ARCHIS INTERVENTIONS_CYPRUS

2013 ACTIVITY REPORT

Archis Interventions_Cyprus (Esra Can Akbil, Şebnem Hoşkara, Giorgos Psaltis)

Supported by ERSTE Foundation
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Archis Interventions_Cyprus informal initiative is set in 2010 with collaboration of architects and academics across the divide with the aim of increasing the quality of urban and social space through promoting sustainable development, enhancing social interaction in urban spaces and creating urban awareness through strategies that extend beyond the social and physical borders of the island.

Archis Interventions_Cyprus team has developed an action program for the year 2013 bringing forward a set of strategies to be implemented in relation to Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso, the main village in the northern part of Cyprus where the Greek Cypriots who stayed in the village after the events of 1974 and Turkish citizens who moved to the north of the island from the southeast and north regions of Turkey have been living together. As part of this, the team applied with the Mapping The Third Space: Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso project and gained a grant from the Knowledge Innovation Fund, a component of the Peace-it-together Network in partnership with UNDP – Action for Cooperation and Trust, the Management Centre and the NGO Support Centre. The project as part of the ARCHIS SEE Network was supported by ERSTE Foundation. Simplified in ‘Mappingkarpas’ the project was initiated on 4th December 2012 and developed throughout the year to be finalized in July 2013.

As part of the Knowledge Innovation Fund, Archis Interventions_Cyprus also had the chance to attend the Practitioners Exchange Program, which allowed members of the team to share the developed strategies with two other initiatives in Pristina, Kosovo and also apply to their expertise on the subject.

Moreover, within 2013, Archis Interventions_Cy team also collaborated with Archis Intervention SEE Network in order to organize locally the two conferences and workshops on 24th and 25th May 2013. Archis Interventions_Cyprus also took part in the editing of the outcomes of the two events in order to digitally produce Post-Production Documentations.
METHODOLOGY AND STRATEGIES

Given the circumstances of the case where social and physical spaces are contested at local and national levels and the co-existing communities represent politics in space in the macro level within such a small-scale environment, the timing and methodologies of the project handled went beyond the known theoretical methodologies. An experience-based methodology comprising alternative directions has been developed, where predictions are tested continuously in order to adapt to reactions and the processes and short-term results become definitive for the future steps. With the aim of community empowerment in order to achieve creation of a mutual social space shared by the communities, the focus in such an environment is on short-term steps and outcomes, i.e. the process, rather than a pre-defined final outcome.

Archis Interventions_Cyprus team espoused a bottom-up approach for intervening into the socio-cultural relations in order to reveal potentials for a mature interactive platform at the physical level. In this manner, Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso project is developed through a series of participatory projects on various scales of meetings, events and workshops organized with the local residents, unions and authorities of the village Dipkarpaz /Rizokarpaso in order to read, learn from and contribute into their understanding and usages of space.

Through the chance offered by the Knowledge Innovation Fund, Mapping The Third Space; Dipkarpaz / Rizokarpaso project turned into a digital knowledge tool. The specific approach and methods utilised created the opportunity to set an innovative model for similar cases not only locally but also internationally. Innovation in Mapping Karpas project stands first of all in its capability of melting a number of opposite terms into a single object: tradition-technology, gaming-learning, urban-rural, virtual-physical, local-international are all combined and merged into a versatile tool that derives directly from the inhabitants’ involvement, capable of enhancing their awareness and assisting them in overcoming the village’s problems. The digital map-game has the potential to evolve into an alternative learning tool on both local and international levels.
Background Information

The settlement of Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso is the main village in the northern part of Cyprus where the Greek Cypriots who stayed in the village after the events of 1974 and Turkish citizens who moved to the north of the island from the southeast and north regions of Turkey have been living together in a rather unique situation. Political uncertainty, dramatic demographic shift, economical decline and unsettled ownership issues created a fragile socio-political case and a youth drain in both communities. Demographic data prior to 1974 indicates no actual shared life, as the village was predominantly inhabited by Greek Cypriots. Today, the village population is about 3,000 and less than 1/10th of it are Greek Cypriots.

Project Concept

The project consists of an alternative knowledge tool operating a mapping action of the rural settlement and the extremity of the Karpas Peninsula. This secluded land stripe consists of today one the most unique and unspoilt examples of the beautiful Mediterranean landscape. Unique geological phenomena, endangered fauna and flora species and scattered ancient monuments compose an enchanting landscape. Despite the widely shared values the area is under threat and it has been thus designated as a potential site of the Natura 2000 Network. The website ‘mappingkarpas.org’ and printed mapgame ‘Eggsplor’ are two integral mediums of the project that aim to become a tool to encourage social, urban and environmental awareness through exploring and gaming.
Knowledge Tool Description

The developed knowledge tool project consists of two parts: an interactive website and a printed mapgame. The idea of a map dates back to the results of the 2011 Hands-On Workshop conducted within the 2011 Archis Interventions_Cy activities. The idea evolved into these two tools, which complete each other aiming to create awareness on both local and international levels in regards to the preciousness and fragility of the region’s environmental and socio-cultural assets. They also aim to promote mutual respect for diversity, and enhance protection based on the idea of common belonging and other relative values described in the UNESCO Diversity of Cultural Expressions Convention, the European Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society and the European Landscape Convention. The web site (mappingkarpas.org) is envisioned to become a growing interactive space where exploring, learning and gaming can enforce a better understanding and appreciation of the village’s unique character. Except for the opportunity of exploring the information in an interactive way and through a downloadable mapgame (Eggsplore), the website hosts a blog that will be updated weekly with invitations for competitions and polls for advancement of the website in relation with the village. To keep the connection with its users, local and international, the website also offers social media buttons. Hence, the tool aims to empower local civil society, promote multi-perspectivity and foster understanding and mutual respect within possible models of sustainable and peaceful coexistence.

Project Main Activities

- a visit to the village prior to commencement introducing the project as an active response to their participation and contributions in the previous workshops handled in the village
- team meetings: team empowerment and
Focusing on the village center, Mapping Karpas Project Website as a Knowledge Tool: mappingkarpas.org

- brainstorming sessions
- research and material collection: village visits for collecting further information to enhance the content; building and urban scale recordings, informal meetings and interviews.
- content information verification
- design of map game
- launch of website during promotion event at the village: The event would be the opportunity to distribute the printed map and will have the role of an active response to the villagers’ participation in the previous workshops.

Team Set-up and Group Empowerment

The idea for the creation of a map for the village of Rizokarpaso/Dipkarpaz started to materialise with the set up of the collaboration team. A number of qualified, open minded and skilled artists/technicians from across the divide accepted our invitation to join Archis Interventions_Cy for the construction of the knowledge product. An initial meeting was organised on 18 December 2012 at the H4C where the grantees presented the idea, the expectations and the possible difficulties to face due to the particular context. Initial workgroups are also formed for the general graphic design, mapgame, website design, general content advancement according to the developed product.

Material Collection

Archis Interventions_Cy team has been working on Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso village since 2008. Yet, this already accumulated information had to be re-elaborated, enriched and verified in order to be used in the innovative knowledge tool. As the context of the project extended further beyond the initial studies, further research is conducted from several resources (old and new) and the findings are verified through visits to the village and interviews with people.
The collected material is grouped under two headings:

**Territorial level information:** focuses on the territorial area of the village (municipality boundaries roughly), which coincides with the basic SEPA area (Special Environment Protection Area). The emphasis is on the identification of the environmental and cultural heritage of the region.

**Urban level information:** focuses on the settlement area, although disperse, in order to have a deeper look into the coexistence of community in shared spaces of the village core.

The design phase of the product also affected the material collection works as they were interrelated.

**Design Phase and Creative Collaborations**

Throughout the months of December and January a series of meetings took place at Hamur Cafe and H4C meeting room in order to give the team members the chance to brainstorm and approach the first structural issues relevant to the basic content/functioning, the size of the tools (both on-line and printed mapgame and their relation) and the general graphic style-visual identity. The team examined similar map examples and went through productive discussions. After the first meetings, workgroups moved further with the following actions: material collection and research, on-site visits, production of first map drafts in order to define sizes and number of pages, logo design, domain registration (www.mappingkarpas.org but also www.mappingspace.org). Between January and February 2013 the tool started to shape as the project entered the actual design phase and material collection came to completion.

During the design phase, the team also attended a Knowledge Products Workshop conducted by two experts, Helena Puig Larrauri & Michaela Ledesma. The
event took place at The Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC), in partnership with UNDP- Action for Cooperation and Trust. During the workshop the project was presented and collected feedback from the attendees was discussed within the group. Received feedback focused on the potentiality of the website to become more interactive and open for uploaded accumulations.

**Challenges**

The most important challenge, which had quite an impact on project development, was drafting/wording of the texts related to the actual content of the knowledge product. Initially, the general writing style/genre had to be decided (touristic, scientific, for adults or for youngsters etc.). In regards to the territorial level map, the content was described from a more touristic guide-scientific point of view aiming to raise respect and awareness of regional values. Following the Practitioners Exchange trip to Kosovo, a new process is facilitated where the feedback received from contacted local partners (Archis Interventions _Prishtina and Kosovo Innovations Lab) helped to define a more suitable and solid framework based on de-nationalisation and co-ownership of cultural heritage, both historical and natural, and the promotion of its protection for common benefit. International conventions were taken into consideration such as the UNESCO Diversity of Cultural Expressions Convention, the European Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society and the European Landscape Convention to contextualize the project on an international level. Support for the project website was asked from the institutions but unfortunately no reply was ever received. On the urban level, the most sensitive issues were recognition and ownership issues which materialised in the naming of the local administration building and the promotion of pensions.

However, the most challenging issue was the toponymes issue due to the unsettled Cyprus problem. The
Eggsplore trilingual game board.
Eggsplore game map is combined of an A2 game board and 4 A4 cut-out sheets to build up the game. The aim of the game is exploring the buildings on a route looking for turtle eggs, while at the same time getting to know the village and buildings of architectural and cultural importance. The game map directs to the web page for further information.
Eggsplore trilingual game explanations.

information and topics are presented in all three languages for all appearing locations on the website. The languages appear in a random order as well. The trilingual tools and wordings in regards to the co-existing double functions such as schools, coffee shops and cooperatives in the village are still likely to create reactions locally and island wide. Archis Interventions_Cyprus team will open platforms for interactive discussions in regards. Depending on reactions, the project may have to exclude some topics in further stages but still these will be recorded as project outcomes to contribute to future models.

In order to make this discussion process possible, apart from using the existing social media the team will meet personally the local actors to make space for feedback on the project. Receiving feedback from directly involved local agents (authorities, community leaders, associations, schools etc) is vital for the project’s acceptance and embracement. In order to initiate a continuous direct involvement and interaction of the local community, a blog on the website is initiated to upload views, comments and impressions. According to the interest and involvement of the community, it is possible in the future to give the website to community to run under the team’s guidance.
Selected logo works from graphic artists in the Creative Team. Final logo used combines together the environmental assets of the village as well as reflecting the everyday colors one can experience on a visit to the village.
NETWORKING THE STRATEGIES: PRACTITIONERS EXCHANGE PROGRAM

A technical visit to Pristina within the scope of Practitioners Exchange for Knowledge Innovation Fund was organized at a point when the creative team had developed the draft work of our knowledge product. The selected destination was Pristina, as a context which is quite relevant to Cyprus. The trip envisioned as an opportunity to get feedback from similar groups and take into consideration observations that would make its dissemination easier while facilitating creation of a mapping network eventually.

Two associations are contacted for the trip: Innovations Lab Kosovo and Archis Interventions_Pristina. The workshops arranged with both groups were quite productive and operational in many ways. The meetings were structured in such a way that we gave an insight to our collaborators about our work and knowledge product and get feedbacks, we got information on their work and we investigated together opportunities to facilitate further collaborations. We had the chance to discuss in detail our methodologies and ‘mapping method’ as a model.

Archis Interventions_Pristina Meeting

Archis Interventions Pristina found our knowledge product as a unique model that facilitates many tools such as language, cultural and natural heritage. The layering of these inputs turns them into tools of reading the space which puts forward the territorial identity of the place rather than ethничal one.

Archis Interventions Pristina specially emphasized the need of this project to be linked with issues that are currently being valued by the UNICEF and EU Commission. The Charters and Conventions that project links bring the opportunity of going beyond the contested issues by the use of international...
language. They suggested that the framework, language and methodology of the work should be defined through and supported by these definitions and statements. Link to EU and UNESCO is beneficial which would also be promotion of the charters as well.

Innovations Lab Kosovo Meeting

Our meeting with Innovations Lab Kosovo was very productive due to their expertise on digital products and dissemination. They stated that successful dissemination of the project among the young people in the village is vital for the project. Innovations Lab Kosovo (ILab) advised the use of existing channels and youth groups that already exist in the space. We agreed that creating the opportunity for users to upload something of themselves to the website creates the sense of ownership. We therefore explored together the nature of the website, as our knowledge product, and ways that enables children and youngsters to contribute. A number of possible opportunities are discussed keeping in mind the sustainability of the project, which lead the discussion to online sharing platforms, which are free of charge. It is decided that a model should be introduced to get input.

Innovations Lab Kosovo team suggested that to bring people in, it is inevitable to be in touch with the end-users as well as the institutions. For this, our contact with locals on many levels (children, women, unions, schools, local administration) is positive. Map has to be fun for kids and youngsters. People’s support in the project defines its sustainability as well.

The valuable feedback is gained from the meetings regarding the game functionality, content and visibility.
On 24th of May Urban Design, Urbanism, Urban Policy – Towards a New Expertise conference and workshop is organized by Archis Interventions_SEE (Kai Vöckler) in cooperation with Centre for Advanced Studies (CAS), Petar Bojanic and supported by ERSTE Foundation. The conference stems from the argument that architecture and urban development only have disciplinary perspective when they conceive themselves as part of the overall political system, that is to say, of ‘governance’, and refer to a new planning strategy which can contextualize itself within various social situations and simultaneously prepare new contexts for social actors. The conference asks the question: How can we bring the spheres of architecture and planning together with political and social sciences? This question is addressed specifically to colleagues from universities in the region, who are dealing with the problems of urban transformation and post conflict development. The event had a program of five international conference presenters, a panel discussion of four participants from local universities and a workshop with the aim of establishing a network, and in the longer run a regional PhD program, supported by different universities.

On 25th of May, the Conference and Workshop with the title ‘Post-Conflict Development and Civic Imagination (Divided Cities)’...
Archis Interventions in collaboration with Friedrich Ebert Foundation Cyprus organises

Local organisation
Archis Interventions_Cy

Conference and workshop

Post-Conflict Development and Civic Imagination (Divided Cities)

Saturday, May 25, 2013
Home for Cooperation, Nicosia Buffer Zone

Opening
Hubert Faustmann, Friedrich Ebert Foundation Cyprus 10:00
Kai Voeckler, Esra Can Akbil, Giorgos Psaltis, Sebnem Hoskara, Archis Interventions 10:10

Presentations
Kyriakos Pachoulides, Nicosia, Cyprus (H4C), president of the AHOR 10:30
Valdete Idrisi, Mitrovica, Kosovo, CiviKos Platform 11:00
Aferdite Syla, Mitrovica, Kosovo (Community Building Mitrovica / CBM, Mitrovica Forum) 11:30
Tina Coric, Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Abrasevic Center 12:00

Lunch Break

European Bodies
Stefan Ghenciulescu, Zeppelin Association Bucharest: EE-Lab 14:00

International Bodies
Christopher Louise, Director, United Nations Development Programme 14:30
Action for Cooperation and Trust

Coffee Break

Workshop 15:30
Concepts, strategies, towards a network of community centres, perspectives of development
with registered guests: please contact archiscyprus@gmail.com

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ARCHIS INTERVENTIONS SEE
ERSTE STIFTUNG

Cities)’ is organized by Archis Interventions in collaboration with FES (Friedrich Ebert Foundation Cyprus) with international participants. The conference dealt with the social and political problems that materialize in cities. The focus was on the cases of Mostar (Bosnia Herzegovina), Mitrovica (Kosovo) and Nicosia (Cyprus) where the bodies that come up with the idea of building a communication space or transforming an existing building and its collective memories into a neutral zone for communications are local organizations. Strategies will be developed in order to turn communications sites into more than just meeting places, by creating activities that, in the long run, have the potential to become part of everyday life in the entire city — activities which are themselves creating a new experience of space.

Archis Interventions_Cy (Esra Can Akbil, Sebnem Hoskara, Giorgos Psaltis) locally organized the two regional events of ARCHIS SEE Network on 24th and 25th of May 2013. Venues of both events were Home for Cooperation (H4C), Nicosia buffer zone. The organization involved moderation of talks and reflecting on the discussions as well as local arrangements of conference events for 2 days. AI_Cy also presented MappingKarpas project during the Post-Conflict Development And Civic Imagination (Divided Cities) conference.

AI_Cy team collaborated with ARCHIS SEE (program director Kai Voeckler) for accumulation of the outcomes of the events, editing the post-production document of conference and workshops, which is published digitally. The digital publication “Urban Design, Urbanism, Urban Policy – Towards a New Expertise” and ‘Post-Conflict Development And Civic Imagination (Divided Cities)’ can be downloaded from ARCHIS SEE Network website (http://www.seenetwork.org/).
FUTURE STEPS

Archis Interventions_Cyprus has spent a quite productive year that resulted into the creation of two knowledge tools that have the possibility of creating a potential model for several cases in similar contexts where conflict affects space.

AI_Cy will spend the rest of the year to communicate these knowledge tools initially among the locals that will allow an interaction of this digital tool with the actual space and users. In order to make this discussion process possible, apart from using the existing social media the team will meet personally the local actors to make space for feedback on the project. The blog on the website will be used to upload views, comments and impressions in order to initiate a continuous direct involvement and interaction of the local community. According to results, it is possible in the future to give the website to community to run under the team’s guidance. Experience has shown that being hosted under an international umbrella would create broader acceptance for the knowledge tools; thus it becomes fundamental to seek for further support from the international institutions.

Further communication and networking of the tool is as well vital to test the model in similar cases and compare the results. It stems from the Practitioners Exchange meetings in Kosovo and from the 25th May conference/ workshop in Cyprus that numerous cases exist in the region where the tools are worth being tested.
Calendar

2 December 2012  ‘initiation of Mapping The Third Space: Dipkarpaz / Rizokarpaso project

4-6 March 2013  Practitioners Exchange Program

24 May 2013  Conference And Workshop In Cyprus:
Urban Design, Urbanism, Urban Policy – Towards A New Expertise

25 May 2013  Conference And Workshop In Cyprus:
Post-Conflict Development And Civic Imagination (Divided Cities)

31 July 2013  Mapping Karpas project completion

October (tbc)  Website launch and map game distribution event in Dipkarpaz/Rizokarpaso, Cyprus
Credits

Archis Interventions_Cyprus Initiative team members:
Esra Can Akbil: Project Coordinator
Giorgos Psaltis: Project Coordinator
Prof. Dr. Şebnem Hoşkara: Project Coordinator
Cemaliye Eken: Researcher

Collaborations:
Archis Interventions / SEE Network
Kai Voeckler: Program Director, Archis Interventions, Archis SEE Network (Archis South East Europe Network)

Design Collaboration Team for Mapping Karpas Project:
Art Director: Senih Çavuşoğlu
Graphic Designer Consultancy Reference Persons: Artemis Eleftheriadou and Popi Pissouriou
Visual Arts and Graphic Designer: Kurşat Sekmen
UTOPIA ENGINEERING Reference Person: Kyriakos Kyriakou

Archis Interventions_Cyprus
Nicosia, 2013