

S-MIG-4 | Internal Immigrants and the Making of the Modern House  
Cooperative house-building practices in the aftermath of WWII

Panayotis Tournikiotis and Konstantina Kalfa are co-chairing the session [Internal Immigrants and the Making of the Modern House](#), in EAUH 2020. The session explores the social, political and cultural matrix that shaped internal immigrants as both the subjects and agents of their respective country's postwar transition to modernity by virtue of constructing their own houses.

In the aftermath of WWII, internal migration led to new and pressing housing demands. New slums were created and met, to a certain extent, by State-planned schemes which were either furthering the well-established pre-war policy of housing blocks or developing a new type of housing provision which involved the migrants in the construction of their own houses (the so-called "aided self-help" system). A third approach soon emerged out of private initiative, which involved self-help cooperative house-building practices applied en masse, under State tolerance, or even after official incentive policies. These practices engaged the land, capital and labour of future occupants and small-time construction companies, thus prescribing an approach to house-building as well as to real estate which differs from large-scale projects of urban development. This third approach to housing is the focal point of the session. An indicative example is the case of the Greek postwar city. Rural migrants that vastly increased the Athenian and other Greek cities' population between 1950 and 1970, found themselves transforming the city through a popular contract of exchange of land for new apartments on this land, known as antiparochì. Antiparochì spread the typical modern-inspired mid-rise apartment block, the polykatoikìa, creating a sense of progress, prosperity and modernization, from the level of everyday facilities to the overall image of the city.

Paraphrasing Friedman's groundbreaking study "Women and the Making of the Modern House" (1998), "Internal Immigrants and the Making of the Modern House" aims to gather similar examples of house-building practices that expand our perception of the possible strands and forms of architectural modernity and the subjects that produce and/or consume it. Furthermore, it wishes to challenge the very concept of the "modern house," advancing beyond the masterpieces of modernism and the established cultural centers of modernity. It also aspires to develop critical stances toward the perception of such examples of mass embracement of "alternative" modernization paths and homeownership as an exclusively bottom-up phenomenon. The examination of the administrative, political and economic context and the impact of Cold War politics in the making of the modern house by internal immigrants are crucial for the understanding and comparative examination of the different cases.



Building the modern Athenian apartment (1960s, photo credits: D. Koutroumpilas personal archive)

We invite scholars and researchers in the history of architecture and urban planning but also in anthropology, human geography, development and Cold War studies, etc. engaging with the theme of postwar, internal immigration and the making of the modern house in various countries and regions to [submit their paper proposals](#) related (but not limited) to the following themes, by

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- Legislation, institutions, policies, bodies of knowledge and the discourse on internal immigration and the modern house.
- Case-studies of cooperative house-building practices. Architectural or other analyses. Residential typologies, etc.
- Assessment of their impact on the [image of the] city and novel types of aesthetic appreciation of the city and the dawn of postmodernism.
- The social stratification of the multistory apartment block and maximum mix.
- Political framework and social impact of self-help cooperative practices.
- Comparative studies that examine the relation between impromptu, bottom-up cooperative house-building practices and planned housing provision schemes of self-sheltering ("aided self-help," "core houses" etc).

The session seeks to advance beyond theorizations of historical instances of cooperative house-building practices, idealized as unique, bottom-up, spontaneous approaches to housing or, at the antipode, criticized as failed attempts and incomplete transitions to modernity. Our aim is to gather papers that will enable us to critically revisit and investigate patterns of similarities or map out structural differences between various cities and countries, and between various periodizations of history. The session chairs' aim is to publish the session's contributions and outcomes as an edited peer-reviewed volume.