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HOUSED by CHOICE, HOUSED by FORCE - Homes, Conflicts and Conflicting Interests

January 21 – 22. 2016

Architecture_MPS, University of Cyprus; Cyprus Institute

Abstract / Initial Proposal Form:

1. Paper / Proposal Title: The distribution of agency and the presence of choice in the birth and life of the contemporary Greek-Cypriot house

2. Format: Written paper

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6. Abstract (300 words):

One would perhaps logically assume that a house distinguished by the state or the professional association of architects as an exemplary design should be the result of the maximum degree of agency and the result of a series of 'wise' choices. One may go

even further and assume that such a house offers choices to its inhabitants. This paper examines whether and to what degree such assumptions are true. The sample is comprised of fourteen award winning houses, six of which have received the State Architecture Award and the other eight have been selected for the Mies van Der Rohe competition. Beginning with a description of the choices available to a couple starting a family, the research then looks at the design process and ends by commenting on the lifestyle proposed by the resulting building. For each of these stages, the main actors, human and other, will be identified and the nature of their agency will be examined. Such actors may be the architect and the client, the state agency awarding building permits, the banking system, the contractor, the social milieu of the people involved, the architectural culture, the architectural press, the different stages of the design itself. For example, spatial analysis of contemporary Greek-Cypriot houses reveals that they tend to have the same spatial genotype. What does that imply for the design process? How much of the decision making was actually based on choice and how much was indirectly almost dictated by the existing culture?

7. Author(s) Biography (200 words maximum for all authors):

Christos Hadjichristos, PhD., is currently an Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Cyprus. He received his first degree in Architectural Engineering in 1986 and a Master in Architecture in 1991 from The University of Texas at Austin. Awarded a Ph.D. in Architecture from the Bartlett School of Graduate Studies at the University College London in 2002. He taught at Pratt in New York (visiting professor, Spring 2010), the American University of Beirut and the Lebanese American University (2002-2003).

Through his designs, paintings and short videos he examines issues in visual perception, which are central to architectural debates as well. Such is the relationship between figure and form or syntax and semiotics, subtraction or erasure, abstraction and layering, synchronicity and 'synchoricity'. Central to this research is the concept of sacrifice in architectural and urban space.

He has received a number of awards in architectural competitions, participated in the Venice Biennale for Cyprus in 2006 and 2008, while in 2010 he was appointed as the curator of the Cyprus pavilion for the same exhibition.

Elias Kranos, is a PhD candidate and currently working as a Teaching Instructor at the University of Cyprus. He received his degree in Architectural Engineering in 2009 from The National Technical University of Athens (NTUA). During his studies he has received a number of awards and scholarships. In the past he has worked for the local firm Arneftis

& Associates (2010-2013) as an Architect in the design department, dealing with projects such of private houses, apartment buildings, office buildings, educational buildings, and architectural competitions.

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