CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION ART

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SINIKISMOI
2011-2012

EVANTHIA TSELIKA

This booklet includes text and photographs that have been produced from the documentation of the actions and happenings of this project that dealt with the urban neighbourhoods for displaced persons in Nicosia. The word 'sinikismoi' literally means settlements in Greek. It is also how these constructed environments are colloquially known in Cyprus. These social housing developments are mostly referred to in Cyprus as 'refugee neighbourhoods' ('prosfigikoi sinikismoi' in Greek), even though the state officially refers to them as displaced housing estates. These urban neighbourhoods of the Cypriot state estates were built to rehouse the internally displaced Greek Cypriots that fled their homes from North Cyprus in 1974. As they are usually colloquially referred to as 'sinikismoi' I decided to use this name to refer to this project. It was also the only project carried out in Greek and as such I felt it was more appropriate for the local name to be used.

Please watch the 'Presence in Absence' and 'Sinikismoi' videos on the Conflict Transformation Art DVD before reading the rest of this booklet. You can also refer to the blog of one of the two projects 'Unconscious Architecture'- **unconsciousarchitecture.blogspot.com**

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECTS

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECTS

The series of these three Booklets documents the projects that have been carried out within my practice led PhD process that examines conflict transformation art, as a facet of socially engaged practice within segregated urban landscapes (2010-2012). The booklets present an overview of the projects that I have been involved in developing and act as the documentation of practice which is analyzed in the written thesis. The booklets demonstrate information on the project, describe what took place, provide visual evidence and an in depth presentation of the situations that were manifested through the practice. It is the practice that allowed the understanding of conflict transformation art to emerge and which also enabled a testing of different methods so as to negotiate and critically reflect on the function of social art practices within the context of socio-spatial divisions that exist within urban environments.

Conflict transformation art is thus presented as an interpretation of a practice that emerged through the examination of the role of socially engaged art within the context of urban segregation through the case study of the divided city of Nicosia, Cyprus. Through this process what was demonstrated are the ties of art to conflict resolution which are presented in Nicosia. This local narrative of social art practice was then used to develop a way of working that combines these two methodological frameworks and which creates new narratives as to how conflict is reshaping the way that we view our cities. Conflict transformation art focuses on the elements of conflict, dialogue, challenging dominant hegemony and bringing different social groups together through formats such as the exhibition, the workshop, the public dialogue and public performance.

These booklets map this practice led research that focuses on how conflict has shaped socially engaged art production within divided cities and also explore the processes of development of the projects. Due to the collaborative element that all the projects portray in their development and the involvement of different social groups in their manifestation, a large emphasis is placed on reflecting all the different voices that have been heard through these projects.

The 'Public Works' booklet documents a project from 2010 that examined Nicosia as a divided city and which focused on the landscape of the old city that is characterized by this ethno-national separation and which at the time was largely inhabited by migrant groups and which depicted the initial steps of a regeneration process. This project was carried out in public and semi public spaces and it tried to reflect on how different social groups interpret the conflicted landscape of the city. The 'Re Aphrodite meets Alice Wang' booklet focuses on the experience of a Chinese American in Cyprus and on informal social research that was carried out with female Asian migrants due to this unique position of access and which demonstrated elements of abuse by Cypriot men to migrant women, the lack of civic representation of migrants in Cypriot society and the limited interaction between Cypriots and migrants. The 'Sinikismoi' (refugee neighbourhoods in Greek) booklet looks at two different projects that took place within the state social housing projects that exist in Nicosia and which were developed to rehouse Greek Cypriot displaced people after the 1974 conflict. The projects within the 'Sinikismoi' umbrella included a public performance, a residency, an exhibition, an intervention in the space of the displaced housing, workshops and a public dialogue in relation to how these social spaces have been utilized by politicians within their ethno-nationalist discourse and how they exist in the periphery of social and urban life in the city.

A DVD accompanies the booklets and this includes video documentation from all three projects. The booklets also act as documentation of the projects.

An overview of each project is provided, the people who were involved in each one are presented, the funders are mentioned, the locations are explained and what actually took place within each one. What these booklets demonstrate is how these projects were produced. Due to the collaborative nature that I had decided to use from the beginning of this research, each project was produced through collaboration with other people. Because of my focus on dialogical practice many voices can be heard through the documentation process. These are the voices of the collaborators, the contributors, the participants and of the members of chance audiences. This documentation process allowed for particular facets of the projects to rise to the surface and this in turn shaped the critical analysis of how art can be used to facilitate social change within the framework of segregated urban landscapes. The element of collectivity and the creation of contexts that bring together different social groups allowed for an understanding of how social art practices can provide contexts where radical forms of democracy can be demonstrated.

As stated above the projects have all been the result of collaborations with different individuals and in the booklets different voices can be heard- of collaborators, participants and of audiences. However I have produced the content of these booklets and they are an integral part of this PhD research project, as they provide the evidence of practice through the documentation process. Even though these booklets present the voices, art work and research of collaborators and participants, they are still authored by me and thus demonstrate these projects through my own lens and interpretation.

I would like to thank everyone that made these projects possible: collaborators, participants and funders alike. Particularly I would like to thank Demetris Taliotis- 'Public Works', Chrystalleni Loizidou- 'Re Aphrodite meets Alice Wang', Natalie Heller and Orestis Lambrou- 'Sinikismoi' projects.

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INTRODUCTION - OVERVIEW OF 'SINIKISMOI'

2. INTRODUCTION - OVERVIEW OF 'SINIKISMOI'

The last of the projects that have been carried out for the purposes of this PhD research project are all related to the Cypriot State Housing in Nicosia. I had moved to Nicosia from London in the spring of 2011 and into a family owned apartment within the displaced state housing in the Platy neighbourhood in East Nicosia. Immediately all three patterns of segregation identifications I had decided to focus on (ethnic, gender, race) became evident. I immediately decided that I wanted to explore this terrain. This was even more interesting as this was the space in which I had partly been raised. The change from what I remembered was immense. Gone were the children that used to run around, gone were the beautiful gardens surrounding the homes and the smells of the Cypriot grandmothers' cooking. The building has six apartments and since I moved in, 3 residents have passed away and only 3 out of the 6 apartments are being lived in at present. Straight away it became evident which direction my last project was to follow.

Following the displacement of 36% of the population (approximately 200, 000) from the North of the island in the events of 1974 the state aimed to solve the homeless condition of thousands through the erection of low-cost houses in newly established Government housing estates. The displaced housing estates found in the South part of Cyprus were constructed hurriedly between the years of 1976 to 2000 and they form the primary example of communitarian architectural environments (of common living) on the island. There are sixty-nine state housing estates and they include low rise blocks of flats and homes. Through this scheme the cypriot government provided low-cost houses free of charge to 'low-income' families following their displacement from the north of the island. In the period of 1975-86 12,500 families found what was meant to be 'temporary' housing in such projects. These were comprehensively planned to include basic services such as shopping centres, community centres, open spaces, schools, play-grounds, medical centres and homes for the elderly. The use of these 'common spaces' now-days is minimal. To date, the state has constructed approximately 14,000 housing units which accommodate approximately 60,000 people across the island (Department of Town Planning and Housing).

All houses, blocks of flats and communal spaces were constructed with the same basic architectural design, building components and materials; thus implementing the concept of industrialization within house construction. Repetition of individual components was used in the design thus facilitating mass production, ensuring low costs and quicker delivery at a time of need. In Cyprus through the 'displaced housing projects' what was being attempted was to find a temporary solution for large numbers of homeless people that had been living in tents.

These 'displaced housing projects' are spaces that have become attached to the notion of 'internal refugee', even though now they are urban spaces that are increasingly being inhabited by elderly refugees that are slowly passing away, families on very low incomes and migrant families that seek cheap accommodation. Working creatively about and within the location of displaced housing estates in South Nicosia (that are the main example of social housing on the island), means creating situations outside the centre of cultural production and more in the neighbourhood fabric of the city. The social theorist Roger Zetter has researched and written in relation to the issue of the "refugees" of the Cyprus Republic after 1974. He presents the contradictory nature of the re housing of the displaced Cypriots, by indicating that they were integrated in the South part of the island but at the same time they were differentiated because of the

characteristics of this state housing programme. Zetter indicates the unique nature of the displaced housing programme because of its magnitude and its quality. The displaced – or a large number of them, were re housed in permanent shelter funded by the Cypriot government. Zetter also emphasizes their fiscal integration in the 1980s and 1990s due to the post destructive rapid economic development that the rebuilding brought to the island (Zetter 1986, 1991, 1999).

These built environments of the city are isolated in terms of their presence within the context of the public sphere but they have an intense public presence as a reminder of war, of ethnic identity and of collective memory. The lack of substantial dialogue in relation to the Cypriot displaced estates, to which the locals refer to as 'prosfigikoi sinikismoi' (refugee settlements) became the springboard for carrying out research based on the social narratives of these built environments. The Cypriot state developed these spaces hurriedly to meet the needs that followed 1974 and thus even used architectural plans for estates that were built in Britain. The hurried nature of this endeavour is presented not only through the swift architectural construction but also through the fact that they created new communities. The state through its policies did not re house the displaced villages and towns together. Instead they separated the uprooted communities, creating new collectives so that they could avoid facing social organisation and unrest. The displaced persons living in the estates were given the deeds to their homes in 2007, thereby transforming the 'sinikismoi' from state owned property to mostly privately owned property. The inhabitants of these spaces today and the new communities of these semi state and semi private environments are mostly displaced elderly Cypriots and migrants. Through my work I have tried to explore how the built environment defines the idea of community and how community defines the idea of the built environment. Exploring

and challenging these spaces aims to present how they have been defined as live, organic and historic remnants of war. This project as part of the PhD process of the practice led research blends artistic, theoretical and social practices and aims to problematize what state housing means in Cyprus and how the community and the social frameworks transform these architectonic settings. Particularly important is how urban planning is appropriated by the people and thus becomes more organic in nature and how art can try and activate these spaces, bring new people into these neglected environments and facilitate dialogue and relationship building.

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PRESENCE IN ABSENCE - PERFORMANCE

3. PRESENCE IN ABSENCE - PERFORMANCE

10.06.2011
Plati Estate, Nicosia

Press Image: Evanthia Tselika

Collaborators- Antonis Antoniou, Natalie Heller, Nikoleta Verykiou, Evanthia Tselika

Voice- Dimitris Alfas

Filmmaker- Rozy Sarkis

Video Edit- Evanthia Tselika

Sponsors- Cyprus Ministry of Culture, Praktoreio No Cultures Space, Kafene Drosia

The performance 'Presence in Absence' took place in my neighbourhood in Eastern Nicosia, in a traditional Cypriot café, a 'kafene' as it is known locally, which overlooks the Green Line and the new university campus. This was how the whole experimentation with the spaces started. The performance was initially organized and developed with performer Natalie Heller and we applied together to the Ministry of Education for funding. This took place at exactly the same time period as 'Re Aphrodite meets Alice Wang'. The 'kafene' is a space that is habitually frequented by only men, elderly gentlemen that go there. Women are largely absent from these spaces - their usual role there being one of the employee. This performance focused on the absence of the female gender from male dominated spaces in Cyprus. This location was ideal as the performance 'Presence in Absence' concentrated on the notion of the female presence/absence from Cypriot public spaces and spheres. Examining the parallel existence of women in entertainment spaces (cabarets) that are usually habituated by men (like a traditional 'kafene') the arts collaborative that developed the performance (women in the majority) entered the male dominated space only to carry out movements and sounds usual to the social placement that the female gender is associated with. The performance included dance theatre, live drawing projection and manipulated sounds of the space itself. The collaboration was an intense procedure with many rehearsals. All the different collaborators represented different artistic disciplines-sound, theatre, dance and visual arts. We all used the space and different social elements of the space to drawn upon, so as to build the performance. Antoniou recorded and manipulated the sounds of the old men that frequent the kafene. Heller, Verykiou and I interviewed old women that lived in the neighbourhood, observed them and built the movement and actions through their experience within the private and public spaces of the estate.

It was interdisciplinary in character and it created a contact zone with the old men that habituate the 'kafene' and the young artsy audience that attended the performance. The owner and men that frequented there were happy to see the place, which is usually empty of young people, become filled with youth, and these were the sentiments they described in the interviews afterwards. The old men took a long time to get used to us and one of the main reasons why we were allowed in was due to the fact that I have grown up in the neighbourhood. The issue of building trust became a very important element as we did not as team want to merely use the setting and

locals as a backdrop but try and develop a response towards the social landscape. The project directly dealt with the need of diversifying cultural production from the city centre into the neighbourhoods.

FEEDBACK FROM AN ELDERLY 'KAFENE' GOER

Filmmaker
Can you tell us your opinion about what you saw?

Elderly gentleman
Is it finished now?

Filmmaker
Yes, it ended.

Elderly gentleman
Yes, it was very nice. But you should do it more often.

Filmmaker
Do it more often?

Elderly gentleman
Now, the sounds of the men playing tavli (backgammon) that you could hear, it was me and an older man- 80 years old. We were sitting together playing tavli and the guy with the beard that is inside told us. Do it more often, not so rarely. This is the first time you guys have come here eh?

Performer
Did you like it?

Elderly gentleman
Yes. It was very nice.

Performer
Did you understand it?

Elderly gentleman
Of course I understood it. What do you think? But you should do it more often. Not just once a year.

Performer
But you wouldn't mind having us here all the time?

Elderly gentleman
Why would we mind you? We are here everyday...

Video Still from the performance: Rozy Sarkis

Video Still from the performance: Rozy Sarkis

Video Still from the performance: Rozy Sarkis

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UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE- GEOGRAPHIES OF CYPRIOT STATE HOUSING

4. UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE - GEOGRAPHIES OF CYPRIOT STATE HOUSING

However the main project that I collaborated in producing that reflected on the state estates of Nicosia was the project- '**Unconscious architecture - Geographies of Cypriot state housing'.** For this project I collaborated with filmmaker and photographer Orestis Lambrou, whose work concentrates on Cypriot modernist architecture.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE PROJECT

Within European contemporary art the terrain of council/ community/ social housing has become a firm trend throughout the last twenty to thirty years. Mass Council housing in Cyprus is barely thirty years old. And it is presently an unchartered creative and artistic pathway which is waiting to be explored. This local specific response towards communitarian spatial environments highlights a plethora of tensions. The understanding of displacement, the monumentality of both the built setting and the narratives of war demonstrate the local specificity and yet unifying characteristics of what social housing means in Europe.

The absence of civic dialogue in relation to the Cypriot state estates, better known locally as 'refugee neighbourhoods' become a good springboard in launching artistic experiments and reflection. The use of Modernist models of community housing that these estates demonstrate situate this creative enquiry into the wider understanding of European interpretations of mass/ social housing developments. The Cypriot state developed them hurriedly to fulfil the needs after 1974, thus even using ready made plans from the UK. This is presented through the architectural after this hurried construction and through the creation of new communities; by not only making houses and blocks of flats but also by creating green spaces, shops, services, schools, churches, pathways and roads.

The current communities of these semi state and semi-private, built clusters present particular micro geographies and socio spatial narratives. The artists were invited to question, document, narrate and face these charged neighbourhoods. The project explores the notions of 'how the built environment defines community' and how 'the community defines the built environment'. This exhibition and happenings question the public understanding of Cypriot state housing, how community shapes these environments, how planned urban developments become organic and how these can demonstrate the disputed notion of failure in relation to the Modernist legacy of European social housing.

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PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE

5. PROGRAMME OF EVENTS FOR UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE

This project included an exhibition with works by artists exploring the theme in a gallery space, an artistic residency, theoretical reflections and other happenings that took place within the estates in Nicosia.

THE EXHIBITION PRESENTED WORKS BY

Claudia Djabbari (Germany) - Residency
Yiannis Ioannou (Cyprus)
Achilleas Kentonis (Cyprus)
Phanos Kyriacou (Cyprus)
Orestis Lambrou (Cyprus)
Maria Toumazou (Cyprus)
Evanthia Tselika (Cyprus)

The exhibition took place at the Visual Artists Association Nicosia- 11.10.12 to 19.10.12

For the duration of the show a workshop was also run for the Fine Art students of the University of Nicosia

ON SITE

The project included a series of affiliated happenings that took place within an estate at a square at the end of Assias street, Platy, Aglantzia, Nicosia. These happenings took place over a day and they included:

-Exploring the site- Experimenting and displaying in the state estates- Platy, Aglantzia- morning to afternoon 13.10.12

Invited artists participated in an experimental day of action in the space of the state housings.
Site specific experimental workshop/ display/ documentation of experiment
Participants- Christos Avraam, Achilleas Kentonis, Chrystalleni Loizidou, Despo Passia, Evi Tselika

-Talk by structural engineer Mr Kypros Pafitis,

member of the team responsible for the construction of the Plati estate housing - 17:00

-KAFENE PHILOSOPHIQUE[1]-

18:00- 20:00
Lead by Dr Andreas Vrahimis (University of Cyprus, University of Technology of Cyprus) Discussion on state housing in Cyprus- social housing, European modernism

For more information please visit unconsciousarchitecture.blogspot.com

This project was funded by: Cyprus Ministry of Education and Culture, The German Embassy, Visual Artists Association

'Unconscious Architecture' aimed to activate critical thinking on how communities can become involved in cultural activities. The ultimate aim was for art to become detached from its contextualisation as something that exists in galleries or museums, and enter into the everyday life of citizens, into the neighbourhood fabric of the city.

FOOTNOTES

1. The idea of the Kafene Philosophique is basically a Cypriot interpretation of the Café philosophique concept that was founded by philosopher Marc Sautet in Paris in 1992. The concept of the Cafe Philosophique is to bring people together in a public place where they can discuss different ideas; it is not pre decided what the discussion will be about. Inspired by this concept 'Kafene Philosophique' uses the space of the Cypriot cafe, the 'kafene', to hold discussions on specific topics.

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UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION

6. UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION

UNCONSCIOUS
ARCHITECTURE
ΓΕΩΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΩΝ ΚΡΑΤΙΚΩΝ ΟΙΚΙΣΜΩΝ

Poster of the project designed by Orestis Lambrou

Phytorio, Visual Artists Association
Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

The exhibition was developed by Lambrou and I and it included works by Claudia Djabbari (Germany, Residency), Yiannis Ioannou (Cyprus), Achilleas Kentonis (Cyprus), Phanos Kyriacou (Cyprus), Orestis Lambrou (Cyprus), Maria Toumazou (Cyprus) and Evanthia Tselika (Cyprus). Each artist was invited 6 months prior to the exhibition to think about their contribution. Lambrou and I worked equally in terms of promoting and designing the exhibition, but he looked after Djabbari, who came over from London on a residency more. The exhibition took place at the 'Visual Artists Association' that is in the 'Nicosia Municipal Garden' and it is managed by an independent artist group. Below I include images from the exhibition and some information about each artist's contribution. I then proceed to analyse my contribution in more detail as it falls within the concept of the research process.

CLAUDIA DJABBARI

Photograph of Djabbari's artwork: Evanthia Tselika

Claudia Djabbari came over from London for a residency, which was funded by the German Embassy. She stayed for 10 days and produced work inspired from the estates. Her work dealt with concepts of architectural models, mapping and reflections.

YIANNIS IOANNOU

Photograph/artwork: Yiannis Ioannou

Yiannis Ioannou is a Cypriot photographer that has been photographing since 2010 the environments of the state housing in Cyprus. His images were projected as slides in a slide projector.

ACHILLEAS KENTONIS

Photograph of artwork: Evanthia Tselika

Achilleas Kentonis was particularly concerned with the element of uprooting. As the oldest participant in the exhibition he was the only one who had lived through the war itself and also the initial stages of the state housing construction. It is interesting to note that this created a very different approach to the rest of the contributions.

PHANOS KYRIACOU

Photograph of the artwork: Evanthia Tselika

Image produced by Phanos Kyriacou for the book that accompanied the construction

Phanos Kyriacou with his piece 'Switzerland' reproduced an everyday facet of the public space of the estates. The concept behind the work was the recording of the pavements in the centre of the estate of Saint George in Pallouriotissa and how it defines the common spaces of the estate, the malfunction of these spaces and of the pavements themselves, as they are rarely used. The reference to this specific element (the pavement) which can be found in all the estates occurs through the use of the cement block. The piece included an installation in the outside space of the gallery, which is literally a transfer of the specific pavement and it's rendering as a semi functional aspect of the space (it ends up in a dead end and it is temporary). The installation was accompanied by a book of photos and collages of the estate, on which certain aspects of the spaces are energized through the use of colour and objects. This was the most costly contribution, as the organizing team paid for the construction.

ORESTIS LAMBROU

Orestis Lambrou with whom we organized this exhibition concentrated on photographing the interiors of homes within the estates. He concentrated on a specific type of housing- 'double storey' attached terrace houses and the living rooms of these houses. He then superimposed these interior space images and produced a photographic triptych. He displayed it in a framed, slanted manner, reminiscent of a museum display case.

Photograph of the artwork: Orestis Lambrou

MARIA TOUMAZOU

Photograph of artwork: Evanthia Tselika

Maria Toumazou produced a sculptural piece based on aspects of the built environment of the estates. She isolated the architectural feature of the concrete blocks that support the water tanks (depicted in the image on the left). She then reproduced two cement plates placed slightly differentiated to one another and with water trickling down the middle. It was a complex sculptural piece as it involved intricate plumbing and it was very heavy. For the piece to be removed a fork lift was needed.

Research Image: Maria Toumazou

Photograph of the artwork being transferred: Evanthia Tselika

EVANTHIA TSELIKA

'State Owned, private, rented'
Research installation in the exhibition
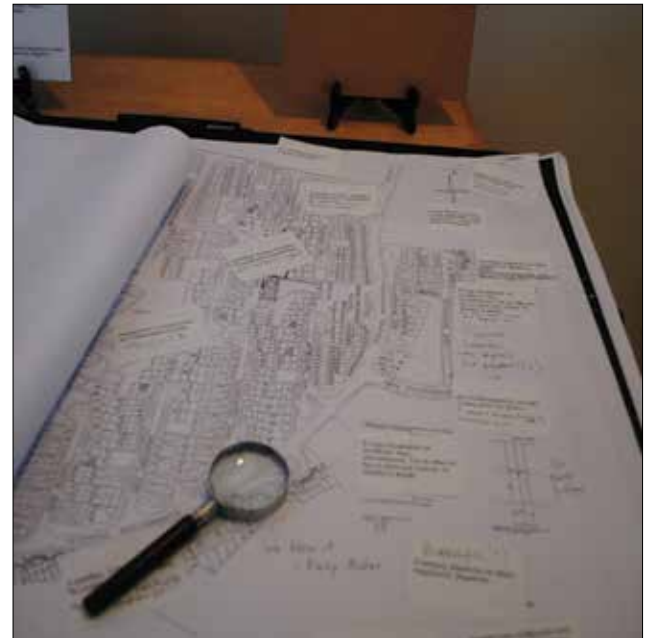

Installation shots: Evanthia Tselika

Installation shots: Evanthia Tselika

Installation shots: Evanthia Tselika

As part of the exhibition I produced a research instal-
lation that comprised of area maps and architectural
plans of the estates that I found through research I
carried out in the Department of Town Planning and
Housing. These architectural plans and area maps
were displayed in a constructed small room within the
gallery. Inside I placed a chair from a home in the

estates, a television, the architectural plans placed
on the walls and a table with plans on it, encourag-
ing people to write on them. On the table there were
also stickers with some of the women's words which
were said on the video that I produced with interviews
of women living in the estates- two Cypriot and one
Eastern European. The stickers with their words was
the only way that you could hear what they were
saying as the video was silenced. I did not wish for
the people to be able to hear what was being said,
indicating a reflection upon the role of the researcher
and how he/she controls data and resources. The
reason for choosing women to speak was the under
representation of female public speaking in Cyprus. The
exhibition goers really interacted with the plans and
wrote some very interesting things. You can view one
of the audience manipulated maps on the next page.

ΟΙΚΙΣΜΟΣ (ΣΤΡΟΒΟΛΟΥ ΙΙ)
ΕΘΝΟΜΑΡΤΥΡΟΣ ΚΥΠΡΙΑΝΟΥ

Τύπος 'Α' Ισόγειος κατοικία 2Τκ. (111 Οικ. μονάδες)

Τύπος 'Β' Διώροφος κατοικία 3Τκ. (164 Οικ. μονάδες)

Τύπος 'Β1' Διώροφος κατοικία 2Τκ. (91 Οικ. μονάδες)

Τύπος 'Β2' Διώροφος κατοικία 2Τκ. (151 Οικ. μονάδες)

Initial social identification
with living in an estate

YOU MEAN, "REFUGEE HOUSING"

Τύπος 'C' Τριώροφος Πολυκατοικία — Ισόγειον 2 Διαμ. 2Τκ. / 1ος όροφος 1 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 1 Διαμ. 3Τκ. / 2ος όροφος 1 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 1 Διαμ. 3Τκ. — 6 X 25 — 150 Οικ. μονάδες

Τύπος 'D' Τριώροφος Πολυκατοικία — Ισόγειον 2 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 2 Διαμ. 1 Τκ. / 1ος όροφος 2 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 2 Διαμ. 1 Τκ. / 2ος όροφος 2 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 2 Διαμ. 1 Τκ — 2 X 12 — 24 Οικ. μονάδες

Τύπος 'D' Τριώροφος Πολυκατοικία — Ισόγειον 6 Κατασ. 3 Χ 6: 18 καταστήματα / 1ος όροφος 2 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 2 Διαμ. 1 Τκ. / 2ος όροφος 2 Διαμ. 2Τκ. 2 Διαμ. 1 Τκ. — 24 Οικ. μονάδες — 3 X 8

ΣΥΝΟΛΟΝ ΟΙΚ. ΜΟΝΑΔΩΝ 705
ΚΑΤΑΣΤΗΜΑΤΩΝ 18

Προσθήκη δωματίου

Άεργοι που παν στους καφενέδες. Πίνουν, καπνίζουν...
Έλεος! Παλε καλα που υπαρχουν τζαι τζινοι να μας θυμιζαν τη κατη ζωη!

Απομόνωση ή επικοινωνία σε επιφανειακό επίπεδο
πλάχαχβ

Η κυρία που το νοικιάζει, πρόσφυγας, δεν βοηθά καθόλου. Καθόλου
Classism! Win!

ΟΔΟΣ ΣΕΩΣΕΦΗ
ΟΔΟΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΑΣ
ΟΔΟΣ ΑΛΑΜΑΝΑΣ
ΟΔΟΣ ΑΙΣΩΠΟΥ
ΔΡΟΥΤΣΟΥ
ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΕΩΣ

3 γιούδες, 3 ξένες. Ρωσίδες. Τα μωρά μου εν ρωσούδικα Εν καλά. Να μπαίνει φρεσκο διαίμαν!

Οι δημ χώροι ήταν/είναι συνήθ καφενέδες, ένας χώρο γντρες. Γνωστή η απόκων γυναικών

Ο κόσμος βαρκέται να κάμει παράπονο. Βαρκέται

Εν έχει λεωφορεία να συνδέουν τους συνοικισμούς. Για να πάω να δω τη μάνα μου πρέπει να αλλάξω 2 φορές

Δεν συνδεούμαστεν να πάει ο ένας σπίτι του άλλου

Εν έχει λεωφορεία να συνδέουν τους συνοικισμούς. Για να πάω να

ΟΙ 3 γιούδες, 3 ξένες. Ρωσίδες. Τα μωρά μου εν ρωσούδικα NEW CYPRIOT HYBRID

THE VIDEO

What the women said was of particular interest and I found that this was really the most informative part of the whole endeavour; hearing what people thought of these spaces and their relationship and understanding of them. Through this process what became evident was the role of the practitioner as a social interviewer and researcher, and how that can change depending on the social group that the interviewee is from. I found that with ladies that are not from Cyprus that it was much harder to get an understanding of their interaction with the spaces. I had to ask a lot more questions. With the Cypriot women it was much easier and once they begun, they talked for a lot longer in relation to their relationship to the estates.

FINAL EDITED VIDEO- 15.36 MINUTES[2]

WOMAN GEOGRAPHIES TEXT

Woman 1
The first estates were built under the pressure of what was happening and the need to accommodate the people who came from the lower social and economic strata. They were built too hastily and people who had too many problems themselves were housed there. In the course of time these problems became evident; problems of violence, criminality, marginalization, drugs arose in some estates. The residential units that were built at a later stage did not depict parallel characteristics, perhaps due to the fact that there was a greater margin of time or the people who were moved in there had something or were more middle class. Certainly though the later constructed ones were better than those built at the beginning.

At first the people in the estates were from many, many occupied villages. It could happen that there were some people from the same villages, but as in all the estates they housed people from different places. Now the composition of the people living within the estates has completely changed. Many houses are empty, the elderly have died, and one can sometimes see only one elderly couple living in an entire building. And from the moment that the deeds were given to the inhabitants the houses can now be exploited by the owners or their heirs and one can observe the phenomenon of many houses within the estates being rented out. So you can meet different people; non-displaced individuals, non Cypriot nationals, migrants but very few young Cypriot couples. And that in itself is a problem. As it brings about loneliness, isolation, marginalization...

Woman 2
I live in Agios Eleftherios, Latsia. I also lived in another house. I spent four years Lefkara. The estate has changed. How can I say it? It has become newer; everyone does whatever he/she wants now, before no one made changes. Now that they gave us the deeds, we are doing as we please to the houses. We used to have problems the sewage tanks would fill up, there were bad odours... The streets are now more orderly. Now about the social issues... The people are very nice but we do not have the ease, the love that we had living in our villages. It is like living in Europe as we do not have many relations with one another. You do not feel comfortable to ask your neighbour for something. Well, everything is a bit stiff. There are many foreigners and migrants living here especially now. Many people built their own homes, moved out of the estates and rent

FOOTNOTES

2. This video is not included in the Conflict Transformation Art DVD, but snippets of these interviews are included in the audio of the 'Sinikismoi' video included on the DVD.

their homes to Filipinos, to migrants, to Romanians etc. And it has changed. If you go somewhere, for example if you go shopping or wherever in the neighbourhood you will mostly see foreigners. The youth has changed. Every now and then there are robberies, quarrels etc. First there were the people of the same age as us and we were a lot more connected, we had more relationships. We would drink our coffee together. They would come down from the buildings. But now things have changed. The older generations have passed away or left. Young couples moved in. They can pass by you and they do not even say a hello or a goodnight or anything.

Woman 3

Evanthia
How long approximately have you lived in this house?

Woman 3
Approximately one year.

Evanthia
Have you ever lived in an estate before?

Woman 3
No.

Evanthia
Had you visited one though?

Woman 3
Yes, of course

Evanthia
How is the house you rent here? Has it been a good stay here or have you had problems?

Woman 3
We have had constant problems.

Evanthia
Like what kind of problems?

Woman 3
Like they have not fixed this apartment in fifteen years.

Nobody has done anything. They have not changed the pipes. They have not changed the water taps. They have not changed the doors. They have not insulated the apartment. The refugees who owned it applied to have it insulated to the services but still nothing has been done. The house is full of damp. It is not good.

Evanthia
Have the owners been helpful? Have they been nice or have they not helped you at all?

Woman 3
(she laughs). No, they did not help us at all.

Evanthia
Do you think it makes a difference if you rent or own a home in the estates?

Woman 3
Of course

Evanthia
Do you know someone who owns his/ her home and the authorities help more?

Woman 3
Yes, I know

Evanthia
Do you think people are friendly in the estates compared to other places that you have stayed so far? Do people talk to each other?

Woman 3
Yes. They are friendlier! We used to rent another apartment previously and for that period of time I did not even know the name of our neighbours. Here we are almost like a big family. If there's a problem I can go downstairs. I can ask for help and they will not mind helping me.

Woman 1
We have a garden here but we live in an a block of flats. The garden or court yard of the building have in

actual fact been divided according to the number of flats in the building. Everyone arbitrarily got a piece and considered it his. The first thing they all did when they came in to the homes was to plant the garden, before even fixing the inside of the house. They planted trees, flowers. That is why I said previously that there were many arguments. It was for this exact reason. 'You took one metre more than me in the yard... I planted three trees, the other guy planted four'. This meant that coming into the estates the people would often clash over a very small piece of land in the common green space. Or if one was watering the garden, the other one would get upset. Or they would be disturbed by the noise levels of the families upstairs. The relationship though with the land and the plants remained very close. At the beginning I think that when you said I live in an estate, you said it with a certain amount of caution. The fact that you were a refugee and you lived in an estate differentiated you form the rest and you had according to the others something that they could hold against you. Presently though I think that we belong to the wider community of the region.

The public spaces are not used and I do not feel like I could go. First of most of them have been abandoned and are deserted. The public spaces had as their centre the 'kafene', in which mostly men would gather and the exclusion of women from these spaces is well known fact. This has remained exactly the same as then. They have not been taken advantage of nor developed. The different customs and behaviours of the people who moved in to the estates were very evident. Each village used to have its own way of life, its own customs. In the estates a patchwork of people of all these different villages was created, the result being that sometimes the disagreements would result in conflict and difficult situations. Despite this the course of time led to either total exclusion from society, or in communication but on a superficial and not sub-

stantial level. The proof of this is that to this day I have no real friend from the estate environment.

Woman 2

Here you do not have the same amount of trust. In the villages you used to have your relatives. You could go for a walk, talk, or complain about life! Whereas here there is no trust! You cannot even say what is wrong with you, or cry if there is something wrong. People here do not care about you. The village was very different to the estate. If there is something wrong with your husband, or anything, if your son is in trouble, then you can talk with your relative, your mother. No, here we have nothing, nor a parent, nothing! For example in my family we are five brothers and sisters. I am alone in this estate. To go see my mother I have to change 2 buses. In other estates such as Anthoupoli for example they have more problems with drugs. In the church you can make a group of friends, you can see your old neighbours and the women from your village and talk. And almost everyone is my age. And wherever we meet we will talk, we will ask about one another and spend some time together. In the cafes of the estate there are many unemployed men and they sit there all day, they drink, there might be fights. The youth disturb things; they rob shops and sometimes even banks. All of them have girlfriends. They do not want to be married or committed. They just live together. Most of the women are foreign and the children as well. You go to the schools and you find mostly children that are half Cypriot and half something else. Bulgarian, Romanian etc. We have many foreign children. For example me, I have three sons and all three are with non-Cypriot women. Russian women. My babies, my grandchildren are Russian. There are also many foreign men and women. If you go to the store you will see more foreign women. If you go the church you will see the women from Sri Lanka with

the old Cypriot women that they look after. It is not like before where you would find people to talk with around the neighbourhood. Also the workers have their days off. One friend will go to the others, more and more will gather. Then one friend will bring the boyfriend and... These are the problems of the estate.

Woman 3
The apartments of our own building have not been fixed. I heard that the flat opposite from us was fixed. They helped with the doors, they painted the walls, but they did not do the insulation. But the houses in the street across from us have all been fixed.

Evanthia
Do you have a garden in the flat that you live? Is there a garden?

Woman 3
Yes there is a small plot of land.

Evanthia
Could you look after it?

Woman 3
The woman who has the flat that we are renting did not fix the water. For this reason even if I plant some things, we cannot water them, so it is a waste. I do not have a problem with the neighbourhood or the municipality. If we act, if we scream a little, if we call regularly then they could fix the situation a bit. If we do not call and if we do not complain then how can the municipality know the problems? And most people are bored to act upon the problems. They are not bothered to call, they are not bothered to express their problems.

7

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UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

7. UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

A workshop was run with the students of the Fine Art programme offered at the University of Nicosia. This was organized by me and Lambrou had very little input on this aspect of the project. The workshop that was run with the students concentrated on the idea of what is 'home'. The workshop started with the students visiting the exhibition, seeing the works and producing a collaborative large scale collage, painting on site.

Photographs from workshop: Evanthia Tselika

Photographs from workshop: Evanthia Tselika

After that the students were encouraged to continue by reflecting on the notion of the 'home' and reflecting on the following brief (this is only part of the brief)-

The concept of home is both personal and universal. This workshop encourages you to use this metaphor to demonstrate that the notion of home is uncertain and charged because of local socio political characteristics. A home can represent a building, a commonality or an affiliation between groups of people. The concept of home in the eastern European and Middle Eastern locality often becomes intertwined with feelings of loss, nostalgia and homesickness. At a time of international travel and globalized conditions of living however, the understanding of 'home' acquires new meanings and un-

derstandings. The home can be interpreted as a physical place where we stay; or the community we belong to; or the part of the world that we are affiliated with.

These are some of the students' works reflecting on these notions of the home-

Petros Sidersas, Installation

Agata Cerak, Photographic installation

Demetra Nikodemou, Painting

8

**UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE - ACTIONS IN THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD**

8. UNCONSCIOUS ARCHITECTURE - ACTIONS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The affiliated happenings were not something that Lambrou was heavily involved with. I found the location due to my personal connection with it and I mostly organized the day. Lambrou due to his personal interests was not very interested in this facet of the project. This is not to say that he did not assist, it is just that this was not his main interest in the project. For me on the other hand this was probably one of the most important facets of the work that has taken place within the social housing actions. I was in contact with the artists that took part in the morning of exploring the site and had the idea of the 'kafene philosophique', and arranged with philosopher Dr Andreas Vrahimis to facilitate it. However both Lambrou and I communicated with our speaker from the Department of Town Planning and Housing, Kypros Pafitis. All the following conversations and dialogues took place in Greek. They were recorded, transcribed and translated into English by me.

8.1. EXPLORING THE SITE - EXPERIMENTING AND DISPLAYING IN STATE ESTATES - PLATY, AGLANTZIA

Invited artists and cultural practitioners participated in an experimental day of action in the space of the state housings. The participants were Christos Avraam, Achilleas Kentonis, Chrystalleni Loizidou, Despo Passia and I. We all met in my flat in the estate and had a small conversation, an extract of which is inserted here-

Photograph: Achilleas Kentonis

TALK AT THE HOUSE

EXCERPT 1

Christos Avraam
I have a couple of ideas. I will tell you them so that you can imagine them and I can imagine them in the space. I have some small boxes approximately this high, square and wooden. It is about five pieces. This can be set up like a path but also like a box. I have two wooden pieces that I want to be placed on this. The one piece is called 'Cultural Diversity' and it is placed on the side of the box. It can be on the side or on the floor. And the other piece is related to the concept of figuration and it concerns human respect. The mask that characterizes for instance people who respect the environment and yet have nothing to say about society...

Chrystalleni Loizidou
Is this related to what we were saying about art outside the institution?

Christos Avraam
The other piece I have...

Chrystalleni Loizidou
Is that our context?

Christos Avraam
Is a sculpture approximately my height made of concrete. It is me. And I set it up in the street as part of a workshop in the village of Lefkara so I can see the interaction with the society. Do you know that street?

Chrystalleni Loizidou
Yes I do.

Christos Avraam
And what happened was very funny.

Chrystalleni Loizidou
You put this thing there. Outside of the expensive grocers and the butcher?

Christos Avraam
Yes in front of the expensive one. Then I removed

it and took it somewhere else. So that I could see if anyone would say take it away or leave it here. I wanted to see if anyone would approach it this way. But no one approached it in this way.

Chrystalleni Loizidou
Generally did they approach it though? Did they pry into what it was?

Christos Avraam
A man stopped with the car and started complaining that I was blocking the road, even though he could pass. He just wanted to emphasize that I was creating trouble to the flow of cars. Instead of considering why this sculpture, this concrete person is here, he did not interact with it at all. This then passed a negative message to the rest of the five or six cars that were behind him. For me it was important to view this we were going to place these sculptures in the school yard as part of an exhibition. Therefore I got how the vibe would be from the locals. Because for us the project was exactly this kind of exploration...

Achilleas Kentonis
I understand exactly what you mean, because yesterday the camera man who is helping us with a short video we are doing told me: One day I forgot my tripod whilst we were doing a shoot at the traffic lights as you enter Nicosia. I forgot the tripod in the middle of the road and I remembered it as were entering Limassol. Imagine an hour to get there and an hour back. The tripod was still there in the middle. No one had moved it. This shows that we are a society that does not act.

Christos Avraam
A society that needs operational instructions.

Achilleas Kentonis
That wants instructions so as to function or that always puts things off. And that says 'this is the responsibility of this person or that person'. They do not comprehend, they do not take initiative and that is why we exist in this situation even though we have so many great

minds. Degrees, minds and good thinking. But no innovation. In fact our analogy is I think within the top three percent in terms of university degrees and in the bottom three percent in terms of innovation.

Evanthia Tselika
It is because we do not have culture imbedded in society. Everyone has a masters' degree, this degree or the other...

Achilleas Kentonis
I want to add that the US does not have so much culture on the whole if we see it this way. But there is innovation. Why? Because people are concerned with strategies that will allow them to be innovative and stand out from the rest. They recognize that they can make money through innovation. They have the American Dream for instance...

Christos Avraam
They act upon things where as we remain on the surface. I mean the image without thought behind it.

Chrystalleni Loizidou
It is also the idea that sometimes it appears naturally. That is to say if you have a need to have a community, the need will find a way for the community to develop. And this is very interesting in terms of the social housing. And this is what we were thinking with Christos Hadjihristos and how we were working together in relation to monuments. And I specifically remember something I read about a project that was developed, very high tech, very cutting edge with squares, communal spaces etc. It was clear that it should have worked, but none of the things that were prescribed as a social area for communication functioned as such. What worked were the bins. Everyone went to the bin area... The spirit of this development did not work and it ended up being that the social area was around the bins. That is slightly unpleasant but that is where all the information such as 'this has been lost, or looking for this' etc, was being placed. So this situation emerged

through the community and the people were kind of walking around the architecture. They were using it without using the prescriptions that described it

EXCERPT 2

Evanthia Tselika
My interviews in the estates included a lady that was saying that people are bored. They have a problem and instead of getting together and socially organizing as in other countries, the people do nothing. This lady is from Eastern Europe and they have social action embedded in the culture due to the political environment which existed there and because they had to get organized in the large state blocks that most people lived in. So they have it embedded in the culture. How is it here though?

Christos Avraam
I wanted to add something. Recently I was in a workshop in Russia and I saw that their social housing is colourful. They might have smaller spaces than ours but they added a touch of colour on to encourage the people living there who are usually from lower social strata, to function a little differently.

Evanthia Tselika
Yes.

Achilleas Kentonis
And I come back to what we were saying before that the society becomes intertwined and starts producing other derivatives. Essentially the only thing that can remain as a platform through which any issue can be dealt with is the aspect that you must change society or become a catalyst for change. You can change and through you other things can also change. So we have to enter in a process that we activate each other's thought. Basically you get into the other person, not through an art form that sets out the right questions. I think that the time of setting the right questions is over. The right questions are together in a bin with a thousand of wrong doings.

We then continued the day by walking around the neighbourhood itself, so that the participants could see the site. Avraam, Kentonis and Passia were photographing the site and a slideshow of their images was later projected in the 'kafene' in which the lecture and dialogue took place. Here are some of the images from the walk. The participants were reflecting on ways that these spaces could be activated and how they could be integrated more within the extended fabric of the city. Some of the walk images- (unfortunately I cannot indicate who produced the images as they placed an array of them in one folder for the presentation).

Photograph: Parking lot

Photograph: Park

Photograph: Water tanks on top of houses

Photograph: Abandoned house

SETTING UP THE WORKS IN THE KAFENE-

Some of the participants set up works in and around the 'kafene' and the square that is right next to it.

Photograph Setting up: Achilleas Kentonis

Photograph: Talking to some of the residents

INTERVENTIONS-

Intervention by Evanthia Tselika and Chrystalle-
ni Loizidou. Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

Intervention by Evanthia Tselika and
Chrystalleni Loizidou. Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

Intervention by Achilleas Kentonis.
Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

Intervention by Christos Avraam.
Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

Intervention by Christos Avraam.
Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

8.2. TALK BY STRUCTURAL ENGINEER WHO WORKED ON THE ESTATE

Talk by structural engineer Mr Kypros Pafitis member of the team responsible for the construction of the Platy estate housing and an employee of the Department of Town Planning and Housing.

Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

This information has been collected and translated from the Powerpoint presentation that Mr Pafitis gave on the day. He spoke for approximately 2 hours and in Greek and as I had to translate so much of the dialogue that followed from Greek, I chose to translate and demonstrate the discussion through the presentation he prepared. This was a particularly important part of the project as he clearly demonstrated the historical process of the construction of these spaces.

MR PAFITIS PRESENTATION-

In 1972 the Cypriot government begun a collaboration with the United Nations and fostered a Housing Policy. The aim was for the reduction as much as possible of the housing problem by the end of the twentieth century. The Housing policy provided for the development of an important increase of the annual construction of housing for low income social groups. This was named the 'Rentbuying Plan'. Also the assistance in acquiring shelter of the groups on middle income brackets was carried out through the Organization of Land Development and the Organization of Housing Funding. The 1974 war resulted to the non realization of the programme and it created a great need for re housing large numbers of the population, due to the take-over of land by the Turkish army in the North of the island. Thousands of Cypriots shifted location. Turkish Cypriots moved to the North and Greek Cypriots to the South. The Turkish Cypriots stayed in the empty homes of the Greek Cypriots. In the South due to the fact that one third of the population was displaced (200,000 inhabitants) they were forced to stay in camps, in tents, with only the bare minimum needed for surviving provided. In 1975 the state fostered a specific housing policy for the displaced. The Ministry of Interior is allocated as the body responsible for handling the state housing programmes: Self housing Assistance Plan for building on state owned land; Plan for self housing assistance on privately owned land; Improvement of housing in abandoned Turkish Cypriot villages and town neighbourhoods. However the most significant aspect of this plan was the construction and management of the **Cypriot State Estates.**

Tents in which the displaced persons resided before the rehousing programme begun.
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

The re housing of the refugees was a grandiose residential plan, that was handled by the Department of Town Planning and Housing, which belongs to the Ministry of Interiors. Working from 1975 to this day they have dealt with various large scale construction works. The plans for the estates were made by the department itself and also initially by private architects. The development and construction was done by private construction companies.

In Nicosia there are 6,950 units, in which 30,500 inhabitants live.

ESTATE OF UPPER LAKATAMIA

Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

Plans of general provisions based on urban planning studies meant that the estates were meant to provide the necessary commercial services that would satisfy basic consumer needs. These plans also included the understanding that there would be

- A relatively low density in the residential building
- A limited use of blocks of flats
- A variety of housing types, thus avoiding repetition and ensuring an anthropocentric dimension
- Creating the feeling of a neighbourhood
- Ensuring that there would be a garden at the front and at the back of the attached houses , and the provision of communal open spaces for the blocks of flats.

Criteria for choosing the appropriate space for the creation of the State Estates

- Connection with main road arteries and the system of public transport to ensure easy transportation
- **Close to organized industrial areas** and other areas of work, so that there would be

an easy integration of the work force
- Pleasant natural environment
- Land with good strength levels for foundation purposes, sufficient ground absorbency and good drainage possibilities for rainwater
- Existing Infrastructure and services
- Government land or private land with a low acquisition cost
- Traffic system for pedestrians and cars
- Main road networks- connecting the estate with the urban traffic network, collection roads- intranet, access roads in the neighbourhoods (cul de sac)
- Adequate standards of sunlight effects, good ventilation, nice views and ensuring a certain amount of privacy
- Provision of green spaces

Percentages of use of the total area of land in each estate:

- -25% construction
- -30% courtyards
- -30% roads and parking areas
- -15% green spaces

FIRST PHASE- LARGE SCALE ESTATES:
500 – 1000 residential units
- **Housing provided for as many refugees as possible within a short time period**
- Low cost land
- **Close proximity to urban or suburban areas**- existing residential development which was either dispersed or rudimentary
- Autonomous cores - augmenting and completing existing infrastructure in the area
- Attraction points for further residential development in the region

EXAMPLES OF A LARGE SCALE ESTATE-

Area Plans of Upper Lakatamia Estate, Nicosia
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing
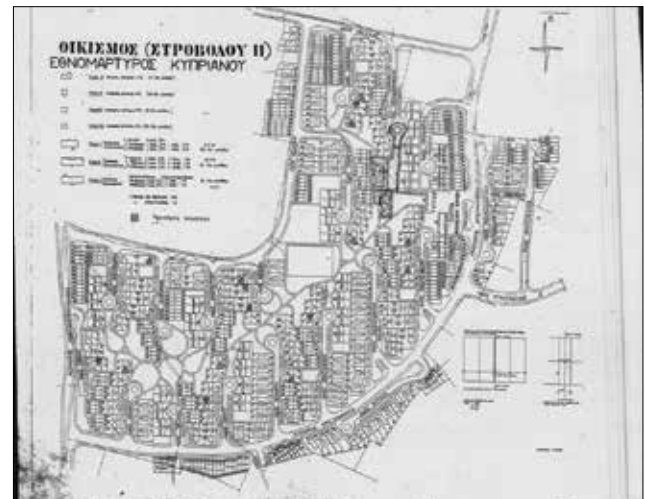
Area Plans of Strovolos II Estate, Nicosia
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

SECOND PHASE- SMALLER ESTATES:

200 – 300 residential units

- Reduction of the need for immediate mass housing
- Easier integration and assimilation within the existing structure of the region
- Reducing and / or eliminating the risk of ghettoisation

Area Plans of Platy Estate, Nicosia
(Where happenings were held)
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

THIRD PHASE- DWELLING CONSTRUCTION USING INTENSIVE NON-TRADITIONAL BUILDING SYSTEMS.

The reasons that enforced this decision:

- Gradual reactivation of the private sector of the construction industry
- Significant employment of part of the workforce

Result:

- Increase of wages
- Increase of material associated with the construction industry

Government research of construction systems and enforcement of plans that minimize:

- Expense
- Construction time
- Manpower needs

FOURTH AND FIFTH PHASE- CONSTRUCTION OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS WITH FEWER AMOUNT OF HOUSES AND TRADITIONAL BUILDING SYSTEMS.

Low Cost Housing is obtained by:

1. Proper selection of the building area - avoiding large height differences and problematic land/ ground

2. Continuous building and massive construction works - allowing efficient organization during the construction process

3. Limiting the area for services/ common use sites within the necessary frameworks

4. Simplifying architecture and static solution – low cost construction of plates and beams, avoiding unnecessary protrusions and sophisticated decorative elements

5. Standardization of key elements in the building process (woodworking, metal constructions etc.).

6. Using materials found locally wherever possible

7. Concentration of water points and collective sanitation drainage system

There are 12 types of three-storey buildings (from 6 to 12 apartments) and there were no elevators until approximately 2009.
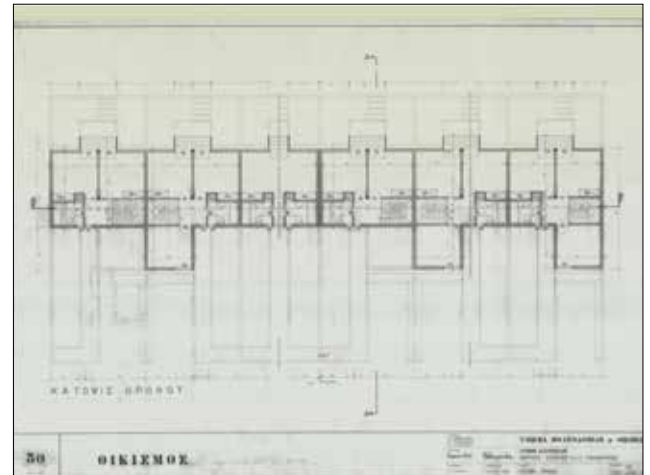
The areas of the housing units
Single storey dwellings:

- One bedroom- 45-50 m²
- Two bedroom- 80-95 m²
- Three bedroom - 95-105 m²
- Double storey houses or apartments:
- One bedroom (apartments) - 45-50 m²
- Two bedroom- 95-110 m²
- Three bedroom - 110-120 m²
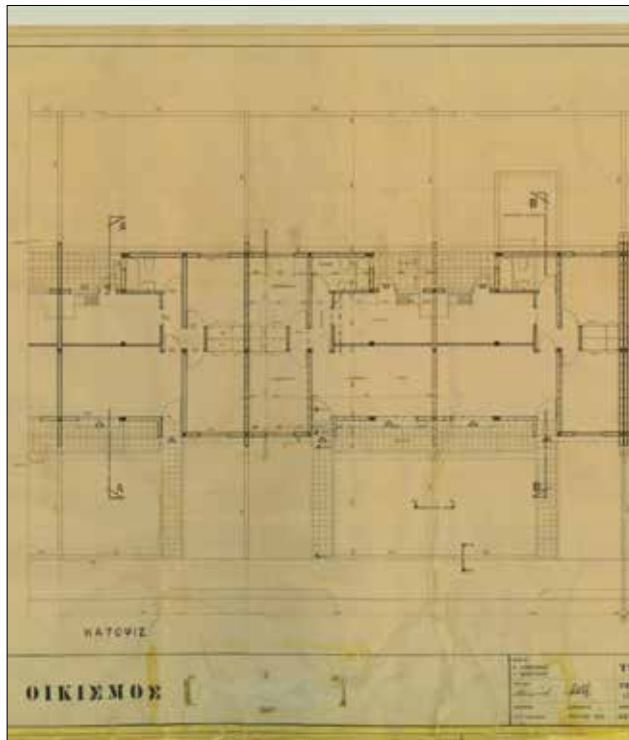
Single Storey Houses
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

Double Storey Buildings
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

Blocks of flats
Image: Department of Town Planning and Housing

CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSTRUCTION AFTER 1974:

1. Use of indigenous materials (sands from the sea, gravel from riverbeds, burnt wood from the forests)

2. Lack of standards, quality controls, regulations, workshops

3. Lacking earthquake regulations which were implemented in 1986 as "Temporary Earthquake Measures" and then in 1993 as Seismic Regulations

Limited experience by the private and public sector of projects of such magnitude.

Final product – the partners were overexerted and an array of errors and omissions can be noted.

Plan for fixing and supporting the buildings in the state residential areas

- Decision made by the Government in 1999 (following the earthquake of 1999) to evaluate the seismic adequacy of public buildings.
- The Town Planning and Housing Department was deemed responsible for state housing.
- There was a choice of 7 state estates depicting the most problems (Upper Lakatameia, Strovolos II and St. Paul in Nicosia, Makarios III, Agios Athanasios in Limassol, Linopetra and Saints Anargyroi I in Larnaca).

8.3. KAFENE PHILOSOPHIQUE[3]

Dialogue. Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

In early spring of 2012 I suggested to Vrahimis that he leads the 'Kafene Philosophique' that was to take place on the day. Due to a lack of communication and collaboration with Vrahimis, he took it to mean literally a 'Cafe Philosophique'. For me this was not the case. It was an extension of the experiments that have been taking place throughout this PhD research project with dialogical practices. The idea of the 'Kafene Philosphique' is an extension of the public and collective conversations that I have been involved in staging. This is a very important aspect of practice within the Nicosia context, due to the lack of civic dialogue that exists within Cypriot every day practices.

FOOTNOTES

3. This is the Cypriot interpretation of the 'Café philosophique'; a concept that was founded by philosopher Marc Sautet in Paris in 1992. The idea of the 'Café philosophique' is to bring people together in a public place where they can discuss different ideas; it is not pre decided what the discussion will be about. Inspired by this concept 'Kafene Philosophique' uses the space of the Cypriot cafe, the 'kafene', to hold discussions on specific topics.

EXCERPT 1

Participant 10

From everything that we have said to this point I think that there are two things that have stood out. One is the view of the people who live in the homes. And then we have as you mentioned a top to bottom approach which sometimes is a problem if someone is deciding how other people will be living. What the role of the urban planner and the architect is (and similar such questions) are somewhat tricky, as no one wishes to have that role imposed upon him/her, but that role exists and it is needed. Much more so in the estates as they were planned urban projects! Therefore we want decisions to be made and it is through this process that all these homes were built the same. And all that was said in relation to the need for thinking of people in the design process you are indicating that the architects should not use a top to bottom approach. In university they taught us this term - **anthropocentric design**, where man becomes the centre of the design process. And by extension minimizing the huge gap that exists between those who design and those who live within a given environment. On the contrary it is through the experience of the people that you begin to design and contextualizing. Therefore design must have its own Cypriot identity. What Cypriot elements, be it social or cultural, do we want to retain and promote through design so that there are no social blocks? It could be by creating passages within the built environment so that you can walk through and be able to see what happens around you and thus perceive it as an experience. So that it is not a 'bubble' that does not allow you the possibility of expressing yourself as a person. And I put this on the table as a sort of question. What elements of the Cypriot identity would you like to reflect through design? If you could all give some examples of what you perceive socially as to what is Cypriot and what things should we preserve and also what we should consider when we are designing some spaces.

Andreas Vrahimis

Ok, others whose turn it is can speak whilst whoever wishes can think of this.

Participant 11

I would like to continue where Participant 10 left off and obviously with this idea that seems to be a little the epicentre of our discussion, and bring up the idea of anthropocentric architecture versus top to bottom architecture. Basically it describes in brief the problem of architectonic modernism, the idea of urban development let's say which was directed by necessity through urban planning and architects, which in Europe came through different socio political trains of thought. And I wonder to what extent it is architecture itself that fails? So this movement and I completely agree that Cyprus should find its own modernism, even if that makes me sound a little bit stuck back in time. **The Cypriot definition of urbanization must be found. Because Cyprus had a violent urbanization process.** And there is no right or wrong. But I wonder whether it is the architects that disappointed the inhabitants or if is it the political handing that disappointed them. I am not sure that in Europe, or more specifically in the UK (as I do not know so much about Central Europe) if it is the architecture that failed or if it is the political approach towards these things that brought about what was earlier described.

EXCERPT 2

Kypros Pafitis

So that you can get more into the spirit I will give a very practical response. What happened is that we urbanized people en mass. People that were not meant to become urbanized were replaced, and in places that reminded them of their villages, such as Koffinou village for instance. We went to the village and we built an estate like in Strovolos III in Nicosia. The same houses, the same dead ends etc. And we placed people there who had come en mass from Yialousa. People that would

have their pigs in the house. So what? Wrong choice of place. Now why the wrong choice? All those decisions that the political world and the technical world took could have been wrong choices. The ministries were not equipped appropriately, the ministers were pressuring us to finish. All these situations brought about wrong decisions, mass urbanization that allowed for psychological and social problems to be created which persist and which will continue to persist.

Andreas Vrahimis
I would like to intervene one moment here. You said that it shouldn't have, but I think it should have, but through another meaning. That is to say urbanization was basically unavoidable. It is not the first time that it happened violently. There was mass urbanization at the end of the First World War. Generally urbanization has happened as a result of war many times. It is not a first here in Cyprus.

Kypros Pafitis
This evaluation though always happened. Something new before it becomes traditional can be off putting.

EXCERPT 3

Participant 14
I would like to say that there definitely was an urgent situation with the war that had to be dealt with. And of course mistakes happened. At the present moment the temporary stage that defined these built environments has passed, and I wonder what could be done and how the urban planning authorities could benefit from this situation. That is to say there should be an evaluation carried out addressing what could be done, what could have been better, what the needs are now days etc. And I suspect that a good solution is to rethink the functionality and structure of the urban planning authorities. Because it is inevitable that it affects the whole of the society. It is one of the most interventionary forces that definitely demonstrate a top to bottom approach in how things are implemented. The issue at

hand is how could all these bodies of authorities that are gathered within a public service but affect society in its totality become decentralized or even structurally let's say include more actions like the kafene philosophique. How these evaluation processes could be integrated alongside the concept of open dialogue which brings together the citizens and the local governance bodies, the state administrators etc.

Kypros Pafitis
Ten years ago and even now these processes are not implemented and put to action. There was no social dialogue. But it is starting. For instance I will be making a road in Aglantzia and it is going through a certain location. The state used to decide and make one wherever deemed appropriate, it publicized it in the 'kafenedes' and the villagers would see the road being constructed through the fields and they had no idea what was going on. Now people are waking up and they are asking for communitarian dialogue. To be exact every time that a main artery or such large scale constructive works there is a rudimentary social dialogue. This thing that is happening here today should definitely be developed and implemented in all aspects. It is pressure. Now however you are not pressuring me as the reasons why we are here today are different but this is the way it works. The artist or the inhabitant who joins the conversation demonstrates an act of pressure towards the people that will be dealing with the urban planning and construction issues.

Participant 14
I think that within this context what is essential is the free dissemination of information. For instance you want to carry out a new project the aims, the budget and such things should be publicized so that a dialogue can be carried out that is truly open and transparent.

Kypros Pafitis
If the authorities are not pressured this thing that you are talking about will never be done. They must be

pressured by the people I think. When I used to do a job I also did not want to carry out a public dialogue. I wanted it to be done, not to be caught up in procedures and dialogues. I preferred not to have dialogue. But I am telling you that it is the only way that people can use to pressure the situation. Dialogue! The artist, the philosopher, the theorist should have a say.

Participant 5
I really appreciate what you are saying and I have a question. I was under the impression that the state authorities were obliged by law to publicize the information when 'works' are going to be carried out and to invite the people to an open dialogue where the public's opinions could be heard and some taken into consideration. I know that this is what happened when I was involved with the restructuring that was planned for the Chrisohous camping. So is this procedure applied?

Kypros Pafitis
It is applied. And it is also applied for the state housing estates.

Participant 5
So why is it never applied?

Kypros Pafitis
Let me tell you how the process is carried out. Let us say that it is not the urban planning department's responsibility to inform the public if it is announced that in Aglantzia we will be expanding the state estates. So what do I do as a department? I publicize it to the local authorities. And the local authorities have to implement the mechanism of announcing it to the people.

Participant 5
That is to say that this mechanism should be implemented by local governance?

Participant 10
Isn't that the role of the local authorities' board?

Participant 5
So by law it is the responsibility of the local authorities?

Kypros Pafitis
Yes. This differs however. If the work is closely connected with central urban planning (e.g. the money is provided by the state such as in the case of road construction) then it is the responsibility of the state. The community which is affected can also publicize this, further to the obligatory publicization by the state to the local authority that is being affected. The community should if the state neglects to do so, instigate the discussion so that it can have a say as to what will be constructed in its locality. For example this happened on Stavrou street when it was to be changed to an avenue.

Participant 5
Ok, so if we were talking about development or changes within the state housing; who would be responsible to instigate the public dialogue?

Kypros Pafitis
You are presenting me with a hard question. From everywhere! The pressure in this matter should be political, communitarian and from the department itself. I mean it should be so. The politicians will play the role they always do. With the negatives and positive points, it does not matter. When they are pressured they play their role correctly. And it is there that issues must arise that must be more specific. For example the embellishment of the state estates which takes place. Now if you want to discuss the issue of embellishment you have to impose it with one way or another.

Participant 5
You are telling me that there should be pressure.

Kypros Pafitis
Yes but pressure about a specific issue. For instance the embellishment of state estates! Now what you are asking for and how you are phrasing it, it might appear a bit strange!

Andreas Vrahimis
Is this to say that the state has an understanding

of beauty and it imposes it to the inhabitants by saying that the environment must be embellished?

Many people speaking together.

Participant 6
Isn't it the law that determines which is the body that carries out this advisory procedure? Or does each body act accordingly each time? This is following on from what you said. If we are doing a road and we go to the local authority board of Aglantzia lets say. If they want they can carry the dialogue out. If they do not, they will not. Does the law determine that you have to go there or somewhere else? Or do you choose where to go?

Kypros Pafitis
The one carrying the work out and to whom the work will belong to is obliged to instigate social dialogue! As I said in cases where I will be transforming spaces or carrying out expansive works within state estates I would publicize it to the local governance council. The local governance board of representatives!

Participant 6
And the law says that this is where you should go to?

Kypros Pafitis
But where else would I go to? To whom should I refer to? Individuals? Inhabitants?

Participant 6
Yes, you could refer to let's say to the inhabitants of the estate.

Kypros Pafitis
This is not convenient. You refer to someone who represents the people. And who represents the inhabitants of a region? The local council! That is who you refer to and not to specific individuals. You cannot do that. It is impossible. I cannot go to the neighbourhood which I will embellish and tell them come let's talk.

Participant 6
I respect you very much and I do not want to put

pressure on you. I do not know if I sound like I am pressuring you. I respect very much what you said and I would like it very much for dialogue to be carried out. But if we sit around and we have a dialogue each time we will not be achieving much.

Kypros Pafitis
We as an authority will not carry the dialogue out. Not because I am a bad architect. Someone is pressuring me to do this work and I will do it.

Participant 6
So you would like another...

Kypros Pafitis
I have a budget getting used up. The situation will pressure me to act. I believe that I would try to do it the best possible way. Now, this is always how it goes. You hire for instance an architect to make your home. There will definitely be dialogue.

Participant 6
But he will find a way to impose his view though.

Kypros Pafitis
Possibly. But you will listen to him if there are no other reasons such as personal interests etc. And I would not mind a healthy public dialogue. And in this case when there is a dialogue you hear things that are expressed in a totally different way and which often highlight personal interest. That is tiring.

Participant 2
I would like to add something. In each committee only the interested parties present themselves and especially those that have vested interests. We made the urban planning board, we held hearings etc. Those that turn up are those who want to construct in the middle of a natural environment. That is it. That is to say that a good technocrat like our speaker, carries out his research and I accept it. But the personal interests are so powerful, family related; together with the clientelistic party relationships and our government preventing any

technocratic element to prevail. You as citizens should face up to your responsibilities. We faced ours once.

Participant 6
And now I think we truly touched the core of the discussion, because here what is revealed is the culture of claiming rights and reasoning about what happens in our lives. Thus from the moment in time that there are no strong interests; ok there is a relationship between the citizens and the state, which the citizens for better or for worse have not questioned or claimed for several historical and other reasons. And in this way the State managed to pass all these actions under the pretext of the practical solution of certain problems and now we are seating here discussing how comes we have ended up where we have. Therefore a very important part that we have to look at is how ourselves as citizens claim the rights that the law or other state policies have provided us with and which we are entitled to.

Participant 3
Since we started off with the discussion on modernism I think this should continue... Instead of seeing things through what we know about modernism, let's judge what has taken place. If we could develop a critical approach of modernism based on specific examples, then based on that we can reject certain options... And let us go to another example. To set what are the priorities because it is not simply creating a neighbourhood for reasons x or y, but essentially it is about rejecting modernism. So using the theory to advance something forward!

Andreas Vrahimis
I was going to mention a historical example that came to my mind related to the idea of people claiming certain things and how that relates to modernism. It is after all my work on this topic that resulted to me being here tonight. When the First World War ended the first big estate project that modernist architects took part in was in Vienna. How this eventually happened was

because once the First Word War had finished there was a mass need for housing and the people came out into the streets and protested that they wanted something to be done about this issue. It is a complicated issue how things evolved so but the fact of the matter is that one of the first important modernist housing projects was a result of mass demand for this to take place.

Participant 3
It came out of a spiritual need you mean?
Many people speaking together... Noise

Andreas Vrahimis
The demonstrations resulted to one of the first large scale estate housing project in Europe and in specific Vienna's.

Participant 5
They were responding to certain demands made by the people.

Andreas Vrahimis
Yes it was in collaboration mostly with a workers' movement, who were demanding some sort of cooperation from the state for the provision of housing.

EXCERPT 4

Evanthia Tselika
Yes, this relationship to the UK is I think another very important discussion. Our very strong connection to the UK in relation to modernism. Identity and generally political identity, our transition from subject to citizen. Therefore it is interesting to think of these two things together. Architecture and political transformation.

Participant 14
And the structure of the state and of the state department and services.

Participant 15
I thought it was concluded in the conversation but now it has come back. We speak of modernism and function etc. Our modernism is not only of the UK, but also of

Greece. We were attempting before to compare the condition of temporality and the role it plays. In the case of Smirna for example and someone mentioned this before, it was a little bit like a done deal. They knew that it was over with the exchange of the populations. The end! And we can perhaps mention as a better example the temporality of the Palestinian settlements on the West Bank that are truly temporary. But in fact there still exists the same construction and concretization of the spaces. Specifically we have the tents that turn into homes that turn into gardens and so forth. Therefore this can assist us to not only see our modernism as a legacy of the UK presence here, but also through a connection with the political realities of the Middle East. A temporality that arises not only through economic processes but also political processes that are related with the claim of land and the instability of the region. And the other thing I wanted to say is that we thought that this came as a trauma and we did not know how to deal with the situation. And in part this is true. In the sense that it was forced that all these people were urbanized. It happened with another way beyond the processes of war but it still acts like the main driving force that caused the modernism of society. But we have to examine this...

Kypros Pafitis
And just to reinforce your thoughts, at least the first ones relating to Palestine and the Middle East. In many 'Habitat' conferences that I have been to, they regard our own state housing as something really special (this not taking into consideration the social problems that have come about, but focusing more on the general design and construction). The rest of the countries that face similar situations regard the re housing of the displaced as something truly temporary. I consider that we made something that was between the temporary and the permanent and that is what depresses people. They thought that they would be there temporarily and then they realized they would stay there forever and that we patched things up to

such an extent that psychological issues were created.
EXCERPT 5

Participant 9
Basically it is sure that modernist architecture within its everydayness betrays the culture of a place prevalent at a specific time period. Surely it is relevant to modernism, postmodernism and all that follows and interconnects. But I want to go back to man again. There are two research studies that I would like to mention. One was by the 'Economist' and it graded and categorized certain behaviours of the Cypriot society based on what my wife used to call as American criteria. However they seem to be logical. They gave us the lowest grade on political judgment and evaluation and civic culture. The other is the 'Euro Barometer' that is produced in collaboration with several universities and the results of which have repeatedly proved that Cypriot people have the least trust in their fellow human beings. I repeat. They depict the least amount of trust in their fellow human beings and the highest to God. I knew that we were religious but I now realize that we do not trust our fellow human beings. And now you tell me that architecture can act as a complex discipline through either intellectual, practical or preventative actions when we do not even trust one another. What should we do? Be realistic one could say. Should we accept this? No we should not. Let us all leave from here today and let us treat someone that we meet tomorrow differently. That is an act of resistance. As it is building a public clay oven for the neighbourhood to use! It is the same thing. Architecture and policy making cannot change culture. I think it is purely a personal act. We all have to project this change and realize that that is where our biggest problem is. We have great minds, a really high percentage of university graduates in an array of disciplines, we have many good souls. But they cannot work with one another. What is that problem? Are they going to quarrel? Can we blame it on competitive nature? I am not sure. But we have to understand it...

Kypros Pafitis
Based on what you are saying I would like to add something I heard on television. Two French businessmen opened a shop in Greece. They chose to live in Greece. And they asked them what is negative about Greek people. And they replied by saying that it is a very nice place, people love each other but they are closed in their homes. And I thought it was the opposite. That we are open and connect with our fellow humans, where as in France being more Northern...

Participant 9
We are covering up guilt.

Kypros Pafitis
That is what I wanted to say. I started realizing it...

Participant 10
This aspect that you are referring to was brought about by urbanization. In rural areas it is not like this I think. That is to say, it is on the whole urbanization that brought about this estrangement. In the rural environment people do not interact in the same way.

Andreas Vrahimis
And if this is so then it means that the urban planning state department is not weak, nor is it not responsible...

Participant 5
I am going to agree with some of Participant 9's observations but I would like to disagree on the issue that architecture or policy making does not have a role to play in this. I think exactly because of these observations that it has a role to play as architects and urban planners are part of the bigger picture. Another important issue is realizing that we have lost that social fabric that used to exist. Perhaps due to the displacement of people because this massive violent occurrence took place. Whatever it is, the social fabric that used to exist was lost, as was the ground for creating the necessary social dynamic and structure for demanding our rights as a collective. Basically we reached another

phase without experiencing the process that allows for the creation of a culture of collective demand. So by establishing that this mistrust exists, we can see that our inaction of demanding things as a collective combined with how our social structure functions, in fact allows the mistrust to exist. These facts demonstrate that architecture and urban planning have a very important role to play here. That is to say that even if I am not an architect and I cannot find a spatial concept that would work, I have an instinct that if an architect and an urban planner that know their job well and have a vision come and do something within the estates, then the time could come when the space for multiple social(s) interaction(s) could be created. This social interaction does not happen. It does not happen in the public spaces of the estates as it does not happen in any public space in Cyprus. And it is not just here. An intervention can bring about things but cannot change things only through that.

Kypros Pafitis
I disagree with you. So what has happened has happened? In what way?! Is it something that only has to be done by the architects and the urban planners? I say no! It is the social collectives that have to do something for the culture and mentality to change. Something else has to come into function. The architect alone has done what he could do. So are we going to bring down the estates so that people who were once not urbanized but became urbanized, can feel better? It is something in the social fabric that must change to transform this situation. Not in terms of construction. Is construction going to ease pain? I do not think so...

Participant 10
Are they not interrelated?

Kypros Pafitis
They are interrelated yes. But social action could also assist.

9

REFLECTIONS ON 'SINIKISMOI'

9. REFLECTIONS ON 'SINIKISMOI'

The 'Sinikismoi' project actively aimed for action in the urban space outside the centre of Nicosia and into the neighbourhood fabric of the city. By going into the displaced neighbourhoods the aims included contact with the residents, dialogue between different social groups, the infiltration of art within the everyday life of citizens and civic engagement on issues of urban segregation as that is formed through housing and urban planning state policy. Through the multiple practice led manifestations that took place within the 'sinikismoi' these aims were met as this has proved to be the most multilayered project within the series of projects that I have carried out in addressing the role of socially engaged art within the context of urban segregation. The idea of community, due to the environment of the estates became very prominent through this project. The lost community of the internally displaced persons, the strong identification with the refugee identity and feelings of ghettoisation which were formed through the built environment, and the changing social landscape of these urban neighbourhoods as the elderly are slowly passing away and are mostly being replaced by migrant residents.

Issues of self-organisation and the lack there of that seems to prevail in Cyprus became particularly prominent particularly through 'Kafene Philosophique'. Through the context of social art action the framework can be set up for people to come together, establish commonalities with other individuals or social groups and then continue to develop new initiatives that facilitate civic action and social change. In Western Europe and in the US, interdisciplinary teams have been operating in the last forty years to implement projects that enhance social change through art led situations[4]. This team working that brings together artists, designers, urban planners and community representatives demonstrates the focus on exploiting "art's social value alongside its aesthetic function" (Landry, 1996, p. 48). Artistic action is thus presented as one method that can assist in the development of enhancing civic engagement and challenging social divisions within the urban space. For this to happen however staging the artistic efforts is not enough. Connections have to be made with social action groups that can further develop this participation into civic involvement. The work of artist Lorraine Leeson is exemplary of this. She has been working in East London since the late 1970s and has involved different social groups over time in her collaborative practice. Her long term collaboration with Hackney school and her placement within the academic environment of the University of East London allowed for the development of educational, community and artistic exchanges to take place; demonstrating how social practices can assist in community building within segregated urban environments (Dunn & Leeson, 1997; Suchin, 2007).

FOOTNOTES

4. A good example can be seen in the 'Project row houses' initiated by artist Rick Lowe in Houston, US in 1993. He discovered twenty-one abandoned homes which he redeveloped with the residents of the neighbourhood. The project still continues and includes spaces for exhibiting, for residencies, a community gallery, a park etc. It is a good example of how art and its involvement of the community can create and revitalize inner-city neighbourhoods (Finkelpearl, 2013, p. 132).

The social landscape of Nicosia does not depict urban neighbourhood community art efforts like ones evident in the US and Western Europe. What was highlighted through the project was that more inclusive citizen led committees need to be set up that deal with the 'sinikismoi'. If citizen committees such as these exist then it is easier for an art project to tap into this and build upon that. However when an absence of such local grass roots approaches is noted then it is the creation of citizen driven committees that gains prominence. The lack of organisation is perhaps due to the aging population that resides there and the migrant groups that also reside there and which are prevented from being engaged in civic life. The emphasis on neighbourhood planning in Western Europe and the US began in the 1970s with the creation of community groups within the neighbourhoods that fostered citizen planning. Citizen action is very important because it can influence state-led initiatives adopted by urban planners. This was highlighted in the 'Kafene Philosophique' discussion by Participant 14 (demonstrated in Excerpt 3).

"A good solution is to rethink the functionality and structure of the urban planning authorities. Because it is inevitable that it affects the whole of the society. It is one of the most interventionary forces that definitely demonstrate a top to bottom approach in how things are implemented. The issue at hand is how could all these bodies of authorities that are gathered within a public service but affect society in its totality become decentralized or even structurally let's say include more actions like the kafene philosophique".

Independent individual and group efforts do demonstrate an alternative understanding of community in Nicosia, a good example being the collective garden project, 'Community Bahce'[5] or 'Bank of Commons'[6] efforts. These reflections in relation to community building were enabled by the 'Sinikismoi' project and its efforts to create instances of interaction between different social groups, thus challenging the element of urban segregation that has characterized these areas of the city.

The emergence of conflict transformation art through the practice has been formed through the context of cities and the urban experience of segregated living. It has focused extensively on the inherent aspect of conflict that exists in human relationships, particularly in the urban environment and the use of art as a platform for bringing together different social groups and questioning how we use urban public spaces through collaborative actions. Some of the methods that were demonstrated as ingredients of conflict transformation art were tested in the 'Sinikismoi' project and they are further analyzed in the thesis through the analysis of the project, alongside with issues of identity, difference and the role of the cultural producer as a facilitator of social awareness and civic engagement.

FOOTNOTES

5. This project took place in the Kaimakli area of Nicosia from May to July 2013 at the Linear Volunteers Park. It was initiated by 'Utopia Collective' and it engaged the neighbourhood in an urban gardening project, whilst promoting knowledge and tools about food production but also how to build a collaborative community based on exchange and mutual respect.

6. This is a project initiated by artists Achileas Kentonis and Maria Papacharalambous in 2012 and which acts to create a window of opportunity for collective action, independence and self-organisation. In 2013 several meetings occurred bringing together different people that wish to act for community building, alternative economic systems, free education and collective action. (Bank of Commons, 2013).

Photograph: Evanthia Tselika

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COLLABORATORS AND PARTICIPANTS

Dimitris Alfas
Antonis Antoniou
Christos Avraam
Claudia Djabbari (Germany- Residency)
Natalie Heller
Yiannis Ioannou
Achilleas Kentonis
Phanos Kyriacou
Orestis Lambrou
Chrystalleni Loizidou
Kypros Pafitis
Despo Passia
Rozy Sarkis
Maria Toumazou
Nikoleta Verykiou
Andreas Vrahimis

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