



**Politecnico
di Torino**

Honors Thesis

Master in Architecture, Construction and City

Abstract

**Design for Uncertainty
Planning for a Socio-Political Divide**

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September 2021

This dissertation will deal and focus on the several actions to be taken to propose a conservation, reuse, or requalification project in a particular, uncertain and difficult context of a divided city. The final aim will be the proposal of a masterplan, or better, of some scenarios for the requalification of the division area and thus for the two sides of the Cypriot capital, Nicosia, whose deeper investigation was allowed thanks to the opportunity of doing a semester abroad in the capital of Cyprus.



Barrels blocking the access to the Buffer Zone in south Nicosia

After an analysis of other case study, namely Beirut, Jerusalem, Mostar and Gorizia, the focus will be in finding analytic tools to divided cities. The aim is not to find a definition, but more of a classification: some parameters, a step-by-step approach in studying what happens in a divided city, in order to calibrate the social and urban analysis for the case of Nicosia with a stable methodological baseground.

This baseground will be preparatory for the employment of a particular tool of analysis, derived through urban sociology: in fact, a campaign of interviews, within the local population insisting in the city of Nicosia, will collect information, perceptions and aspirations in order to create different masterplans, or strategies, to follow, in order to requalify and regenerate the Buffer Zone in downtown Nicosia.

These strategies are then defined and polished via a second campaign of interview, constructed according to the findings of the first. It will deal mainly with the professional opinion of local stakeholders involved in the issues, including high-caliber interlocutors such as the United Nation mission in Cyprus, or the representatives of both Greek and Turkish municipalities of Nicosia. This second passage is needed to understand the common trend within the city, and to fit the

desiderata of the interviewed population within the path and the strategies already envisioned for the city by the local decision-makers. Moreover, the opinion of the stakeholders, even with their different levels of power and involvement, defined a second scale of the project, going from an urban requalification masterplan to a localized intervention on a specific plot, using the investigated data to elaborate a design proposal.



A Turkish military post guarding the Buffer Zone along Ermou Street, once Nicosia commercial axis

Already identified with the morphological analysis of the city, the defined intervention area will be Agios Kassiano/Kafesli district, in the East of Nicosia, and will insert itself in a path of rapprochement already identified by the local decision-makers. To sum up, the paper will display three different scenarios, or phases, and will provide three operational masterplans for the whole of the Buffer Zone in downtown created starting from the acquired data, shaped into a planning tool of urban sociology.

The perception of the urban population will be taken into account, and the opinion of involved stakeholders, whose interviews were based on the result of the urban

population interview campaign, to identify an area to the conservation, reuse and refunctionalization, or better, reappropriation by both side of the island. The area of Agios Kassianos/Kafesli, through this process, will become a new checkpoint between the two sides of the island, in the form of an urban exchange point encompassing an area of the Buffer Zone accessible from both sides.



Agios Kassianos/Kafesli areas with the decayed buildings and one of the historic Nicosia Bastion

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