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# the [un]common place

art, public space and  
urban aesthetics in europe

**the [un]common place** is the result of the research project *Trans:it. Moving Culture through Europe*, a journey through creative practices between art, architecture and urban research that are redefining the concept of public space in Europe. A „common place”, a shared vision, from Norway to Turkey, from Spain to Bulgaria, from Cyprus to Romania, emerged from the more than fifty artists and projects documented in the book. Artists, institutions and society are searching for new relations to experiment unforeseen forms of cohabitation, mutual understanding and visions of the urban landscape. The book, organised in five thematic chapters, presents a European interpretation of public space resulting from complexity and difference, translation and memory.

The enclosed **DVD** features the cycle of three documentary films that are part of the project. Interviews with artists, curators, architects, critics and intellectuals, realised in eleven European cities, introduce the context of the artworks and the thematics explored in the book.



FONDAZIONE ADRIANO PANZERI

**trans:it**

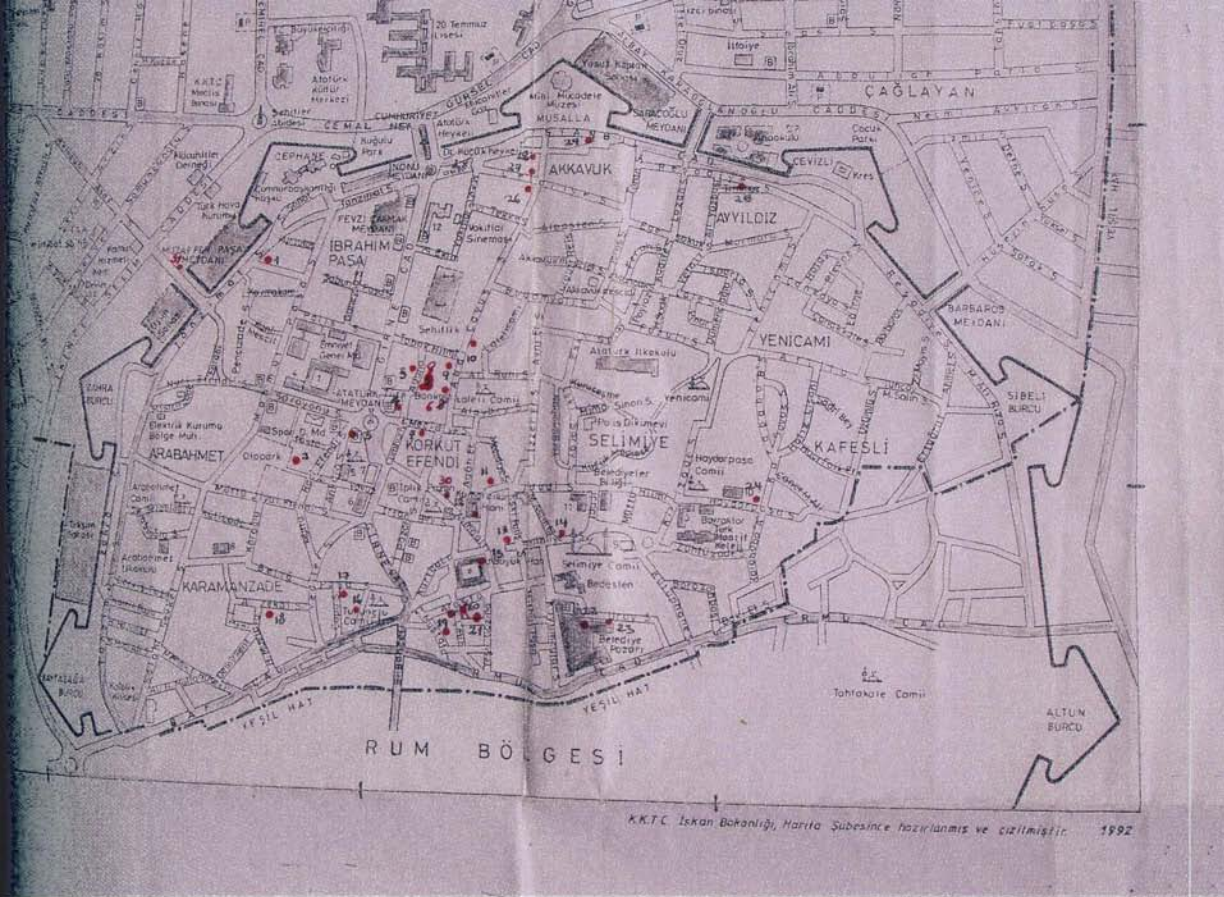
MOVING CULTURE THROUGH EUROPE



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## Socrates Stratis

Socrates Stratis studied as an architect in the US and France. He has worked in many projects of architectural and urban scale in Greece and Cyprus. His studies of architectural environments brought him to reflect on the identity of the urban space in Nicosia, which is shaped by everyday-life relationships between two parallel and divided worlds, and that create new anatomies for the city and its populations' life

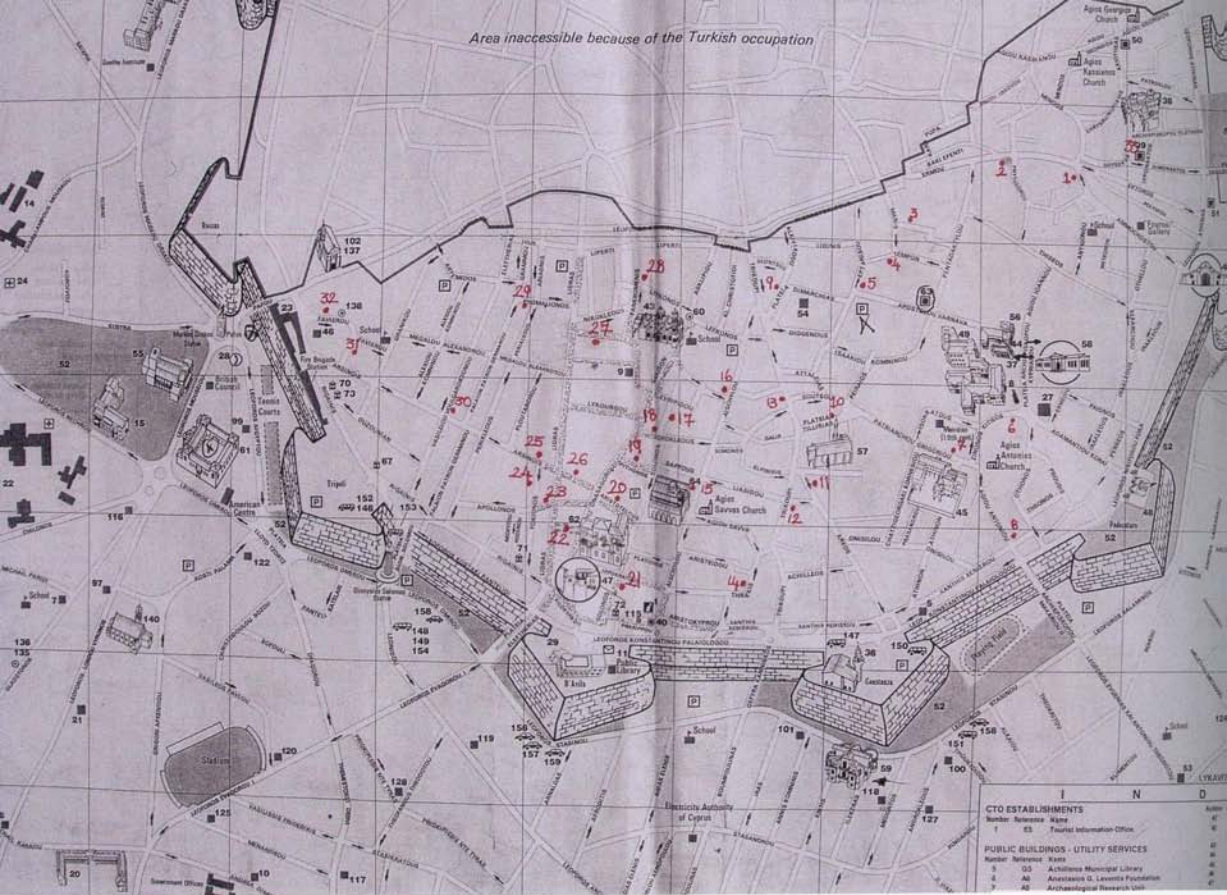


## The Cyprus Case

The Cyprus case is actually very rich and complex. Especially after the dramatic changes of April 2003, when the military buffer zone had opened in selective points initiating the first movement of people between the two parts of the island since the 1974 Turkish invasion. This was even more so the case with Nicosia, which had not seen migration since the first clashes between Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots in the beginning of the 60's. Since April 2003, the cease-fire line could be experienced by the two communities as a dead-end element. The line itself was a two dimensional element only

experienced along its length. The concept of dead-endness has become part of the everyday life of people. After April 2003, the world of paradoxes was enriched even more: a still cease-fire line, in military, political and legal terms can be experienced by Greek and Turkish Cypriots from both sides. Anyone can cross the cease-fire line at a specific check point and witness for example the two fragments of one of the most commercial streets of Nicosia within the walls, Ledra Street, cut in two for the past 40 years. Such a transgression however remains only experiential as its status is still a military one.

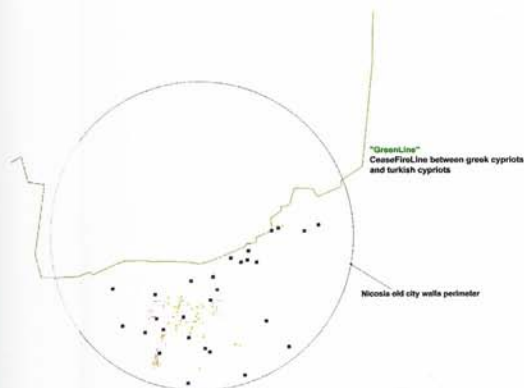
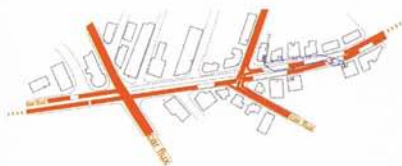
Thus, our task was to focus a possible research not on the consequences of the cease-fire line as a separating element, but on the porosity of such a border. This was done in two directions: the first is a purely documentation study, mapping the modes of transgressing the borders, physically and also psychologically. This study was actually encouraged by the events of April 2003. The purpose of this study is to collect data concerning the anatomy of transgressing the borders relating to both communities on the island. The second direction concentrates more on the concept of the commonness of two parallel



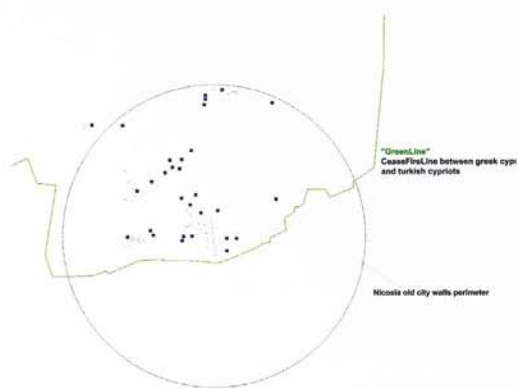
worlds not in communication for the past 40 years.

Mapping the coffee trips in both parts of the city of Nicosia becomes a vehicle for this second direction of research. There was firstly a documentation of the coffee trips in the Greek Cypriot side and then in the Turkish Cypriot side taking advantage of the possibility to cross the ceasefire line after the events of April 2003. (Working group: project leader: Socrates Stratis (Cyprus), collaborator: Riccardo Urbano (Italy), assistants: Miguel Her- raiz (Spain), Ayse Ufuk (Cyprus), Halide Orgunoglu (Cyprus). The act of drinking coffee has generated trips of coffee-service usually in commercial areas:

a man or a woman serve clients (shop keepers) within a commercial area bringing a very fine blended coffee in small cups, called *Turkish coffee* or *Greek coffee* or *Byzantine coffee*. The transportation of coffee is a very delicate act because of the required equilibrium capacities of its transporter: small coffee cups are filled up and placed on a special tray which is held by a handle created by wire extensions. An alternative map of the city based on time-space relationships was generated. Representing the urban fabric in its wholeness, (contemporary, historic – in Greek Cypriot use and in Turkish Cypriot use), in order to identify similarities and differences.



Bying coffee  
 coffee shops units  
 coffee shops units



all city coffee shops customers (ending)  
 coffee shops units

