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DIGITAL ANCHORS OF DISPLACEMENT: [Re]claiming Space on the Unsettled Grounds of Athens

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Abstract

This paper examines how digital platforms have functioned as spatial anchors for forcibly displaced people in Athens following the ‘long summer of migration’ in 2015, when the ability to claim or inhabit space was often precarious, temporary or denied altogether. Drawing on my fieldwork in Athens, it traces how migrants and grassroots collectives have used digital means to assert presence, build connections and make claims to space in a city that became a threshold for migration.

The physical geographies of displacement in Greece shifted significantly after the 2019 parliamentary elections, when the new centre-right government escalated the eviction of informal housing spaces for migrants. These changes, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, further destabilised initiatives with already fragile infrastructures. In this climate, ‘hybrid spatialities’ that were formed through the interplay of physical and digital practices became integral to political claims. Digital engagement acted as an extension, and at times a substitute to material space where access to the urban realm was restricted by legal, economic and political constraints.

Rather than idealising the digital as inherently emancipatory, this paper frames it as a complex terrain which facilitates visibility and connection while being prone to exposure and bound by conditions of precarity. It probes practices of solidarity anchored digitally in the context of forced migration when both literal and political ground is unsettled, and considers how such hybrid spatialities reveal modes of relating to space that exceed the physical. Focusing on three projects in Athens—a city shaped by overlapping crises and contested spatial claims, this paper contributes to debates on architectures of displacement, urban precarity and digital geographies. It argues that the digital is increasingly a contested field of reclaiming space, and examines how such spatial claims are articulated and sustained when material access is constrained.

DIGITAL ANCHORS OF DISPLACEMENT: [Re]claiming Space on the Unsettled Grounds of Athens

Introduction: Unsettled Grounds of Athens

Athens has faced a succession of overlapping crises in recent decades. Austerity measures weakened social protection, reduced public spending and exacerbated poverty (Matsaganis 2013). These contributed to rising homelessness, inequalities and greater social precarity. Unemployment and reduced access to services, on the other hand, disproportionately affected vulnerable groups (Arapoglou & Gounis 2015). Within this climate, political unrest and neoliberal urban policies further shaped the city's governance with significant impacts on neighbourhoods that have been historic hubs of activism, resistance and solidarity, where state responses to poverty and displacement shifted towards stricter control and policing measures (Makrygianni & Tsavdaroglou 2011).

The arrival of thousands of forcibly displaced people during the 'long summer of migration' in 2015 (Makrygianni 2017) compounded these pressures, and the solidarity networks extended their attention to the issues faced by forcibly displaced people (Arampatzi, Kouki & Pettas 2022). As the state proved unable to meet demand, informal responses emerged as complex ecologies of care, cultural exchange and political claim in forms of self-managed squats, repurposed buildings and grassroots social centres (Tsavdaroglou 2018). These initiatives actively contested what their participants viewed as insufficient and disempowering responses of the state. Rather than reproducing the asymmetrical relationships implied by 'charity' and 'aid' where displaced people are positioned as passive recipients, solidarity initiatives advocated for social relations based on mutual participation and equality irrespective of background or legal status (Alexandri 2015). As several scholars noted (e.g., Kaika 2012; Leontidou 2014; Alexandri 2015), such practices worked against the

‘othering’ embedded in many migration policies by placing people side by side rather than in binary oppositions.

These infrastructures, however, had to operate under precarious conditions. Following the June 2019 parliamentary elections, the newly elected government targeted refugee squats which led to public evictions and the dismantling of occupied spaces like *City Plaza* which was a former hotel turned refuge and solidarity hub (Kotronaki, Lafazani & Maniatis 2018). Soon after, the COVID-19 pandemic brought further constraints and disrupted those fragile ecosystems. For many arriving the city after 2015, Athens thus remained an unsettled and unstable ground. As physical refuges were lost or became increasingly insecure, the digital sphere continued functioning as a ground for claiming presence. Social media, websites and online archives were mobilised for coordination, advocacy and cultural heritage preservation by acting as digital anchors when the material ground grew increasingly constrained.

In this paper, which is part of a broader project on architectures of displacement, I examine these practices, which I call ‘digital anchors’, as part of the wider political and spatial practices in Athens. Drawing on my fieldwork and digital research, I centre on three initiatives: *Hotel City Plaza*, *Communitism* and *Musikarama*, each of which harnessed both physical and digital strategies to sustain community and solidarity in the context of forced migration. These cases show that in contexts of forced migration, the sites of architectural production are not always visible or limited to physical form but extend to the digital realm. It suggests that attending to these hybrid and relational assemblages, we can unpack a broader conception of architectural agency while engaging with disrupted, unsettled grounds of forced migration.

Notes on Methods and Context

This paper draws on my doctoral fieldwork in Athens from 2018 to 2019 and my subsequent digital research into what I describe as the city’s digital geographies of displacement. This period sits between two political moments, which are the so-called ‘long summer of migration’ in 2015 and the June 2019 parliamentary elections, after which refugee solidarity infrastructures came under sustained state pressure. This was a formative period in which solidarity activities were at their height yet faced growing threats, which made it possible to observe both the consolidation of physical spaces of care and the emergence of digital practices that took on a new significance as material footholds diminished.

The 2015 migratory arrivals brought tens of thousands of forcibly displaced people into Greece, and the EU–Turkey Statement of March 2016 effectively closed the Balkan route which trapped many newly arrived migrants in the country for extended periods (Oikonomakis 2018). As state responses were widely perceived as inadequate or hostile, solidarity groups established self-managed refugee squats and other initiatives that combined accommodation with cultural and political activities that are often described as “political infrastructures of care” (Kapsali 2020). Following the July 2019 parliamentary elections, a coordinated campaign to evict refugee squats in central Athens further disrupted these already fragile arrangements. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic compounded these pressures and accelerated the loss and displacement of physical solidarity spaces. As physical spaces were increasingly unsettled, digital practices became more central for

coordination of events and activities as well as maintaining continuation for solidarity initiatives.

These digital activities had symbolic weight for maintaining visibility, sustaining narratives and projecting claims on the city, but they also intervened directly in lived spatial realities. Online announcements, event coordination and archiving shape where and how people gather, mobilised resources and sustained relationships in the city. In this way, the digital actively participated in producing the geographies of displacement and solidarity in Athens. Throughout my fieldwork, I traced how the transformations of physical sites were accompanied and sometimes mitigated by digital efforts through observations on the ground and online, which revealed hybrid geographies at the core of this study. These provided insights into how solidarity infrastructures are both socially and spatially organised, and how their architectures intersected with political action.

In this paper, I focus on three initiatives to navigate digital practices linked to displacement in Athens each of which illustrate different modes of digital anchoring. These cases offer distinct spatial trajectories and a diversity of spatial tactics from political housing and cultural heritage preservation to mobile/nomadic cultural production:

1. ***Hotel City Plaza:***
a large-scale, self-managed housing squat,
2. ***Communitism:***
a cultural heritage project that transformed into a digital archive under threat of eviction,
3. ***Musikarama:***
a grassroots musical collective that operated across venues before building a studio in 2019.

While these initiatives had their unique trajectories and relationships to space, they were also interconnected through events and collaborations that cut across their boundaries. *Musikarama*, for example, undertook performances both in *City Plaza* and in *Communitism's* original building. Together, they were part of a wider solidarity ecology that linked local struggles in Athens to broader transglobal networks.

Theoretical Frameworks

On 'Hybrid Spatialities' of Forced Migration

In the recent years, studies of migration and Information and Communication Technology begun to examine how digital technologies mediate identity, belonging and mobility in different ways, particularly within media and migration scholarship. Georgiou (2013, 2019), for example, explores how digital engagement can function as expressions of belonging for diasporic communities, while Leurs (2015) and Latonero and Kift (2018) conceptualise "digital passages" to describe the intertwined physical and virtual routes migrants navigate in the formation of hybrid identities. Alencar, Kondova and Ribbens (2019) focus on migrants' use of smartphones in Netherlands as part of their journeys and a means to preserve memories, and Galis and Makrygianni's (2022) engage closely with individual journeys of migrants in Athens, and how digital practices can produce "ruptures in the sovereignty scapes" by carving alternative modes of presence within restrictive governance frameworks.

Read spatially, these accounts point to hybrid practices as modes of claiming presence within geographies of forced migration. Both physical and digital practices can be understood as acts of claiming space by producing footholds—however temporary—within

shifting conditions of governance and precarity. While scholarship on hybrid spatialities is expanding across multiple disciplines, there remains scope to deepen and diversify the contexts in which these practices are examined, both individually and collectively, as forms of spatial claim. This paper takes up that opening by engaging these debates through an architectural lens, in which such spatial realities have received comparatively limited attention. For architecture, attending to hybrid spatialities brings into view modes of spatial production that challenge an overpowering focus on material site as the locus of claim, and instead draws attention to how architectural practice both informs, and is informed by, digital infrastructures emerging through practices of solidarity.

On 'Claiming Space' with Digital Anchors

This paper adopts a relational approach to architecture and draws from critical spatial practice to read it as continually made and remade through the interplay of relations, practices and networks (e.g., Awan, Schneider & Till 2011). In contexts of forced migration, this approach is particularly necessary to unearth lived realities where the materiality of spaces for forcibly displaced people is subject to erasure through various forms of inflicted precarity, temporariness and various forms of political hostility. Following Lefebvre's work, Mitchell (2003: 81) contends that space is not only where rights are contested, but also "actively produced". Here, claiming space is an act of practicing rights against being disenfranchised by structural orders and property regulations.

Since the austerity crisis in Athens, solidarity groups have pursued socio-economic alternatives operating outside capitalist models that disproportionately disadvantaged

those most affected by the crises (Travlou & Bernát 2022). In the context of forced migration, these solidarity infrastructures extended architectures of displacement beyond refugee camps and other sites of confinement.

As physical occupation of urban space became increasingly disrupted and precarious, digital practices emerged as an integral component of these efforts. Digital networks were mobilised to sustain claims to space, memory and history, and to counter isolation and erasure. In this way, social media pages, knowledge exchanges, announcements, event listings and online archives functioned as spatial practices for communities to organise, connect and maintain presence even when the physical ground was unstable or absent.

Connections and Disruptions

Focusing on this aspect of claiming space, I position digital practices of solidarity as part of the wider solidarity infrastructures in Athens. In these contexts, online presence becomes a ground of action that is political with a transformative potential. Attending to the hybridities between digital and physical spaces, we can get deeper insights into how initiatives like *City Plaza*, *Communitism*, and *Musikarama* sustained their claims when histories of the displaced and other marginalised groups were aimed to be deliberately erased or overwritten, and how digital traces helped preserve and support their presence. Such claims often operate through everyday acts of co-presence, material care, and shared governance, echoing what Hou (2010: 5) describes as the tactical production of space through community-led action.

The interaction between digital technologies and geographies of displacement, however, extends far

beyond these localised efforts. It spans a wide range of practices from top-down, institutional interventions to more hybrid and bottom-up configurations. A prevalent framing of such efforts has been through “digital humanitarianism” discourse (e.g., Akhmatova & Akhmatova 2020; Johns 2023; Aradau 2024). However, the logics in which humanitarianism operates, and its associations with moral economies have been widely critiqued for the unequal power dynamics they reproduce (e. g., Ticktin 2011; Fassin 2011; Redfield 2013) and therefore, is not deployed to frame the digital practices discussed in this paper.

Digital systems, indeed, are not inherently emancipatory. This is particularly evident when considering the longer histories of participation and control embedded in digital technologies. Infrastructures once associated with openness and participation have also been shaped by commercial imperatives, surveillance logics and forms of centralised governance, producing uneven conditions of access, visibility and control (van Dijck 2013; Andrejevic 2007). In humanitarian contexts, these dynamics are compounded by the fact that widely used tools from biometric identification to predictive analytics originate in military and security sectors (Duffield 2016), and subject their participants to systems of control and extraction that can reproduce the very forms of domination these interventions claim to redress.

These critiques point to a broader pattern where digital systems, even when presented as participatory or accessible, may not deliver on these promises, or may even work to the opposite end. Rather, their effects are contingent on the conditions in which they are deployed and need careful evaluation. In what follows, I examine three cases that aimed to operate outside

top-down governance structures. These initiatives used the digital to sustain political agency, connect with struggles both locally and beyond, and to make claims on the city despite its unstable physical grounds instead of remote forms of management or depoliticised ‘care’. The following cases examine how these dynamics unfold through different spatial registers in Athens under conditions of instability.

Three Modes of Digital Anchoring

Hotel City Plaza: Anchoring Housing within Transglobal Solidarity

The difficulties faced by Greece’s forcibly displaced population significantly worsened when the Turkey-EU agreement went into effect in March 2016. When demands were not met by governmental and humanitarian solutions, activists and solidarity networks resorted to direct action by taking over abandoned buildings across Athens to accommodate stranded individuals and families. To address the shortcomings of governmental and humanitarian initiatives, many disused buildings in Athens have been occupied to host displaced people and families that were then stuck in the country. One of these was the former *City Plaza Hotel* (often referred to as *City Plaza*) in central Athens, which, although one of many such squats, soon became the most emblematic.

City Plaza was occupied from April 2016 to July 2019, and it united activists from around the world in what Squire (2018) refers to as a collective opposition to the disposable nature of migrant life. Around 380 refugees lived in the building by May 2016 (Squire 2018: 120), and it developed into a self-run community that included childcare, legal assistance, language instruction and spaces for political

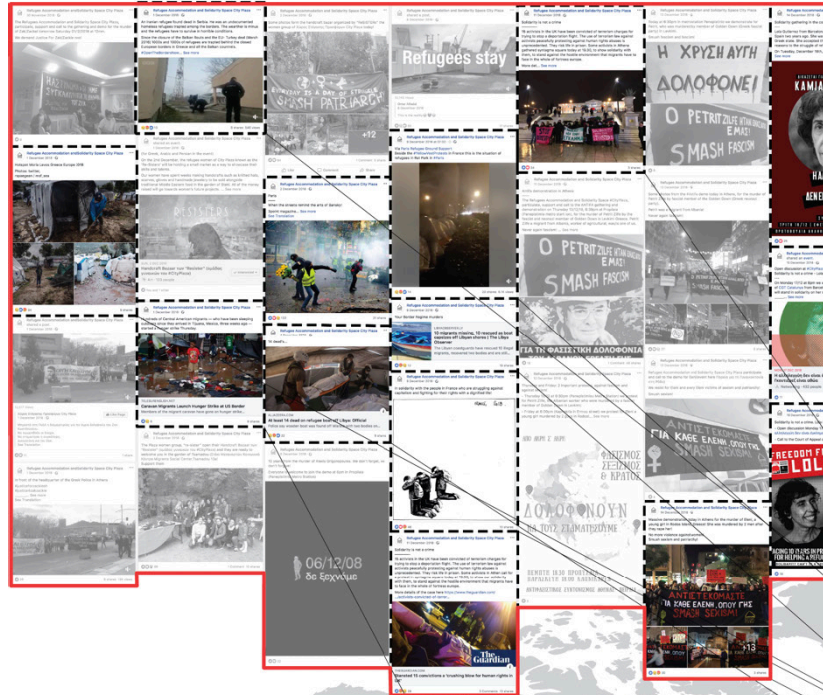
organising. The symbolic geography of *City Plaza* went well beyond its Athenian street, even if its seven stories were the physical anchor in the city. The collective broadcast political messages from around the world on social media, including calls for international days of action, campaigns against deportations in Europe and news of protests in Turkey, Palestine, and Afghanistan. It also announced local assemblies, solidarity dinners, and demonstrations.

In my mapping of public posts from a single month in 2018 (Figure 1), the initiative's digital traces extend outward from Athens to multiple continents and form a cartography of alliances that collapse geographical distance and borders into political proximity. This positioned *City Plaza* as part of a transnational movement and showed that struggles over housing, migration and dignity in Athens were connected to those beyond its cityscapes.

During my fieldwork in and on Athens, I observed how *City Plaza's* digital networks, particularly through social media, interwove events across the city's solidarity landscape. The first-floor social hub was a dynamic space for a wider network of grassroots collaboration. It hosted shared events with groups such as *Musikarama* which undertook musical performances, and the digital outreach turned into a street-level engagement.

These connections were maintained and amplified online. Facebook posts and livestreams publicised events, documented activities and connected the community to struggles and allies far beyond Greece. In this case, we see how physical and digital infrastructures can operate together to sustain political presence, even in contexts where the future of a space is uncertain. Its digital footprint did not simply record what happened inside the building but

30 Nov 2018



extended the reach of its activities, built networks of support and contributed to a shared urban geography of solidarity.

City Plaza's digital anchoring extended its political agency far beyond its physical site. By broadcasting struggles and alliances across borders, it wove the housing struggle in Athens into a global solidarity network. Here, the digital was not supplementary but constitutive of the squat's urban geography and sustained its reach while under threat of eviction.

Communitism: Anchoring Cultural Heritage in Flux

About a mile away from *City Plaza* and in the heart of Metaxourgeio where neoclassical architectures meet multiple layers of contested urban histories, *Communitism* sought to revive a disused building, Kerameikou 28, through self-managed cultural production. This project began as a self-managed cultural and community space in an unutilised building through practices of creative communing. The project members stated that their approach is based on “sharing spaces, means of production, competences and time, through practices of cooperation, solidarity and mutualism” (*Communitism* n.d.). The purpose of the project was both to revive disused heritage buildings and to reimagine them as commons through cultural production. The building hosted art exhibitions, theatre performances, skills workshops and public discussions, often in collaboration with migrant and refugee groups, before it left the building in June 2023.

During its use, and despite hosting many activities, the project was under constant pressure as it did not hold legal ownership to the building. On their Instagram page, *Communitism* announced the end of their residing in Kerameikou 28 after six years (*Communitism* 2023a).



Figure 01: A map showing public posts from the Facebook public page of City Plaza from 30 November to 21 December 2018 with links across geographical borders.

Olcay, 2021.

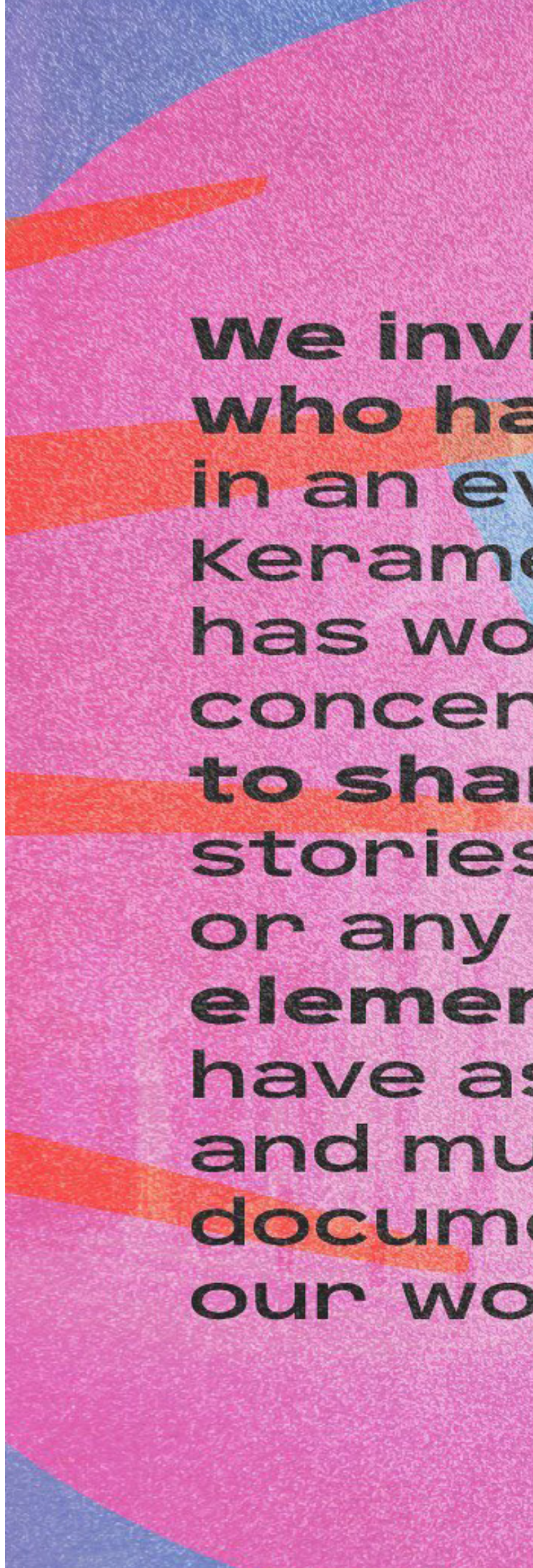
In May 2023, they issued a call to supporters across their social media accounts (see Figure 2) to contribute to a digital archive including this note (*Communitism* 2023b):

We invite artists and creative professionals who are motivated by our purpose to work with us to raise awareness to as many people as possible about the cultural heritage that is being lost from Metaxourgeio - but also throughout Athens - day by day.

We invite anyone who has participated in an event within Keramelkou 28 or has worked on any essay concerning our practice, to share with us photos, stories, texts or any other archive elements, in order to have as complete and multi-aspected documentation of our work as possible.

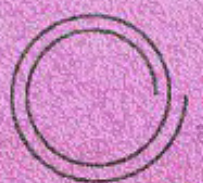
We call on the social & creative spaces we have been in collaboration within the past years, to hold space for the communities hosted in Kerameikou 28; A wave of creativity is about to burst in the city!

In this framing, the departure from Kerameikou 28 was presented less as an ending than as a shift in form, with activities and networks repositioned to operate across the city. The call for contributions to a digital archive turned the moment into an act of documenting as another spatial intervention through extending the situated activities onto an online archive that could be accessed, shared and expanded. Social media activity during this period—with some posts receiving over 200 reactions—points to a reach that extended well beyond the building's immediate surroundings. Following the move, *Communitism* was re-established in another building. Its digital archive remains as a record of continuity through rupture and preserves a collective memory by providing a platform to sustain visibility during periods of physical instability.



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Musikarama: Anchoring Soundscapes

While *City Plaza* and *Communitism* projects were based on specific buildings, *Musikarama's* solidarity work unfolded largely through mobility, where they initially used multiple urban sites and digital platforms to create and sustain their activities. The project started in 2017 as a grassroots initiative and brought together musicians from refugee, migrant, local and international backgrounds. The group initially had no dedicated venue and instead, they performed in solidarity spaces, public squares and cultural hubs across Athens including *City Plaza* and *Communitism*, and collaborated with other grassroots initiatives such as *Khora*, *ANKAA*, *ECHO Mobile Library*, and the *Jafra Foundation*.

Music in this case offered a mode of spatial occupation that did not rely on property rights or permanence. Inhabiting what could be called ephemeral soundscapes, their performances temporarily transformed streets, courtyards and squares into sites of political visibility. This mobility also allowed them to reach audiences in places often excluded from cultural life: in 2019, they performed in *Moria Refugee Camp* on Lesbos and organised music lessons in *Malakasa Refugee Camp*.

From its inception, *Musikarama's* identity and audience were sustained by its digital presence. Social media platforms functioned as noticeboards for performances, calls for collaboration and invitations to rehearsals. Video recordings of live events circulated online and supported their reach to extend beyond those physically imminent. During the COVID-19 lockdown, when in-person gatherings were impossible, they shifted to online jam sessions, lessons and tutorials to maintain community and visibility despite the loss of shared physical space.

In July 2020, *Musikarama* organised two public events: a Dabke and Greek Dance Class and Dabke and Jamming Session (Figure 3). The first was organised in collaboration with the *Syrian & Greek Youth Forum (SGYF)*, and the second with both *SGYF* and *Palmier Solidarity House*. *SGYF* was active in Athens between 2018 and 2023, and described by its members as a collective that promotes human rights and works towards creating platforms for active citizenship in Greece through cultural exchanges to foster knowledge for “a better future for all”. (*SGYF* n.d.). *Palmier Solidarity House*, on the other hand, was a seven-apartment building in central Athens that offered “solidarity cohabitation” for about 40 refugees.

These event posts extended beyond only introducing schedules and logistics of the event. They provided explanations of *Dabke*, a Middle Eastern folk dance found mainly in Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, Syria and Iraq, and explained “jamming” as a collaborative, improvisatory way of making music. They also outlined the roles of the three organising committees and extended invitations to local and international solidarity groups, along with former and current residents of squats worldwide (*Musikarama* 2020). With these online circulations, these events became embedded in a wider network where social media acted as both a noticeboard and meeting ground that anchored *Musikarama's* soundscapes and cultural activities within Athens' geographies of solidarity.

The digital anchoring allowed the group to remain visible, coordinate across multiple venues and mobilise audiences in a city where spaces for such gatherings were often temporary or contested. Such digital anchoring connected *Musikarama's* cultural production within a dispersed geography of solidarity and extended its claim to space both locally and transglobally.



Fri, 31 Jul 2020

Dabke and Greek dance class in Metaxourghio by SGYF

Event by The Syrian & Greek Youth Forum / SGYF



Sun, 19 Jul 2020

Dabke & Jamming Session Οικ. Ενίσ. του Palmier Solidarity House

Event by Στέκι Μεταναστών Κοινωνικό Κέντρο Migrants Social Center, Tsamadou 13a

Figure 03:

A Screenshot of two events posted publicly on Musikarama's Facebook Page: Dabke and Greek dance class and Dabke and Jamming Session.

Musikarama, 2020.

Across Hybrid Practices

Taken together, the three cases show how digital anchoring emerges through different spatial registers in response to conditions of precarity and displacement. Although each initiative operates at a different scale and through distinct practices, they are linked by a shared understanding of space as relational and contingent which is sustained through ongoing coordination rather than secured through stable occupation alone.

At *City Plaza*, digital practices of claiming space worked to extend the occupation of a building into a wider field of transglobal solidarity which allowed political presence to continue even as the future of the building itself became uncertain. In the case of *Communitism*, digital practices redirected efforts of supporting a specific heritage building

to preserving collective memory and cultural production through archiving in the face of eviction and relocation. For *Musikarama*, digital platforms supported mobility and helped sustain musical practices and collaborations across a series of temporary sites, performances and moments of spatial loss.

Despite these different configurations, digital anchoring functioned as a way of maintaining spatial presence when physical occupation was unstable, contested or short-lived. Rather than replacing material space, digital practices remained closely entangled with it, extending or reworking spatial claims as circumstances changed. Read together, the cases point towards forms of architectural agency that are not tied to enclosure or permanence, but instead emerge through the capacity to sustain relations, memory and visibility on unsettled ground.

Discussion: Hybrid Claims to Space on Unsettled Grounds

The three cases presented in this paper show how digital anchoring becomes a spatial strategy in situations where the physical grounds of solidarity are disputed, unstable or completely absent. By increasing reach, maintaining visibility and facilitating forms of political presence that endure despite disruption, the digital in each case complements the physical location rather than taking its place. In this way, these practices represent what Leurs (2015) and Latonero & Kift (2018) refer to as “digital passages,” in which digital and physical pathways are intertwined and mutually constitutive, and exemplify what Galis & Makrygianni (2022) define as the emergence of ruptures in sovereignty regimes through claims of alternative modes of presence.

These hybrid activities can be read as acts of claiming space which involve more than just physical occupation. They involve reclaiming agency, memory and presence in areas that are more difficult to control or evict. In the case of *City Plaza*, digital networks placed the housing fight of the squat into a broader geography of solidarity by amplifying it into a transglobal register. *Communism’s* digital archive preserved collective memory beyond physical tenure by transforming a building’s function into a cultural repository. Through its online coordination and promotion, *Musikarama’s* itinerant cultural output brought solidarity soundscapes to areas that would not otherwise be included in cultural life.

Nevertheless, despite the rigour of these political acts and their influence, they are not without limitations. As Travlou and Bernát (2022) note, solidarity initiatives have often operated as essential

substitutes for state support, yet their reach has remained constrained and uneven. In practice, digital anchoring can privilege those who already have access to devices, connectivity, linguistic competence or a degree of legal and social security that allows for public participation. Undocumented migrants, people with limited digital literacy or those unwilling or unable to appear visibly online may therefore remain marginal to these forms of engagement, even within solidarity frameworks.

Furthermore, digital presence is never a neutral tool due to how digital systems are entangled with surveillance logics, commercial imperatives and institutional control (van Dijck 2013; Andrejevic 2007; Duffield 2016). The same channels that convey messages of solidarity can also profile communities, harvest data and make them visible to state surveillance. This is an inevitable condition as digital anchoring allows for new kinds of political agency, but it also functions inside systems that could jeopardise the same independence it aims to protect. Rather than suggesting withdrawal from these spaces, this calls for a critical and strategic engagement by recognising the risks while leveraging the openings they create. These struggles will inevitably operate within such tensions and the challenge is to navigate them in ways that preserve autonomy, sustain presence and continue claiming space even under the constraints of hostile or extractive systems.

Navigating these tensions demands an expanded understanding of architectural ‘site’ which follows the shifting assemblies of people, activities and digital platforms through which presence and solidarity are sustained. In Athens, unsettled grounds shaped by economic austerity, evictions and restrictive migration governance have given rise to architectures that are both digital and tangible, as well as relational and tactical. These hybrid spatialities

reveal social and technological infrastructures beyond buildings as sites to claim and contest space.

Concluding Notes

This paper has examined how solidarity initiatives in Athens mobilise digital anchoring as a spatial tactic in contexts where the physical grounds of presence are unstable, contested or absent altogether. Through the three cases — *City Plaza*, *Communitism* and *Musikarama* — it has shown that digital practices can extend physical acts of solidarity by enabling visibility, coordination, participation and political presence to endure despite material disruption. This way, these initiatives demonstrate that claiming space is not limited to occupying buildings or plots of land, but also involves sustaining relationships, memories and visibility across platforms and geographies.

The paper has also underlined the hybrid nature of these practices: digital and physical realms do not stand in binary opposition but operate in constant interplay by shaping and reinforcing one other. This interplay can open new possibilities for political agency, yet remains bound up in wider conditions of precarity. Digital anchoring is shaped by the same economic, legal and infrastructural inequalities it seeks to resist, and it unfolds within systems entangled with surveillance and commercial logics. As such, these practices operate within enduring tensions between visibility and vulnerability, autonomy and dependence, as well as solidarity and exclusion.

Rather than viewing these contradictions as grounds for withdrawal, this paper argues for a critical and strategic engagement with digital infrastructures which capitalises on their capacity

to sustain presence while mitigating their risks. The dispersed and mobile constellations of people broaden conceptualisations of architectural site where activities and platforms through which solidarity is enacted. Recognising hybrid spatialities as valid and significant sites of practice, architectural discourse can engage more comprehensively with displacement, solidarity and the politics of presence, particularly in contexts where the physical ground remains unsettled.

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Figures

- A map showing public posts from the Facebook public page of City Plaza from 30 November to 21 December 2018 with links across geographical borders, Olcay, 2021. **Figure 01**
- Poster shared on *Communitism's* social media accounts, Communitism, 2025. **Figure 02**
- A Screenshot of two events posted publicly on Musikarama's Facebook Page: Dabke and Greek dance class and Dabke and Jamming Session, Musikarama, 2020. **Figure 03**



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