HISTORY OF THE CITY AND OF URBAN PLANNING

Urban planning in the Greek State, 19th c.

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- This lesson presents the history of urban planning in modern Greece during the 19th century (1833-1900), focusing interest on state interventions to:

  -Promote ekistic regeneration

  -The processes for implementing them.

  It follows the initiatives of the state and the actions of municipal authorities in reforming the cities, and sheds light on how the local communities responded to these reforms.

- The purpose of this lesson is not solely to record these issues but also to interpret them: it endeavours to explain how the changes evolved that helped cities adapt to the European environment despite its long years of being shaped spontaneously.

- The lesson covers the period from the beginning of Otto's reign (1833) to 1900, presenting data about both the Old Greece and the territories that were annexed to the Greek State in 1864 (the Ionian Islands) and 1881 (Thessaly and part of Epirus).

- The city is examined within the broader historical context of the Greek Kingdom; urban planning and architecture are seen as part of the more general issues raised by the historical conditions. The maximum possible correlation is sought between urban development and social and economic facts.

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▦	1864
▨	1881
▤	1913
▨	1919
⋯	1919–1922
▥	1947

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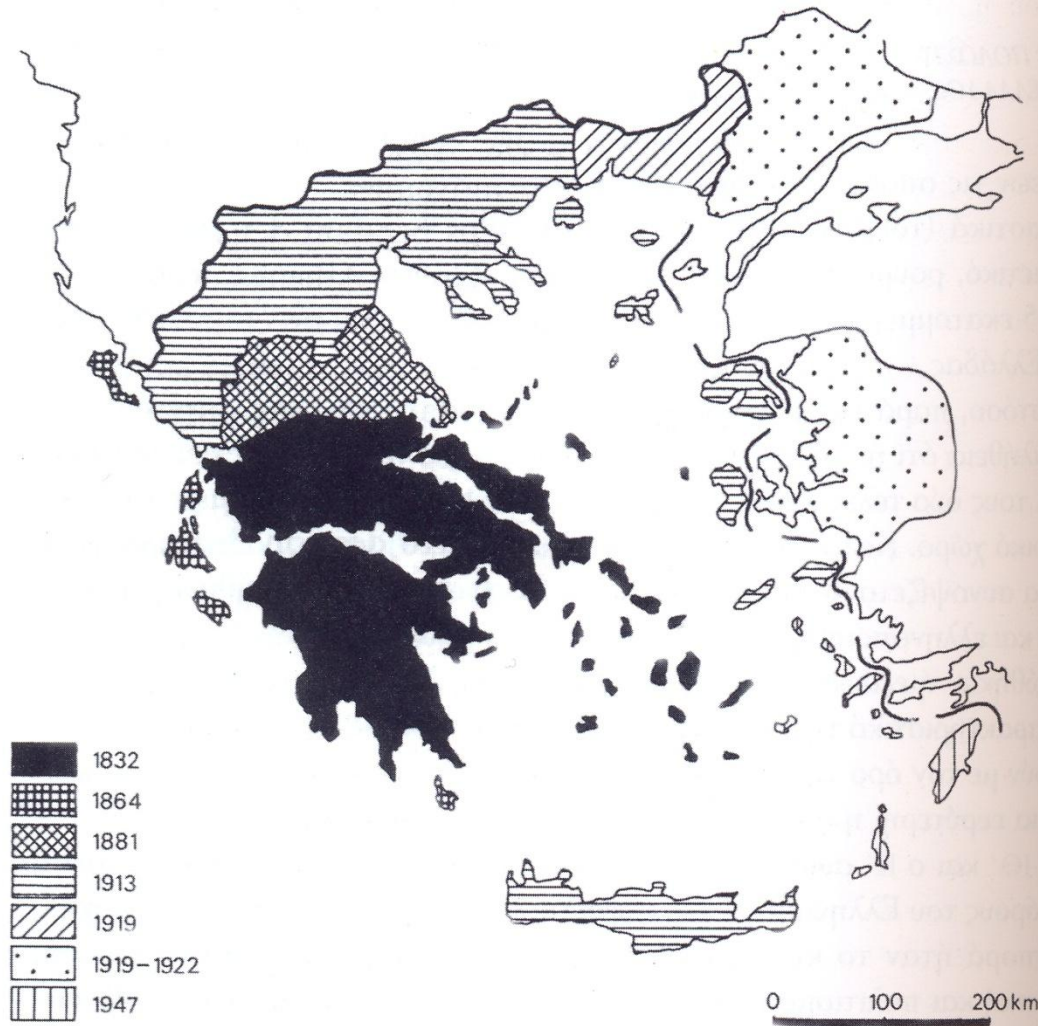
Οι επεκτάσεις της Ελλάδας

- The lesson attempts to reply to research questions, some of which are:

-What were the prevailing political views in the fledgling kingdom regarding the organisation of urban space? Why was the particular development model selected and were there any other choices?

-What were the urban planning views of the period and how were they applied to the plans for Greek cities?

-What were the ideological parameters used to create the new capital city, as expressed in the early decrees?

-What were the responsibilities of the municipal authorities in the management of space?

-Was there any participation by the local societies in planning their cities, and at what stage?

-What was the impact on the existing space of implementng urban planning policy in the modern Greek state?

-Did the state try to create an identity through the form of the city?

-Was urban planning characterised by particularities or uniformity?

- The early decades after Independence were characterised by the effort on the part of the state to:

  -Secure the county's urban development by rebuilding devastated cities,

  -Creating new cities and giving priority to the network of settlements.

  Its goal was to ensure viable settlements and to transform heaps of ruins and insignificant villages into cities capable of developing urban functions

- The newly-constituted kingdom chose to set up new institutions staffed by new people, completely replacing the conditions that had existed previously.

- It set up a centralised decision-making mechanism based in the capital city of Athens with a view to altering the urban landscape radically. In addition to the major changes in the emerging structures, the agents of these changes were entirely different people. In the early years of Otto's reign, the Greeks were absent from government, because the Bavarians that the king had brought with him occupied all the administrative positions.

- The administrative hierarchy responsible for urban planning issues drafted legislation aiming to organise a network of urban settlements with infrastructure of the European type in its constructed space. The statutory framework and planning of cities and New Towns were organised and imposed "from above", without the participation of the local communities, at least in the early period, and previously unknown innovations were introduced to both city plans and the shape of buildings.

- Did the young realm have any other options? The War of Independence was inspired by the Western modernism that provided the model for the new state, which could not use the left-overs of Ottoman governance or the structures that survived after independence. It had to repeal and replace them as soon as possible with an administration and systems of the Western type.

- After Independence, Greece followed European cultural models, and organised itself to create regular, sanitary cities. In the vast majority of cities, planning gave priority to rational, sensible goals, rather than aesthetics:

  Straight streets with a constant width, squares dotted about the city, and public buildings on selected sites constituted major innovations. The plans had to show off the cities as hubs of a centralised, modern European monarchy, honouring their antiquities and meeting the needs of their inhabitants, thus symbolising the country's regeneration and its Western orientation.

- Did the new urban planning and architecture aim to change the society by creating a national identity? Was an official state ideology being chanelled through urban planning to the Greek citizens? Did urban planning and architecture contribute to creating a sense of national pride?

It certainly did. Emmanuel Manitakis, who was responsible for public works, described the reconstruction of the city proudly. As E. Bastea writes:

"The new buildings and new cities of the 19th century constituted the most unshakeable evidence of national progress. In fact, they were oftentimes the only evidence of progress."

- In addition to urban planning, significant changes were also made to the architecture of the Old Greece. The traditional style was replaced by neoclassicism, which introduced new forms and construction techniques that were different from what builders had previously been using.

- Neoclassicism in Greece was linked with the visionary goal of national regeneration and the revival of the classical Greek architectural model. The new morphology brought in chiefly by Otto and the Bavarians became identified with the art of the ancient forefathers, after being welcomed enthusiastically by the society. It was the only architecture appropriate for the new Hellenic state, at the same time directly symbolising the scattered Greek communities from Russia to Egypt.

- Were the urban planning interventions by the Greek state based on some model?

- The symmetry known in antiquity through Hippodamus as well as in the Roman period, which appeared in newly established Greek cities, had resurfaced in France in the mid-16th century. During the 19th century, almost all the large European cities saw changes in their ekistic fabric, the main features being straight roads, symmetry and perspective. The interventions of Haussmann in Paris and John Nash in London were typical.

- In the Greek world, classical rationalism initially and plain regularity later not only made it easier to distribute the land and settle its inhabitants, but, above all, signalled the country's modernisation and Europeanisation, distancing it from its Ottoman past

The decree of 1835

- The planning of cities was treated as a whole in the particularly important decree of 1835, which bears the title "On the sanitary construction of cities and towns". It laid the foundation for urban planning policy, expressing the views of the state about the manner in which its settlements were planned and developed. This framework Decree defined the principles of urban planning, its construction and stylistic principles and systematised the basic conditions for construction. Characteristically, it provided instructions for building roads on a rectangular grid (with their orientation at such an angle that all buildings would receive sunlight), and stipulated the desired width of streets and squares. In the decree, a distinction is made between cities and villages. Judging it in terms of the conditions and practice of urban planning at that period in Europe, this decree became, as Lavedan wrote, a "first-class urban planning document" that specifies comprehensively the structure, form and construction of the city.

Street plan for every city and town.
From the initial plan to the numerous minor amendments

- The state used the town planning processes as a way to achieve the desired urbanisation.

- Urban planning legislation promoted the creation of a homogenous urban space that would declare the common national identity.

- Planning was the means to this end, through a street plan characterised by its geometric layout.

- An effort was made to reconnect with ancient Greek models (the Hippodamian street plan) and to differentiate the modern Greek city fully from its Ottoman predecessor.

- The planning of the existing or new cities was also a step towards achieving progress, or "Westernisation" which, particularly in the early years of Otto's reign, carried an obvious ideological message (plans for Athens, Eretria, Sparta, Megara, etc.).

- The plans drawn up especially by Kleanthis and Schaubert followed the neoclassical style.

- Then, the Central European neoclassicism of the plans drawn up in the early period of Otto's reign was replaced by the "undifferentiated" grid of the plans drawn up by state functionaries and imposed on dozens of old and new settlements.

- The modern cities of the 19th century, with their plans based always on a regular rectangular grid and their new buildings, constituted significant evidence of progress.

The regulations set out in the plans shaped the modern form of Greek cities.
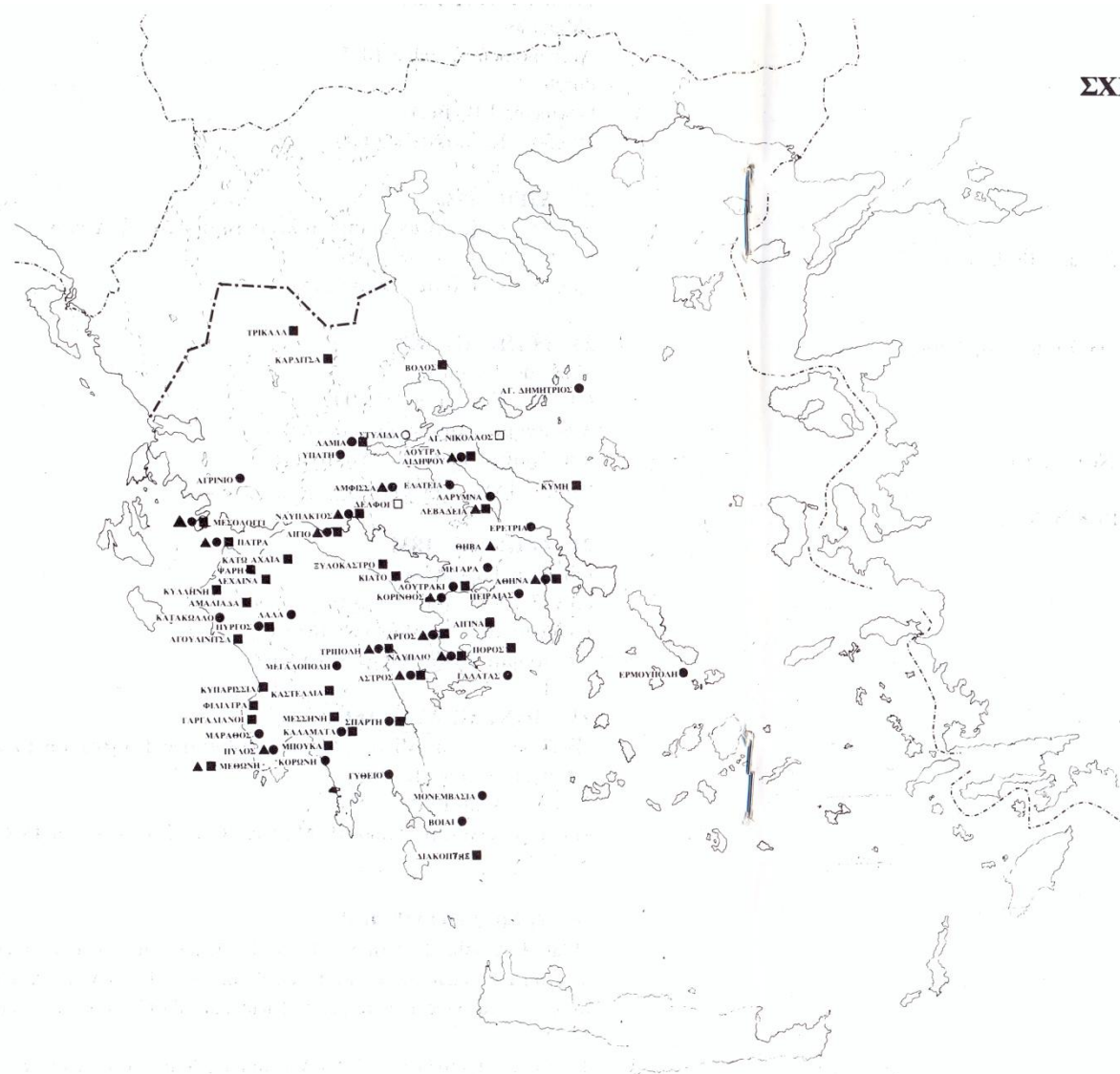## More specifically:

- The new street plan was characterised by the geometric, usually rectangular pattern of the road network and city blocks, with adjustments in the older districts of the city. Through planning, a new form was imposed on the road network and city blocks, very different from the existing irregular form found in older towns.

-The new, rectangular shape of city blocks.

-The distinction between the commercial centre and the rest of the city, the former with smaller lots determined after consultation with city councils. On maps of reconstructed cities, the market areas are clearly distinguishable by their smaller lots.

-The layout of the rest of the city with larger lots, also after consultation with the city councils.

-The terrace building system that was selected at least for city centres and market districts.

-The demolition of parts of walls and the inclusion of the space they occupied in city blocks.

-The creation of coastal urban land with landfill.

-The construction of new buildings, particularly in new cities, and the replacement of old buildings in existing cities.
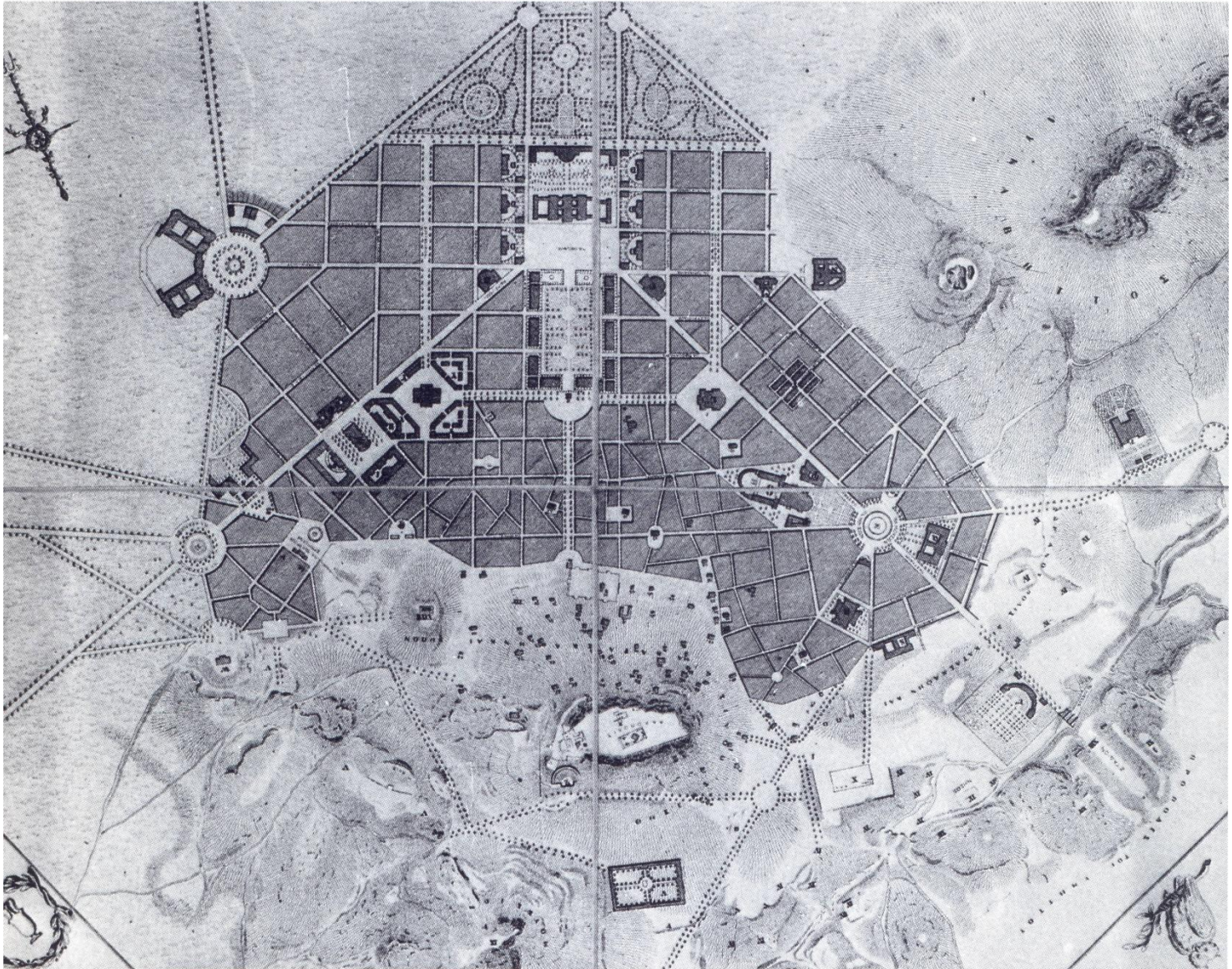
ΣΧΕΔΙΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΩΝ ΠΟΛΕΩΝ
1828-1900

ΤΡΙΚΑΛΑ

ΚΑΡΔΙΤΣΑ

ΒΟΛΟΣ

ΑΓ. ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΣ

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ΜΕΣΟΛΟΓΓΙ ΝΑΥΠΑΚΤΟΣ ΕΡΕΤΡΙΑ
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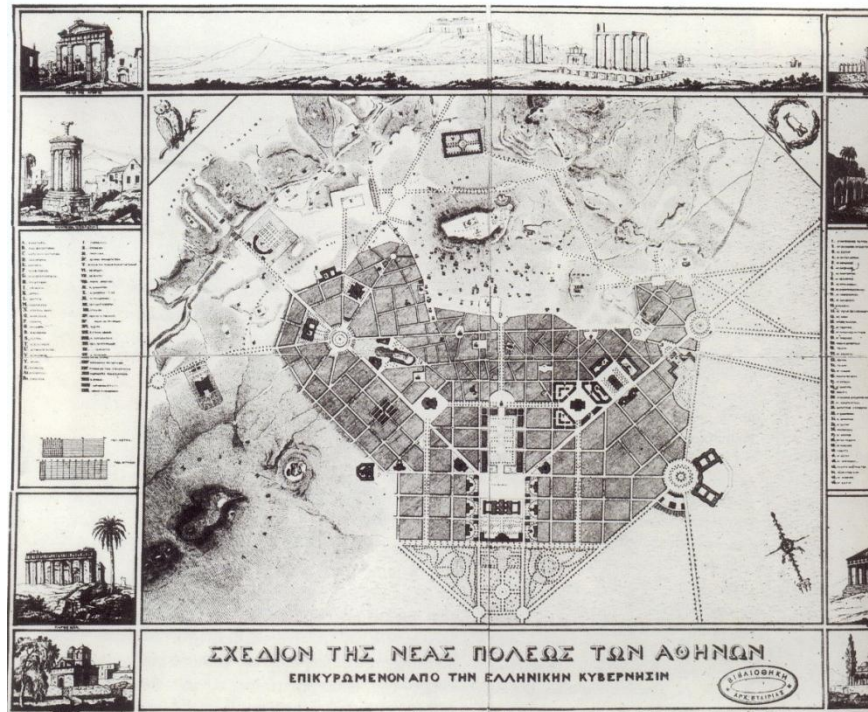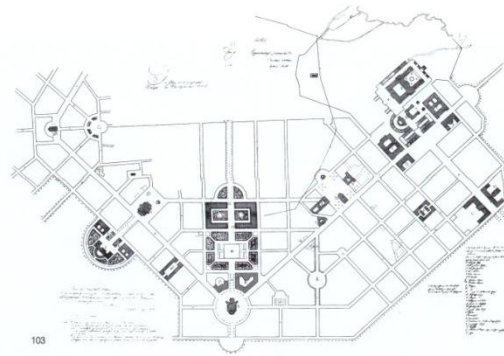ΓΥΘΕΙΟ

ΜΟΝΕΜΒΑΣΙΑ

ΒΟΙΑΙ

ΔΙΑΚΟΠΤΗΣ

ΥΠΟΜΝΗΜΑ:

▲ Καποδιστριακή περίοδος
1828—1833

● Οθωνική περίοδος
1833-1862

■ περίοδος Γεωργίου Α΄: 1863-1900

The 1833 Kleanthis and Schaubert first plan of Athens

The Klenze plan of Athens
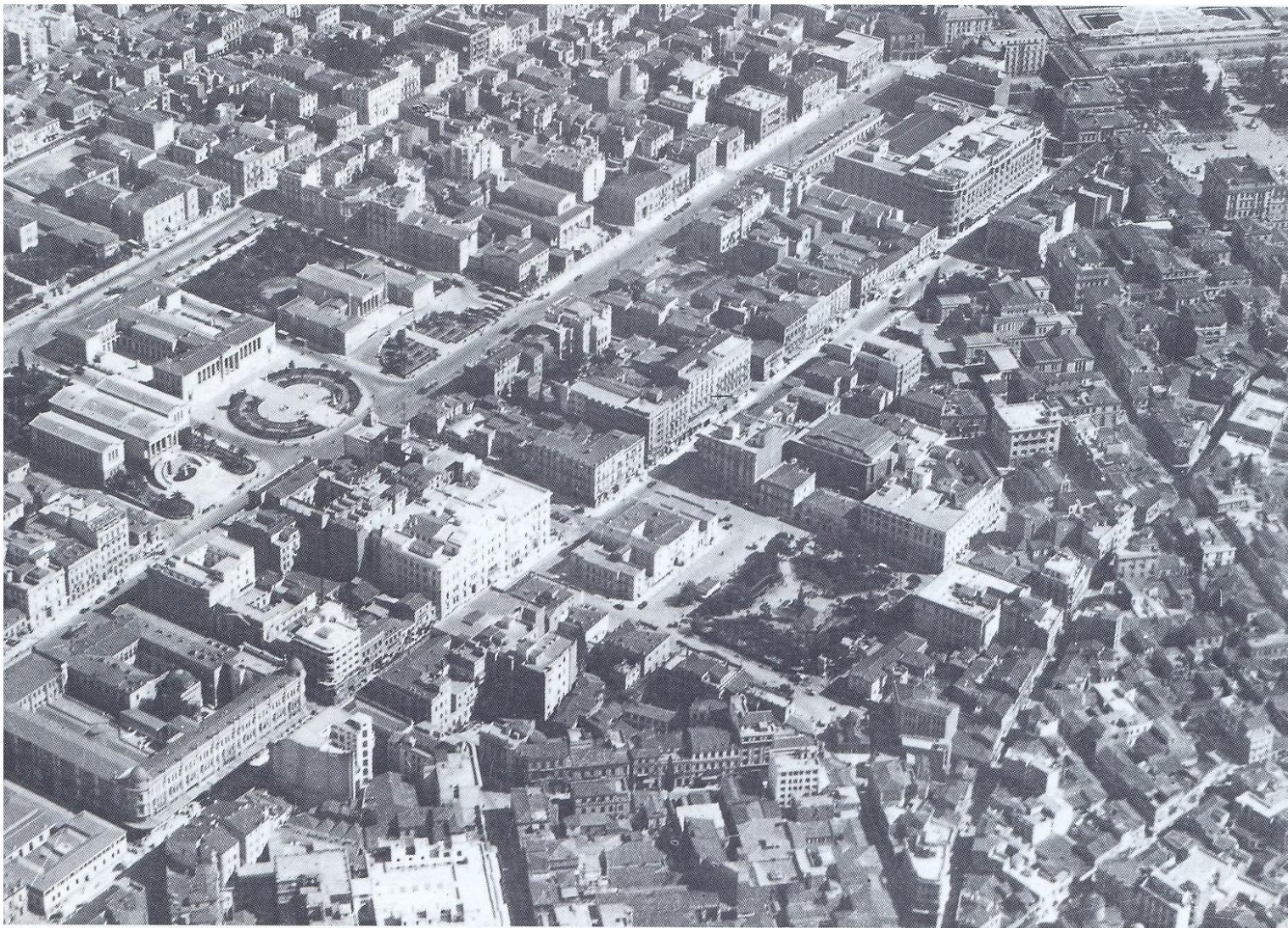# The Kleanthis and Schaubert plan of Athens

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ΑΘΗΝΑΙ
1833 – 1959 μ.Χ.

ΛΥΚΑΒΗΤΤΟΣ

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ΟΔΟΣ ΠΕΙΡΑΙΩΣ

ΑΘΗΝΑΣ

ΒΕΝΙΖΕΛΟΥ (ΠΑΝΕΠΙΣΤΗΜΙΟΥ)

ΧΑΣΕΚΗ 1778

ΑΓΟΡΑ

ΕΡΜΟΥ

ΠΛΑΤΕΙΑ ΣΥΝΤΑΓΜΑΤΟΣ

ΧΑΣΕΚΗ 1778

ΒΑΣ. ΣΟΦΙΑΣ

ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟΥ

ΛΟΦΟΣ ΝΥΜΦΩΝ

ΑΡΕΙΟΣ ΠΑΓΟΣ

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Βασιλ. Λεωνίδη

ΙΛΙΣΟΣ

ΣΤΑΔΙΟΝ

ΛΕΩΦ. ΣΥΓΓΡΟΥ

ΑΡΔΗΤΤΟΣ

500 Μ

Ι. ΤΡΑΥΛΟΣ

. 164. Τμῆμα τοῦ κέντρου τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, περιλαμβάνον τὸ συγκρότημα τῶν κτηρίων Βιβλιο-
θήκης, Πανεπιστημίου καὶ Ἀκαδημίας, κατὰ φωτογραφίαν ἀπὸ ἀεροπλάνου τοῦ ἔτους 1934.