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## **READING TRAILS AND INSCRIPTIONS AROUND AN OLD BUS-HOUSE IN MONARGA, NORTH CYPRUS**

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### **Abstract**

On top of the natural fortifications of Monarga in Cyprus, there are three houses facing the Mediterranean Sea. Behind them there is a semi-derelect bus, which was brought here in the early 1970's and converted by its owners into a fully serviceable house. There is also a derelect steel shed, which was also used as a house. These buildings and the bus were all located within the close vicinity of a Maronite family, who abandoned their home during the 1974 Turkish intervention. Today, these houses are owned by three Turkish families. These three houses, which are viewed as pieces of conventional architecture, are still used as houses, but the “bus-house” and the steel shed have been left to decay naturally.

The bus-house protected its autonomy after the war, because it has not been badly damaged, and it still whispers the story of its first owners. The objective of this paper is to investigate the architectural reasons behind the autonomy of the bus-house in the face of the war. The bus was first used like a playground for children, and finally, after six phases of transformation, it became a type of unconventional dwelling.

The bus-house is a trail, the autonomy of which can be investigated according to;

1. its particular characteristics as a ruin,

2. the process of its construction in the memories of the first owners of the environment,
3. its immediate ethical effect on the new users of the environment.

The methods, which were used during this research, were; the observation of the bus-house and its surroundings, interviews with the Maronite family, and the new owners of the environment, the preparation of a scenario about the process of transformation of the bus-house, and the participatory observation of the current physical environment.

**Keywords:** conflict, architecture, warchitecture, autonomy, remembrance, Cyprus

## 1. Introduction

*“While we were on the way to Nicosia, we became aware that we had forgotten the radio, and had left it outside the kitchen window. We were worrying about the radio being stolen, however the whole house was gone that day. We were not able to see our house for thirty years.”* These were the words of eighty years old Costas M.,\* who was the first owner of one of the houses on the Monarga fortifications (new name - Boğaztepe), which face the Mediterranean sea. (Figure 1) He was explaining what happened on 14th of August, 1974. Similar to his family, who are Maronites, all the Greeks, who lived in Monarga, had to evacuate the village, just like the evacuation of Monarga by Turkish Cypriots in 1963, after the British, who had protected the minorities, relinquished control of the island in 1960. However, the case of Costas is different from any other type of migration, including enforced migration, because his family did not know, at that moment, that they were not going to see their houses again. (Hürol, 1998; Camara, 1988) Actually the Monarga and Karpaz peninsula have been considered as an area, which should be included with the Turkish territory, since 1960, and several maps were produced, which reflected this suggestion. (Druşotıs, 2008:213-37) This situation could also explain the reason for the low cost of land in Monarga during the first half of the 1960’s.

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\* The names given in this article are not the real names of the people.

Figure 1. The satellite photographs of the three houses, the bus-house, and the steel shed (from google-earth), and the house of the Maronite family.

According to the interviews conducted with the members of this Maronite family, the three adjacent houses, which are to the front of Monarga fortifications, were part of the family's surroundings, as well as all the trees, rocks, fences, and other objects in their gardens. After the 1974 Turkish intervention these houses were given to Turkish Cypriot families, who were originally from Monarga, which had been a village of mixed ethnicity (Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot) prior to 1963. It is hard to observe today that the existing owners did not buy their houses from their first owners. One can sense this situation only because the new owners do not look after and maintain these houses as if they were their own houses. They still somehow feel that they are not at home. (Boğaç, 2009:267-78)

The traces of war on these buildings can still be seen. The bullet damage to the flat roofed extensions, and on the brick covered parts of the facades are still visible. A propellor from a crashed Turkish aeroplane is also kept beside the bus-house. However, nobody can say that these buildings lost their autonomy through being destroyed. They lost their autonomy, because they no longer represented their original owners. Whilst explaining, in her novel, the 1974 re-settlements into the evacuated Greek houses, N. Yaşın (2002), mentions the striking differences between these luxurious Greek houses and their poor new owners. In those days the houses still represented their first owners. However this is no longer true.

According to R. Bevan (2006:8,40-5), the buildings, which continue to represent the original owners, such as religious buildings, are more likely to be subjected to deliberate damage during/after the wars by the new owners/residents of the place. In this paper we accept that a building/object is capable of protecting its autonomy in the face of war, if it is not too heavily damaged, and if it still remains representative of its first owners. On the basis of this definition, we have identified two objects, which have continued to protect their autonomy after 1974. These objects, which can be seen close to the home of the

Maronite family, are a high quality copy of the bust of Hermes, which was hidden under a staircase for thirty-five years, and the derelict bus-house, which still stands in the garden of one of the three houses. (Figures 2,3) We described these autonomous objects as ‘trails’ left by their first owners. Interest in these trails can make the new owners aware of the first owners, help them to find and make contact with the first owners, and support the new owners to recognize some hidden signs of the first owners, which are described in this article as the ‘inscriptions’ of the first owners.

Figure 2. The copy of Hermes bust.

Figure 3. East and north facades of the bus-house.

The bust and the bus-house have created an area of interest for everybody in the neighbourhood, and have encouraged people to share everything they know about their first owners with each other. This sharing of information resulted in an attempt in 2009 to come into contact with the Maronite family, who finally came to their old house and pointed out all their inscriptions, which would not be recognizable otherwise. These inscriptions included the steel shed in the back garden of the house of the Maronite family, the old beds in the steel shed, the inscriptions of a kitchen in the steel shed, the bases of the busts of Hermes and Aphrodite (the latter of which is lost), the fountain in front of the house, some trees and plants (such as colourful bougainvilleas and Chinese roses), which have been in the garden for more than thirty-five years, the metal supports for these plants, some parts of the old electrical and mechanical systems of the house, some permanent furniture, such as cupboards and fitted wardrobes, and the old paint of the house, which had not been renewed and was now a modest blue, green and grey. During the interview with the Maronite family it was discovered that the steel shed in their back garden is very meaningful to them, because it was the first building, built by them, on their site.

The objective of this article is to discuss the architectural characteristics, which have rendered the bus-house autonomous in the face of the war. A. Herscher (2008:35-43) asks

how the autonomy of buildings can be increased in respect of wars. Thus, the objective of this article is to answer this question by revealing the characteristics of this bus-house. Since it does not really constitute a space, the characteristics of the Hermes bust are ignored for the purposes of this article.

The article does not describe the walls, which separate people with different identities (Atun, Doratlı, 2009). It does not describe what has happened to buildings during a war (Weizman, 2006; Herscher, 2008; Somma, 2004). It does not describe the characteristics of architecture in relation to a political conflict (Saifi, 2006). It does not describe what might be the architectural contributions to the process of building peace (Lejano, 2006). It does not describe the connection between human conflict and the arts (Beckman, 2008; Frascina, 2005). It also does not describe examples of disasters/terror (Kitchen, 2001). This article contributes to the existing literature by focusing on the meaning of the concept of: ‘architectural autonomy in the face of war.’

In order to reveal the architectural reasons behind the autonomy of the bus-house; the following methods were used:

1. Informal interviews were conducted with the new owners of the three houses,
2. A formal group interview was arranged with four people from the Maronite family, who are in contact with some of their former neighbours,
3. The bus-house was examined,
4. A scenario describing the process of the conversion of the bus-house was written,
5. One of the authors currently lives in the house of the Maronite family as a participant observer of the environment.

It was not possible to reach all previous owners of these houses, because of the current political situation on the island. It was risky to go to the land registry office of the Republic of Cyprus to establish the names of these owners, because of the ongoing court cases in respect of land ownership on the north side of the island.

During this research the architectural reasons behind the autonomy of the bus-house, which is an unconventional dwelling, were questioned by:

1. Observing the physical and spatial characteristics of the ruin of the bus-house,
2. Identifying the role of the bus-house in the memory of the Maronite family, by discussing the process of the construction of the three houses, which was realized in twelve stages.
3. Identifying the disturbances in the place attachment of the new users, such as not accepting these houses as their home, and discovering and acknowledging some unethical issues, such as not willing, consciously or unconsciously, to identify some physical objects, which belonged to the first owners of the houses.

## **2. On Autonomy**

The concept of autonomy is usually used in reference to human beings. In Ancient Greek the concept consists of the concepts of 'self + law.' It denotes self-governance in politics, and the capacity of self-determination in ethics. (Drowkin, 1988; Lindley, 1986) T.W. Adorno's concept of 'individual' and D. Hume's concept of 'subject' can be studied to provide a basis for an architectural interpretation of the concept of autonomy.

According to Adorno, an 'individual' is somebody, who is not obedient to the value system of his/her society. This person, who has developed his/her personal value system, can provide autonomous critiques and make a contribution to society. (Adorno 1998:4) On the other hand, most of the people within society identify themselves with one of the dominant antagonistic thought systems in society. (Adorno 1994:135-207) Since there are differences between the thoughts of individuals (including artists) and the majority of society, conflicts occur between society and these autonomous individuals. The social responsibility of the individual is to express these conflicts in an effective manner. Consequently, the individual carries the psychological scars, which arise from this conflict, even although s/he might, nevertheless, cause societal change. (Adorno 2000:15) An artist can only be responsible for his/her society, if s/he is autonomous; independent from the power relationships and ideologies created by society. (Adorno 1998:4,125) In

other words, Adorno suggests that non-identification is necessary to achieve autonomy. (Adorno 1994:147)

On the other hand, Hume's concept of 'subject' can be defined on the basis of a particular type of interaction between perception and the component parts of the human memory. Thus, it includes the inner world of the person in the discussion of autonomy. If an event occurs, which enables a person to be aware of others' pain, and if this awareness causes the person to dedicate him/herself to express/represent the others, this situation causes changes in the interaction between different parts of his/her memory, and makes him/her autonomous. Expressing the pain of others, whilst also expressing him/herself, and having a personal thought system, are the major ethical characteristics of the subject. Having different thoughts, including others within the definition of the self, makes the subject an autonomous person, who is also critical about society (Hume, 1978;1975;1947). What makes a subject autonomous is his/her sensitivity towards the pain of others.

However, it is also known that extreme sensitivity in respect of the pain of others can be an indication of various psychological problems, and achieving a balance between sensitivity and selfishness is preferable. (Bekker, van Assen, 2006; Bekker, Belt, 2006) Consequently, autonomy and a reasonable sensitivity are conceptually related to each other. The concept of reasonable sensitivity can be explained with the ontological approach, which balances body and mind, matter and time, and separation and continuity in achieving spirituality. (Deleuze, 1991:13-35)

Adorno also applies the concept of autonomy to objects by relating this concept to details. According to him 'form,' differs from the 'schema,' because of its details. '*...Yet artworks distinguish themselves productively from the merely schematic exclusively by the element of the autonomy of their details...*' The details of artworks appear just as autonomous individuals shine within society. They gain their autonomy, but this does not necessarily mean being irresponsible towards the whole. (Adorno 1998:303-4)

Thus, when the concept of autonomy is used with reference to a piece of architecture e.g. the bus-house, this expression can mean that there is something different about this building in comparison to the other buildings within the context of its neighbourhood. This is a difference, which causes sensitivity and criticism in respect of the effect politics has had within this neighbourhood.

### **3. Situation of the Bus-house.**

The bus-house, located in the back garden of the house, which is adjacent to the Maronite family's old house, immediately commands attention when it is seen, and the observer starts imagining scenarios in order to make its extraordinary existence acceptable. Although it is difficult at first glance to understand that it has been transformed into a house, one feels the need to start asking people in the vicinity why this old bus is still kept there.

The new owners of the houses in question did not give their permission to print the exact address of the bus-house in this article. This is a semi-derelict 1945 model Bedford bus produced in the UK. It is a typical example of the buses, which serviced the rural villages. It is fitted with a roof-rack for carrying luggage. The driver's seat is located on the right side, as Cyprus traffic still drives on the right, a hangover from British colonial times. The driver's seat is no longer there, but we can deduce this from the position of the doors and stairs, which are situated on the left side of the bus.

The bus engine has also been removed. The whole bus has been painted grey and its windows are all broken. One of the striking aspects about the bus is its fully inflated tyres, as if they are ready to move. However, a closer inspection reveals that the bus is stabilized in its location and elevated over large pieces of rocks, in order to avoid any movement taking place whilst moving around inside. Since the elevated wheels have not had any pressure on them for the last thirty-five years, they look as if they are still fully inflated.



Another interesting aspect about the bus is its connection to a sewage system. After seeing this, a careful eye starts differentiating the clean/dirty water pipes, and electric cables, which have all been very carefully replaced. (Figure 4) According to the new owner of the house, who said that she never saw the bus-house during its good days, there used to be water tanks on the roof, but which now no longer exist. Most systems and the furniture of the bus-house were either stolen or damaged after the 1974 intervention.

Figure 4. Service systems of the bus-house. (a.bath tube, b.place of toilet, c.sewage connection, d.water supply, e. electric fuses)

The bus-house contains an open kitchen, and a cabin with a closing door, which contains a shower, a sink, and a toilet. (Figure 5) The kitchen, its cupboards, and the closed cabin are very carefully designed and built. The kitchen is part of the living area to the front of the bus-house, which also contains an elevated area where the driver's seat used to be located. This elevated area might have been used to lean on and rest. It probably contained comfortable pillows. The closed cabin separates the sleeping area at the back from the living area. The metal structures of the old beds are still in their places.

Figure 5. The cabin and the other spaces in the bus-house.

Bedford buses are much wider than other buses. Their floors are straight, and they contain easily removable seats. Thus, one can imagine that this particular type of bus was a conscious choice in respect of converting it into a bus-house.

The bus-house is situated in such a manner that its windows face east and west directions, so as to catch the summer breeze, and to avoid the north wind during winter. Most of the east windows were kept transparent, however the west windows of the bathroom were painted, and other west windows were covered with hand-made timber shutters to avoid the hot summer sun. (Figure 6)

Figure 6. Remains of a hand-made shutter on the west facade of the bus-house.

The inside space of the bus-house provides feeling of comfort, when compared to other bus-houses, which have not been re-designed with such a degree of care. Many (we found eighteen) examples of bus-houses, can be found through by researching on internet, and by keying in the word 'bus-house.'

The bus-house is positioned between a garage, which was built by the new owners, and two trees. Either the garage, or the trees would have to be destroyed to move the bus-house. However, the new owners are happy with the bus-house. They still use it as storage without carrying out any maintenance. This old couple, also continue to use the electricity supply from the bus-house with the use of extension cables.

The bus-house is an unconventional structure, which reminds us of the days of the war in a way that differs from that of the history books, which represent the ideologies of the two states on the island. It is different, because it tells of another story, which belongs to a group of ordinary people. The bus-house seems to give the people around it permission to themselves from bad memories arising from events, which took place in the war, and which belong to the ordinary people of this island. Actually, this type of an explanation is connected to the essence of the reason for the presence and indeed the existence of monuments themselves. Monuments free people from the memories of traumatic events. The bus-house is also a reminder of the other political aspirations and possibilities of the 1970's, in which people thought that they were capable of changing the world. (Huysen, 2006) Goethe's (1949) Faust also tells us that modern people need and respect history only as a means of supporting them to be able to produce better things than their history.

The bus-house also presents as a ruin, but not a contemporary ruin, which appears as a kind of decoration within contemporary architectural spaces. The bus-house is rather like an 18<sup>th</sup> century ruin, which is half damaged, and left to deteriorate along with time/nature. As a result of it being left thus, the deteriorating presence of the bus-house makes people aware of time, temporality, and death. It represents the power of nature, which is

generally a more concealed issue within human cultures. (Huysen, 2006:10-21) We can also perceive the bus-house as an unconventional indicator, which demonstrates the dangers of the conventions of the language of architecture. (Fracina, 2005)

#### **4.Remembering the Bus-house in relation to its Role in the Building Process.**

According to the group interview conducted with the four members of the Maronite family, the building process within their immediate vicinity, which contained the bus-house, consisted of twelve stages. These stages included the construction process of the three houses, the bus-house, and the steel shed.

They bought the land in 1968, mainly because of the marvelous view it offered. (First stage) The land did not house any pine trees at that time, which are now very dominant in the current landscape of the place. According to Costas M., the preference for this particular site had no conscious relationship with St. Maron's house in Lebanon, which was also located at the top of a hill, with a marvelous river view through pine trees. These characteristics also apply to the abandoned Maronite village, Kormakitis (new name - Koruçam), which has a view of the Mediterranean sea from the Kyrenia mountains. However, it is possible to believe that some subconscious connections with this preference of the Maronite ancestors could exist. (Morton, 2007:157-60)

In 1968, the father and an uncle of the family built a steel shed, which contained a kitchen and another room. They used this steel shed as a shelter, whilst building their house. The two storey house, which was planned to contain four flats –a flat for each of the three children and the parents- was to be built in stages. Although the house looks very modern, building in stages is the general development process of traditional houses. (Boğaç, 2009:267-70; Habraken, 1998) The beginning stage was the skeleton of half of the building, and the toilet and bathroom on the ground floor. The males in the family were working in construction, including the twelve and thirteen year old sons, and the

females were responsible for carrying out the general household tasks for everyone. (Second stage) The family lived in Nicosia most of the year, and only went to Monarga to continue their house construction during the summer, because the children in the family were attending school in Nicosia. The act of building their house with their own hands also created a material relationship with the house, itself. (Morton, 2007: 160-70)

When the first stage of their house was completed in 1969, the next door neighbour living on the right, who later became the owner of the bus-house, started to build another house. (Third stage) The father of this Greek family was skilled and capable person, who worked in the construction business. The Maronite family managed to complete the top-right flat of their house in 1971 (Fourth stage), and in 1972 they decided to extend the veranda, which now offers marvellous panoramas and faces the Mediterranean Sea (Fifth stage). It was probably after this stage that they started to plant trees and other plants. They also built a fountain, which contained colourful live fish at the front of the house, and placed busts of Hermes and Aphrodite at each side of their main entrance door. According to S.N. Brower (1980:190-2), the presence of these busts, which are clear indications of a non-Turkish cultural identity, can also be seen as indications of a need to defend their territory. However, the Maronite family feels no enmity towards the Turkish people, in fact they actually feel friendly towards them.

After this stage was completed the father, mother, and daughter of the Maronite family started to live in this flat, whilst the two boys continued to use the insulated room in the steel shed. It becomes clear once more that the family relationships are spatial. (Morton, 2007) The kitchen of the steel shed was also being used, when the family had visitors, to cook and eat in the open air. The sons of the family said that the steel shed, itself, and the memories it evoked remained the most touching aspect of the whole place for them. (Figure 7) One of the new tenants of this house, a Scottish lady, reported that she had seen Costas M. walking around the steel shed with tears in his eyes. However, Costas said that the spot which evoked the most touching memories for him in this environment, for a romantic man like him, was the veranda (balcony) facing the sea.

Figure 7. North facade of the steel shed, which has a timber structure and corrugated steel walls.

In 1972 their Greek neighbour brought a 1945 model Bedford bus for their back garden. (Sixth stage) The idea was to have a playground for all the children in the neighbourhood. The daughter of the Maronite family, Maria M., remembers playing in this bus all together. The Greek family had two sons, and twelve years old Nicolaos was desperate to convert this bus into a house. Maria remembers him removing the seats of the bus. Its easy to imagine that within a short time, in the capable hands of the Greek builder and his two sons, the old bus was turned into a marvellous bus-house. (Seventh stage) According to M. Proust (2001; 2005; 2006.a; b; c; 2007; 2008.a; b) authentic places, which have such particular and unusual details, are carved into the memories of young people in such a way that they can be recalled to memory in full detail at any time.

In 1973, the neighbour to the left of the house in which the Maronite family lived, started to build a house. (Eighth stage) This house was being built by a construction company, for which the Greek neighbour, who was also the owner of the bus-house, worked. The Maronite family surmised that the bus-house was moved onto this construction site in order to provide accomodation for the company engineers. (Ninth stage) The mobility of the bus-house at that stage could also be seen as a kind of defence mechanism in respect of having a quick means of escape.

After the completion of the house construction at the end of the same year, the bus-house was driven back to the garden of the house on the left and was used as a 'living room' for Nicolaos and his brother, who were probably very much inspired by the sons of the Maronite family, who lived 'independently' in the steel shed for more than a year. (Tenth stage) Nicolaos and his brother, who were teenagers, were preparing for the psychological and physical separation from their family as a part of the process of developing healthy male identities. (Bekker, van Assen, 2006; Bekker, Belt, 2006) Such issues of settlement, which is related to the need of separation or connection, makes us think about the ontological meaning behind the words of M. Heidegger: "*Poetically man*

*dwells,*” because both connectivity and separation are poetic. The mobile bus-house was static at that time, and it was also probably connected to sewage, water, and electricity systems then. The needs for the two boys to establish their independent living arrangements actually eliminated the possibility of having a mobile bus-house, which could provide a means of escape in case of danger.

During the summer of 1974, the Maronite family wanted to complete the ground floor of the existing house (the second flat). For this purpose they bought a lot of bags of cement to build the kitchen. (Eleventh stage) In July of 1974, when the Turkish airforce planes started to attack Monarga, from the direction of the sea, the family was hid behind the cement bags under their house. They do not remember what Nicolaos’ family was doing at that time. Various events and traumas are also remembered in relation to the material space, eg. the cement bags under the pilotis. (Morton, 2007:160-70) The lower parts of the village housed a Greek military base, which was in possession of anti-aircraft weapons. One Turkish aeroplane crashed very close place to the bus-house and the pilot died. As aforementioned, the propellor of that aeroplane still remains beside Nicolaos’ bus-house to-day.

The Maronite family left their house on 14th of August to visit one of their relatives. They decided to take their fourteen year old daughter, and their seventeen and eighteen years old sons with them at the last moment. However they forgot their radio, which they had left on the kitchen window sill. Having a radio was really important for hearing the news, and they thought that it was going to be stolen. They were not expecting to encounter any other particular trouble. However, all the roads towards the east of the island closed that afternoon, and all their neighbours abandoned their houses. The Maronite family, therefore, did not see their house again till the borders were opened in 2004. The ground floor of their house was left half finished, whilst the other half of their house had hardly been started. (Twelveth stage) After they had left, a high ranking member of staff from the Turkish army was allocated their house, untill it was subsequently allocated to a Turkish Cypriot family, who were originally from Monarga.

It is probable that the territorial defence signs, such as the Hermes and Aphrodite busts, were removed during this period.

Within this neighbourhood the steel shed and the bus-house seem to have been the places, with which four young teenager boys attempted to identify themselves as autonomous individuals/subjects. The Maronite family house held the ontological balance between the materiality of the process of building it with their own hands, and the dream of having the ideal retirement house for the parents of the family. They still maintain that they do not blame the new owner of their house for anything, because they are very much aware of the political trouble and issues in Cyprus.

This issue of remembrance, which is based on the materiality of the previously described building process (Morton, 2007), and adapting to a place with love (Tuan, 1974:92), has considerable differences from the issues of collective memory (Stumpf, 1998; Brower, 1980). According to Morton (2007), people's experiences of building and settlement processes provide a model for them in all their future actions. Building your home or anything with your own hands, and then being forced to leave it is traumatic precisely because of this. Thus, buildings and spaces, such as the bus-house, become significant in respect of their role within the material processes of life and the material processes of the construction activity. (Proust, 2001; 2005; 2006.a;b;c; 2007; 2008.a;b; Pallasma, 2005; 2000)

## **5. Disturbances in the Place Attachment of the New Inhabitants and some Ethical Implications.**

Knowing the history of their house and the first owners, and being permitted to use their house by the first owners, contribute considerably to the place attachment of the new users/owners. (Morton, 2007: 157-79) Knowing that their house belonged to somebody else before these people were forced to abandon these houses, and knowing that there is a possibility of an agreement, which might give this house back to their first owners, the new owners of these houses do not feel at home. (Boğaç, 2009:267-70) A house holds a

central place in human existence. (Norberg-Schulz, 1976:428-34) The new owners of the Monarga houses usually rent these houses, and do not make attempts to maintain them. The new owner of the Maronite family's house does not know that the first owners were Maronites. Since the house was being used by the army, the furniture of the Maronite family had been removed when the new owners moved in. It was the Scottish tenant, mentioned previously, who met the Maronite family in 2004, and gave information about them to the new tenants. However, the new owner, who is an old archeologist, knew that the Hermes bust represented a trail of the first owners.

The new owners of the bus-house, maintain their house, but not the bus-house. One can think that this old couple is attached to their house, because of their good relationship with the garden. These people know that the first owner of their house was a Greek man. Since they were amongst the Turks, who abandoned Monarga in 1963, they think that it is their right to live in this house. When they first came to this house, there was no furniture in the house, and even some of the windows/doors had been stolen, which is the case for all abandoned houses. They think that the bus-house and the small timber hut in their garden are the trails of the first owner of their house. Although they have not seen the bus-house in its good days, they can imagine it with water storage on the rooftop, and with curtains on its windows. They currently use the bus-house as a semi-protective garden storage, in which they keep their garden equipment. When they first came to live in this house, a man wished to buy the bus-house to live in, however the new owners did not like the idea of having a neighbour in their garden. They also did not wish to move the bus-house out of the garden, because this would require the destruction of either their stone garage or the two trees in the garden.

The authors of this article believe that only after being sure that these houses will belong to their families forever, will it be possible for the new owners to start developing an attachment to these houses. Following this development, it will also be very important to become acquainted with the history of the house and obtain the approval of the first owners in respect of the new owners living there permanently. The spiritual step follows the calculative step in place attachment.



Trails (autonomous objects) demonstrate themselves clearly. However, it is not that easy to recognize the inscriptions of the first owners. Sometimes you stand beside a pipe and do not think that it was connected to a tap, or you stand beside a house and you think that it is a garage, because you were told that it is a garage. You can recognize these objects as a tap and a house only after the first owner of the house tells you this. These can be seen as the ethical implications of the recognition of the inscriptions of the first users of buildings in a war-zone. However, such ethical implications cannot be clarified by simply conducting interviews with the new owners of these buildings. Such issues can only be clarified by being a participant observer within this environment. Since one of the authors of this article has lived as a tenant in the Maronite family's house for three years, her observations concerning the differences between her recognition of objects before and after having the interview with the Maronite family, can provide personal, healthy information about such ethical implications.

This author states on the basis of her notes that after beginning this research, she started to think that many things in and around the house represented inscriptions of the first owners. However, most of the things in and around the house did not belong to the Maronite family apart from the concrete bases of the two busts and the small metal structure in the steel shed. She was aware that the outdoor paint of the house had not been renewed, as well as some permanent furniture in the house, such as cupboards and wardrobes. Before talking with the Maronite family, she had thought that the steel shed had been built as a garage, although there were clear signs on the steel shed, which showed that it had been constructed as a little house. She thought that the small metal structure in the steel shed was a type of workshop table, not the support for the kitchen sink, although there is a pipe, which was previously connected to a tap. She was not aware of this pipe. (Figure 8) She recognized some pieces of the timber insulation layers in the steel shed only after talking with the Maronite family. When she was first told about the little house by her Scottish neighbour, she could not believe that this was really the case. She was not even aware that the bougainvilleas contained metal supports. She had thought that the large pine tree in front of the Maronite family's house was an

inscription of theirs, because St. Maron lived in a similar environment with pine trees. However, after talking with the Maronite family, she found out that not the pine tree, but the bougainvilleas, Chinese roses, the fig tree, and the almond tree belonged to them.

Figure 8. Remains of the kitchen sink in the steel shed.

It is clear that people tend to recognize their immediate environment only as it is presented to them. If a steel shed looks like a garage from one direction, or if somebody says it is a garage, then it is seen as a garage. A tenant might enter the steel shed everyday not noticing or paying any attention to the kitchen sink in it, as well as the characteristics of the its façade. This is an ethical problem, which shows that most of our relationships with our physical environment are based on preconceptions. Not being aware of the inscriptions of the first owners is a selfish daily life tendency, which avoids the pain of reflecting on other people's material life within the same places.

The authors of this article believe that what affect the place attachment of new owners/users is the calculative mind, and the psychological shields employed by human beings, which avoid pain, rather than giving place or thought to ethical considerations. According to H. Bergson (1920:130), recognition in general, in other words; 'attention to life,' wards off the useless, painful and dangerous recollections of the human memory. Only the trails of the first users force people towards a more ethical mentality or thought process in respect of the truths contained within their immediate environment.

## **6. Conclusion**

According to Bevan (2006: 40-5), a piece of architecture is more likely to be subjected to deliberate damage during or after a war, if it still represents its first owners. Because of this, symbolic buildings such as mosques and churches are good targets for destruction by the enemies of their original owners. However, the bus-house, which is in the back garden of a house in Monarga, presents a peculiar character, which might lead towards a contribution to the theory of architecture by clarifying the concept of 'architectural autonomy in the face of war', because it still represents its first owners thirty-five years

after the Turkish intervention. Thus, it is accepted in this article that a building/object is capable of protecting its autonomy after the war, if it is not heavily damaged in the war, and if it still carries enough traces to represent its first owners.

The objective of this article was to discuss the architectural characteristics, which made this bus-house autonomous in the face of war. By analyzing the physical characteristics of the bus-house, it can be said that the bus-house:

1. Does not represent any traditional figure of identity, as do e.g. mosques/churches,
2. Is unconventional,
3. Is still used for secondary purposes, but not maintained,
4. It cannot be moved from its location,
5. Was created and converted with care,
6. Expresses temporality, nature, and former times.

By analyzing the memories of the first owners, it can be said that the bus-house:

1. Represents the autonomy of two young people,
2. Was created by a skilled and inventive person (probably a carpenter–*tektion*),
3. Was the result of a long and painstaking process, which involved many stages.

By analyzing the effects of bus-house on the relationship between the new owners/users and their house/environment, it can be said that the bus-house:

1. Immediately grabs your attention and your curiosity to find out more about it,
2. Helps new users/owners to build a more ethical place consciousness and to pay careful attention to their immediate environment.

Depending on these characteristics of the bus-house, the characteristics of a piece of architecture, which remains autonomous in the face of war, can be interpreted as follows:

- Being unconventional, but simple,
- Being re-produced to represent the autonomy of young individuals,
- Being a product of a careful re-production process, in which there is a material relationship between the user/owner and the object,

- Being able to support its new users/owners in respect of developing a more ethical place consciousness and to pay careful attention to their immediate environment by continuing to represent its first owners.

Only a little bit of good luck is needed to protect such architecture from wars.

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## Figures



Figure 1. The satellite photographs of the three houses, the bus-house, and the steel shed

(from google-earth), and the house of the Maronite family.



Figure 2. The copy of Hermes bust.







Figure 3. East and north facades of the bus-house.



Figure 4. Service systems of the bus-house. (a.bath tube, b.place of toilet, c.sewage connection, d.water supply, e. electric fuses)



Figure 5. The cabin and the other spaces in the bus-house.



Figure 6. Remains of a hand-made shutter on the west facade of the bus-house.



Figure 7. North facade of the steel shed, which has a timber structure and corrugated steel walls.



Figure 8. Remains of the kitchen sink in the steel shed.

