

# Editorial: Ekistics-related Research in Greece - Planning Principles

**Myrto (Petunia) Exacoustou MSc AAS**

*Researcher and Architect, Ministry of Education and Sports, Greece.*

Email: [mexacoustou@gga.gov.gr](mailto:mexacoustou@gga.gov.gr)

---

The present issue is the second of a three-part special issue of *Ekistics and the New Habitat* addressing 'Ekistics Related Research in Greece'. Drawing on a growing community of researchers, academics, and scholars, regularly involved with the problems and solutions in the field of human settlements, the present issue explores the planning principles at issue in current discussions about ekistics theory and ekistics related work in Greece and abroad. It includes scholarly articles by scholars and researchers operating locally in Greece and transnationally around the world. Contributors are academics, researchers, practitioners or government officials with previous academic experience. They are writing from positions in the US, Colombia, UAE, China, and Greece. As mentioned in the first part of this triple issue, *Ekistics-related research in Greece - A Critical Approach to the Ekistics Legacy (Part 1 or 3)*, this collection of research essays and papers are dedicated to my dear godfather Panayis Psomopoulos, an architect and planner who collaborated closely with C. A. Doxiadis. Panayis' continuous efforts and total commitment to the continuation of the ekistics legacy kept the ekistics flame alive and growing worldwide for almost 35 years. It is to him that we owe the current journal's predecessor, *Ekistics: the science of the problems of human settlements*, a longstanding journal which reflected the preservation and further development of his lifelong work and that of C. A. Doxiadis' legacy; the details of which are outlined in the Editorial to the first part of the issue (Exacoustou, 2022).

This present special issue (Part 2 of 3) returns to the question of planning principles at issue within the current dialectics on human settlements and searches for proper strategies for the future among the latest discourse based on Ekistics and other related theories. Ray Bromley opens the issue with an exploration of Jean Gottmann's *Megalopolis* (1961) as a regional monograph. He discusses the collaboration between Gottmann and Doxiadis, as well as Gottmann's transition from writing descriptions a specific geographical region to conceptualizing major polynuclear urban agglomerations in different parts of the world (Bromley, 2022). Ioannis Aris Alexiou, through a text translated from Spanish by Myrto Exacoustou, presents his own theory that emerged as a synthesis of research outcomes based on the author's research group entitled 'The planning of articulating nodes and structures for the territorial organization of urban systems under cooperation' (2005-2011). Additionally, theory draws on methodologies and findings from Systems Theory, the Science of Ekistics, Complexity Theory, and the principles of the molecular biology of living ecosystems (Alexiou, 2022).

Following this theoretical presentation, a study by Mark David Major, Raya Atour and Deepthi John examines several topics relating to neighborhoods and placemaking with the use of analytical tools as Space Syntax. Their research builds directly on Doxiadis' ideas about entopia - a practically realizable form of utopia - and his effort to create one through his projects that eventually led to the rise of the placemaking agenda (Major et al, 2022). It serves as an example of subversion and achieving placemaking in the neighborhoods of our cities. Lawrence Wai Chung Lai then reflects on the reasons why Doxiadis' theory of planning for human settlements is not only a laudable, human-centred, bottom-up, and multi-disciplinary theory, but also a practical tool informed by a clear model with unambiguous criteria and measures (Lai, 2022). Lai suggests that, when utilized in combination with other analytical tools and approaches, ekistics provides a theoretical framework and practical method capable of planning an open society in a complex world.

Ioanna Theocharopoulou's article examines the unique facets of Doxiadis Associates' planning approaches in Lebanon. Based on archival material of the work of Doxiadis in Lebanon (1957-8), Theocharopoulou discusses how Doxiadis' work can serve as an exemplary approach. In Theocharopoulou's telling, the extended material of the *in situ* surveys in Lebanon were meant to "read" each settlement, before coming up with appropriate solutions and recommendations (unlike other foreign firms); this went against contemporary trends in importing ideas from "the West" by listening and recording the needs of the inhabitants. Finally, in a Viewpoint Article, Dimitris Philippides addresses an often ignored link between two "sides" of Doxiadis' personality: the connection between an action-prone scientist and a visionary philosopher.

## Acknowledgements

The present special issue would not have been possible without the continuous support of Prof. Dr. George Giannopoulos, who guided me throughout this process until the very last moment, Mrs. Giota Pavlidou, Director of the C.A. Doxiadis Archives, whose expertise and support are always invaluable, the previous Editor-in-Chief Prof. Dr. Kurt Seemann, who accepted my proposal whole heartedly for a special issue, guiding me when I began preparing these issues, and the Doxiadis family who supported me in many ways. This issue is the outcome of collective work, therefore I owe many thanks to the current Editor-in-Chief Prof. Dr. Derya Oktay, to the Deputy-Editor Dr. Ian Fookes, to Dr Ricardo Arribas, and our Assistant Editors and close collaborators, Prof. Dr. Ioanna Theocharopoulou, Dr. Lefteris Theodosios, and Harrison Blackman. Finally, special thanks are due to all the authors who contributed their work, sharing with us their ideas and knowledge, for a triple issue in memory of Panayis Psomopoulos.

## References

- Alexiou, I. A. (2022). The Systemic City. *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 2 of 3): Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(2), 16-28.
- Bromley, R. (2022). Megalopolis Revisited: Reflections on Gottmann, Doxiadis and the Northeastern United States. *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 2 of 3): Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(2), 3-15.
- Exacoustou, M. (2022). Editorial: Ekistics-related Research - Dedicated to Psomopoulos (1926-2017). *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 1 of 3): A Critical Approach to the Ekistics Legacy: Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(1), 1-2.
- Lai, L. W. C. (2022). Reflections on Doxiadis' Theory of Planning for Human Settlements. *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 2 of 3): Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(2), 43-52.
- Major, M.D., Atour, R. and John, D. (2022). Chasing the 'Ghost' of Entopia: Doxiadis, Ekistics, and Placemaking in Cities. *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 2 of 3): Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(2), 29-42.
- Philippides, D. (2022). C.A. Doxiadis as an itinerant merchant-philosopher. *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 2 of 3): Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(2), 62-66.
- Theocharopoulou, I. (2022). Surveying Lebanon: Contextual Readings and Encounters, July 1957 - January 1958. *Ekistics and the New Habitat: Special Issue: Ekistics-related Research in Greece (Part 2 of 3): Dedicated to Panayis Psomopoulos (1926-2017)*. 82(2), 53-61.