



The Aga Khan Award for Architecture

Rehabilitation of Chrysalinotissa and Arab Ahmet

Nicosia, Cyprus

Architect

Nicosia Master Plan Team
Nicosia, Cyprus

Clients

United Nations High Commission
Nicosia, Cyprus

Completed
1996



2007 On Site Review Report

2098.CYP

by Mohammad al-Asad

Rehabilitation of the Walled City

Nicosia, Cyprus



Architect

Nicosia Master Plan Team / UNOPS

Client

UNDP

Design

1986

Completed

1997 - On going

Rehabilitation of the Walled City

Nicosia, Cyprus

I. Introduction

Nicosia has a long, diverse and sometimes turbulent history that is reflected in its urban and architectural composition, most markedly in its historic walled core. It experienced centuries of foreign rule – Ptolemaic, Roman, Byzantine, Crusader/Lusignan, Venetian, Ottoman and British – before becoming the capital of an independent Cyprus in 1960. In 1974, conflict between Greek and Turkish Cypriots led to the city being divided into two, with each part absorbed into a separate political entity. The southern, Greek sector of the city continued to be the capital of the Republic of Cyprus, while the northern sector eventually became part of the new Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, which only Turkey recognises as a state. A buffer zone separates the two sectors of Nicosia and passes through the centre of the walled city, taking up about 10 per cent of its area.

The present city wall was built by the Venetians between 1567 and 1570 to replace the earlier medieval walls. It was intended to protect the city against an anticipated Ottoman invasion, but the Ottomans nevertheless managed to capture the city less than a year after its completion. In plan, the wall is characterised by its unique geometric outline, which consists of a circle with eleven equally spaced spearhead-shaped bastions protruding out of it.

Since the 1980s considerable efforts have been made to protect the architectural and urban heritage of the walled city and also to address its deterioration, especially in the areas bordering the buffer zone. What makes these efforts remarkable is that they have been carried out by the municipal authorities of both the Turkish and Greek sectors of the city, who have formed a joint Nicosia Master Plan (NMP) team. This initiative was the first (and for some time the only) common project carried out by the two communities. It has been sustained since its inception up to the present despite periods of political turmoil.

II. Contextual Information

A. *Historical background*

Two factors have caused considerable harm to the rich architectural heritage of the walled city. The first is related to the forces of modernisation. Beginning in the period of British rule and reaching a climax in the 1960s, the historic urban fabric came under attack as streets were widened to accommodate traffic and old buildings were torn down to make way for new ones. A prominent early example of this was the demolition in 1931 of sections of the wall on both sides of the historic Kyrenia Gate to ease traffic flow in and out of the city. The damage wrought by such interventions, however, remains limited in comparison to other cities.

In 1974 the city was divided into two sectors, with a buffer zone running right through the middle. The buffer zone turned what had been a central and commercially vibrant part of the city into an uninhabited no-man's-land patrolled by United Nations peace-keepers. It also

caused a deterioration of the areas bordering it to both north and south, as it abruptly severed the organic links between neighbourhoods.

In 1979, the mayors of the northern and southern sectors of Nicosia, Mustafa Akinci and Lellos Demetradis, held a historic meeting under United Nations auspices and agreed to work together on urban issues affecting Nicosia. The first issue they addressed was the completion of a unified sewage system for the city. A year later, they launched the comprehensive Nicosia Master Plan (NMP) project, of which the rehabilitation of the walled city has been an important component. Surveys, studies and plans for the walled city were drawn up over the next few years, and the first phase of implementation was initiated in 1986. This included twin projects for the rehabilitation of two areas located along the buffer zone: Arabahmet in the northern part of the city, and Chrysaliniotissa in the south. Since then, dozens of projects have been implemented on both sides of the walled city.

B. Local architectural character

The walled city has a tightly knit urban fabric. The buildings are constructed of a soft yellowish stone and of plastered sun-dried brick. They range in size according to function. Religious and other public buildings are the largest and most dominant, while houses are generally one or two storeys high. There is diversity of building styles, reflecting the various periods of Nicosia's history: Byzantine, Gothic and Ottoman, as well as more recent vocabularies ranging from the neo-classical to the modernist.

C. Climatic conditions

Nicosia has a Mediterranean climate. It is rather mild throughout the year, but generally cool in the winter and relatively hot in the summer, with rainfall of about 500 millimetres occurring mainly during the winter months.

D. Site and surroundings

The circular walled city has a diameter of 1.6 kilometres and is the heart of Nicosia. The surrounding areas include a number of historical structures from different periods as well as modern extensions which form the city's central business district. The two parts of the city, north and south, have a different character, both inside and outside the walls. This is not surprising as they have been separated from each other for over 30 years, and affected differently by political, economic, demographic and also socio-cultural forces. The southern or Greek side generally is more affluent and benefits from greater resources and full access to the outside world; it became part of the European Union in 2004. The northern side, on the other hand, has been relatively isolated, with its only link to the outside world being via Turkey (on whom it depends for financial aid). Its per-capita GDP income is also somewhat lower than that of the south. However, conditions in the north began to change in 2003. Members of the Turkish Cypriot community now enjoy wide-ranging access to the Greek side and have full rights of citizenship in the Republic of Cyprus. This is removing barriers between the two communities and bringing them closer to each other.

E. Topography

The topography of the walled city is generally flat, with relatively mild topographic variations.

III. Programme

A. History of the inception of the project

As mentioned above, the project resulted from the efforts of municipal officials from both north and south. More specifically, the mayors of the two sides are to be credited with taking the initiative to set up the project and push it through against a background of political opposition between the Greek and Turkish communities. They signed an agreement of cooperation at a time when other forms of cooperation between the two sides were non-existent. The immediate goal was to work out a unified sewage system: however the long-term goal was to develop a master plan that treated the city as a unified entity rather than a divided one.

B. How were the architects and specialists chosen?

An important issue in the choice of architects and specialists was the desire to have municipal staff from both communities work together. A good number of foreign consultants also were brought in to help develop the various components of the master plan.

C. General programme objectives

The objectives were to: survey and diagnose existing conditions; propose solutions; create an environment in which representatives of both communities would be able to exchange views and work together; and develop a master plan for Nicosia that would address the current and future needs of the inhabitants of the city as a whole.

D. Functional requirements

As with any master plan, there has been a need to address, amongst other things, issues relating to infrastructure services, traffic, growth, sprawl, sustainability of the city's neighbourhoods, preservation of cultural heritage and the overall improvement of the quality of life in the city.

IV. Description

A. Project data

The walled city has a diameter of about 1.6 kilometres, which translates into an area of about two square kilometres. It is circular in shape, with eleven spearhead bastions located along its perimeter. There are three historic gates, facing north, east and west (additional entry points for motor vehicles were added during the modern period). The city includes hundreds of buildings of various uses: residential, religious, commercial, governmental, cultural and

educational. The southern side includes about 2,800 buildings, the northern side no less than 2,000 and the buffer zone about 230. The number of listed buildings is about 1,100 in the south and 630 in the north (all numbers are approximate). A joint team of four architects from both sides also carried out a project surveying all the buildings of the buffer zone, which was completed in 2003.

B. Evolution of design concepts

A very important aspect of the project has been to preserve the historical heritage of Nicosia's buildings and the urban fabric. This of course limits the nature of interventions that may be carried out. A process of surveying buildings of historical and architectural importance and placing them on a protection list was initiated in 1986. Before then, only the main monuments of the city were listed. A legal framework was developed to ensure the protection process could be sustained. For example, development transfer rights were put in place. Height limits were set at two storeys. The existing street network was respected and pedestrianisation introduced whenever possible. Vehicular traffic was reorganised and dedicated parking spaces were provided in various parts of the city. Internationally accepted restoration practices were adopted with the aim of safeguarding the authenticity of the structures and ensuring that all interventions were reversible.

C. Structure, materials, technology

See above.

D. Origin of technology, materials, labour force, professionals

The Nicosia Master Plan project has emphasised the participation of specialists from both the Turkish and the Greek communities. Foreign consultants have been brought in whenever the need arose.

An attempt is made to use traditional materials and techniques wherever possible. A number of rehabilitation projects, especially in the southern side, include interventions that have a strong contemporary feel. One example is the conversion of the power station, which dates from the 1930s, into a contemporary art gallery. These interventions, however, are reversible.

V. Construction Schedule and Costs

A. History of the project

Implementation of the work began in 1986 and has been continuing ever since.

B. Total costs

It is difficult to give an overall cost estimate since this is an ongoing urban project that spans two decades, two different parts of the city, and dozens of individual components.

Initial funding was provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Implementation was carried out through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), United National Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). More recently, funding also has been provided by the European Union.

Local financing began to be provided on both sides as the project evolved and political conditions began to stabilise. The level of financial support available in the Greek sector of the city is considerably higher than in the Turkish sector. Since becoming part of the European Community in 2004, the Republic of Cyprus has been experiencing considerable economic growth, giving the municipal authorities in the southern part of the city substantial resources.

On a local scale, subsidised rents are offered to encourage people to move into the old city. Cash subsidies are also provided for restoration projects: these can cover up to 20 per cent of the construction costs.

C. Comparative costs

Not applicable.

D. Qualitative analysis of costs

Not applicable.

E. Maintenance costs

Not applicable.

F. Ongoing costs

Not applicable.

VI. Technical Assessment

A. Functional assessment

The city is functioning quite well and a reversal of the deterioration has taken root. The process is a bit further along in the Greek part of the city, but this is to be expected in view of the more abundant resources and international contacts available there.

B. Climatic performance

Not applicable.

C. *Response to treatment of water and rainfall*

Not applicable.

D. *Environmental response*

Not applicable.

E. *Choice of materials, level of technology*

Discussed above.

F. *Response to, and planning for, emergency situations*

The standards used for restoration address earthquakes, since Nicosia is in a seismic zone.

G. *Ageing and maintenance*

This is an ongoing project that has raised the level of care provided for the buildings of the walled city. Private owners and other non-municipal public organisations are now beginning to carry out rehabilitation projects on their own initiative. This is happening in both parts of the city, but is currently more widespread in the south.

H. *Design features*

Not applicable.

I. *Impact of the project on the site*

The project's impact has been very positive. The southern part of the walled city is gradually evolving into a high-quality urban district with a diverse mix of residential, commercial, religious, and cultural uses springing up everywhere (even along the buffer zone). The area also seems to accommodate diverse economic groups and activities. Though the planning team feels that much still needs to be done, what has been achieved so far is very impressive.

In the northern part of the walled city, the changes are also positive, but are taking place at a slower rate. The north lags somewhat behind, in terms of both quantity and quality. There are a number of reasons for this. One is the uncertainty about the future of relations between the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the Republic of Cyprus. More specifically, there is a problem with property ownership in the walled city since it is expected that properties that were expropriated in 1974 would have to be returned to their original Greek Cypriot owners if and when a solution is reached that unifies the two sectors of the city. A good number of these properties were taken over by residents of the Turkish part, and some have even been sold to new owners since. (This is not such a serious problem in the Greek part, where the properties owned by Turkish Cypriots before 1974 have been placed under the management of a special committee run by the Ministry of Interior.) Though the problem is not as intractable as it may initially seem (some mechanisms for resolving it have already been put forward), it has still

dampened the inflow of investments to the Turkish side, especially in areas close to the buffer zone.

J. Durability and long-term viability of the project

There is an almost universal awareness of the historical, architectural, and economic importance of the walled city of Nicosia. It is highly sustainable on its own as a place to live and do business, as well as a popular destination for both local residents and tourists. In this context a project to rehabilitate its historic core seemed inevitable. All that was required was an initial push to get the rehabilitation process going. In the south, that process is now well underway and has its own momentum; in the north, it seems the positive changes will reach a critical mass in the near future.

K. Interior design and furnishing

Not applicable.

VII. Users

A. Description of those who use or benefit from the project

The project addresses many groups: the local stakeholders who originally inhabited these areas, as well as people from outside the walled city who are being encouraged to move in. For all involved, a potentially high quality of urban life is on offer. The walled city provides not only a setting with a rich architectural and urban heritage, but also a healthy urban environment where all services are within walking distance, where pedestrian movement takes priority over vehicular traffic, and where considerable economic opportunities are evolving. Moreover, the infrastructure is being upgraded (street paving as well as water, electricity, sewage and telecommunications networks). Social and cultural services are being set up: there are cultural centres that host exhibitions and offer classes in various subjects, daycare centres for children and the elderly, and meeting places for the local community. In some cases, such as the Chrysaliniotissa project, subsidised housing has been offered to young families in order to create a healthy mix of inhabitants in the neighbourhood (and in the process help the established inhabitants, who were mostly elderly, feel part of the wider community).

Of course, the project also benefits the tourists who visit the town and get to experience a unique urban setting with a diverse historical and cultural heritage.

B. Response to project by clients, users, community

The project is welcomed by many. No one has been displaced as a result, but on the contrary an effort has been made to encourage people to move into the under-utilised sections of the walled city. In that sense, it is a win-win situation. Property values in the southern part have risen considerably since the rehabilitation project began. In the northern part, a similar process is taking place, though at a slower rate.

The project is being carried out in a sensitive manner on all levels on both the Turkish and the Greek sides. However, one survey has indicated that some Greek Cypriots from outside the walled city seem to have a rather negative view of it, as a place that with too many migrant workers, crime, inadequate services, etc. By contrast, those living inside the walled city view it far more positively and want the rehabilitation project to move along at an even faster pace.

VIII. Persons Involved

There is a tremendous team spirit among the people involved in the project (both within the individual teams, and in terms of cooperation between north and south). A dedicated group of architects and planners in each of the two municipalities work for the NMP project. On the Greek side, they include NMP team leader Agni Petridou, Athina Papadopoulou, Eleni Petropoulou, Simos Droussiodes, Andri Sofroniou, Costas Mavrokordatos, and Elena Sofianou. On the Turkish side, they include NMP team leader Ali Guralp and Cemal Bensele.

Also, considerable credit should go to the two mayors who initiated the process of cooperation in 1979: Mustafa Akinci and Lellos Demetriadis.

IX. Bibliography

Nicosia Master Plan, *Walled Nicosia: A Guide to its Historical and Cultural Sites* (n.d.; n.p.)

United Nations Development Programme, *Revitalizing Old Nicosia* (Nicosia: Partnership for the Future Programme Management Office, n.d)

UNDP/UNOPS Nicosia website: www.undp-unops-pff.org/News.asp?CiD=45

Mohammad Al-Asad

April 2007



Nicosia walled city



Pedestrianized area along Ledras Street in the southern section of the city.

Exterior view of an early-twentieth-century house in the Chrysaloniotissa area of the southern section of the city that has been converted into a kindergarten.





View of the restored sixteenth-century Omeriye Bath complex in the southern part of the city.



Interior view of a rehabilitated space in the Omeriye Bath complex.



Exterior view of the power-station located in the southern section of the old city . The power-station was built between 1913 and 1936. It has been converted into the Municipal Modern Art Centre.

Interior view of the Municipal Modern Art Centre.





View of garden area in the Chrysaloniotissa kindergarten.

Rehabilitation of the late-1930's municipal market in the northern section of the city into a restaurant complex.



Pattern in pavement in the southern section of the city showing symbol of walled city of Nicosia and indicating route of walking tour in walled city.



Restoration of the Old People's House in the southern section of the city into a Social and Cultural Centre.

A restored building in the Arabahmet area in the northern section of the city.



A lane in the Arabahmet area in the northern section of the city.





A lane in the Arabahmet area in the northern section of the city.



A plaza in a pedestrianized area in the northern section of the city.



A street in the Samanbahce housing complex in the northern section of the city. The restored complex originally was built between 1900 and 1955.

The courtyard of the restored sixteenth-century Buyuk Khan in the northern section of the city, which currently includes a tourist information centre, souvenir shops, and eating establishments. The Buyuk Khan also hosts small-scale performances.





A new restaurant established in the northern section of the city.

A café in the fourteenth-century chapter house located next to the cathedral Saint Sophia, converted into the Selimiye mosque during the Ottoman period, in the northern section of the city.





The Aga Khan Award for Architecture

NOMINATION FORM

CONFIDENTIAL

I. PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

A. Project Title	Rehabilitation of Chrysalinotissa and Arab Ahmet Quarters		
Address	the old city		
City	Nicosia	Postal Code	Country Cyprus
B. Date of Completion	1997		
C. Architect	The Nicosia Master Plan team (see attached list)		
Mailing Address	1. (Greek) Republic of Cyprus: The Municipality Office, 2. Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus: Town Planning Department		
City	1. Lefkosia 2. Lefkoşa	Postal Code	Country 1. Cyprus 2. Northern Cyprus*
Telephone	1 c/o UNHCR Cyprus 2 00 90 392 2284925	1 c/o UNHCR Cyprus Facsimile 2 00 90 392 2276349	*via Mersin 10, Turkey Telex
D. Client	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees		
Mailing Address	Office of the Chief of Mission, UNHCR Cyprus,		
City	Nicosia	Postal Code P.O. Box 1642	Country Cyprus
Telephone	00...235 9043	Facsimile 00...235 9037	Telex

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Please give a brief description of the project.

Located in the centre of the physical and politically divided island of Cyprus, Nicosia is today broken in two by a buffer zone cutting across its historic core-the inner Walled City - which contains a unique heritage of beautiful pieces of Byzantine, Venetian, French Medieval and Ottoman architecture which is harmoniously embraced by a massive circular 16th century Venetian Wall.

The buffer zone, which physically separates the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities as a result of tragic events in recent decades, runs from east to west through the middle of the Walled City.

Under the impact of rapid growth and the reality of its division in two separate parts, years of unplanned and uncontrolled development have created accumulated problems for contemporary Nicosia.

Since 1979, the Representatives of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities of Nicosia, despite the prevailing political circumstances, assisted by their teams of professionals from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities of Nicosia, have worked closely together, under the auspices of the UNDP and with technical support from the UNHCR (HABITAT). The first achievement of this common effort was to produce a plan for the rational development of the city to the end of the century.

In this context the Nicosia Master Plan identified not only a set of policies needed to control the city's growth and reverse the trends of decay of the Walled City but also a series of priority projects targeted towards arresting the trends of physical decay and socio-economic disintegration of the historic core.

The aim of the Nicosia Master Plan Priority Projects is to preserve the cultural and architectural legacy of the Walled City, provide the impetus for new private investments, enhance the quality of life in it, attract new residents, strengthen economic activity and ultimately reestablish the role of the historic centre in the contemporary city.

They are designed to act as "pilot" schemes demonstrating how innovative investment can combine the merits of the historic environment and traditional architecture with the benefits of modern amenities.

The pioneering efforts of the Nicosia Master Plan to implement its policies for the preservation and revitalization of the historic centre were given real impetus through the funds allocated by the UNHCR for the realisation of its first priority projects.

Chrysalinotissa and Arab Ahmet Rehabilitation Projects are among the most demanding projects of the Nicosia Master Plan and aim at the revitalization of two of the most important residential areas of the Walled City. The revitalization of residential areas is a major, yet most difficult to achieve, priority of the policy for the historic centre. A strong residential use was considered a necessary component of the balanced development of the ancient core of the city.

The United States of America is the sole donor of UNHCR funds for Cyprus. A continuous flow of yearly allocations from these funds which started in 1987, has already borne results which are beginning to change the profile of these neighbourhoods.

Please continue overleaf

III. NOMINATOR'S STATEMENT

Please indicate why you feel this project is important and should be considered for the Award.

One of the malign consequences of the partition of the island in 1974 unbridgeable gulf and the subsequent diplomatic isolation of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and the economic embargo against it has been the almost unbridgeable gulf that has opened up and now separates the two communities that have occupied the island and lived together in communities all over the island for centuries, and that have created, over the centuries, a culture that is uniquely and unmistakably Cypriot.

This project, important and commendable enough as an exercise of urban conservation, is exceptionally important because it has brought together professionals and community representatives of both communities, to co-operate together in the identification of goals, the acceptance of policies, the selection of suitable properties for conservation/restoration and adaptive renewal, and the agreement of procedures for implementing the project. Common aims and tasks shared have led to a greater understanding of other's needs and aspirations and have resulted in a remarkable turn around of the former spiral of decay and dereliction, and the revival and re-creation of viable inner-city communities, within the walls of the old City.

IV. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please append visual materials (ie: slides, photographs, drawings, or sketches) and also indicate possible sources of information on the project, bibliographical or other.

'A Vision for the Future of Nicosia' UNHCR, Cyprus, 1993

Rehabilitation of Nicosia Old Town

Nicosia, Cyprus

Architects: Nicosia Master Plan Team
Nicosia, Cyprus

Client:

Occupancy: 1997

Program: The aim of the programme is to preserve the cultural and architectural legacy of the non-divided Walled City, provide the impetus for new private investment, enhance the quality of life, attract new residents, strengthen economic activity and, ultimately, to re-establish the role of the historic centre in the contemporary city.



PLANNING IN NICOSIA

For over nine centuries, Nicosia's role as the capital of Cyprus has been due to its central location, making it the centre of population, employment and services with corresponding advantages over all other towns. The existence of a buffer zone, going right through the middle of Nicosia and the Walled City itself, has undermined its centrality and made Nicosia a 'frontier' town. While Greater Nicosia accounts today for about a third of the island's population and over half of the urban population, economic activities and investment in the south have tended to gravitate to other towns, particularly in the coastal areas.

The old city of Nicosia within the Venetian Walls, concentrates most of the buildings of cultural, historic and archaeological value in Cyprus from the medieval period onwards. Yet, the Walled City has suffered steady deterioration for many decades, and much renovation would have to take place. The future of Nicosia is dependent on strengthening the administrative and service functions which form its economic base, and this in turn requires great improvements in the quality of the urban environment. Observed trends again point to the sprawl of office and shopping development away from the Central Business District where traffic conditions, open spaces and accessibility from the newly-developed residential area pose less of a problem. A major task in planning Nicosia's future is to reverse these trends through actions derived from a comprehensive planning strategy and a detailed revitalisation programme, which would make living and working conditions in the Central Area of Nicosia more attractive and promote the city's specific advantage as the cultural, business and service centre of Cyprus.

THE WALLED CITY

For many years the Walled City has been subject to physical decay and socio-economic decline, conditions which resulted in loss of population and employment and deterioration of the architectural and environmental quality of the historic centre of Nicosia. The conservation policy aims to arrest these trends and re-establish a role for the area in relation to the overall development of the Central Area and Nicosia as a whole.

The conservation of the Walled City is seen as a multi-dimensional process incorporating architectural objectives with regard to the restoration of individual buildings and groups of buildings with distinct environmental and architectural qualities, planning objectives for the use of buildings, the density of development and the pattern of circulation and traffic, social objectives relating to the rehabilitation of six residential neighbourhoods, for community development and population increase, and economic objectives aiming to revitalise the commercial core and increase appropriate employment opportunities. All these aspects constitute an integrated conservation policy and will be tackled through a combination of control measures, incentives and Special Projects.

Building Type: 72
2004 - Award Cycle: 2004/2005



Old Nicosia Urban Setting
Showing the circular extent of the medieval city within which two urban renewal subprojects are located



SPECIAL PROJECTS

The special Projects represent the backbone of the policy for the Walled City, being the vehicle for concrete activities to be undertaken by the authorities to improve the residential and working environment in selected parts of the Old Town. These projects contain a multiplicity of elements including road improvements, landscaping, housing rehabilitation and provision of social facilities. In most cases emphasis is placed either on housing or on associated commercial and social facilities which are part of the immediate objectives of the policy for the Walled City. It is stressed that the implementation of these projects will take place against the background of an on-going process of development control and the gradual application of a variety of incentives for private development so that the combined effect may culminate in the establishment of a continuous demonstration programme for the protection and improvement of the environment of the Walled City with both the private and the public sector playing complementary parts in this process.

THE AREA OF THE AUGUSTINIAN MONASTERY OF ST. MARY

LOCATION

This Monument of the 14th century was the church of the Latin Monastery of the Augustinian Hospice built during the Lusignan Times (12th - 15th century). During the 15th century was added at the north-east sector a renaissance building used as a Hostel for the Pilgrims. Later during the Ottoman's occupation (16th - 19th century) was added the minaret and the church was used by them as a mosque (Osmaniy Mosque).

MAIN OBJECTIVES

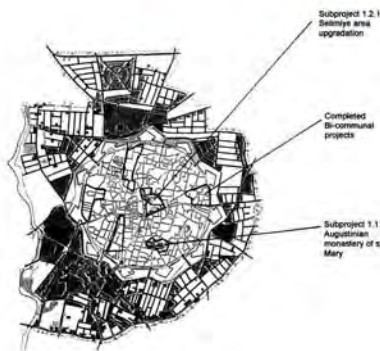
The objective is to re-evaluate the historic importance of this monument, and to use the potential of the area in order to promote residential, leisure and artisans activities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project comprises the following works:

- The relocation of the inappropriate existing uses (parking, warehouses, etc.) from the area.
- The reuse of the area at the north side of the church (substudy area B) as a low profile organized open space in order to promote the importance of the monument.
- The creation of a continuous pedestrian route between the monument and the surrounding historic spots.
- The restoration of the monument which is in a very precarious conditions. (Study and implementation undertaken by the Antiquities Department).
- The revitalization of the building block at the west side of the monument and its adaptation for residential use. (substudy A).
- The reorganisation of the southern part of the monument's courtyard which is now covered by some crescent constructions. (substudy area C).

This could become a mixed use area for selected traditional artisans workshops.



Subproject 1.2.1
Selimiye area
upgradation

Completed
B-dimensional
projects

Subproject 1.1.1
Augustinian
monastery of St.
Mary



Chrysalinotissa and Arab Ahmet Quarters

Nicosia, Cyprus

Architects Nicosia Master Plan Team
Nicosia, Cyprus

Clients United Nations High Commission
Nicosia, Cyprus

Programme The aim of the programme is to preserve the cultural and architectural legacy of the Walled City, provide the impetus for new private investments, enhance the quality of life, attract new residents, strengthen economic activity and, ultimately, to re-establish the role of the historic centre in the contemporary city.



The Nicosia Master Plan is an ambitious and unique Plan which reflects the conviction that a better future should be created for the capital city of Cyprus.

Nicosia, established as the capital city of Cyprus for about a thousand years, bears the vivid marks of a history flooded with turbulent and devastating events but also rich in diverse cultural influences which have shaped the city's unique identity.

Located in the centre of the island, Nicosia is today broken in two by a buffer zone cutting across its historic core - the inner Walled City - which contains a unique heritage of beautiful pieces of Byzantine, Venetian, French Medieval and Ottoman architecture which is harmoniously embraced by a massive circular 16th century Venetian Wall.

The buffer zone, which physically separates the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities as a result of tragic events in recent decades, runs from east to west through the middle of the Walled City.

Under the impact of rapid growth and the reality of its division in two separate parts, years of unplanned and uncontrolled development have created accumulated problems for contemporary Nicosia.

Since 1979, the Representatives of the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot communities of Nicosia, despite the prevailing political circumstances, assisted by their teams of professionals from the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities of Nicosia, have worked closely together, under the auspices of the UNDP and with technical support from the UNCHS (HABITAT). The first achievement of this common effort was to produce a plan for the rational development of the city to the end of the century.



A partnership towards the rehabilitation of Chrysalinotissa and Arab Ahmet



Building Type 072
1998 Award Cycle 2098 CYP



Arab Ahmet and Chrysalinotissa project areas, covering an area of about 2.5 hectares each and lying at the western and eastern edge of the Walled City.



Rehabilitation of Nicosia Old Town

Nicosia, Cyprus	
Architects	Nicosia Master Plan Team Nicosia, Cyprus
Clients	
Occupancy	1997
Programme	The aim of the programme is to preserve the cultural and architectural legacy of the now-divided Walled City, provide the impetus for new private investments, enhance the quality of life, attract new residents, strengthen economic activity and, ultimately, to re-establish the role of the historic centre in the contemporary city.



PLANNING IN NICOSIA

For over nine centuries, Nicosia's role as the capital of Cyprus has been due to its central location, making it the centre of population, employment and services with corresponding advantages over all other towns. The existence of buffer zone, going right through the middle of Nicosia and the Walled City itself, has undermined its centrality and made Nicosia a "frontier" town. While Greater Nicosia accounts today for about a third of the island's population and over half of the urban population, economic activities and investment in the south have tended to gravitate to other towns, particularly in the coastal areas.

The old city of Nicosia within the Venetian Walls, concentrates most of the buildings of cultural, historic and archaeological value in Cyprus from the medieval period onwards. Yet, the Walled City has suffered steady deterioration for many decades, and much renovation would have to take place. The future of Nicosia is dependent on strengthening the administrative and service functions which form its economic base, and this in turn requires great improvements in the quality of the urban environment. Observed trends again point to the sprawl of office and shopping development away from the Central Business District where traffic conditions, open spaces and accessibility from the newly-developed residential area pose less of a problem. A major task in planning Nicosia's future is to reverse these trends through actions derived from a comprehensive planning strategy and a detailed revitalisation programme, which would make living and working conditions in the Central Area of Nicosia more attractive and promote the city's specific advantages as the cultural, business and service centre of Cyprus.

THE WALLED CITY

For many years the Walled City has been subject to physical decay and socio-economic decline, conditions which resulted in loss of population and employment and deterioration of the architectural and environmental quality of the historic centre of Nicosia. The conservation policy aims to arrest these trends and re-establish a role for this area in relation to the overall development of the Central Area and Nicosia as a whole.

The conservation of the Walled City is seen as a multi-dimensional process incorporating architectural objectives with regard to the restoration of individual buildings and groups of buildings with distinct environmental and architectural qualities, planning objectives for the use of buildings, the density of development and the pattern of circulation and traffic, social objectives relating to the rehabilitation of old residential neighbourhoods, for community development and population increase, and economic objectives aiming to revitalise the commercial core and increase appropriate employment opportunities. All these aspects constitute an integrated conservation policy and will be tackled through a combination of control measures, incentives and Special Projects.



Old Nicosia Urban Setting

Showing the circular extent of the mediaeval city within which two urban renewal subprojects are located





SPECIAL RPROJECTS

The special Projects represent the backbone of the policy for the Walled City, being the vehicle for concrete activities to be undertaken by the authorities to improve the residential and working environment in selected parts of the Old town. These projects contain a multiplicity of elements including road improvements, landscaping, housing rehabilitation and provision of social facilities. In most cases emphasis is placed either on housing or on associated commercial and social facilities which are part of the immediate objectives of the policy for the Walled City. It is stressed that the implementation of these projects will take place against the background of an on-going process of development control and the gradual application of a variety of incentives for private development so that the combined effect may culminate in the establishment of a continuous demonstration programme for the protection and improvement of the environment of the Walled City with both the private and the public sector playing complementary parts in this process.

THE AREA OF THE AUGUSTINIAN MONASTERY OF St. MARY

LOCATION

This Monument of the 14th century was the church of the Latin Monastery of the Augustinian Hospice built during the Lusignan Times (12th - 15th century). During the 15th century was added at the north-east sector a renaissance building used as a Hostel for the Pilgrims. Later during the Ottoman's occupation (16th - 19th century) was added the minaret and the church was used by them as a mosque (Omerye Mosque).

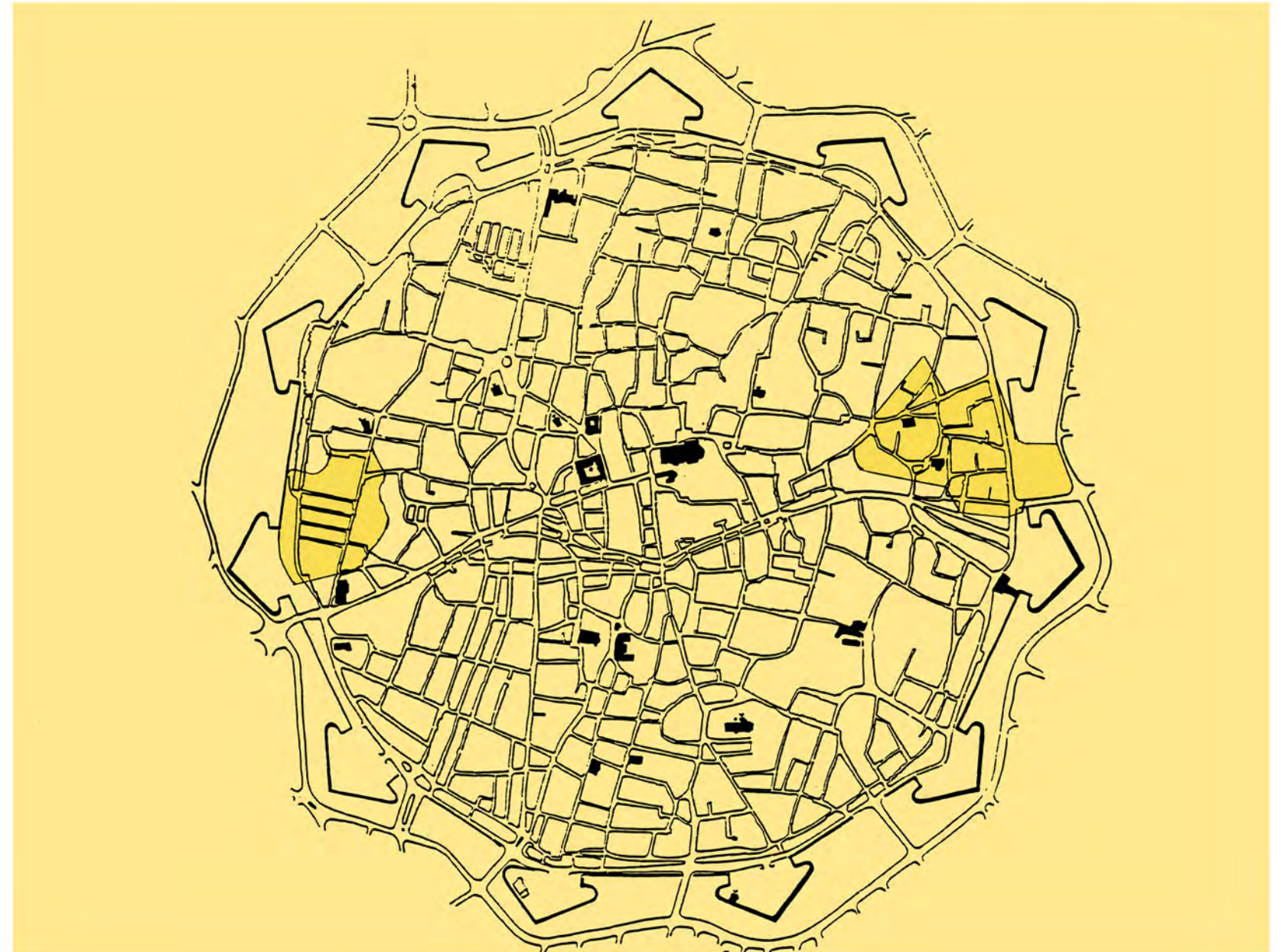
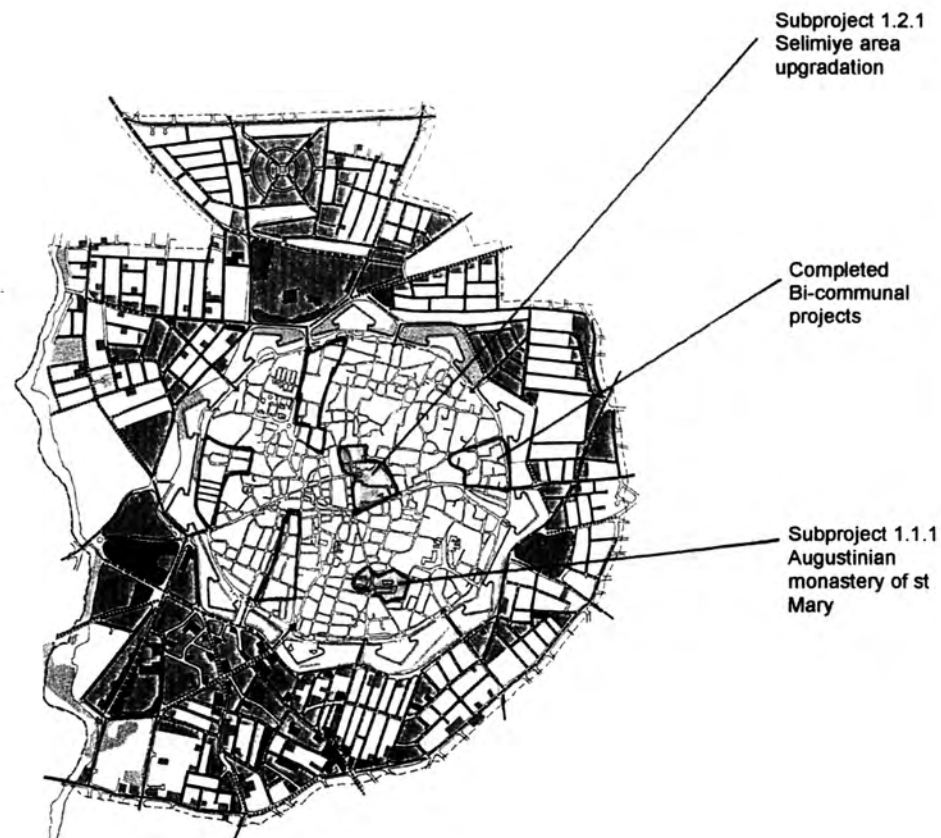
MAIN OBJECTIVES

The objective is to reevaluate the historic importance of this monument, and to use the potential of the area in order to promote residential, leisure and artisans activities.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project comprises the following works:

- The relocation of the inappropriate existing uses (parking, warehouses, etc.) from the area.
- The reuse of the area at the north side of the church (substudy area B) as a low profile organized open space in order to promote the importance of the monument.
- The creation of a continuous pedestrian route between the monument and the surrounding historic spots.
- The restoration of the monument which is in a very precarious conditions. (Study and implementation undertaken by the Antiquities Department).
- The Revitalization of the building block at the west side of the monument and its readaptation for residential use. (substudy A)
- The reorganisation of the southern part of the monument's courtyard which is now covered by some cheap constructions. (substudy area C)
This could become a mixed use area for selected traditional artisans workshops.





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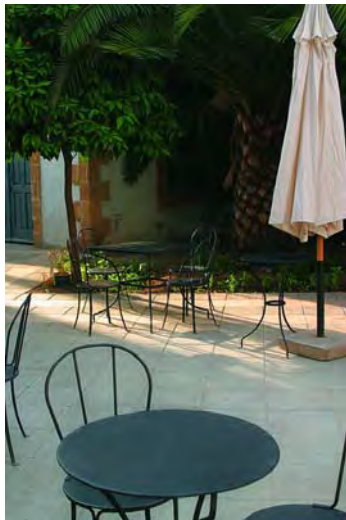
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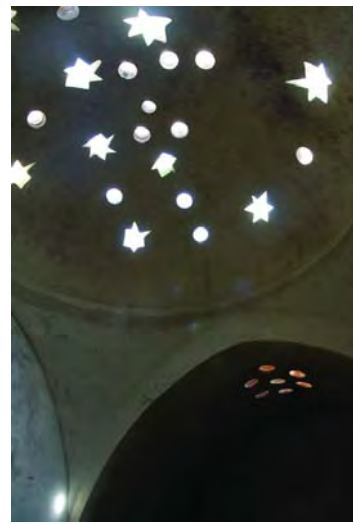
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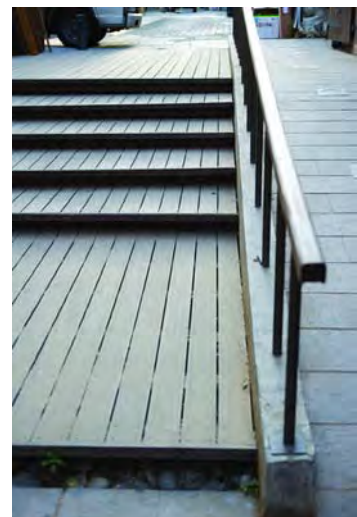
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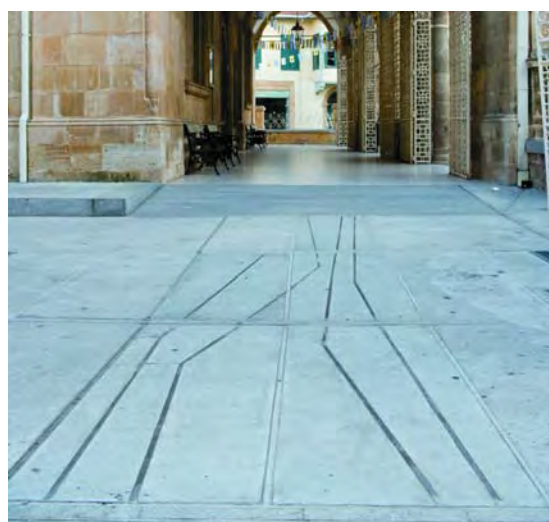
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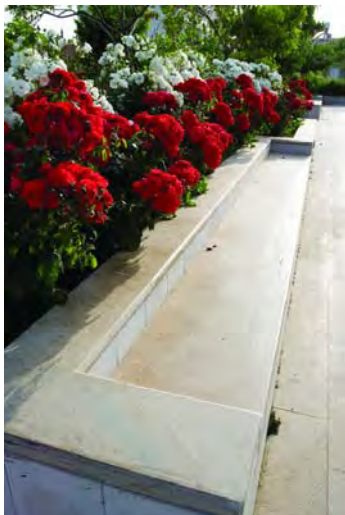
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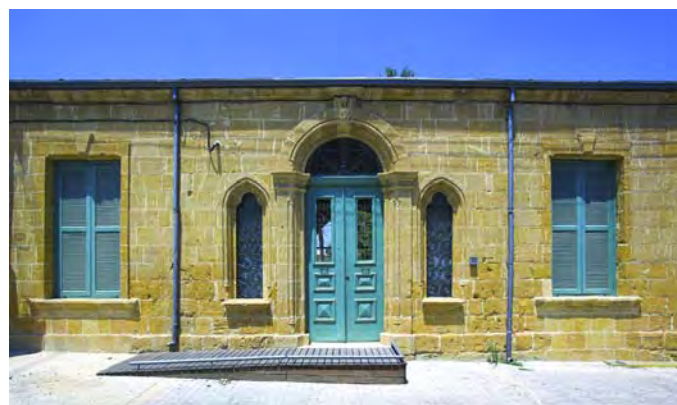
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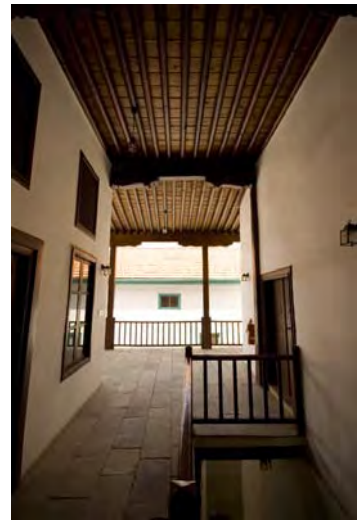
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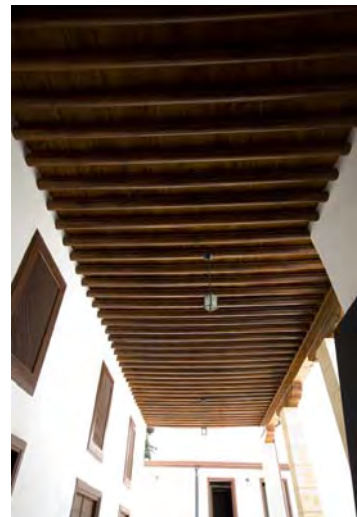
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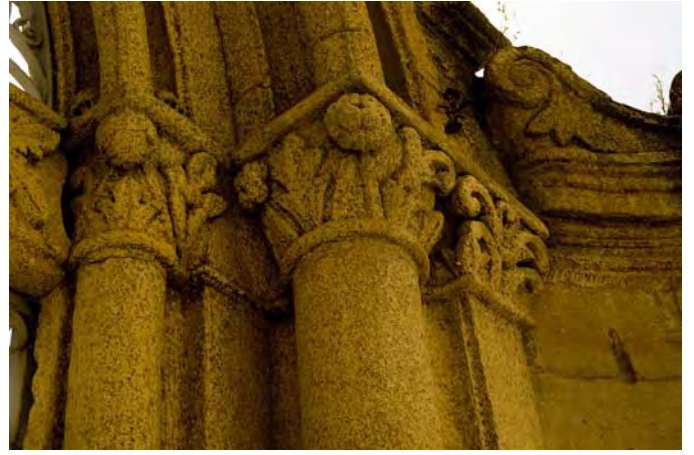
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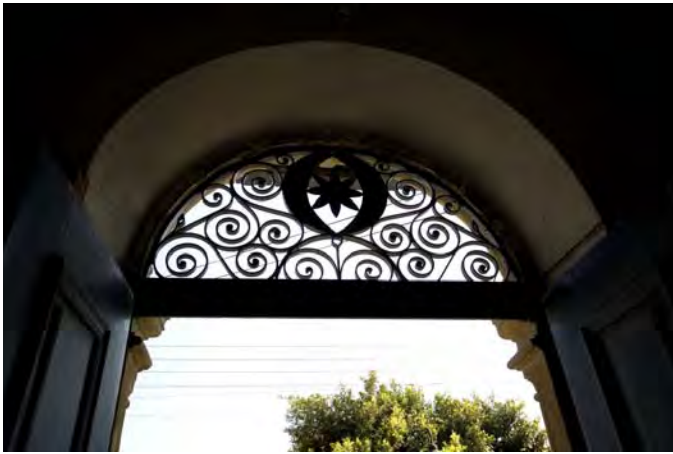
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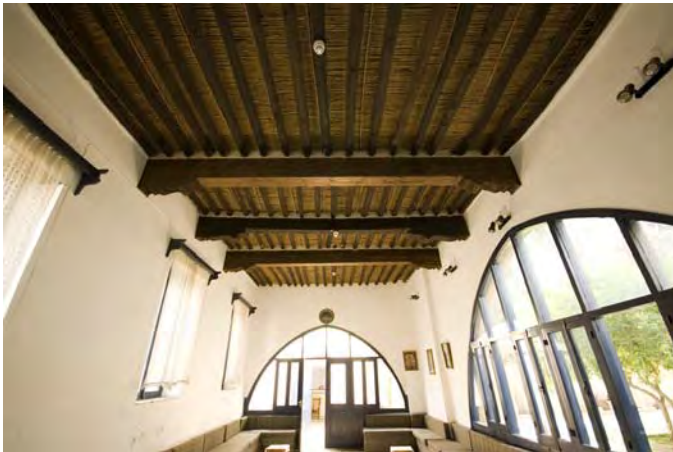
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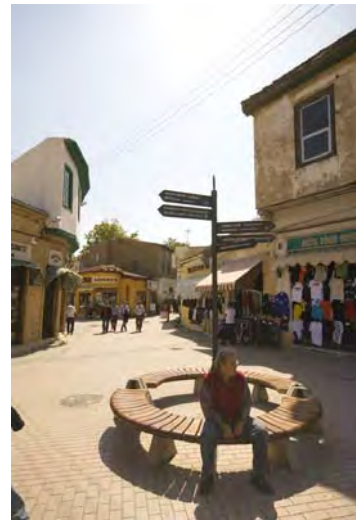
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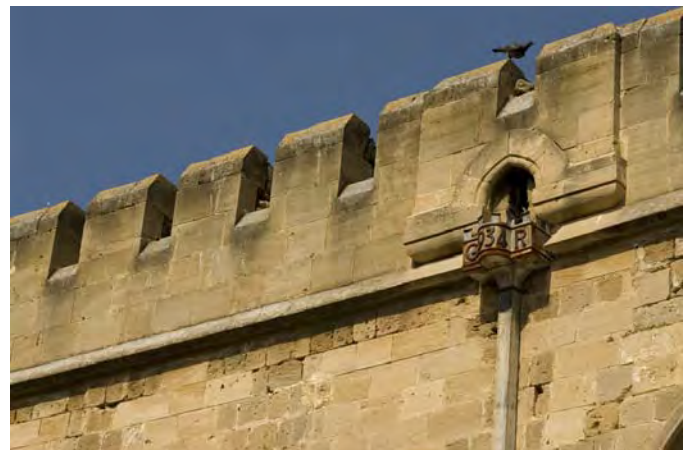
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