Third Interdisciplinary Forum

Panayiota Pyla, Ph.D., Professor of Architecture, University of Cyprus

May 9, 2022
The Leisurescapes Project: Landscapes of Leisure and their Politics

Leisurescapes of the Global Sunbelt — edited volume, S. Bozdoğan, P. Pyla, P. Phokaides

Famagusta: a mini-Miami on Cyprus

By Horace Sutton

The new resident of the newly arranged West End neighborhood, John Smith, is already enjoying the sun and sea of his new home. He has recently moved from the United States to Famagusta and is delighted with his new life in Cyprus.

“Famagusta is like Miami,” says John. “The weather is beautiful, the beaches are stunning, and the people are friendly.”

John is not alone in his enthusiasm. Many tourists and expatriates are flocking to Famagusta to enjoy the warm, sunny climate and the turquoise waters of the Mediterranean Sea.

“Famagusta is a great place to retire,” says Martha Johnson, a retired teacher from the United States. “The cost of living is very reasonable, and there’s plenty to do for people of all ages.”

Competing actors in Famagusta, 1960s

1. Foreign “technical assistance” from French experts

2. How expert plans were mediated by state agendas of nation-building, and intercommunal conflict,

3. How these competing visions were metabolized on the ground by private enterprise
1. Foreign “expertise”

SCET, 1962 [Société Centrale pour l’Équipement du Territoire - Central Association for the Development of National Resources]

Beaudouin on coastal urbanization

Famagusta coastline, 1962

Source: Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, Beaudouin - Baud-Bovy - Tzanos Collection
1. Foreign “expertise”

Beaudouin on Coastal Urbanization
Competing actors in Famagusta, 1960s

1. Foreign “technical assistance” /French experts

2. State agendas of nation-building and intercommunal conflict

3. How these competing visions were metabolized on the ground
2. How expert plans were mediated by local political realities

Cyprus ethnic distribution after 1963

Life Magazine, February 28th 1964
2. How expert plans were mediated by local political realities
Competing actors in Famagusta, 1960s

1. Foreign “technical assistance”

2. How expert plans were mediated by state agendas of nation-building, intercommunal conflict,

3. How these competing visions were metabolized on the ground
3. Competing spatial logics of tourism development

a. The coastal strip

the French vision of a natural, seemingly untouched 3km landscape was giving way to the reality of tall and dense buildings driven by speculation.
Aerial View showing Golden Sands under construction.
Source: J+A Philippou Architects Engineers
"what to do" (right) and "what to avoid" (left) in tourism accommodation.
shift in the spatial logic of tourism

The ‘tower on the beach’ iconography
Famagusta Coastline, 1968
Source: PIO, Cyprus

VS.

The beginning of ‘nuclear resorts’
Golden Sands under construction, 1973
Source: J+A Philippou Architects
“The tourist-minded Cypriot government”, *NYTimes*

Opening ceremony of **Golden Sands hotel**, May 1974
The leisure-scape of the abandoned Varosha area in Famagusta, 2010.
architectures of tourism

1. Foreign “expertise”? 

2. State agendas and political conflicts?

3. Physical transformations?
Varosha’s opening in October 2020
Competing **futures** in Famagusta, **2020s**

1. Whose heritage? Whose expertise?

2. What are the mediating roles of the state and private enterprise?

3. How can post-conflict futures be imagined, and could not history’s critical scrutiny provide guidance?
Clearing Varosha after October 2020