

Matters of Polyphony: Deep Mapping of the Many Narratives of Ledra/Locmaci Gate

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Abstract:

The paper offers a nuanced understanding of the term “deep mapping” by demonstrating its value as a key methodology through which contested spaces may be re-approached and re-interpreted. Deep mapping is increasingly discussed as a methodology that recognizes the fluid nature of a place aiming at grasping and visualizing the multiple layers, both temporal and spatial, that result from the human experience through the wide variety of narratives that are embodied in such a setting. The present research uses Ledra/Locmaci Gate in Nicosia as a case study. This linear entity is broken into three segments due to the buffer zone between the Greek-Cypriots in the South and the Turkish Cypriots in the North. The selected site is of particular interest not only because it is among the few places where individuals from the two communities come together by crossing on the other side through the buffer zone, but also because its long history, its various administrative and planning processes as well as hidden stories of everyday life, echo the multi-layered history of Nicosia itself. Therefore, the layered nature of the Gate is itself a project which reflects upon the fuzzy relationship between official histories and everyday experiences. Using deep mapping, the paper “re-inhabits” the Gate from alternative points of view, with the purpose of uncovering the polyphonic and polysemic nature of the place.

Keywords:

deep mapping, narrative, representation, Nicosia