

# Gerani, Athens: Space and Patterns of Immigrant Segregation

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## Research Topic

- An examination of the extent to which spatial configuration and urban morphology relate to the distribution of immigrant groups at the city scale, through the case study of Athens, and at a fine grain scale, through the study of the district of Gerani.
- Using a combination of spatial analysis with census socioeconomic data and primary ethnographic research and examining the various manifestations of immigrant segregation (residential, commercial and public space use), the study aims at providing a more holistic view of the topic that enables the examination of its different dimensions, both negative since it reinforces social separateness, but also positive, since it accommodates social differences by creating distinct but collaborative socioeconomic networks for the protection and support of immigrant groups.

## Methods & Data

- GIS for the mapping and analysis of social and economic census data
- Primary ethnographic research, including mapping of the local immigrant activities and urban morphology
- Use of existing data sources providing mapping of the location of vulnerable groups in the city
- Space syntax theory and analysis in order to establish the spatial properties of the street network and understand the spatial reflection of immigrant segregation

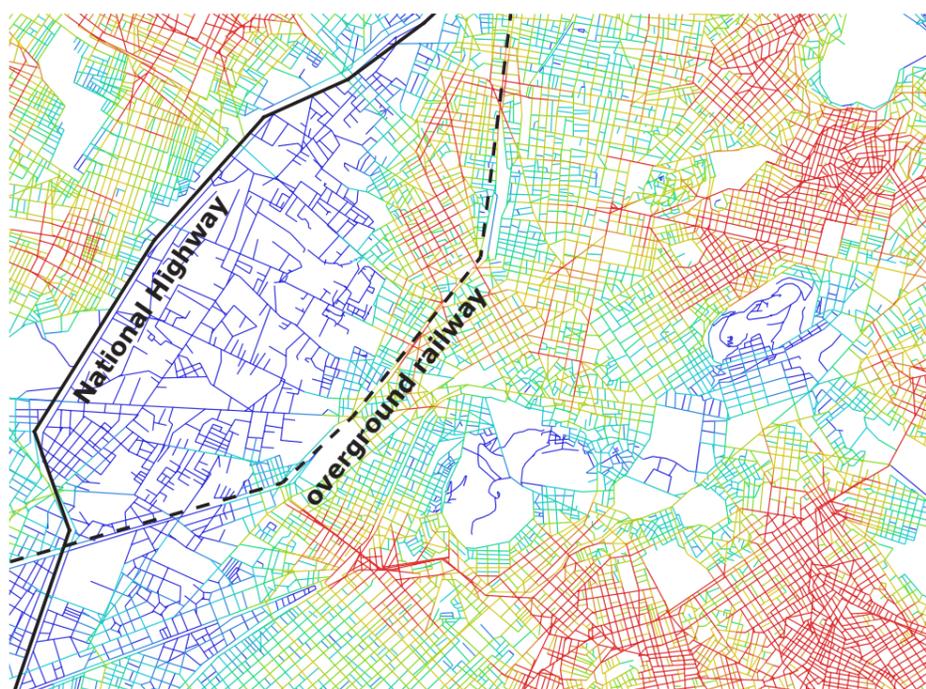
## Findings

### City-wide analysis

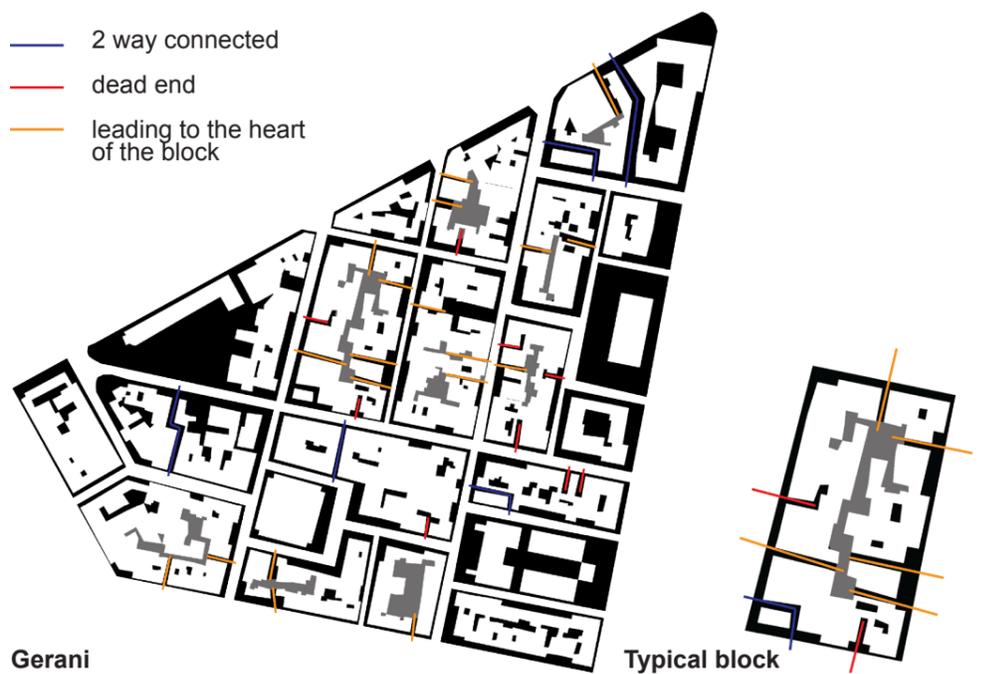
The results of the city-wide analysis suggest that the settlement of immigrant groups is dependent on cheap housing, labour opportunities and mobility options. Furthermore, an underlying hierarchical rationale seems to relate immigrants' degree of integration in the native society to their location in the city. This relates to levels of "natural movement" and quality of built space.

### Close scale analysis

The close scale analysis suggests that Gerani's street grid configuration and the morphology of the building stock and public space support immigrants' social and economic life offering them the necessary adaptability, intimacy and freedom. Furthermore, reinforcing findings from the city-wide analysis, an internal hierarchical structure seems to emerge. Locations characterised by higher levels of "natural movement", better quality building stock and proximity to attractors are occupied by the more integrated groups to the native society, whilst locations with lower levels of "natural movement", lower quality built space and adjacent to abandoned enclaves of anonymity attract the less integrated groups.



- 2 way connected
- dead end
- leading to the heart of the block



## Conclusion

The study reveals that the various scales and manifestations of immigrant segregation demand different responses. Considering the role of spatial design in immigrant segregation, the study suggests that specific spatial structures offer immigrants the necessary intimacy, protection and freedom required to gradually integrate in the native society. Such elements and principles observed in both the city-wide and the fine grained scales could be re-interpreted and assimilated in strategic design proposals.