A decisive turning point occurred with the Great Fire of 1917, which destroyed most of the historic center and prompted an unprecedented state-led reconstruction process (Yerolympos, 2007). Instead of allowing spontaneous rebuilding, the Greek government commissioned the French architect and planner Ernest Hébrard to prepare a comprehensive modern plan introducing axial boulevards, monumental public space, sanitation infrastructure, and functional zoning aligned with contemporary European planning ideals (Yerolympos, 2007). Although only partially implemented, the Hébrard plan fundamentally restructured the spatial organization of the city center and marked the transition from Ottoman morphology to modern planning practice.

After World-War-II, urbanization introduced a different planning dynamic shaped by rapid population growth and housing shortages. The widespread construction of polykatoikia apartment buildings transformed block structures and enabled vertical densification. Within this broader framework, mechanisms such as antiparochi (see the two following chapters) accelerated speculative private development and contributed to limited public space provision and fragmented planning control (Mantouvalou et al., 1995).

In the recent past, mayor changes stem from how the 2007/8 financial crises has impacted the Greek economy tremendously. The decade-long economic crisis and accompanying austerity policies profoundly reshaped everyday urban life in Thessaloniki. Greece's unemployment surged significantly, and retail collapse became visible in Thessaloniki, with nearly 30 percent of shops in the city center closing in 2012 (Near Futures Online, 2014). These processes produced widespread ground-floor vacancy with weakened street vitality and socio-spatial fragility.

In the subsequent recovery phase, rising tourism and speculative real-estate investment have begun to reactivate central areas, yet this revival is uneven: increasing rents and the rapid growth of short-term rentals such as Airbnb are transforming former retail spaces and contributing to new affordability pressures (Charis Christodoulou, guided field trip, Thessaloniki, November 2025).

Recent planning initiatives seek to address these post-crisis transformations, most notably through the new General Urban Plan, the first comprehensive framework adopted in several decades (GTP Headlines, 2023). The plan outlines strategies for the reuse of vacant building stock, public-space improvement, pedestrianization, and environmental upgrading, signalling an institutional attempt to guide recovery after years of austerity-driven decline.

Taken together, the historical trajectory of Thessaloniki reveals a city shaped by profound and often abrupt

transformations, in which crisis, reconstruction, and adaptation repeatedly redefine urban life.

Fig. 6: Old and new urban structures in Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

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ANTIPAROCHI

Colleen Wild

Any study of life and the urban environment in Thessaloniki would be incomplete without addressing antiparochi (in Greek, Αντιπαροχή), a unique trade-based housing development model which shaped much of the city's urban character today. First introduced during the post-war period to provide fast, affordable housing for a quickly growing population, antiparochi became the dominant construction model for polykatoikia (the ubiquitous Greek apartment building) for much of the twentieth century. While no longer financially viable under the current legal framework, the system's influence on housing, density, and public space was formative to the development of the city.

Antiparochi emerged in response to demographic changes in Greece in the early twentieth century. During the 1920s, Thessaloniki saw a rapid population increase as migrants fled Asia Minor and resettled in Greece. In order to accommodate the incoming population, the Greek state offered housing assistance in the form of cheap land and minimal development fees, encouraging individuals and families to build for themselves. While many new residents took advantage of this opportunity, not everyone had the means to build, thereby contributing to the ongoing housing shortage (Gugg, p.43). Antiparochi was developed as a legal mechanism to address this problem: through tax incentives, landowners were encouraged to outsource the development of their land to a construction company who, rather than paying money for the use of the land, would return a certain percentage of units in the finished building to the landowner.

By enabling individual landowners to partner with small, often family-oriented construction companies, housing could be built quickly and across many sites simultaneously. Landowners secured housing for themselves and often for relatives as well, and the remaining units were sold by the builders. In effect, the system functioned as a decentralized and efficient alternative to state-funded social housing - one which also aligned with Greek cultural values of strong family ties.

Following the end of the Greek Civil War in 1949, antiparochi became increasingly widespread and its use continued to expand during the period of intense urbanisation and economic growth in the 1960s and 1970s (Gugg, p.43). Of the current housing stock today, an estimated one half was constructed under the antiparochi model between 1960 and 1980, with more than one third of suburban housing built between 1980 and 2000 (Gugg, p.32).

The prolonged period of antiparochi-dominated construction had a significant impact on the urban fabric of Thessaloniki. As a financial model, antiparochi strongly incentivized dense development to maximize sellable floor area. Landowners paid almost no tax and only small development fees, while high taxes on property transfer encouraged new construction over renovation (CoHab Athens). Increased floor area ratios, together with the ubiquitous polykatoikia typology—whose "only agenda is the production of real estate" (Kyriakou, p.171)—resulted in construction at the maximum allowable lot coverage, often at the expense of public space. Together, the highly prescriptive zoning regulations, minimal city planning, and many individual developers using cost-saving construction methods resulted in an urban environment that is both homogeneous in architectural form and fractured in urban structure.

In 2006, the introduction of an 18% tax on the value of newly developed units brought the golden age of antiparochi to an end (CoHab Athens). However, the im-

Fig. 7: Dense housing in Analypsis (Amelie Lucia Müller).

pact of the system on the development of Thessaloniki remains undeniable. As a housing mechanism, antiparochi enabled generations of both Greek and migrant residents to access affordable housing while maintaining family networks and reinforcing social structures. At the same time, it sustained a construction sector based on small-scale companies, thereby supporting local economies. More an economic framework than a city planning tool, antiparochi promoted an intensely inhabited and vibrant city, but also one in which dense, private development was prioritised over cohesive planning and public spaces. With both the benefits and challenges it has presented, antiparochi remains a historically and culturally grounded approach to urban development which continues to shape the social and spatial character of Thessaloniki today.

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Fig. 8: Polykatoikia (Hayden Hess)

POLYKATOIKÍA

David Grzeja

The polykatoikía is the defining residential and architectural form of Thessaloniki and a central element of the city's identity. The term refers to a multi-story residential building with several, mostly privately owned residential units. The rise of the polykatoikía was driven by social shifts in the 20th century. It became the dominant architectural form to address the urgent need for housing after World War II.

This rapid expansion was facilitated by a unique Greek construction and ownership model known as antiparochí (see chapter on Antiparochi). Designed for quick construction and the maximization of rentable floor area, this model enabled the creation of private living space without extensive government intervention. However, this focus on private yield meant that common spaces within the buildings were often kept to a minimum.

In terms of urban planning, the polykatoikía is characterized by its functional, often sober architecture, typically featuring reinforced concrete structures and clean facades. While building regulations changed over the decades, most required buildings to be set back from property lines to ensure light and ventilation. In many districts, such as Analypsis, these setbacks resulted in unplanned, "leftover" spaces between and behind buildings. This dense development has had a significant impact on the city's layout. Because the peak of the construction boom was accompanied by a lack of comprehensive city planning, neighborhoods became incredibly dense with very few public green spaces.

The ground floors of polykatoikía buildings are traditionally used for commercial purposes, such as shops, cafés, or offices, while the upper floors remain residential. This mixed-use approach contributed significantly to the liveliness of the neighborhoods. However, as a result of changes in residents lifestyle and in connection with the financial crisis in 2008, many ground floor areas , paticularly on minor streets, have become vacant.

Today, the polykatoikía faces a new set of challenges. Many buildings dating from the post-war period energy, structural, and functional issues. Furthermore, many ground-floor units which are not located on main thoroughfares have fallen vacant, threatening the traditional vibrancy of the side streets. As the city looks to the future, issues such as energy renovation and climate adaptation, redensification and the management of "leftover" spaces, social mixing and the revitalization of vacant commercial zones are becoming increasingly critical for the sustainable development of Thessaloniki.

OIKIEOPOIESIS = TO CREATE HOME

Maira Konstantinidou

In Greek cities public, private, and in-between spaces emerge through a state of multiplicity, shaped by an ongoing interplay. While conventional and formal urban-planning frameworks provide important insights, they do not fully convey the vitality of these spaces, making it essential to incorporate lived experience as a central element of spatial understanding.

Moving in this direction, the analytical lens of cultural appropriation is introduced through the Greek term of "οικειοποίηση/okiepoeisis", which refers to the act of making something one's own that was not originally in one's possession. The term's etymology is derived from the ancient Greek words "οἶκος" = house and "ποιῶ" = to do / to create and therefore signifies, to create home / to transform something into a hom

"Οικειοποίηση", both as a term and as an established practice in Greek urban environment, shows points of alignment with C. F. Graumann's theoretical analysis of space appropriation and consequently helps us understand it's essence. According to Graumann, the appropriation process is always socially mediated, repealing the neutrality of space and reflecting the social structures within which it occurs (symbols, customs, relationships, rules). In this way, the environment acquires subjective meaning, while at the same time the formation of the subject is shaped by the engagement with the environment (Graumann, 1976).

Ultimately, appropriation is not a momentary act, but an extended process, enacted and maintained through habitual practices and collective memory. As a result, it contrasts with the notion of space ownership and, when applied to the public realm, it hosts conditions of simultaneous or even overlapping functionalities within the same spatial element.

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Fig. 9: Appropriation in Analypsis (Amelie Lucia Müller).

Fig. 10 following page, left: Roman Forum in Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).
Fig. 11 following page, right: Rotunda of Galerius (Amelie Lucia Müller).

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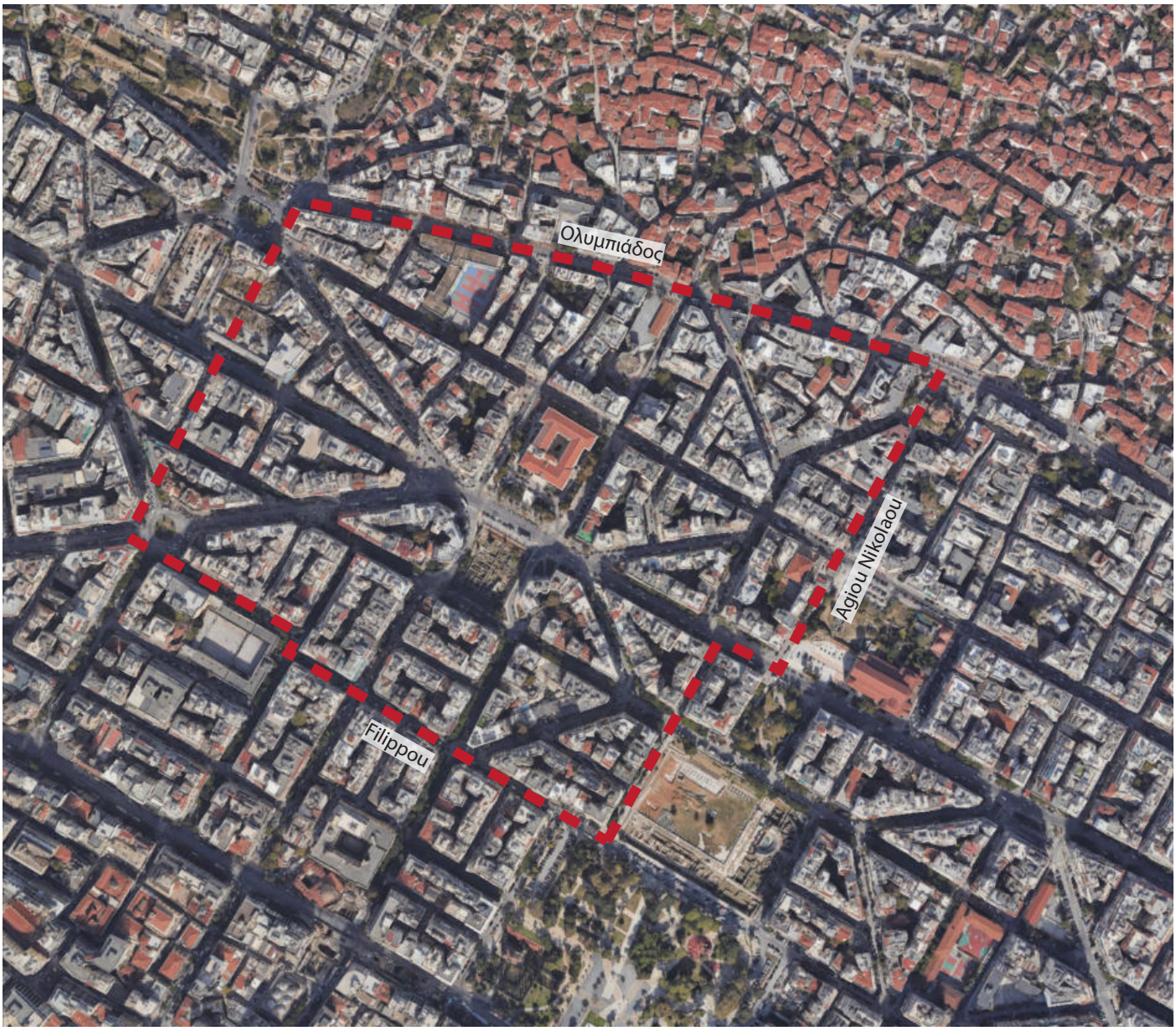

Fig. 12: Map: Central Thessaloniki Study Area, Google Earth 2026 (David

STUDY AREA 1: DIIKITIRIOU

CENTRAL THESSALONIKI

Clemens Langeder

On the first day after our arrival, Charis Christodoulou, professor of urban planning at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, gave us a short tour of the Diikitriou area. She gave us first insights, which we would like to share in the following:

We encountered a lively and vibrant city center where commercial functions are located on the ground floor, while residential uses are found on the upper floors. The area is speckled with monuments of different historical periods such as the Roman Forum and Kiprion Agoniston Square. To the north stands the government building of the Ministry of Macedonia-Thrace, designed in eclectic style. The area is characterized by a distinct shift in urban organization. The upper city pre-dates 1917 and still retains the structure of a naturally evolved city. After the fire of 1917, three quarters of the old town had to be rebuilt, leading to the establishment of a strong grid structure in the southern part of the city comparable to the urban structure of Paris and Barcelona. In this part of the city, it is almost impossible to get lost. Orientation is very easy as the streets are aligned parallel and perpendicular to the sea, while the numerous historical sites serve as important landmarks for navigation.

In general, a lot of eclectic buildings of the interwar period can be found. To the northeast along the axis of Aristotelous Street, the Hagios Demetrios church is located. The area became known for its role as a marketplace, a function which continues today, with numerous shops and workshops. Additionally, a small bazaar area is popular with both locals and tourists. It Transforms into a lively nightlife destination during the evening hours. Overall, the area can be described as a dense and lively part of the city with a lot of historical layers embedded.

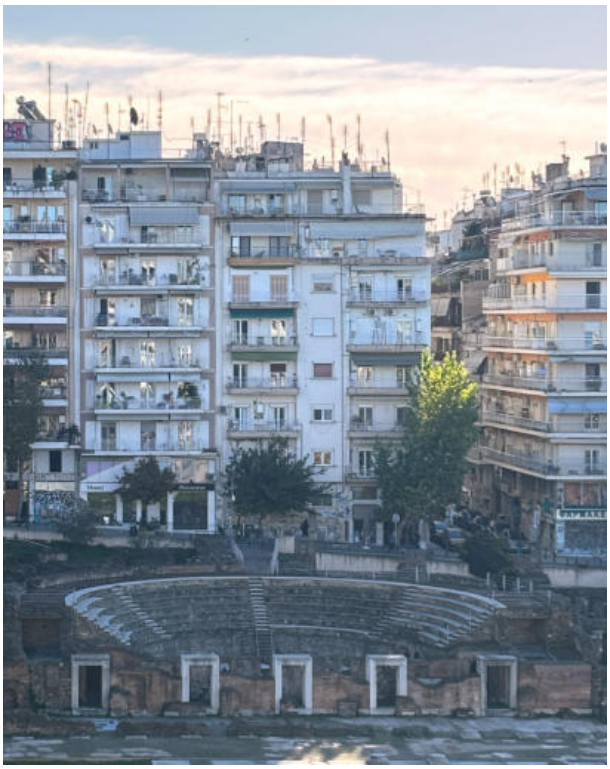

Fig. 13: Roman Forum (Clemens Langeder).

BIT BAZAAR

BELONGING AS A SPACIAL PRACTICE

Felix Erhart, Franca Dörner, Bertille Roure, Elisabeth Schröer

INTRODUCTION

Since the late 1990s, Thessaloniki has experienced increasing pressure from political and planning agendas that aim to reposition the city as a modern European port city. Local politicians and urban planners have focused on improving the city's image at political, cultural, and economic levels, particularly in the context of EU integration, the European Capital of Culture in 1997, and the growing importance of tourism and large-scale events. These strategies of urban transformation have had tangible effects on public space, especially in the historic city centre, where groups such as street vendors, homeless people, and drug users have increasingly been displaced. Central streets and squares have become symbolic spaces representing Thessaloniki's role as a European hub in the Balkans. Tourism has further intensified these dynamics, as heightened police presence and security controls in central and tourist areas seek to create an image of safety, while simultaneously producing new forms of exclusion through the regulation of informal activities and street vending (Stroux 2008).

The Bit Bazaar in Thessaloniki represents one of the city's most historically layered commercial environments. Located in the historic centre close to the Roman Agora and enclosed by the streets of Filippou, Olympou, and Tositsa, the bazaar forms a semi-hidden urban enclave. Spatially concealed by surrounding buildings and accessible through narrow passages and internal courtyards, it is largely removed from the city's dominant commercial axes. This condition of partial invisibility has shaped its development as a distinct urban micro-space structured by everyday practices rather than formal planning.

Emerging during the late Ottoman period and further consolidated in the early twentieth century, the Bit Bazaar evolved incrementally through small-scale trade, craftsmanship, and informal exchange. Its contemporary formation can be traced to 1928, when the area was allocated to refugees following the Asia Minor Catastrophe. Organised around refugee housing with small ground-floor shops, the bazaar became associated with second-hand trade, particularly used clothing and household goods. Its colloquial name, often translated as "flea market," reflects these early trading practices and the material conditions of the time. Historically, the bazaar functioned as an important node within Thessaloniki's commercial landscape, especially for lower-income populations and migrant communities, relying on proximity, trust, and repeated daily interactions. (Visit Central Macedonia, n.d.)

Today, permanent ground-floor retail, informal market vending, and gastronomy coexist within the area. While several antique dealers continue to operate during daytime hours, the bazaar undergoes a transformation after nightfall, as courtyards and galleries shift from spaces of trade to spaces of nightlife sociability. Taverns and bars attract a young clientele, particularly students, drawn by relatively low prices. This temporal layering of commerce and leisure positions the Bit Bazaar as a hybrid urban space in which historical memory, everyday economic practices, and contemporary nightlife intersect. Against the backdrop of rising property values, tourism-oriented development, and changing consumption patterns, the Bit Bazaar offers a productive site for examining everyday economies, spatial differentiation, and the interplay of formal and informal practices.

RESEARCH QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY

Building on Stroux' (2008: 146) understanding of urban public space as socially and culturally constructed, this essay approaches the Bit Bazaar as a relational social space shaped through continuous (inter)actions and everyday practices. In this process, different social, ethnic, and gender groups continually renegotiate its meanings, rendering it more than a simple marketplace (Stroux 2008: 146–151). As we entered the Bit Bazaar, we were welcomed with remarkable kindness and openness, despite being complete strangers. We were offered coffee and tea by a regular buyer right away, and

Fig. 13.1: Vendors and Buyers of Bit Bazaar (Elisabeth Schröer)

he, as well as a vendor, later openly told us parts of their life stories, giving us insight into the Bit Bazaar as well as intimate details about their working-situation, family, and personal hardships. Mesmerised by this instant feeling of connection, we decided to dive deeper into this feeling of belonging that we ourselves experienced and also recognised in the close, familiar relationships of the people congregating in the Bazaar. Therefore, we formulated the following research question:

HOW DO VENDORS AND REGULAR BUYERS EXPERIENCE AND PRODUCE A SENSE OF BELONGING IN THE BIT BAZAAR?

We based our research on Riege's (2007: 377 ff.) definition of social space as spheres of action, focusing on the spatial patterns of use and behaviour. Qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews, informal conversations and participant site observations are well suited to investigate subjective socio-spatial understandings, encompassing opinions, preferences, desires and individual interpretations as well as the social (inter)actions and everyday practices of the local actors (Träger 2022: 57). Furthermore, a differentiation based on the social structure of the local actors is necessary, as it influences their (inter)actions (Träger 2022: 55).

We began our research with a participant site observation to document existing physical structures (e.g. furniture, materials), as well as social and economic uses, social structures (e.g. age, gender) and interactions. Building on this, we conducted semi-structured interviews and held informal conversations to contextualise these observations and explore the everyday practices and lived experiences of different stakeholder groups who socially shape the market through their actions.

We conducted four informal conversations with different key actors of the market structure:

Nr.	Role	Socio-Structural Information
1	Vendor	Age: Around 70 Gender: Male Nationality: Greek Originally from Thessaloniki Occupation: Vendor at the Bit Bazaar since 8 years, when he lost his former job at a Hotel
2	Regular Buyer	Age: Around 70 Gender: Male Nationality: Greek Grandparents immigrated from Asia Minor Occupation: Retired teacher & dance teacher
3	Occasional Buyers	Age: Mid 20s Gender: Female and male Nationality: Greek Occupation: Students (Medicine)
4	Regular Buyer and Girlfriend	Age: Mid 50s Gender: Female and male Nationality: Greek Occupations: Journalist and photographer

Fig. 13.2: Matrix of Interviews

The informal conversation with the regular buyer turned into a walking interview, as he started guiding us through the area around the Bazaar and the adjacent antique stores. By moving through relevant spaces, more place-specific data could be generated (Evans & Jones 2011: 856). The walking interview, along with a mapping of vendor retail spaces in the Bit Bazaar and the surrounding area, helped place the market and its wider impacts in a broader social and economic context.

It is important to note that we decided not to audio-record the interviews and informal conversations, but instead to document them through written protocols, based on our field notes immediately after the interviews. While this decision can negatively affect transparency and accuracy, it also facilitated the development of trust and increased participants' openness and willingness to share personal information. This was particularly important given the socially vulnerable situation of the vendors at the Bit Bazaar, which is shaped by legal uncertainty and limited social acceptance in parts of society (Vogel & Funck 2018: 23; Stroux 2008: 161).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

To analyse how vendors and regular buyers experience and produce a sense of belonging in the Bit Bazaar, this research draws on theoretical approaches that conceptualise belonging as a socially and spatially constructed process. We don't understand it solely as an individual feeling but also as an atmosphere shaped by routines. Christine Mady's research on urban space transformations in Beirut highlights how everyday practices and social interactions can shape residents' sense of inclusion and attachment to the city. She argues that place is shaped through repeated interactions, economic exchanges, spatial practices, and informal social relations which reinforce integration in the society (Mady 2022: 117). Marco Antonsich, in 'Searching for belonging - An Analytical Framework', distinguishes the place-belongingness and the politics of belonging. What he names 'the place-belongingness' is the affective and experiential feeling of being at home in a place, shaped by familiarity, everyday routines, and emotional attachment. In contrast, 'the politics of belonging' refers to the social, political, and discursive processes through which boundaries of exclusion and inclusion are produced (Antonsich 2010: 645). While Antonsich does not explicitly frame belonging in terms of care, his relational understanding of place-belongingness allows for interpreting everyday caring practices as contributing to feelings of attachment and familiarity. It is not only an affective feeling of attachment to a place, but also involves a sense of being carried by, and embedded within, a social group or shared practices. People care about each other, about the place, about the cats. They care about their environment and this caring aspect leads to the sense of belonging to a group, then to a place.

In both Antonsich's and Mady's work, belonging is shaped by power relations that influence who is recognised as legitimate and who is excluded from a specific urban space (Mady 2022: 120-121; Antonsich 2010: 649-652). Indeed, if some people belong, then others do not, and in every place we can feel how the belonging is hierarchised between the users of the space.

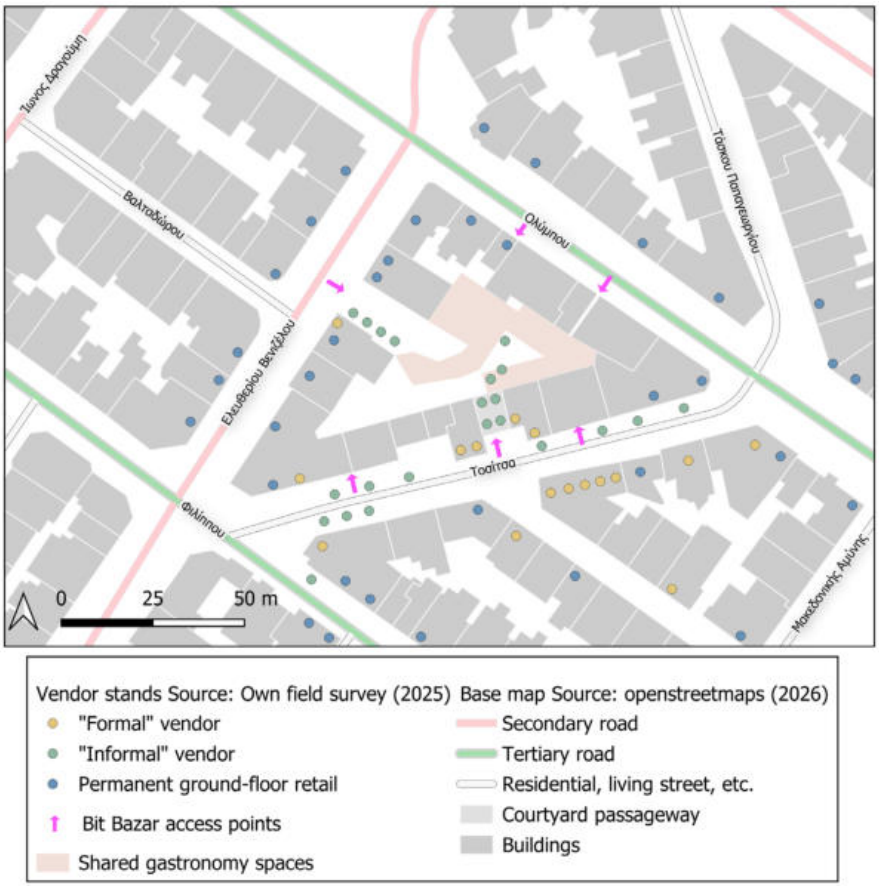

Fig. 13.3: Vendor mapping of Bit Bazaar

Finally, the sense of belonging is neither abstract nor solely individual but it is inherently spatial and relational. This feeling emerges from the relation between people and the space as well as between individuals.

These perspectives raise several guiding questions for the empirical analysis. How do everyday interactions between vendors and regular buyers produce familiarity and recognition? In what ways do economic exchanges and caring practices extend beyond transactional relations? How do spatial routines and memories attached to the Bit Bazaar shape experiences of belonging, and how are these experiences structured by relations of power, recognition, and exclusion?

VENDOR MAPPING

To analyze the economic and spatial structure of the Bit Bazaar, we conducted a vendor-mapping as a qualitative-spatial research method. The final map is based on a field survey conducted on the 27th of November 2025 and documents the location and characteristics of market vendors, permanent retail units, gastronomy spaces, and access points within and around the bazaar area (Figure 3). Based on the spatial structure of the Bit Bazaar, a strong sense of belonging can be interpreted as being concentrated within the courtyard. The enclosed layout, together with the clustering of informal vendors and shared gastronomy spaces, creates a closed community atmosphere shaped by repeated encounters and everyday interactions. In the surrounding streets, a sense of belonging can still be experienced due to the continued presence of vendors in public space, but it appears weaker and more dispersed. This can be linked to ongoing urban development and regulatory pressures, which have reduced informal activities in more exposed areas. Moving further away from the bazaar, this sense of belonging gradually fades as vendor presence decreases and the space becomes increasingly aligned with the faster and more regulated public life of the city. Overall, the Bit Bazaar can be understood as a small and spatially limited area in which a strong sense of belonging is concentrated.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS OF BELONGING

The economic structure of the Bit Bazaar is characterized by a layered system in which formal and informal economic practices coexist within a dense and negotiated spatial setting. A wide range of products is offered, including antiques, photographs, furniture, textiles, and jewellery. The quality and value of these goods vary significantly, ranging from very low-cost everyday items to expensive and cost-intensive antiques. As a result, the bazaar does not function like a typical shopping street. Instead, it feels like a collection of individual micro-businesses, each shaped by the owner's background, available goods, and long-standing relationships with customers.

This layered structure becomes particularly visible through the coexistence of different types of vendors. Informal vendors sell their goods directly in the streets or courtyard passages, often using very simple furniture or, in some cases, placing their products directly on the ground. Alongside them are formal vendors who operate ground-floor shops, yet whose merchandise is still closely associated with flea market and second-hand cultures rather than conventional retail. In addition, permanent ground-floor retail has increasingly entered the area as a result of urban modernization and urban development pressures in Thessaloniki. While these shops no longer fully reflect the traditional character of the Bit Bazaar, they contribute to economic stability and help maintain an active ground-floor environment in an area otherwise shaped by informal and temporary practices.

Across these different economic layers, economic exchange is closely intertwined with long-term social relationships between vendors and customers. Transactions often go beyond purely functional exchange and are embedded in familiarity, trust, and repeated interactions. Gastronomy spaces play an important supporting role in this economic structure by providing places to stay, rest, and socialize, especially for regular buyers and vendors. These spaces function as informal meeting points that sustain everyday routines and contribute to the continuity of economic and social life within the bazaar. In this sense, the economic structure of the Bit Bazaar does not function solely as a system of exchange, but also as a framework through which social relations and a strong sense of belonging are continuously produced.

SOCIO-MATERIAL CONFIGURATIONS OF BELONGING

Depending on the street from which one enters, the perception of the Bit Bazaar differs. When approaching from Filippou Street, one immediately encounters objects displayed on tables or directly on the sidewalks, as well as a large entrance, which we informally referred to as the "main entrance." However, when arriving from other surrounding streets, the experience is markedly different. The Bit Bazaar is physically concealed, as it blends into the surrounding buildings and remains largely invisible from the main commercial axes of the city.

This physical concealment contributes to the production of a distinct socio-spatial environment. There is a clear spatial differentiation between official vendors, who occupy enclosed shops and operate under formal contracts, and informal vendors, who collectively constitute the bazaar itself. The official shops form a kind of outer envelope, within which informal market activities take place. The core of the Bit Bazaar is located within an inner courtyard, accessible either through the main entrance or via narrow passages. This enclave-like structure is produced by the urban morphology, as the surrounding buildings allow the interior space to function almost as a world of its own.

This spatial configuration plays a central role in fostering a sense of belonging. By creating a semi-enclosed and partially hidden environment, the physical structure of the Bit Bazaar facilitates informal activities, repeated encounters, and everyday routines, which contribute to feelings of familiarity, comfort, and trust. In line with Antonsich's notion of place-belongingness, the courtyard and its access routes support an affective experience of being "at home" that is closely tied to the material and spatial qualities of the place (Antonsich 2010: 649-652).

At the same time, the semi-hidden character of the Bit Bazaar has implications for the politics of belonging. Historically, we can suppose this spatial configuration may have enabled refugees and socially marginalised groups to establish themselves in a context where they were less visible and less exposed to dominant norms of public space. The physical structure thus not only supports everyday practices of trade and social interaction but also contributes to the production of belonging for

groups whose presence might otherwise be considered less legitimate in more formal or regulated urban spaces. As will be discussed in the section on social structures, this suggests that the two "worlds" of formal and informal activity do not exist in opposition, but rather coexist and cooperate in the ongoing production of the Bit Bazaar as a place of belonging.

SOCIAL PRACTICES AND COMMUNITY BELONGING

While visiting the Bit Bazaar we experienced complex social structures and a close community network. As soon as we entered the courtyard, we were recognised from a short conversation the day before and invited for coffee and tea by a regular buyer of the bazaar, who then proceeded to explain and show us the bazaar and the surrounding neighbourhood over the course of the next five hours. During our visit we aimed to find out more about the social roles, relations and interactions of the vendors and regular buyers within the Bit Bazaar at daytime.

We observed a relatively stable group of vendors, most of them men between approximately 40 and 80 years old (Site Observation). One interviewed vendor refers to the work at the bazaar as "no good times." A phrase that captures the precarious conditions many vendors face. He commutes daily from the outskirts of Thessaloniki because living in the city centre has become unaffordable and sells his goods for little money after losing his former job in the hospitality sector (Interview 1). This confirms the assumption of a regular buyer that the vendors earn just enough money to survive (Interview 2). While the interviewed vendor has an academic background, having studied in London, the educational backgrounds of others remain unclear (Interview 1). What is visible, however, is the bazaar's multicultural character. Vendors speak multiple languages and are described as belonging to Albanian, Russian, and Georgian Romani communities, alongside newcomers from Pakistan and Syria who appear to be well integrated into the bazaar's community (Site Observation; Interview 2). Regular buyers are often older men with professional or academic backgrounds such as teachers, professors, or scientific staff or collectors who come looking for antiques, historical documents, or objects connected to cultural heritage. In contrast, occasional buyers primarily browse the bazaar for casual, cheap purchases. They have more heterogeneous social backgrounds and consist of local people from the neighbourhood as well as tourists, especially in summer (Interview 1, 2 and 3; Site Observation).

The bazaar functions as an informal legal arrangement, with vendors paying small fees to the tavern owners to use their private outdoor spaces (Interview 1). The acceptance of the vendors by the tavern staff is reflected by the tavern owners' willingness to engage in reciprocal economic relationships from which both parties benefit, as well as in familiar social interactions during the transitional period in the afternoon, from bazaar use to nightlife use (Site Observation). The interviewed regular buyer also speaks of a high acceptance of the vendors in Thessaloniki, as they are considered a cheap workforce (Interview 2). In contrast, disapproving perspectives on the vendors' informal activities become apparent through occasional police controls, which at times result in the temporary closure of the bazaar (Interview 1).

The small kafenio in the courtyard plays a central role in shaping the bazaar's social life. Its seating arrangement encourages people to linger. Elderly men sit alone or in small groups, drinking coffee, reading, and talking. Here, the boundaries between vendors, regular buyers, and visitors become blurred. It is often difficult to tell who is present for business and who is simply spending time. Familiar interactions among vendors, regular buyers, and tavern staff - including friendly banter and (brief) conversations - foster a sense of collective belonging. Cultural practices and exchange, such as one vendor playing the guitar and regular buyers purchasing and discussing historic documents and pictures, can further strengthen social and emotional ties. Furthermore, caring gestures such as one vendor feeding the local cats, indicate a sense of responsibility for the shared space that goes beyond economic transactions (Site Observation; Interview 1).

Overall, we experienced the Bit Bazaar not just as a site of economic exchange, but a lived social space shaped by familiarity, trust, routinised everyday interactions, caring gestures and shared histories, cultures and precarious experiences, which can all contribute to this feeling of belonging to a place and a social group for the vendors and regular buyers, as illustrated in the theoretical background. Moreover, small gestures such as pulling up a chair for us to sit during the site observations,

kind greetings, and engaging in personal conversations, even with strangers like us, demonstrated how much the vendors and regular buyers value friendliness and openness in contrast to anonymity. These interactions, while not on the same level as the bonds between regular users of the Bit Bazaar, still fostered a sense of inclusion and belonging, even for us.

CONCLUSION

This essay asked how vendors and regular buyers experience and produce a sense of belonging in the Bit Bazaar. Based on site observations, interviews, and spatial mapping, the findings show that belonging in the built space of Bit Bazaar is primarily produced through everyday socio-spatial practices rather than through formal inclusion, legal status, or ownership.

Vendors and regular buyers experience belonging through repeated presence, mutual recognition, routinised interactions, and informal social relations that are embedded in daily economic exchange. The participation in shared practices such as recurring encounters, conversations, caring gestures, and the possibility to linger creates familiarity and trust and enables actors to feel recognised and socially embedded within the space.

The Bit Bazaar operates simultaneously as a socially embedded economy in which transactional and relational dimensions are closely intertwined. Reciprocal relationships between vendors, regular buyers, and gastronomy actors stabilize everyday routines and contribute to emotional attachment to the place. Especially for economically vulnerable vendors, the bazaar functions not only as a marketplace but also as a social infrastructure that supports continuity and community. The analysis also shows that belonging is not uniform but differentiated. While initial recognition can emerge quickly through openness and interaction, deeper attachment develops through sustained engagement and repeated participation in everyday routines.

At the same time, this form of belonging remains fragile. The informal and semi-legal arrangements that enable flexible access and participation also produce insecurity. Police controls, temporary closures, legal uncertainty, rising rents, and redevelopment pressures in the surrounding city centre disrupt established routines and could weaken informal cooperation structures. The Bit Bazaar thus illustrates a broader tension between lived

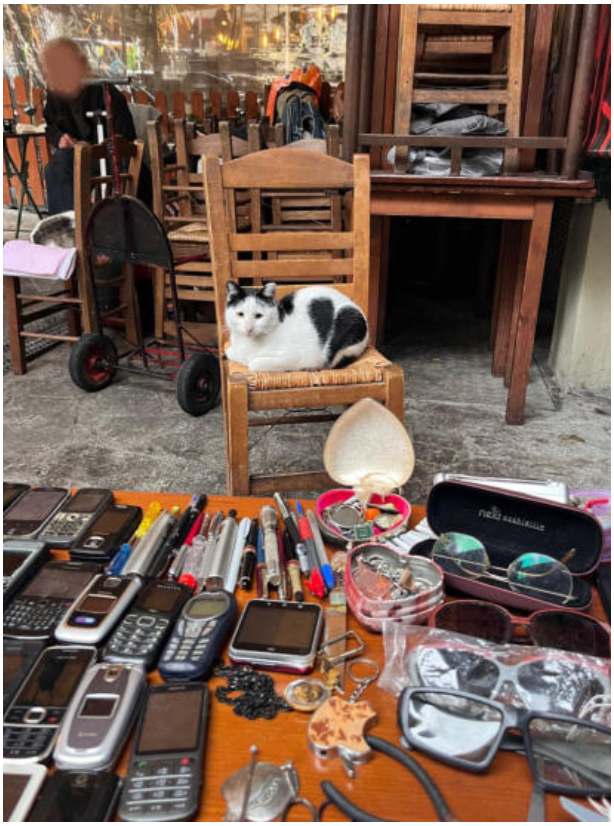

Fig. 13.4: Shop of a Vendor in Bit Bazaar (Bertille Roure)

belonging produced through everyday practices and regulatory as well as urban development frameworks that define which uses of space are considered legitimate.

Overall, the case of the Bit Bazaar demonstrates how belonging can be socially and spatially produced through care, repetition, and informal cooperation in mixed-use urban environments. The findings show that belonging is actively made and maintained through everyday participation rather than granted through formal structures. The Bit Bazaar thus highlights both the social significance and the structural vulnerability of such lived urban spaces.

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DWELLING & PRACTICES OF APPROPRIATION

THE ROLE OF SIDEWALKS IN FILIPPOU STREET, THESSALONIKI

Leah Bartz, Tidian Auer, Maximilian Holze

INTRODUCTION

Urban public space is often seen as a shared area structured by regulations and design to ensure accessibility and collective use. However, everyday urban life reveals a more complex reality where public space is continuously negotiated and redefined through daily practices. This research stems from a curiosity about how people inhabit and transform space beyond formal definitions, caused by an observation during a field trip in Thessaloniki: sidewalks as a typical public infrastructure were actively appropriated. This aligns with broader theoretical discussions on dwelling and appropriation, which emphasize the sensory and affective dimensions of inhabiting space. Everyday environments such as sidewalks are not merely physical containers or spaces but places expressed through practices of intimacy, care, and appropriation. People negotiate these characteristics of lived space through practices such as decoration, adaptation, and informal regulation, making space their own without formal ownership.

To keep the analysis focused, this study examines appropriation specifically in the area directly in front of shops. It explores how shop related practices such as placing furniture, displaying goods, and socializing at the storefront shape the public character of the sidewalk in the Filippou Street neighbourhood. Drawing on urban research on everyday life and difference, this essay asks how private interests materialize and normalize in public space and how this affects daily life for all users. The study highlights tensions between public accessibility and private control, revealing sidewalks as lived, contested spaces where power and belonging are negotiated: How is public space shaped and appropriated by private interests and how does this affect daily life in the Filippou Street neighbourhood?

CLAIMS

This research argues that sidewalks in the Filippou Street neighbourhood are actively appropriated by shopkeepers and their friends and family. Through everyday practices such as sitting outside, placing furniture, displaying goods, or socializing in front of shops, sidewalks

Fig. 14.1: Documentation of Sidewalk Appropriation (Tidian Auer)

are used as extensions of daily shop life. Although these spaces remain formally public, they are shaped through repeated occupation and routine use, which influences how people move through and use the street.

The study further suggests that these practices contribute to a neighbourhood in which repeated encounters and continuous presence play an important role. Rather

than functioning only as neutral passageways, sidewalks become spaces where social interaction can occur as part of everyday routines. At the same time, the analysis considers that participation in this street life may be connected to familiarity and local networks.

In addition, the research points to the relevance of economic practices in sidewalk use. Sidewalk space is used for visibility, display, and spatial extension of commercial activities. In this sense, appropriation can have both social and economic dimensions, shaping how the street is used in everyday life.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This essay's theoretical framework builds on the concept of appropriation as a key lens for understanding how public space is produced and used in everyday life. Appropriation refers to the ways individuals or groups make use of space through repeated everyday practices, even without formal ownership (Elizondo 2024). It involves material, social, and symbolic actions such as placing objects, arranging furniture, decorating, maintaining, or informally regulating access (id.). Appropriation transforms abstract space into lived space, embedding it with meaning, routines, and affect (id.). In urban contexts, appropriation often occurs in threshold spaces such as sidewalks where the boundaries between public and private are blurred. This research draws on theories of spatial appropriation and messy urbanism to understand how these interim-spaces emerge, what their role is and how they are lived in everyday situations.

Building on this, the concept of dwelling helps to capture how appropriation is not only a set of spatial practices, but also an ongoing process of inhabitation. Therefore, dwelling can be understood as an embodied and relational process through which subjects come into being in and through space. Rather than merely occupying a physical setting, dwelling unfolds through everyday routines, affective attachments, and ongoing spatial negotiation over time. In this sense, dwelling constitutes what Gabauer describes as a "spatialised mode of subjectivation" (Gabauer 2025 p. 38) and an "ongoing process of spatial becoming shaped by everyday life" (Gabauer 2025 p. 38). Similarly, Ingold conceptualizes dwelling as something that emerges through movement, perception, and practical engagement, whereby individuals grow into the world along lived pathways (Ingold 2000). Thus, dwelling encompasses everyday trajectories between home, work, care, and social relations, grounding belonging and attachment in embodied practice.

To specify what is at stake in these practices, the following perspective highlights different but connected dimensions of appropriation and dwelling: its relational and moral logics, its informal and negotiated character, and its tension with formally planned space.

MESSY URBANISM AND INFORMALITY

Messy urbanism conceptualizes the city as an open ended, improvised system shaped by informal practices, overlapping uses, and constant negotiation (Chalana & Hou 2016). Rather than interpreting disorder or informality as a failure of planning, this approach understands messiness as a productive condition that generates adaptability, social encounter, and urban vitality (id.). Blurred boundaries between public and private spaces are seen as characteristic of lived urban environments, especially in contexts marked by diverse lifestyles and economic practices (Nissen 2008). Hou's work on everyday urbanism further supports this perspective by arguing that informal spatial practices should be understood as legitimate forms of urban production (Hou 2010). From this viewpoint, sidewalk appropriation is not simply a violation of regulations, but part of a broader process through which urban space is continuously reshaped from the bottom up. Messy urbanism thus provides a framework for analyzing how everyday interests materialize in public space through everyday negotiation rather than formal planning. At the same time, focusing on negotiation and informality raises the question of how these lived practices relate to the formally defined purposes of public space, which brings in a third perspective on the production of space.

This theoretical perspective frames the shopfront sidewalk as a lived, negotiated, and care infused interim-space. They provide the analytical tools to examine how local actors' private interests shape public space through everyday practices, producing sidewalks as semi public, semi private spaces in the Filippou Street neighbourhood.

METHODOLOGY

The study combines literature research with qualitative fieldwork to understand how shopfront sidewalks are

produced and stabilized through everyday practices. First, relevant literature on spatial appropriation and everyday urbanism was reviewed to build an analytical lens for interpreting informal uses and their social meanings. Building on this grounding, field trips to Filippou Street were conducted as participatory observation across different times of day, focusing on rhythms of use, interactions, object placement, and how different users navigated these arrangements (Whyte 1980; Gehl 2011).

To complement these situated observations with a systematic spatial overview, mapping documented where and how appropriations occur along the street (Fig 1). Observed uses such as seating, storage, or social gathering were recorded to visualize clustering and potential conflicts (Corner 1999; Lynch 1960; Michel 2022). Finally, semi-structured interviews with four shopkeepers explored motivations, routines, economic considerations, care relations, and informal rules shaping sidewalk use (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009). The interviewees were a woman in her early twenties (granddaughter of a shopkeeper), a woman in her early forties (co-worker) and two shopkeepers in their late sixties (female and male). The methodological combination enabled an understanding of both observable practices and the justifications behind them.

Due to the context of our research, the research remains limited in scope: it foregrounds shopkeepers' perspectives and does not represent other sidewalk users like residents, passersby or marginalized groups to the same degree. In addition, socio-demographic characteristics of the interviewed shopkeepers (for example, gender, age, and socio-cultural background) were not systematically collected in a way that would allow for a more robust analysis of structural selectivities and intersectional dynamics. The small sample of interview participants does not allow for evidence-based conclusions about the neighbourhood as a whole. Rather, it provides qualitative insights from selected affected individuals whose experiences and knowledge help to address the research question and support context-sensitive conclusions. Due to the exploratory nature of this research and its character as a case study, the findings are preliminary and tied to the specific field site under investigation (Fig. 2).

FIELD TRIP REFERENCES

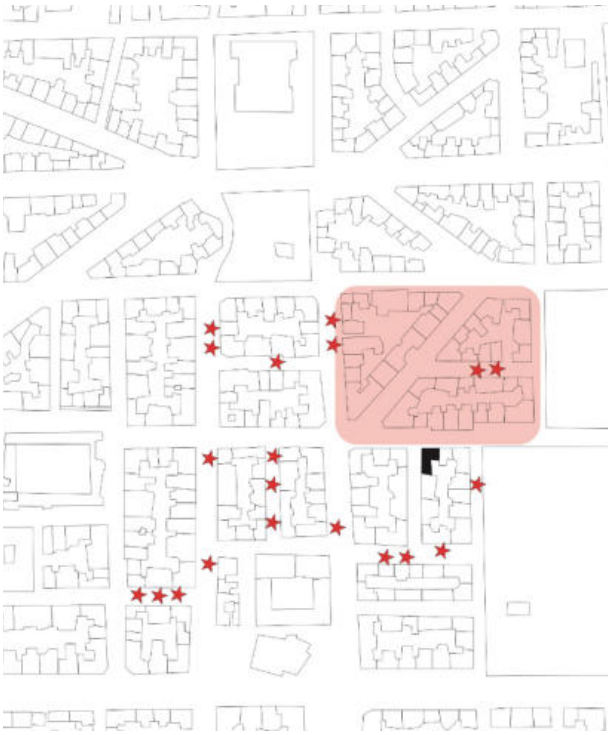

Fig. 14.2: Mapping of Sidewalk Appropriation in the Diikitirou area.

RESULTS

The empirical findings from field observations, mapping, and interviews allowed us to understand how sidewalks in the in the neighbourhood around Filippou street are actively appropriated by shopkeepers as extensions of both commercial and domestic space. These practices reveal the intertwined economic, social, and socio-economic dimensions of everyday sidewalk use.

USERS AND ACCESS

The use of sidewalks is primarily dominated by long-standing, locally embedded shopkeepers and their friends and family (Interviewees 1-4). The observed shopkeepers are mostly from Thessaloniki and above the age of 40. They perceive the shop and its surrounding sidewalk as part of their domestic environment, combining working activities with leisure and social practices (ib.). While this creates local networks and a sense of care, it also suggests that access to these semi-public spaces is shaped by familiarity and social belonging, potentially limiting inclusion for others.

MATERIAL AND SPATIAL APPROPRIATION OF SIDEWALKS

One of the most visible forms of appropriation is the placement of chairs and tables on the sidewalk in front of shops (Fig 1 & 3). These objects provide basic comfort for shopkeepers, their friends, and family members, enabling everyday activities such as sitting, talking, eating, or resting during work hours (Interviewees 1 & 3). The presence of furniture signals a shift from pure circulation space to a space of dwelling and social use. Beyond comfort, these arrangements support social integration and neighborly contact (Interviewees 1 & 2). At the same time, these practices create a form of informal observation and street awareness (Interviewee 2). The use of furniture also establishes territoriality. By occupying specific sidewalk areas on a daily basis, shopkeepers symbolically extend their private and commercial space into the public space. This territorial presence is reinforced through visibility and street-level communication, as shop interiors visually merge with the sidewalk, blurring the boundary between inside and outside.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE AND EVERYDAY RHYTHMS

Sidewalk appropriation plays an economic role (Interviewees 1, 2 & 3). For the shopkeepers, the sidewalk functions as an extended selling area where goods are displayed and customers are attracted (Interviewees 1, 3 & 4). Visibility from the street becomes a key factor in commercial success as products, seating, and activity signal openness and invite engagement. Cleaning the area in front of shops further strengthens this effect (Interviewee 1). Shopkeepers often take responsibility for the upkeeping of their sidewalk segment, reinforcing a sense of ownership while enhancing the commercial appeal of the street (Interviewees 1 & 3).

Socially, sidewalks operate as semi-private living spaces comparable to balconies or living rooms. Shopkeepers and their social networks regularly sit outside, transforming the street into a place for everyday social life (Interviewees 1-4). These practices enable informal surveillance, described by one interviewee as “a living camera” (Interviewee 4), where constant presence allows people to look out for each other and remain aware of street dynamics. The street also functions as a social meeting point and a space for local networks (Interviewees 1-4). Conversations between shopkeepers, customers and neighbors occur naturally and repeatedly, reinforcing a non-anonymous character of the neighborhood (Interviewee 2). These interactions show how public space becomes socially meaningful through daily routine use.

Highlighting the presence of informal care networks embedded in daily work routines, one shopkeeper stated: “We watch out for each other” (Interviewee 3). Another interviewee reflected on the blending of personal history and work life, stating: “It’s almost like I grew up at my grandfather’s shop” (Interviewee 4), while adding: “The social life starts from the shop” (ib.). These statements illustrate how shops are perceived not merely as workplaces but as integral parts of home and family life. Work, leisure, and social interaction merge into a single daily rhythm, enacted both inside the shop and on the sidewalk.

Overall, the evidence shows that sidewalk appropriation in Filippou Street is a multifaceted practice that supports comfort, economic activity, social integration, and care (Interviewees 1-4). At the same time, it produces territorial claims and informal control over public space. These findings highlight how everyday practices transform sidewalks into lived, negotiated spaces that structure both social relations and everyday economic life in the neighborhood around Filippou street.

CONCLUSION

This qualitative research focuses on spatial thresholds: sidewalks, shopfronts, and entrances. The dwelling practices observed in Filippou Street show that dwelling is not merely about physical containers, but represents a lived, relational, and embodied engagement with space. These practices emerge through everyday routines combined with spatial appropriation of sidewalks, care and presence enacted by the community, strong social ties, and emotional attachment that evolves over time (Interviewees 1–4). At the same time, the findings indicate that sidewalk appropriation in Filippou Street reflects an uneven distribution of access and use. Although sidewalks remain formally public, the ways in which they are occupied and informally organized primarily serve established shopkeepers and their friends

and their family, while other users and neighbourhood members are less present in these semi-public spaces.

A fair distribution of public space is therefore not fully achieved. The ongoing appropriation of Filippou Street produces a public space that primarily caters to the everyday routines, livelihood practices, and social relations of established users, especially those who work, live, or regularly spend time there, while impeding other uses and other user groups, such as pedestrians who need more accessible passage, people with reduced mobility, forms of active mobility, or users seeking public seating and more inclusive opportunities to remain in the space. Filippou Street thus functions not only as a workplace but also as a homelike territory shaped by daily life, community relations, and informal urban inhabitation (Interviewees 1 to 4). At the same time, this homelike quality can reinforce informal forms of control: repeated occupation and familiar routines make certain uses appear normal and legitimate, while users without an established presence may experience the space as less open, accessible, or welcoming.

Read through the lens of messy urbanism, these findings underline how informal, negotiated practices can generate everyday vitality and social connectedness, while also producing exclusionary effects through territorial claims. Consequently, the case highlights the tension between vibrant, community-driven uses of space and the challenges of equitable public access. While sidewalk appropriation supports social connectedness, local care relations, and everyday vitality, it can also produce territorial claims and exclusionary effects, especially for those outside the commercial community. These findings underscore the importance of acknowledging informal dwelling practices in urban planning while also addressing the need for inclusivity and balanced public interim-spaces management.

Fig. 14.3: Laundry rack on the sidewalk in the Diikitiriou area (Tidian Auer).

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SQUATTING IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF SQUATTING ON THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF THESSALONIKI'S DIIKITIRIOU NEIGHBOURHOOD

Anna László, Clemens Langeder, Vero Feichtinger

We arrive at the agreed meeting point near the squat. A group of our acquaintances are already waiting for us there. A Greek student with connections to the squatters' team is nervous about bringing so many people, especially non-Greeks. Even though the event in the building has been publicly announced and is not hidden from view, the squatters do not want it to become a tourist attraction.

We go to the eclectic building; there are people smoking in front of it. As we walk through the first door, we are greeted by a student we met before who is talking to a friend. After a brief chat, we go through the second door. We are greeted by music, laughter, and a cheerful atmosphere. In the middle of the room, there are chairs arranged in a circle around an open space. Young people are sitting on the chairs and talking. In the middle, there are four musicians: one playing an accordion, two playing guitars and one singing. The music is Greek and rather lugubrious. Behind the musicians, we can see stairs leading to the upper floors, and every so often, one or two people walk up, but otherwise, it is inaccessible. There are flyers depicting house rules, such as not taking photos of people or smoking.

The air is heavy with cigarette smoke and the room is full of people. We can only slowly make our way deeper into the house. In the next room, there is a small bar selling cheap beer, with a young man behind the counter. Most of the people look under 30. We also see people we met during our previous research stay.

We walk out through a second door onto a veranda in the garden. From here, we can see a small building that is used as a restroom, as well as an electric cable leading to it. While we are talking, a guy comes over and says something in Greek. Seeing that we did not understand, he repeats in English that one of us looks familiar. We re-encounter our acquaintances in the front part of the garden and start leaving the squat.

To investigate this, we took a multi-method approach. This involved conducting short interviews with local people, mapping vacant and previously squatted buildings, collecting artefacts from the streets, and conducting literature research. This essay provides an overview of the history and context of squatting in Greece and Thessaloniki, before focusing on the case of the well-known former squat, Mundo Nuevo, in the Diikitirio neighbourhood. We frame the phenomenon of squatting within wider debates on the right to the city as formulated by Henri Lefebvre and David Harvey, AbdouMaliq Simone's concept of people as infrastructure, as well as Isabel Gutiérrez Sánchez's idea of infrastructural systems as care commons. We will use these theoretical insights alongside the empirical material we collected to discuss our findings and provide a future outlook.

It is important to acknowledge our position as external researchers participating in politically sensitive topics. When researching squatting, we noticed a conflict in the interviewees and ourselves. Even though squatting seems widely accepted by Greek society, it is still illegal. Squatters have a caring relationship between each other and being part of a squat makes you feel as part of this community. Therefore, talking about this politically and legally sensitive topic with strangers is encountered by a reluctant and cautious stance. This can potentially result in obscured information.

RESEARCH IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

In the course of our interviews, residents reported that the neighbourhood has undergone significant changes in recent years, most notably an increase in vacant

shops, the growing presence and influence of young people, processes of touristification, and the emergence of squatting practices in empty buildings.

In recent years, many shops have closed, leaving the ground floor empty. In the past, there were many furniture stores and hairdressers run by the older generation. When they retire, young people are often not interested in taking over their parents' or grandparents' businesses. This is mostly because it is financially unstable and requires self-employment. Additionally, shops may have to close due to the growth of online shopping.

While young people might not be interested in taking over their family's shops, they are however opening new shops in the neighbourhood, creating a variety of new offerings. Recently, many bars, cafés and alternative shops have opened, making the area more popular, especially with young people. Small creative offices, such as those belonging to architects, designers and artists, make the neighbourhood feel alive and vibrant. Nightlife has flourished, especially thanks to the bars and newly accessible underground spaces. This has led to a division in the neighbourhood between different age groups.

This development also means that more tourists are staying in and visiting the neighbourhood, and it is adapting to their needs and demands. According to one of the residents we interviewed, many foreign investors are buying apartments in the city centre and using them as a short term rental. This affects not only the upper floors of buildings, but sometimes the ground floor (which is usually intended for shops) as renting them out is more lucrative than using them for their original purpose. Consequently, many tourists only stay in the area for a short time. The neighbourhood has also had to adapt to the needs of tourists, resulting in many places where food and drink can be consumed, as well as souvenir shops. There is thus a clear connection between changes in the neighbourhood and touristification.

Apart from the vacant ground floors, there are also buildings in the area that are empty overall. These are usually historical buildings owned by institutions such as municipalities, universities and churches or they were passed down by private individuals with no heirs. As maintaining and renovating the buildings would be expensive, they remain empty and become run down over time. Some of these buildings are occupied by squatters. In our area of interest, we found 14 vacant buildings and three buildings with a history of squatting (see map). To the North we can see Terra Incognita and to the south Mundo Nuevo. We thus assumed that it is not just vacancies and empty stores that have a significant influence on the neighbourhood's everyday life but also the presence of squats, so we delved deeper into the squatting movement.

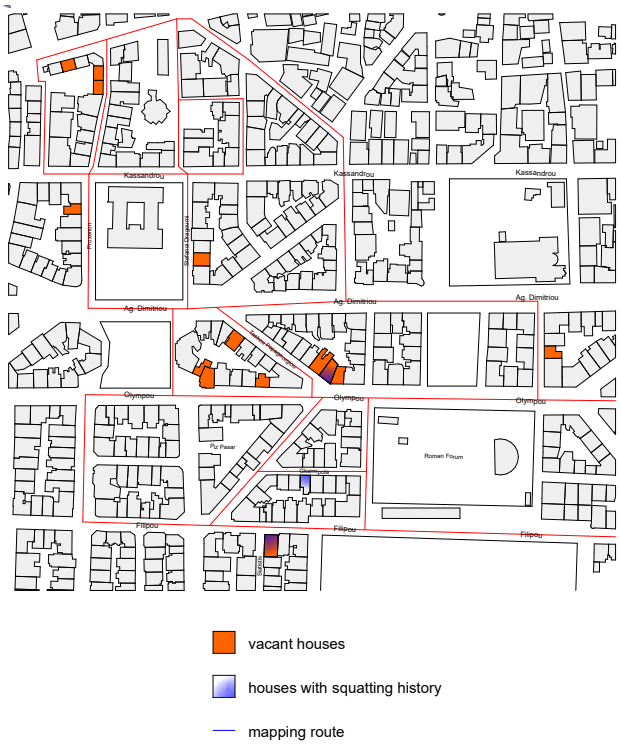

Fig. 15.1 Mapping Diikitiriou

SQUATTING IN GREECE

Squatting has a long history in Greece and started emerging in connection with protests against the Greek dictatorship (1967-1974). Students played an important role in these protests and the attack on the students occupying the university of Athens was when the tide turned against the dictatorship. Additionally, through the translation of foreign books and Greek activists visiting European squats, a new conception of politics

emerged which formed the theoretical basis for squats in Greece (Souzas 2015: 2). The first wave of squats occurred in 1981, just days after the socialist party won its first election in Greece. People's high expectations of the new government were not met, and state oppression continued. However, the squats did not last long, mainly due to a lack of experience (Souzas 2015: 2-3).

The history continues with the second wave of squats (1985–1988) which was a left wing anti-authoritarian movement. It adopted a non-hierarchical, horizontally structured, anti-institutional political stance (Souzas 2015: 3). Squatting reached its peak during the winter of 1989/1990 known as 'The Hot Winter of Squats'. New squats emerged and attempted to cooperate and organise collectively (Souzas 2015: 3-4). In 1999, the global justice movement sparked new protests against globalisation. As well as using occupied houses to express their political opinions, these protests also used self-managed places called 'stekia' (meaning 'hangout') and even some university spaces (Souzas 2015: 4). In 2019, political pressure on squats increased due to the election of the “New Democracy” government under Kyriakos Mitsotakis which led to evictions of several squats. This tougher approach to squats only increased through the surveillance scandal in 2022. The government used a spying software called “Predator” to spy on prominent political figures and journalists. (Amnesty International 2023) This was noticed internationally and resulted in a decrease of popularity shortly before the election in 2023. As to not lose voters shortly before the election, the government focused on emphasizing accomplishments, establishing law and order and therefore on the eviction of squats (Unicornriot 2022).

SQUATTING IN THESSALONIKI AND IN THE RESEARCH AREA

As Greece’s second-largest city, Thessaloniki has a rich history of squatting with squats like Libertatia, Orfanotrofio, Biologica, Terra Incognita and Mundo Nuevo. The latter used to be the most influential squat of the Diikitirio neighbourhood, with a history well known among the residents and also featured in national newspapers.

Fig.15.2 Example Poster from Fabrika Yfanet (Vero

Owned by the Municipality of Thermi, the building has been used as a refugee shelter since 2002. However, at the beginning of 2010, the organisation permanently closed the shelter. An effort was made by the 'Anti-Racist Initiative' to run the shelter on a self-organised basis that can be considered as squatting, but this only lasted a year. As solidarity gradually decreased, the residents organised the shelter alone until, at the end of 2014, the refugees could be relocated. Afterwards, the building was abandoned and remained empty until the end of 2015, when it was occupied by an anarchist collective called 'Mavrokokchino'. The squat was named Mundo Nuevo, meaning “New World”. The squatters chose the building because of its history. With the squat they sought to give back the building its social character, return it to the public and fulfill social needs (Mundonuevo.squat.net 2015). The building was used as a social center and there were various political and cultural events over the seven years of squatting (Unicornriot 2022). Mundo Nuevo was evicted by the police in November 2022, followed by demonstrations of hundreds of people. Despite reoccupation attempts in 2023, the building has remained empty and barricaded since then.

In the area around the building of Mundo Nuevo we saw many posters mentioning an ongoing squat called Fabrika Yfanet. The former textile factory has been squatted since 2004 and has since been an important part of political struggles relating to various topics (Mittens XVX 2025). The building today houses "various infrastructures, including a cinema hall, a lending library/radical bookstore/grassroots archive, event halls, a kitchen, an underground concert hall, a housing structure, a music studio, a bar-café, an indoor BMX park, and a woodworking space" (Mittens XVX 2025).

DIFFERENT TYPES OF SQUATS IN THE RESEARCH AREA

During our research process we came to see squats as a form of appropriation due to political beliefs , out of need and as a form of social center, housing and meeting point. This is congruent to sociologist Hans Pruijt's typology of squatting. He distinguishes between political squatting, deprivation-based squatting, squatting as an alternative housing strategy, conservational squatting and entrepreneurial squatting. The first three types are proving to be relevant in the context of squatting in Thessaloniki.

Pruijt argues that political squatting wants to achieve a political goal outside the realm of squatting (Pruijt 2022: 2). Whereas the other forms of squatting are usually also driven in some way by political beliefs, this form is focusing on politics. According to Pruijt, It can be driven by a wish for a direct movement of confrontation with the state (Pruijt 2022: 13). We would classify all squats as political, as there is always an underlying political motivation, but we would consider anarchist squats, such as Mundo Nuevo, to be the best example of this.

Deprivation-based squatting is generally about "helping poor people to housing" (Pruijt 2022: 2). The idea behind it is to force the public authorities to recognize the need for housing and take steps to provide it (Pruijt 2022: 3). Pruijt argues that deprivation-based squatting in Western Europe since the 2000s has tended to be related to migrants, thus providing housing and community spaces to them when public authorities are failing to do this (Pruijt 2022: 4). Deprivation-based squats in Thessaloniki are often connected to migrants or refugees as seen in Orfanotrofio and Mundo Nuevo.

The third type, squatting as an alternative housing strategy, is about "squatters helping themselves to housing" (Pruijt 2022: 2). Squatters of this type just seek to dwell there like others live in apartments and are usually quiet squats (Pruijt 2022: 5). We observed that people use the buildings not only as a place to live, but also as an alternative social meeting point. We would describe this as a form of dwelling, not only in the sense of living there, but also in the sense of meeting others, forming connections and building a sense of community. Therefore, many of Thessaloniki's squats can be allocated here.

INTERPRETATION

We see two developments which have emerged in response to the existing vacancies in the area. On the one hand, the vacancies are transformed as part of the touristification and gentrification of the area and are turned into coffee shops, hotels, small offices etc. On the other hand, squatters occupy the buildings with a desire for expressing their political opinion and being part of a community. The vacant buildings gradually increase in value over time not only monetarily as a real estate investment but also socially as living space, social center and meeting point in the center of the city. People want to use this vacant space for the community and make room for their needs.

In this respect, squatting can be connected to what Marxist sociologist Henri Lefebvre and Marxist geographer David Harvey, picking it up from Lefebvre, called right to the city because it puts into action the two central demands of this right to the city: the right to centrality, meaning the right to the access to urban resources, and the right to difference, meaning the right to have spaces where different people and groups can meet and deal with each other (Gebhardt/Holm 2011: 8). It is not just about the right to use urban spaces but also the right to be a part of shaping them, which includes having access to political and strategic debates about their future development (Gebhardt/Holm 2011:

8). Harvey summarizes this right to the city as follows: It is the right to urban life and the right to the production of urban space (Harvey 2013a: 18). He argues: “The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization” (Harvey 2013: 16).

Our observations also indicate a desire for social belonging and group participation, with squatting functioning as a movement that actively constructs a communal identity and caring relationships between the squatters. An interviewee told us that “for a squatter, the other squatters are like family”. While typologies of squatting, such as Pruijt’s classification, are helpful in distinguishing between different forms and motivations, they do not sufficiently account for the relational and caring dimensions of squatting in Thessaloniki. Squats are not simply housing solutions or political acts of protest but rather operate as deeply social and care-oriented spaces. In this sense, we see the need to discuss squats in the context of AbdouMaliq Simone’s concept of people as infrastructure and Isabel Gutiérrez Sánchez' idea of infrastructural systems as care commons.

People as infrastructure tries to understand how people engage infrastructures regarding their everyday economic activities and the significance that human relationships, mutual support networks and informal interactions have for people to sustain themselves when formal systems and institutions fail (Simone 2004). People as infrastructure also has an explicit political dimension as it is not just a coping strategy but rather “both a supporting structure for livelihoods and a site for the exertion of (some) agency” (Sánchez 2023: 2459). Squats that oftentimes take on necessary care functions when public institutions fail and can act as a site for the exertion of agency can also be considered a part of these systems of care commons and people as infrastructure.

In our research, we saw squatting as an effect of austerity and a traditionally underdeveloped welfare state. Families, young people and neighbourhoods develop social infrastructures in forms of squats. In squatting, young people find the space to fight in an organised way in the political scene against capitalist urbanization and for alternative forms of dwelling. Squatting as a movement builds caring relationships, not only between the squatters but also in regard to the buildings. Therefore when giving a future outlook and proposing new developments of the vacant buildings, we focus on the already existing social infrastructures.

OUTLOOK

Our interviewees had several ideas on how to use the vacant buildings. Most of them talked about using them as housing, especially for people in need. They had a clear aversion to using the buildings as hotels or for other commercial uses and were inclined to use it in a social way. This however does not answer liability issues and the financing of such projects. One resident stated that in his view it is necessary for the state or municipality, as opposed to bottom-up initiatives or squatters, to organise a reutilization as otherwise it would be difficult to control. While none of the interviewees explicitly mentioned this, we do see squatting and using vacant buildings as being part of the aforementioned approach of the right to the city. In this case it would mean that people who need space for dwelling (in both forms of housing and social infrastructure) are able to create and shape it themselves.

We see the opportunity for repurposing vacant buildings as a bottom-up social housing program, with the additional aim of functioning as social meeting points. Given that the Greek state currently lacks the financial capacity to implement a large-scale, top-down social housing initiative, municipalities could instead adopt a tolerant approach toward squats. By identifying and designating specific spaces where squatting is permitted - drawing inspiration from examples such as Christiania in Copenhagen - the city could enable alternative housing models to develop organically. Where possible, this

approach could be supported through limited financial assistance rather than direct state-led development. The goal should be to strengthen the existing structures of squats and community and planning from the bottom up.

CONCLUSION

Returning to our research question - What influence does squatting in the Diikitirio neighbourhood of Thessaloniki have on everyday life in the neighbourhood and for its residents? - we conclude that it's more the various different usages of vacant buildings and shops (squatting, touristification, investor-driven developments etc.) rather than just squatting that have recently significantly shaped the area's social and political life. Vacancies, emerging from post-financial crises and socio-economic change, have become contested spaces. They are tied to processes of touristification and investor-driven restructuring on the one hand and to squats as left-wing, bottom-up political practices on the other hand. As there are presently no active squats in the neighbourhood, squatting at the moment is mostly present visually, through the posters we found.

Our findings suggest that squats such as Mundo Nuevo function not only as political symbols but also as social infrastructures and spaces of dwelling, mutual support and collective agency. However, increasing state repression and evictions in recent years have undermined these movements, gradually reducing the influence of squats in the neighbourhood. As a result, everyday life in Diikitirio now appears to be shaped more strongly by the interests of investors and processes of touristification than by squats.

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AQUA CALDA

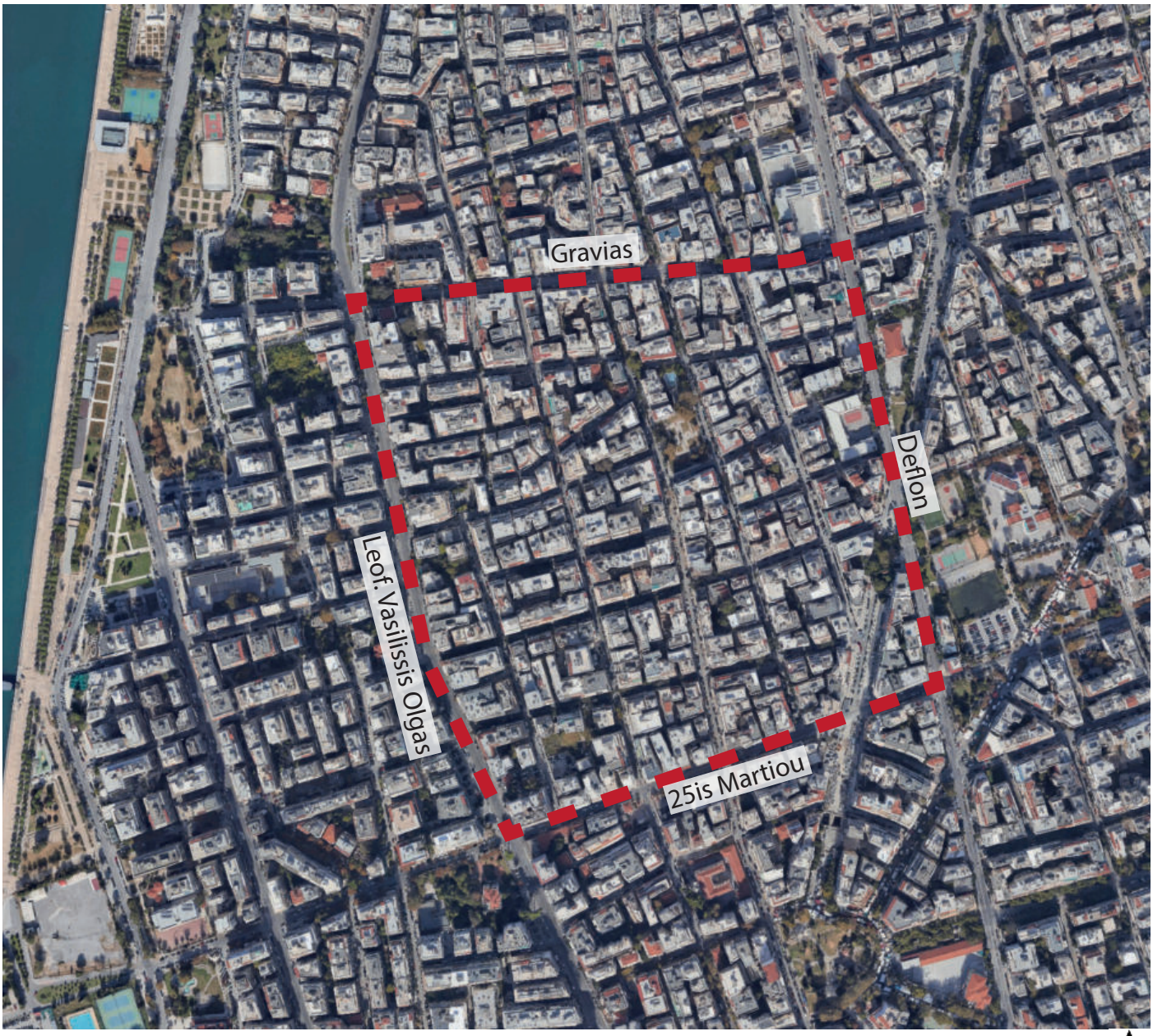

Fig. 17: Map: Analypsis study Area, Google Earth 2026 (David Grzeja)

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STUDY AREA 2: ANALYPSIS NEIGHBORHOOD

David Grzeja

ANALYPSIS

Analypsis is a well-established urban neighborhood located in the eastern part of the municipality of Thessaloniki. Situated between the historic city center and the suburban areas to the east, Analypsis occupies a strategically significant position within the metropolitan structure of the city. The area is bounded by major urban arteries and benefits from direct access to public transport corridors. The Bus Network remains very important, however the subway station “25 Martiou“ in the southeast and “Analypsis“ station in the north could play a significant role in the future when the subway reopens.

Historically, Analypsis developed primarily during the mid-20th century, reflecting the rapid urbanization processes that shaped Thessaloniki after World War II. Its built environment is characterized by dense residential blocks with narrow streets, predominantly multi-story apartment buildings (polykatoikía), interspersed with local commercial uses and neighborhood-scale services. This urban morphology reflects common patterns of post-war Greek urban development, including high building density, limited open space, and a strong emphasis on mixed-use ground floors.

Today, Analypsis functions mainly as a residential area while also accommodating educational facilities, small-scale retail, and everyday services that support local life. Its proximity to the waterfront, the city center, and major employment areas enhances its attractiveness, yet it also faces typical inner-city challenges such as traffic pressure, limited green space, aging building stock, ground floor vacancy, and parking problems.

Fig. 18: Streets of Analypsis (Amelie Lucia Müller)

Fig. 16: previous page: Roofs of Analypsis (Amelie Lucia

APPROPRIATION OF SPACE IN POLYKATOIKIA

Greta Kalmbacher, Hayden Hess, Lea Mirenic, Colleen Wild, with support from Maira Konstantinidou

Coming from Vienna to Thessaloniki meant transitioning from straight building lines to blurred boundaries between public and private space, from clearly regulated and carefully maintained public spaces to extending one's living space into the neighbourhood, and from buildings with ornate architectural façades uncluttered by balconies to streets whose lively, organic character emerges from endless balconies displaying fragments of private life to the public. This shift in the everyday spatial experience spurred our interest in how dwelling is practiced beyond the walls of the individual residences.

The vibrant character of streets in Thessaloniki is created through a lifestyle and a building typology which are distinctly Greek. Polykatoikia, the ubiquitous apartment building in Greek cities, emerged in response to an urgent need for housing in the post-war period (see chapters on Polykatoikia and Antiparochi). Due to the rapid, efficiency-oriented construction of neighborhoods like Analypsis, shared indoor spaces were kept to a minimum, while a lack of city planning during the height of construction led to dense neighbourhoods with few public outdoor spaces (Woditsch, p.59). Residents and workers therefore look for opportunities to extend their private living or working spaces beyond the walls of their units, appropriating threshold areas like semi-private balconies, semi-public indoor spaces such as entries and hallways, and the spaces between buildings.

In Greece, where urban spaces are shaped by the dynamic interplay of the public and private realms, appropriation takes on a very particular connotation. Here, everyday acts and experiences reflect the needs of the citizens and the shortcomings of formal planning. This is captured by the Greek concept of "οικειοποίηση" or oikieopoesis — the socially mediated act of transforming external spaces into home (see chapter on Oikieopoesis). Through habitual practices, neutral environments are infused with personal meaning and collective memory. Compared to more regulated cities like Vienna, appropriation in Thessaloniki is a visible and culturally embedded part of everyday urban life.

Threshold spaces such as balconies, sidewalks, and spaces between buildings mediate the relationship between the public and private realms and are therefore essential to understanding dwelling practices in everyday life. These spaces are differentiated by their levels of access, ownership, and control, all of which shape how residents negotiate visibility, interaction, and appropriation. Through our study of the Analypsis neighbourhood, we examined how people use and adapt these transitional zones and what this reveals about social behaviour, the influence of architectural conditions, and the lived character of the area. In particular, our research examines how the building type 'polykatoikia' presents both opportunities and constraints for everyday acts of appropriation by residents and workers in Analypsis.

RESEARCH METHODS & TYPOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Our analysis of Analypsis focused on a section of the neighbourhood with a variety of street types, including purely residential streets, a neighbourhood park, streets with light commercial usage, and a busy commercial street. Our methods were visual analysis, mapping, and ad-hoc interviews. To investigate the patterns of use and appropriation in the polykatoikia, we observed and mapped those threshold spaces to which we were able to gain physical or visual access: balconies and spaces between buildings. In order to document and compare the use of these spaces, we developed five typological use categories:

- Enclosed: physical boundary separates space from public realm, eg. roof or walls;
- Active Use: signs of frequent occupation, eg. tables, chairs, laundry rack;
- Inactive Use: signs of use, but not occupation, eg. storage units;
- Not Used: signs of care, but not use, eg. empty space in good condition;
- Delapidated: lack of care, evidence of decay, eg. unrepaired damage to building, trash;

In addition to uses, the locations of building entrances were mapped, as well as any additional walls or boundaries (fences, gates) that could be assessed on site. This set of data allowed us to observe not only the types of appropriation, but also the influence of access and spatial configuration on the use of the spaces.

With the help of a local student, we were able to conduct and collect information from three ad-hoc interviews to supplement our observations. Using a framework analysis approach, we were systematically organised and compared the qualitative data across the cases through the identification of recurring themes (Bryman, 2012).

REFLECTIONS FROM INTERVIEWS

The following analysis is based on three qualitative interviews conducted in Thessaloniki with a male shop employee, a female resident, and a female business owner. After reviewing the interviews, the material was organized into core thematic categories, identified as: occupying and using space, care and maintenance, neighborhood relations, and the role of the municipality. The following section discusses the core themes through a comparative reading of the interviews. Despite the small number of cases, these interviews provide insight into how appropriation is interpreted and enacted in different everyday contexts.

In all three interviews, respondents describe how they regularly occupy and use threshold spaces beyond their formally intended functions. The interviewed resident uses her balcony as an additional living area due to the small size of her apartment. This illustrates how privately owned threshold spaces can be used to compensate for limited interior living spaces. She notes that there is a shared outdoor space behind the building which she would use — and believes others would as well — were it not for its poor condition.

The interview with the shop employee reveals how public space becomes part of everyday work routines. He uses more sidewalk space than officially allowed and, while he is aware that this is not legal, he explains that the space provided by the municipality is too small for the practical needs of his work. In this case, appropriation of space is driven by economic necessity, showing how formal regulations are informally negotiated in everyday practice.

Fig. 19.1: Local shop appropriates sidewalk in Analypsis (Greta Kalmbacher)

A more socially oriented use of space becomes visible in the interview with the business owner, who has run a shop in the area for many years. She regularly places chairs and a table outside and describes how, especially during summer, people sit outside between buildings or bring chairs, tables, or blankets to the nearby park. For her, the use of outdoor space is an established and accepted part of everyday life, contributing to a lively atmosphere and an active social infrastructure.

Practices of care and maintenance emerge as important aspects of everyday dwelling. For the interviewed resident, they are primarily a source of frustration. She describes her building as being in very poor condition, with no elevator, old staircases, and parts of the façade already falling off. She also notes that such conditions are common in the neighborhood, where buildings are often old and apartments small, and explains that these physical conditions strongly affect everyday comfort and accessibility.

The resident further explains that she has repeatedly asked the building owner to take better care of the building, but no action has followed. Even formal instructions issued by the municipality were not enforced. Because

nobody in the building takes responsibility for shared spaces, these areas remain neglected, significantly limiting residents' ability to influence, appropriate, and care for their living environment.

Acts of care and maintenance are not limited to residents, nor to the buildings themselves. The shop employee, although he does not live in the neighborhood, engages in everyday acts of care. These include watering the trees outside the shop because he sees them daily and feels a sense of responsibility, and caring for the sidewalk, which mainly benefits his business. He has also observed benches in the area being repaired by local residents and later damaged by others, giving rise to the feeling that maintenance is never fully finished.

A more socially-based understanding of care emerges in the interview with the long-term business owner. Rather than referring to formal maintenance, she describes how her everyday presence outside the shop and regular interaction with others contribute to a sense of safety and liveliness in the neighborhood. In this case, care is embedded in social practices and routines.

Neighborhood relations differ significantly across the interviews and shape how space is socially experienced. For the shop employee, interactions remain largely functional and work-related. The interviewed resident describes weak neighborhood relations, where neglected shared spaces and the limited use of balconies primarily for storage reduce everyday encounters. In contrast, the long-term business owner describes very strong and long-standing social ties. Having worked in the area for over thirty years, she refers to the neighborhood as resembling a village, where people regularly visit her shop just to talk and spend time. Other local businesses such as a hair salon or pharmacy play a similar social role.

In two of the interviews, the role of the municipality in shaping the conditions of the neighborhood appears to be insufficient. The shop employee describes requesting easier access to water in order to care for trees in the public space and was ultimately refused by the municipality. In the resident's case, the municipality issued formal instructions to the building owner to repair the deteriorating building, yet these instructions were not enforced. In both cases, the lack of effective intervention reinforces a situation in which care and maintenance are either informally taken on by individuals or remain entirely unresolved.

Overall, the interviews illustrate that appropriation in Analypsis is not uniform, but shaped by everyday roles, spatial situations, and material and social conditions. Living, working, and caring for space involve different forms of engagement, negotiation, and adaptation, resulting in a wide range of practices across the neighborhood. Threshold spaces repeatedly appear as the sites where formal planning gives way to everyday negotiation.

Among these spaces, balconies stand out as the most direct area of expression between private and public life, a sight that characterizes the polykatoikia and Thessaloniki's streets. For this reason, the following analysis focuses on balconies as a primary lens through which appropriation practices can be systematically examined.

ANALYSIS OF BALCONIES

Positioned between the private interior and the public realm, balconies operate as semi-private thresholds through which exposure, visibility, and interaction are continuously adjusted through everyday practices. To analyze these patterns systematically, we applied the framework of use categories we developed to map balcony use across four different building groups with differing spatial and street conditions in the Analypsis neighborhood:

Group #	Building #	Street Context	Traffic	Commercial Use
A	1-6	Adjacent to public park	Low	Limited
B	7-11	Low-traffic side street	Low	Limited
C	12-16	Heavy commercial street	High	High
D	17-21	Residential side street	Low	None

Fig. 19.2: Building Groups and Urban Contexts

Across Group A, which surrounds a public park at the heart of the Analypsis neighborhood, inactive use is the dominant balcony appropriation. Buildings One, Two, and Three in particular show a high number of inactive or not-used balconies relative to active ones, suggesting that proximity to a shared public space like a park may reduce the perceived need to occupy private outdoor areas. Although the park provides accessible exterior space at the ground level, balconies in this group often

Fig. 19.3: Example of Balcony Use Analysis (Hayden Hess)

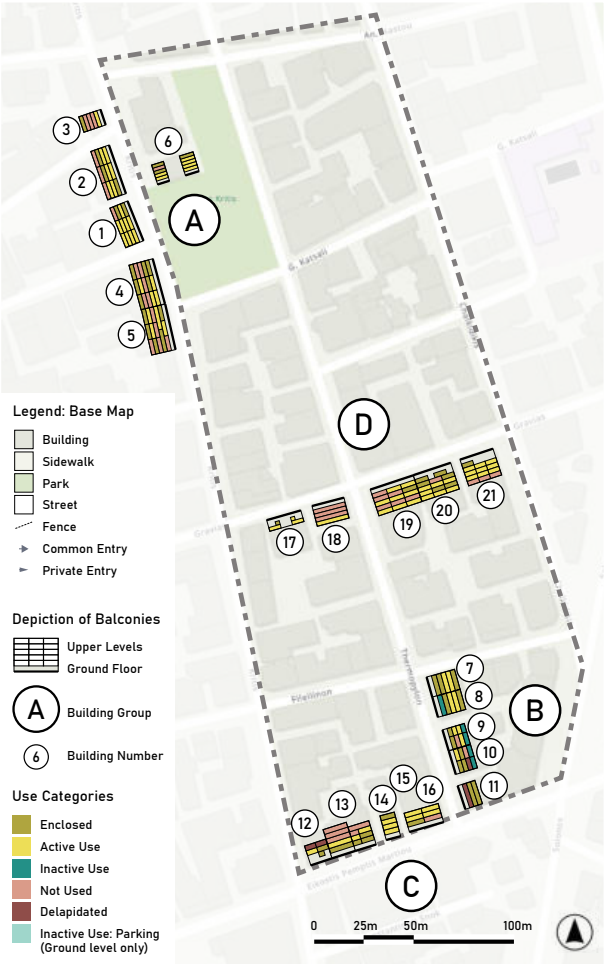


Fig. 19.4: Map of Balcony Use Categories

function as secondary or storage spaces rather than as sites of daily activity. However, buildings Four through Six display higher levels of active use, indicating that engagement varies even within the same urban setting.

Group B shows a more balanced distribution between inactive and active use balconies. Several buildings in this group contain a small number of enclosed balconies and fewer not-used spaces overall. This suggests that the quieter, more residential character of the street encourages residents to use balconies as extensions of their living space. The limited presence of dilapidated balconies in the group further indicates a relationship between building condition and desire to engage with exterior living space.

In contrast, Group C, situated along a wider commercial boulevard with heavy traffic, exhibits lower levels of active use and a higher proportion of not-used or inactive balconies. Increased noise, traffic, and exposure likely reduce the comfort and desirability of balcony occupation in this context. The presence of dilapidated balconies in this group can be attributed to the less ideal location and use associated with the aforementioned issues. In this group, the balconies seem detached from the living space and are not used as extensions of the home.

The buildings in Group D, located within an almost exclusively residential area, demonstrate varied patterns of use. While inactive and not-used balconies remain common, there are instances of active use that suggest selective engagement, likely depending on individual building conditions or resident needs.

Our findings suggest that balcony use is closely tied to surrounding urban and spatial context. Areas with strong public or commercial activity show reduced reliance on private outdoor spaces, while quieter residential settings support more consistent balcony engagement. Active balconies contribute to the visible social life of a building, while inactive or not-used balconies reflect a diminished role of exterior living spaces. The rel-

Fig. 19.5: Polykatoikia with balconies and akalyptos: uncovered spaces between polykatoikia buildings (Colleen Wild).

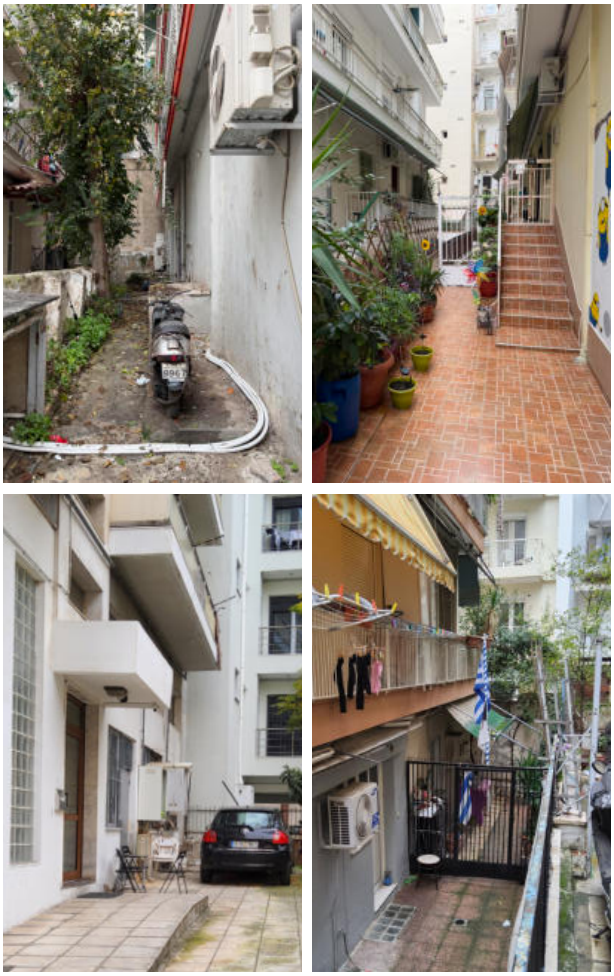
atively low occurrence of both dilapidated and enclosed balconies suggest that these extreme situations of physical degradation and major modification are localized to specific instances. Overall, the spectrum of balcony use illustrates how architecture, environment, and daily life intersect in different urban settings.

Our analysis demonstrates that balconies function as sensitive indicators of how residents interact with their immediate environment. Rather than being used uniformly, balconies are adapted by residents to serve their individual and ever-changing needs. Furthermore, the trends across residential, commercial, and mixed-use areas suggest that balcony engagement and appropriation are influenced by external factors such as noise, activity levels, and access to public space. Ultimately, our findings emphasize that balconies should be understood within their urban setting, as they function as adaptable threshold spaces through which residents negotiate social, spatial, and functional needs between private and public life.

AKALYPTOS (UNCOVERED SPACES)

Walking through Analypsis, we observed another threshold space characteristic of the polykatoika: akalyptos, the legally required "uncovered spaces" between and around the buildings. These spaces were never designed, but were simply left over as a result of zoning regulations (Alexiadou, 29). They may be vegetated or fully paved, appropriated for private use or treated as a common space, carefully maintained, abandoned, or used for parking. Due to their unplanned and often unclaimed nature, the akalyptos become a socially and legally ambiguous grey-zone between the public and private realms.

Akalyptos emerged as part of a policy change in response to extremely dense urban development in the mid 1900s. To maximize sellable floor area, some early polykatoikia covered 80% or even 100% of the lot area. In order to ensure adequate light and air for residents, building regulations were updated to require that a cer-



Akalyptos Use Categories, top L to bottom R: Fig. 19.6: delapidated, Fig. 19.7: inactive use, Fig. 19.8: active use, Fig. 19.9: enclosed

Fig. 19.10: Map of Akalyptos Use Categories

tain percentage of the lot remain uncovered (CoHab Athens). The resulting leftover spaces are frequently narrow, fragmented, and walled-off from the neighbouring lots, making them awkward and undesirable to use. The ownership structure of polykatoikia adds further complication, as rights and responsibilities are divided among the many micro-owners of the building (Alexiadou, 29). While the combination of impractical form and ambiguity often leads to neglect, it also creates conditions which invite appropriation, adaptation, and acts of care from the residents.

In mapping the use categories of akalyptos in the neighborhood, a few patterns became visible. First, where a shared building entry is accessed via the akalyptos, the space is generally maintained, if not decorated and cared for. Second, spaces where individual residences open onto the akalyptos correlated with a higher level of appropriation. And third, while there does not seem to be a correlation between the street character and the level of activity or appropriation of the akalyptos, as there was for balconies, there does seem to be a correlation between the level of appropriation of adjacent spaces. For example, if the akalyptos of one building is actively used, it is unlikely that the neighboring akalyptos is delapidated, suggesting that the use or dis-use of the space is socially influenced.

Many of the akalyptos serve as access corridors between the street and the shared building entrances. These transitional spaces are used daily and often show signs of attentiveness through the presence of planters, decorative elements, and cleaning supplies. While this type of inactive use does not encourage lingering, it does symbolically extend the domestic into the semi-public realm, conveying a sense of care and informal ownership to both residents and the public passing by. Parking is another common use tolerated between buildings. Arising from a lack of formal infrastructure, this purely functional form of appropriation illustrates

how polykatoikia can accommodate daily needs not adequately addressed by formal planning.

Where individual residential units open directly onto the akalyptos, the level of appropriation can be noticeably higher. In these cases, residents often actively use the spaces for everyday functions, such as dining, laundry, or storage, indicating that they perceive these areas as extensions of their private living space. (Whether this reflects legal ownership is unknown.) In several cases, these claims are further emphasized through physical adaptations, such as fences, awnings, or lightweight roofing. Such enclosures signal a shift from temporary or negotiated use to more permanent forms of appropriation. By limiting not only access, but also visibility, enclosure reduces the relational character of the space and conveys a desire for separation and withdrawal from the public realm.

In a small number of cases, akalyptos are appropriated for communal social use, as evidenced by tables and chairs near the building entrance or in the rear yard space. While not many such uses were observed in the field, interviews and discussions with local colleagues suggest that social use of outdoor spaces is quite common in warmer months. When interpreted as a shared social space, the akalyptos fulfill an important role as "in-between spaces" (Santos-Garcia, 36), which have the capacity to facilitate connection both within the building community and with the public realm from the relative comfort and safety of the building property.

In cases where the akalyptos are visibly delapidated, there are very limited signs of use. Most commonly, the space might contain a storage element or vehicle, which often look neglected themselves. The spaces neighbouring delapidated akalyptos are also generally unused.

As a ubiquitous element of polykatoikia development, akalyptos illustrate both the challenges and opportunities inherent to the building typology. The ambiguous nature of these shared spaces presents challenges in terms of management and upkeep, but simultaneously invites care, re-interpretation, and adaptation. In this way, akalyptos exemplify how the polykatoikia leave room for residents to fulfill their social and functional needs through everyday acts of appropriation.

CONCLUSION

In a context of dense urban development and limited public space, polykatoikia function as an adaptable setting for daily life and enables residents to fulfill social and practical needs unmet by formal planning. While individual units are often small and common areas minimal, polykatoikia present opportunities for appropriation and invite an ongoing negotiation between public and private realms. Through acts of care, adaptation and appropriation, dwelling in polykatoikia emerges as a flexible and socially driven process that is continuously produced through daily practices.

The analysis of Analypsis shows that this process of appropriation is shaped by everyday use of balconies, akalyptos and other threshold spaces. These spaces mediate how people extend their living and working spaces beyond their private space and how they negotiate visibility, interaction and use in relation to their surroundings. At the same time, the extent and form of appropriation vary depending on building condition, care and maintenance, and unclear responsibilities for shared areas, leading to differences between actively used, neglected and purely functional spaces.

Overall, the findings suggest that the polykatoikia neither guarantees nor prevents appropriation, but provides a spatial framework in which appropriation unfolds through everyday practices. Dwelling and working thus appear not as fixed spatial conditions, but as negotiated and ongoing processes shaped by lived experience, informal use and the limitations of formal planning.

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VACANCY GROUND FLOOR TRANSFORMATIONS

IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF ANALYPSIS

David Grzeja, Leonie Huber, Timo Kortum

INTRODUCTION

The problem of widespread vacancy had already been presented in the university of Thessaloniki and framed within more general conversations about spatial possibilities prior to the outing. However, the firsthand encounter in Thessaloniki's Analypsis area was what really focused on this conversation. The area's abundance of underutilized and vacant ground floors made the abstract concept of vacancy readable as we walked around.

The discovery of a tiny bookstore tucked away in this isolated area was an interesting point in the journey. The bookstore seemed to be a vibrant and populated exception to the surrounding closed off areas. This experience made us more conscious of the social and spatial potential that ground floor areas might have, especially in situations where there is a lot of empty space. Additionally, it signaled the beginning of our exploration of the subject, changing the emphasis from vacancy as absence to vacancy as a field of hidden on potential alteration.

In Thessaloniki, the Analypsis neighborhood is located slightly to the eastm, close to the coast and surrounded by a few major roads. We limited ourselves to the area near 25Is Martiou Street. To understand exactly what we wanted to study, we explored the neighborhood. This allowed us to experience the area with our own eyes and form our own impression of the situation. We walked through the streets and immediately noticed the parked cars. No matter where you look, every free inch is used for parking, which makes crossing the streets a challenge.

Another thing that caught our attention was the high number of vacant ground floor spaces, as visible on the map (Figure 1). We documented and categorized these vacancies and decided to focus on their potential for reactivation. This issue is particularly relevant in the context of the Polykatoikia, which is traditionally constructed according to the principle of mixed use. The typology implicitly assumes active ground floors accommodating small scale commerce, services, or workshops, thereby contributing to street life and everyday urban rhythms. The current prevalence of vacant ground-floor units therefore represents not only an economic issue but also a disparity from the original and functional logic of the building type.

RESEARCH FOCUS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In our research, we specifically examined the crisis of vacancies and its perceived impact on the neighborhood. Therefore, we focused on two key research questions that guided our entire investigation:

1. How do vacant spaces, particularly empty ground floors, affect the daily life and rhythm of the Analypsis neighborhood?

2. How do residents perceive the potential conversion of these vacant spaces, specifically into uses like garages or other transformative community functions?

The purpose of this research is not simply to document vacant spaces, but to understand the profound spatial and social impacts that these areas and their potential conversions have on everyday life in in the social life of the neighborhood.

METHODOLOGY

Visual methodologies, as discussed by Rose (2016), were utilized to systematically document and interpret the built environment and the phenomenon of ground-floor vacancy:

- **Documentation through Photography**: Photographs were taken to document the specific visual characteristics of the neighborhood, capturing both the vacant properties and the already transformed spaces (e.g., garages).
- **Interpretation of Composition**: This documentation extended to analyzing how a facade's appearance

contributes to the overall neighborhood "feeling" and interpreting the composition of the visual landscape.

- **Mapping out the Topography**: This method provided the initial input for creating the distinct spatial maps used in the study.

The Walking Interview, ("Go-Alongs") inspired by Evans & Jones (2011), was used to capture the "rhythm of the place" and residents' spatialized experiences through go-alongs during their daily routines. Conducted while walking past key areas (shops, pilotis, parking spaces, garages), this method enabled an embodied understanding of everyday challenges, such as difficulties moving through areas crowded with parked cars. Being physically present also generated rich contextual data, linking residents' comments on mobility and parking constraints directly to the built environment. Finally, the interviews revealed residents' perceptions of past and potential transformations, including awareness of long-standing parking issues and uncertainty about future uses of vacant ground-floor spaces.

Spatial Mapping functioned as both a preparatory and analytical tool, visualizing the density and spatial distribution of key phenomena. Two main maps were produced: one identifying vacant ground floors within the study area, making the degree of vacancy immediately visible; and a second mapping garage transformations, distinguishing older structures from more recent ones. Together, these maps contextualize vacancy and parking-related transformations within the neighborhood's spatial framework.

CRISIS OF VACANCY

The high vacancy rate in ground-floor units in Thessaloniki started in 2009–2018 because of the Greek economic crisis and structural changes in the retail sector. Rising unemployment and declining purchasing power have forced many small businesses, historically central to urban life, to close, particularly in residential streets outside main shopping areas. At the same time, shifts in retail, like the growth of online shopping and concentration in large malls or reduced demand for traditional small-scale retail, are leaving many ground floors economically inactive. Complicated ownership structures further hinder their reuse, meaning structural retail changes compounded the economic impacts of the crisis, accelerating business decline and persistent vacancy.

Fig. 20.1 Map of vacancy in the study area

VACANCY TRANSFORMATION

In the study area, vacant ground floors have occasionally been repurposed, mainly as private garages or residential units. Garage conversions, more common since

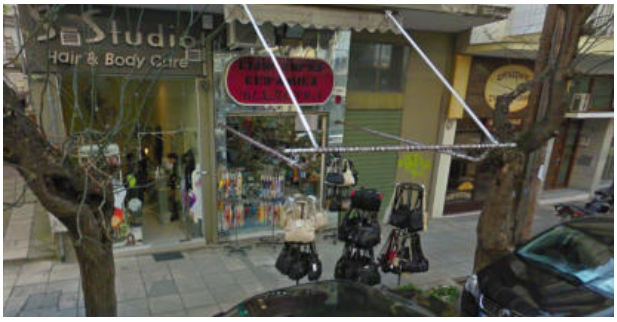

Fig. 20.2,3,4,5 Vacancy transformation to garages/housing between 2011 and 2021, Google street view 2011/2021

the financial crisis, remain rare due to high renovation costs, unsuitable floor plans, and structural constraints. Residential conversions tend to serve short-term tourist rentals, as locals avoid living on ground floors. Since the end of the 2009–2018 crisis, a few new commercial uses have emerged, such as a bookstore highlighting the social value of active ground floors, but neglected conditions and high renovation costs continue to limit further reuse, leaving vacancy largely unchanged.

OUR EMPIRICAL APPROACH

Urban planning is not the force that drives the transformation of empty ground floors in Analypsis; it's more a result of individual necessity and personal adaptation. Our site visits and interviews showed that the immediate pressures in the area and the everyday routines of its residents are fundamental to these changes.

TYPOLOGIES (THE FACES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD)

Based on the conducted interviews, we identified the following typologies:

Type A, The Indifferent Resident:
People who have spent decades living in high-density blocks and have become used to seeing shutters closed. For them, vacancy is not a "crisis" but rather a constant aspect of the backdrop, similar to the parked automobiles they have to deal with on a daily basis.

Type B, The Struggling Business Owner:
Local actors, such as the owner of the "Yellow Store," saw vacancies as a direct danger to their means of subsistence and an indication of missing capital.

Type C, Mobility-Oriented People:
People who focus on functional use of the space, see parking as high value, and think social or commercial uses are less relevant.

CATEGORIES

Across all interviews, four central categories emerge. First, the normalization of emptiness describes how vacancy has become an ordinary visual element of the streetscape since the economic crisis, reflecting ongoing economic limitations and reduced investment capacity. Second, the prioritization of parking over social space illustrates the high practical demand for garages, even residents without cars support the conversion of former ground-floor shops into parking spaces in order to relieve pressure on the walkways.

Third, the need for renovation highlights how high maintenance costs and poor building conditions in the research area prevent the realization of new uses, particularly social meeting places.

Finally, market saturation is perceived as a barrier to new commercial activities, as many locals believe that there are already enough cafés and therefore see little necessity for additional businesses in the remaining vacant ground floors.

Mapping Linkages

Meanwhile

In contrast

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE FUTURE

This section moves the emphasis from analysis to potential, building on the theoretical framework and empirical observations established in the previous sections. In addition to structural difficulties, the analysis of Analypsis's vacant ground floors has uncovered hidden capacities which can be found in regular urban areas. Opportunities for future transformation are identified in the following section by combining insights from mapping, literature, and observations at the site. Instead of offering definitive solutions, it describes potential paths that underutilized and unoccupied ground floor spaces

Fig. 20.6 Vacancy transformation into housing (Timo Kortum)

could take, guided by the theoretical debate on spatial potential and urban resilience as well as the realities seen on site.

We can use these findings to engage the question of opportunities. The following chapter shows a way on how to revitalize underused ground floors. We combine mapping, literature and on-site observations and link the theoretical approach to the ground floor potential.

HOUSING

The current transformation of ground-floor zones is not driven by a strong local retail market, but rather by new investment logics and external demand patterns. While vacancy reflects ongoing economic constraints and limited local purchasing power, the remaining conversions are increasingly shaped by short-term rentals (e.g., Airbnb), as residents often avoid living at street level due to privacy, air and noise concerns. However, the new space could be used to fight against the housing shortages.

- **Social Diversification:** Future strategies could aim to repurpose these spaces for student housing or barrier-free units for the elderly through regulatory flexibility (similar to the "temporary-use toolbox")
- **Reclaiming the Pilotes:** The open ground floors (Pilotes) typical of Thessaloniki, currently used almost exclusively for parking, could be partially reclaimed for communal housing projects or hybrid live-work spaces. This would increase social "eyes on the street" and vitality in the side alleys.

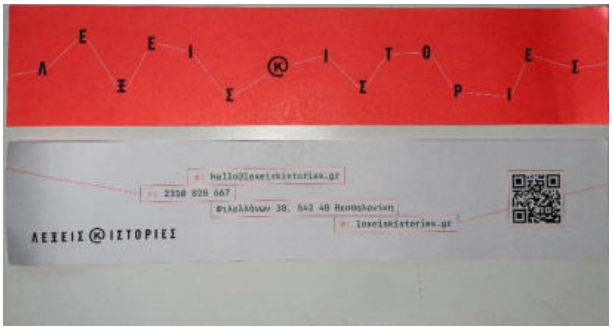

Fig. 20.7 Bookmark from the bookstore where the Interview was conducted (Leonie Huber)

COMERCIAL ZONES

Economic barriers, such as high renovation costs and taxes, and the overall structural change in the retail sector, currently prevent to revitalise small local businesses.

- **Niche Commerce vs. Chains:** A look at the Lerchenfelder Straße in Vienna illustrates how targeted urban planning and cross-sector alliances can promote the settlement of small-scale businesses and creative crafts to counteract the monotony of large retail chains. While the Vienna model focuses on high-end curation, Analypsis could prioritize "essential" local services (e.g., repair shops) that have vanished but are vital for daily life.

COMMUNITY SPACES

Analypsis must battle the empty ground-floors and has to create spaces that transcend purely commercial interests.

The greatest potential for Analypsis lies in creating spaces that transcend purely commercial interests.

- **Care Commons as a Guiding Principle:** Vacant ground floors could be reactivated as self-organized spaces such as community kitchens, neighborhood libraries, or intercultural centers. While Lerchenfelder Straße focused on cultural and commercial upgrading, Analypsis requires a focus on social reproduction to compensate for the extreme residential density and lack of public green space.
- **Performative Planning through Experiments:** Before establishing permanent uses, "urban experiments," such as pop-up workshops or temporary exhibitions in the "pink-coded" vacancy zones, could shift the residents' perception. The goal is to see vacancy not as a sign of decay, but as a communal asset

CONCLUSION

Our investigation of Analypsis shows that ground-floor vacancy is not just a sign of urban decline, but a space where local resilience and crisis-related needs are discussed.

Answering the Research Question: The conversion of unoccupied spaces in Analypsis into private garages to relieve the district's severe parking pressure is one of

the main functional needs driving this transition. This "garage-pragmatism" impedes or undermines the social potential of the street level while providing a private solution to a space problem. One prime example in the neighborhood is the already mentioned bookshop. It shows that these places still have the capacity to be an important social aspect if they can get beyond the obstacles of high renovation costs and commercial pressure.

Closed and inactive ground floors reduce street vitality and limit everyday social interactions. With few active uses at street level, streets function mainly as transit spaces rather than places to linger, leading to a normalization of emptiness in daily routines. Opportunities for spontaneous encounters and neighborhood life are therefore limited.

Across all conducted interviews, respondents stated that the daily routines in Analypsis's are shaped by a „normalization of vacancy". The closed ground floors have turned into an unseen background for a lot of homeowners. Socio-spatial tensions became visible by the conflict between the demand for parking and the need for meeting places. Future urban designs have to consider these ground floors not only as useful containers but also as the main infrastructure for social interaction in order to overcome a landscape of dead facades. The "empty" area is actually a hidden potential for the residents of Analypsis to gain back the sidewalk instead of empty space.

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FIGURES

Figures 2-5: Vacancy transformation to garages/housing between 2011 and 2021, Google street view 2011/2021

Fig. 20.8: Vacancy in Analipsi (Amelie Lucia Müller)

ΜΑΝΩΛΑΚΗΣ

ACCESSIBILITY AND SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN ANALYPSIS

THE IMPORTANCE OF (FAMILY) CARE SYSTEMS FOR ELDERLY RESIDENTS WITH A FOCUS ON PEOPLE WITH IMPAIRMENTS AND DEMENTIA

Amelie Lucia Müller, Theo Moosmann, Amina Prunbauer, Finn Welter

Fig. 21.1: Elderly man crossing the street (Amelie Lucia Müller).

We were sitting in a café in Analypsis, when it became apparent how relevant social infrastructure in public space truly is. An elderly woman asked for help in assisting both herself and her shopping trolley over a high curb in order to cross the street. The situation conveyed a sense of routine and taken-for-grantedness. The immediacy of such on-site encounters played a key role in shaping our research focus, but our interest in the topic had already emerged the day before. As part of our academic excursion to Thessaloniki and during two neighbourhood walks in Analypsis, everyday practices of care and their spatial and social organisation became visible in the urban fabric. So we decided to dedicate our field research in the neighbourhood to accessibility and social infrastructure with particular attention to (family-based) care systems for elderly residents and people with dementia.

Throughout the fieldwork, we were accompanied by Greek student, Despoina, who helped us overcome language barriers and added her contextual knowledge of Thessaloniki. This collaboration facilitated access to residents and local institutions and enabled us to interpret our observations through a more locally grounded perspective. Methodologically, our research followed a qualitative and exploratory approach, combining participant observation, mapping, and interviews conducted over two days. Alongside several interviews with local actors - such as pharmacy staff, shop owners, and representatives of care-related institutions - we also engaged in narrative interviews in public space. In total, we conducted seven interviews of varying lengths, complemented by informal exchanges that offered insights into local perceptions of care, ageing, and accessibility.

During walks through the area, it became evident how visible and normalized care practices are in Analypsis. Helping people with mobility impairments to cross the street appeared as part of everyday routines, while the high density of pharmacies and medical facilities highlighted the neighbourhood's role as a local healthcare hub. These observations led us to reflect on the close relationship between accessibility, ageing, and local informal care practices, particularly within families — a responsibility that interviewees described as increasingly challenged by the outmigration of younger generations.

A key moment in the development of our research focus was when interviewees told us about two Alzheimer day centres in the area. These facilities provide daytime care, therapeutic programmes, and support for people with dementia and their relatives (Interview 6).

At the same time, interviews revealed limited awareness of existing care infrastructures, pointing to a gap between available services and their visibility in everyday life. Overall, the combination of observation, mapping, and interviews enabled us to approach care as a multifaceted and relational practice that extends beyond purely functional support.

This introductory exploration situates our research within the everyday realities of Analypsis and establishes the framework for the following, more detailed discussion of dementia, accessibility, and social infrastructure.

DEMENTIA

Dementia is a disease of the brain in which cognitive abilities such as orientation, memory, language, and logical thinking are impaired. Dementia refers to a set of different symptoms that can be caused by various diseases; Alzheimer's disease is one of them

Temporal and spatial orientation in particular become increasingly difficult as dementia progresses, especially in unfamiliar places or later even on familiar routes and in familiar locations. The range of movement of those affected decreases over time, and communication is also made more difficult by word-finding problems. Due to cognitive and physical impairments, people with dementia become increasingly dependent on the help of others.

(Deutsche Alzheimer Gesellschaft, 2017)

IS THESSALONIKI A CARING CITY?

During the course of our research in Analypsis, Thessaloniki, we repeatedly encountered the concepts of Care and the Caring City either through discussions with our research group or through the care infrastructures present in the neighborhood. This sparked our curiosity about what is meant by a Caring City in the first place, and to what extent these characteristics can be identified in Thessaloniki, using Analypsis as a case study.

The concept of the Caring City has its roots in feminist care ethics of the 1970s and 1980s. Emerging from debates around the problem that care work is often rendered invisible, undervalued, and disproportionately carried out by women, the vision of the *Caring City* developed as a political demand to move care work from the invisible private sphere onto the public and political agenda (Knierbein et al., 2025, p.3,8,16). This approach marks a departure from individualistic models of society toward an understanding of human beings as homines curans — caring subjects connected through social relations of mutual dependency and vulnerability (Knierbein et al., 2025, p.12). With regard to elder care, the concept of care encompasses multiple dimensions and extends beyond physical assistance and nursing to include mutual support, attentive supervision, acts of kindness, empathetic encounters, and reflective engagement with oneself and one's own actions (Knierbein et al., 2025, p.3). In the Mediterranean region, particularly in Greece, the traditional model of family caregiving is deeply rooted in society and often compensates for gaps in the state healthcare system. Health and social care largely rely on informal caregivers, usually female family members (Xiarchi et al., 2024, p.2). During our field research, both passersby and a pharmacist confirmed this form of family care. Additionally, the owner of a store selling care supplies, such as crutches and wheelchairs, stated that the majority of his customers are family members purchasing care equipment for elderly relatives.

This phenomenon of collective care becomes particularly visible in times of crisis and represents a response to major events, such as the financial crisis or COVID-19 (de la Fuente & Cobos, 2025, p. 2). When we asked a pharmacist about the current care situation in Analypsis, she referred us to the café owner next door. According to her, he is one of the most well-informed residents of the district and keeps a close eye on everything that happens in the neighborhood.

When we entered the café, the owner, a tall, sturdy man with a noticeable urge to talk, was engaged in a conversation with a group of mostly older men. However, upon noticing us, he immediately addressed us. During the conversation, he described himself several times as being a well-read person and a history enthusiast. Beyond the history of Greece, to which he often digressed, he surprisingly knew a great deal about Vienna and Austria,

which immediately helped us establish a good rapport with him.

Over the course of the conversation, he repeatedly highlighted the severe problems within Greece's care system. Overall, it became clear that the topic truly lay close to his heart and his knowledge. He explained that an increasing number of young people are leaving the city or even the country in search of job opportunities. As a result, there is a shortage of trained caregivers available to care for the local population and to relieve family members, who are currently providing informal care for their elderly relatives. At the same time, Greece's population is aging rapidly. The country has one of the oldest populations in the OECD and, according to projections, by 2050 one third of its population will be over 65 years old (Kyriopoulos et al., 2025,p.1).

Fig. 21.3: Man helps woman crossing the street (Amelie Lucia Müller).

Coupled with the strain on the care sector, this could have consequences for the well-being of residents in the coming years. When we asked about the situation of nursing homes in the region, the owner complained that there are no adequate facilities in Analypsis. Those that do exist are located in the suburbs and are privately run, a situation which is common throughout Greece. Our conversation revealed that Thessaloniki also lacks a substantial extent of formal, mobile, home-care services, as compared to Vienna, which our interviewee mentioned as being more advanced in elderly care. This assumption is also supported by the report by Karagiannidou (2023), which indicates that public funding for community-based care within Greece's long-term care system is low and that although help-at-home programs exist, they are neither widely available nor systematically developed.

The increasing privatization and marginalization of formal elderly care represent one of the core problems that the concept of a Caring City seeks to address. Over recent decades, the healthcare sector has increasingly been commodified and transformed into a private and individual responsability, while welfare state care infrastructures have continued to disappear (Saltiel & Strüver, 2014, p. 48; Kyriopoulos et al., 2025, p. 4).

SOCIAL CARE SYSTEM AND PHYSICAL SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Physical social infrastructure refers to the material and spatial conditions that enable social participation, care work, and everyday mobility in urban contexts. It includes built structures such as sidewalks, crossings, seating, public facilities, as well as the spatial accessibility of health and care services within the neighbourhood (Enneking et al., 2024, p. 1). In relation to the care system, physical social infrastructure provides the spatial framework within which both formal and informal care practices can be carried out. From a Caring City perspective, it connects material urban environments with everyday care practices and reflects how care responsibilities are distributed between the state, communities, and private households (Gabauer et al., 2021, p. 3–14).

This relationship is particularly relevant for older people, as physical social infrastructure functions as an enabling structure for independent everyday living. Barrier-free paths, safe crossings, and accessible public spaces close to one's home are crucial for promoting mobility, social contacts, and inclusion (Lewis et al., 2022, p. 523). At the same time, physical social infrastructure shapes how care systems operate locally, as care work relies on accessible infrastructures such as health centres, pharmacies, and day care facilities (ILO, 2018, p. 3–5). These interdependencies are especially evident in the context of dementia. While institutions such as the St. Ioannis Alzheimer's Center and Alzheimer Hellas provide essential services in diagnostics, day care, and counselling for

relatives, their effectiveness depends on how well these services are embedded within a supportive and accessible urban environment.

Affected people deal with their illness and the resulting insecurities in orientation in different ways. One approach used by people with dementia is to strengthen their own orientation through targeted training, such as studying transport and city maps. In this strategy, distinctive buildings and other orientation aids in space are important for those affected (Pichler et al. 2018: pp. 11f). The other approach is to ask other people for help (Pichler et al. 2018: p. 11). This highlights the social infrastructure on which people rely or are dependent. This means for people with dementia, other people are a key factor in feeling safe enough to move independently in public space. (Pichler et al. 2018: p. 15).

In public transport, as is often the case in public space, different needs collide. People with dementia may need more time to board or require personal contact with fellow passengers or transport staff in order to check the correct direction of travel or the right stop. This contrasts with a fast-paced world that is strictly scheduled in terms of time (Pichler et al. 2018: p. 20).

Our field research in the Analypsis district of Thessaloniki shows that although elements of physical social infrastructure are present throughout the neighbourhood, they remain highly fragmented and unevenly distributed. These conditions have direct negative effects on older residents and people in need of care, limiting everyday mobility and reinforcing social inequalities. Many older residents use walking sticks, walkers, or shopping trolleys and depend on short distances and regular rest opportunities. Park benches along main roads and near residential buildings are used intensively and function as important nodes of everyday mobility. At the same time, observations reveal significant physical infrastructural deficits. Narrow sidewalks, parked cars on pavements, missing curb ramps, and damaged surfaces considerably hinder movement. Pedestrians often resort to walking on the road, particularly in side streets with little traffic. These experiences illustrate that inadequate physical infrastructure poses concrete safety risks and significantly restricts independent mobility, confirming findings that link barrier-free design, continuous pathways, and safe crossings to older people's ability to remain mobile and socially engaged in their neighbourhoods (Lewis et al., 2022, p. 23).

Field research further reveals pronounced spatial inequalities within the neighbourhood. Along main roads and in areas renovated as part of the new metro expansion, infrastructure is noticeably better developed, including barrier-free crossings, tactile guidance systems, elevators, and ramps. In adjacent residential side streets, however, these adaptations are almost completely absent. Parking spaces for people with disabilities are frequently used illegally, while sidewalks are blocked by trees, potholes, or garbage containers. This uneven distribution confirms interview statements that infrastructure improvements are selective, leaving large parts of the neighbourhood largely unadapted and reinforcing unequal conditions of accessibility. In Analypsis, basic medical care is highly accessible due to the close proximity of pharmacies, doctors' offices, and specialised facilities such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's centres, allowing many older residents to integrate medical appointments into their everyday routines without long-distance travel.

At the same time, interviews indicate that responsibility for care and support remains strongly embedded within the family sphere. This burden is implicitly gendered, as care work in Greece continues to be disproportionately carried out by women. In the context of economic crises, austerity policies, and demographic ageing, this familistic care regime places increasing pressure on female family members, while public care infrastructures remain insufficient to offset these responsibilities (Daly & Lewis, 2000, p. 285-288; Xiarchi et al., 2024). The outmigration of younger generations further exacerbates this situation, as informal care resources become increasingly scarce. This constellation reflects a structural shift of care responsibilities from the state to private households, a process intensified by fragmented and inadequate public infrastructure (Daly & Lewis, 2000, p. 285–288).

This situation is particularly problematic for people with dementia. A lack of orientation aids, unsafe crossings, and interrupted tactile guidance systems makes independent use of public space difficult. As Lehtonen and Jupp emphasise, care infrastructure is only effective when built environments, social services, and informal care practices are considered together. In Analypsis, this interrelation is weakened by material barriers as well as limited visibility and accessibility of information about care services, especially for families already strained by

austerity, demographic change, and the erosion of informal care networks.

In summary, the findings from Analypsis show that physical social infrastructure plays a central role in care work, mobility, and social participation among older people. Its fragmented and uneven design reinforces dependence on family support, increases safety risks, and deepens existing inequalities. From a Caring City perspective, this highlights the need for neighbourhood-based, continuous, and inclusive infrastructural strategies that recognise care as an integral, spatially organised public responsibility rather than a private obligation (Gabauer et al., 2021, p. 3–14).

DEMENTIA FRIENDLY EVERYDAY LIFE

People with dementia have often accumulated care-needs as their biological body gets old which makes participating in public life and everyday life more difficult (Pichler et al. 2018: p. 11). The Greek Association for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders, which was founded in 1995 in Greek as a non-profit organization, has been operating two day centers in Thessaloniki since 2007, as well as a third one outside the city. The goal is to create structures, services, and conditions that improve the quality of life of people with dementia and their relatives. In total, around 8 500 people (patients and relatives) are supported. (Alzheimer Hellas n.y.: online).

The challenges of everyday life for people living with dementia do not end with care work or with mobility from one place to another in public space. Daily life also includes leisure activities in commercial and public settings. Brittain and Degnen therefore examine restaurant and cinema visits as well as shopping activities in their study. Their findings show that it is above all strict normative rules of behaviour, and the resulting fear of negative judgement by strangers (Brittan and Degen, 2022, p. 427), that make these activities more difficult for those affected. Creative supports, such as familiar materials like cutlery from home, as well as social factors, for example challenging social stigma, are crucial for fostering inclusion and enabling a dementia-friendly everyday life (Brittan and Degen, 2022, p. 428).

WHAT IS (NOT) THE PATH TOWARD A DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY CITY?

At this point we want to give an outlook on a further research agenda, where the caring community must be considered. Within the concept of a "caring community" civil society plays a central role in the transformation toward a dementia-friendly society. In addition to the administrative level, which is responsible for the provision and coordination of care facilities and for financing, the caring community - consisting of relatives, neighbours, and local residents - must assume responsibility (Laufenberg 2018: p. 79f).

A caring community "begins at the doorstep, in the neighborhood, in the municipality" and relies on the immediate "shared responsibility," "capacity for resonance," and "capacity for empathy" of neighbours and community members who take an interest in one another (Laufenberg 2018: p. 80).

Critical voices warn that the image of an urban, caring civil society may weaken the expansion of welfare-state responsibilities such as transfer payments and services, and may lead to exploitation and de-professionalization of care work (Laufenberg 2018: p. 78). Such a process can be described as a shift of responsibilities between the state and society, a transformation from a welfare state to a welfare community (Laufenberg 2018: p. 81). A community, (van Dyk 2017) refers the solidaristic community as the "elixir of life" of capitalism. However a caring community could enable (older) people with cognitive impairments to live self-determined lives, dementia-friendly municipalities should create appropriate and de-commodified framework conditions. Some people we talked to in Analypsis wish for places where people can meet in everyday life and safe crossing points. From a city planner perspective, a sincere cooperation between civil society actors and those affected is needed.

Future research could benefit from participatory methods such as Interviews during urban walks. This would make it possible to implement orientation aids and symbols, safe crossing points, or user-friendly ticket machines (Laufenberg 2018: pp. 85f). Furthermore it would be a step toward a dementia-friendly city within a caring community.

"Care is a collective societal challenge, neither solely private-individual nor exclusively public-institutional,

but represents shared responsibility" (Saltiel & Strüver, 2014, p. 51).

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CONCLUSION

WHAT THESE STUDIES REVEAL

Maximilian Holze

This reader takes an approach to Thessaloniki in which the latter is not viewed as a fixed urban form, but as a dynamic constellation of everyday practices, spatial negotiations and layered histories. Across the two different study areas and thematic perspectives, the city emerges as a space that is constantly shaped by its inhabitants, visitors and users. Housing typologies, pavements, markets and semi-public courtyards are revealed to be sites where broader socio-political conditions manifest in tangible, lived situations.

A recurring insight throughout the essays is that spatial arrangements cannot be understood in isolation from the social relations that sustain them. Whether examining informal trade, practices of pavement extension, care networks within residential buildings or ground-floor transformations, the analyses demonstrate how urban life unfolds through small-scale routines and embodied interactions. These everyday practices generate forms of attachment, familiarity, and collective presence that often remain invisible within formal planning frameworks. At the same time, however, they also expose inequalities in access, recognition, and spatial control.

The case studies demonstrate that urban space is neither fully regulated nor entirely autonomous. Instead, it is shaped by an ongoing negotiation between institutional structures, economic pressures and locally embedded actors. Formal planning instruments, legal regulations and redevelopment strategies interact with informal arrangements, tacit agreements and the habitual use of space. This interaction does not produce stable balance, but rather a shifting terrain in which certain practices are tolerated, others are contested and some are marginalised.

The role of intersectional differences in structuring urban experience is particularly evident. Categories such as age, gender, class, migration background intersect to determine who feels entitled to claim space, who remains visible and who must adapt. The essays demonstrate that spatial belonging cannot be guaranteed by design alone; it is continuously produced through repetition, negotiation, and social recognition. Urban environments thus function as areas in which inclusion and exclusion are enacted subtly and explicitly.

Taken together, the essays do not offer a unified model of 'better' planning. Instead, they provide empirically grounded perspectives that complicate simplified narratives of order and informality, regulation and freedom, and public and private spaces. By foregrounding everyday life as a methodological and analytical starting point, the contributions emphasise the importance of paying attention to lived realities in urban research and planning practice. The insights developed here suggest that engaging seriously with everyday spatial practices is essential for understanding how cities function and evolve in socially responsive ways.

Fig. 22 left: Mixed-use street from above (Amelie Lucia

Fig.23 next side: Balconies in Analypsis (Amelie Lucia Müller).

TIMES	SUNDAY arrival date	MONDAY kick-off and context	TUESDAY field visits & methods
9:00		Intro to Thessaloniki at Rotunda thematic Walks at the two research sites with: Charis Christodoulou	input: Social Housing with: Richard Pfeifer research site visits in groups with: greek students
11:00			
13:00		Lunch	Lunch group research at the sites
15:00		Housing in Thessaloniki with: Charis Christodoulou	input: Walking as a qualitative Research Method with: Richard Pfeifer
17:00		Group related Workshop: Are you looking for a flat? with: greek students	self organized research
19:00	first meeting & drinks		

EXCURSION TIME TABLE

TIMES	WENDSDAY fieldwork & feedback	THURSDAY refinement & prep	FRIDAY presentation day
9:00	field work, self organized	consultations with: Knierbein, Pfeifer	
		fiels research, self organized	final presentation with: Christodoulou, Pfeifer, Knierbein
11:00			
13:00	Lunch	Lunch	reflection and goodbyes
		Interest based Thematic Input with: Knierbein, Pfeifer	
15:00	group work and consultation with: Christodoulou, Pfeifer	group work	
17:00	interrim Presentations with: Christodoulou, Pfeifer, Knierbein		
19:00			
	joint dinner		

Fig. 1: Central Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

Fig. 2: Central Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

Fig. 3: Central Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

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Fig. 5: Introductory workshop exploring social groups and intersectionality in everyday urban space (Greta Kalmbacher)

Fig. 6: Old and new urban structures in Thessaloniki (Amelie Lucia Müller).

Fig. 7: Dense housing in Analypsis (Amelie Lucia Müller).

Fig. 8: Polykatoikia (Hayden Hess)

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Fig.23 next side: Balconies in Analypsis (Amelie Lucia Müller).

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