



An analytical methodology for revitalization strategies in historic urban quarters: a case study of the Walled City of Nicosia, North Cyprus

Naciye Doratli*, Sebnem Onal Hoskara and Mukaddes Fasli

Faculty of Architecture, Gazimagusa, Eastern Mediterranean University, via Mersin 10, North Cyprus, Turkey

Historic urban quarters are special places not only due to the cultural heritage that they house, but also due to their urban pattern. Many such quarters are in a danger of losing their traditional character if relevant measures are not put in place to ensure the continuity of this character. This paper proposes a new method—based on SWOT analysis—for identifying and assessing the key criteria of historic urban quarters; from its findings it proceeds to derive an appropriate revitalization strategy. In order to illustrate the implications of the proposed methodology, to check its validity, and to see how it empirically works, the paper uses the Walled City of Nicosia in Cyprus as a case study.

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Introduction

It is widely accepted that historic urban quarters have a special place in the cultural and historical heritage of any country. As they are coherent entities, they are clearly identified by their traditional character and architectural value. They reflect the accomplishments of a significant cross-section of the world cultures, and while some represent the efforts of indigenous cultures, others display the impact of colonial activities. All mingle their diverse influences in creative fashion to create unique forms and patterns of use.

It is these attributes, and their value as a capital stock, that make historic urban quarters worthy of conservation. The qualities of these special areas were often not appreciated until the 1960s, and individual buildings, structures and other artifacts were subject to “preservation”. It is only since the 1960s that the historic urban quarters have been re-evaluated with respect to their positive qualities,

and revitalization of these areas as functioning parts of their cities became popular. Today, the rationale underpinning the phenomenon of revitalizing historic urban quarters is widely recognized, as is its global diffusion.

As stated by Tiesdell *et al.*, historic urban quarters are part of an economic dynamic; they are rarely autonomous functioning zones and usually have a symbiotic relationship with the rest of the city. They must therefore be considered within the context of the city as a whole and their conservation has to be considered, not as a straightforward and restrictive concern for preservation, but as a concern for revitalization and enhancement (Tiesdell *et al.*, 1996: p 22). The process of revitalizing them involves the integration of the historic legacy, inheritance, and sense of place with the demands of contemporary economic, political and social conditions. Accordingly, revitalization can be defined, in its simplest form, as a “process through which the deterioration and decay of a historic urban quarter can be addressed terminated or reversed” (Doratli, 2000: p 32). This process is a complex issue that has to be approached from

*Corresponding author. Tel.: +90-392-630-2241; fax: +90-392-365-0918. e-mail: naciye.doratli@emu.edu.tr

many different perspectives, since it should involve social and economic dimensions rather than purely physical protection and enhancement measures in a long-term perspective. Such a process calls for the connectivity of conservation-area objectives and the consideration of physical quality, social viability, economic vitality and the wider concern for sustainability, all of which demands the rapid, efficient and focused conversion of new knowledge into socially, economically and environmentally acceptable solutions.

It is difficult to apply this philosophy of revitalization by utilizing conventional planning approaches for conservation, since they mainly deal with (more or less) technical-scientific questions concerning material aspects of cultural property and their straightforward protection. In addition to this, as Rowley (1997: p 36) states, "...conventional planning approaches tend to be oriented toward looking at problems based on current understanding, or an inside-out mind set; whereas strategic planning requires an understanding of the nature of the issue, and then of an appropriate response, or an outside-in mind set". According to Zapryagaev (1999: p 3), strategic planning tends to be idea driven, is more qualitative, and seeks to provide a clear vision or focus. Criticizing the conventional conservation process, Bold and Guillery point out that it is geared to site-specific recording, protection and regulation, rather than the overall assessment of a historic area (Griffith and Romaya, 2000).

Based on these arguments, it can be stated that only through employment of strategic planning approaches would it be possible to develop an understanding and vision across a whole range of social, environmental and economic issues that go far beyond conventional approaches, taking a comprehensive and integrated approach over long time horizons. The underlying intention of a strategic approach is to identify what is valuable in a historic urban quarter, qualities that should be protected and enhanced; and along with identifying these, to determine where negative factors could be removed or mitigated and to identify where the opportunities for enhancement lie.

Burton *et al.* (2002: p 1465) state that the popular SWOT model (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) forms the basis for virtually all formalized strategy formulation processes. A tool of situation analysis, SWOT is used in the preliminary stage of strategic decision-making (Johnson *et al.*, 1989), where it provides the basic framework for strategic analysis. According to different authors, the objective of SWOT is to recommend strategies that ensure best alignment between the external environment and the internal situation (Hax and Majluf, 1996; Hill and Jones, 1992). Hence, SWOT analysis can be considered a useful tool for approaching conservation and revitaliza-

tion of historic urban quarters, indicating a contextual understanding of the historic environment, which is a prerequisite of all strategic approaches. However, we consider the original SWOT analysis (and the one utilized by Moughtin for the assessment of the built environment) to be too broad; consequently, the authors feel that, in addition, an interpretive version of the SWOT method is required. In order to identify place assets, the processes acting upon them (such as obsolescence and development pressures) would be much more convenient for the determination of the strategic approach for revitalization of historic urban quarters.

Thus, the aim of this paper is, first, to propose a new method of analysis, a new interpretation of the SWOT analysis, which would lead to a more organized and compact set of data that can contribute to the identification of the most appropriate strategy for revitalization. This method will then be illustrated in a case study of the northern part of the Walled City of Nicosia,¹ on the Island of Cyprus, which will be followed by a critical evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of this newly interpreted method.

The challenges of revitalizing historic urban quarters

Tiesdell *et al.*, (1996: p 20) argue that the revitalizing historic urban quarters "...involves both the renewal of the physical fabric and the active economic use—or utilization—of buildings and spaces. Accordingly, there is a need for both physical and economic revitalization. One may prefigure the other, for example, a cosmetic or "physical" revitalization may be a short-term strategy intended to induce a deeper "economic" revitalization in the longer term. A physical revitalization can result in an attractive, well-maintained public realm. However, in the longer term, economic revitalization is required because ultimately it is the productive utilization of the private realm which pays for the maintenance of the public realm". Depending on their inherent qualities as well as local physical, socio-economic conditions, different comprehensive approaches, in other words different strategies—*restructuring the economic base, regeneration, functional diversification*—should be engaged in the

¹The Walled City, which is the geometric centre of Nicosia, has been divided into two parts with the "buffer zone" along the east-west axis. Physical separation due to the inter-communal conflict and clashes between the two communities—the Greek and the Turkish—on the island which started in 1958 led to the setting of this buffer zone in 1963. Since then, the two sectors of the Walled City have been developing in their own physical and social contexts with Turkish Cypriots in the north and Greek Cypriots in the south. The study covers only the northern sector of the Walled City, since it was not possible to gather data about the southern part when the research was conducted.

revitalization processes of historic urban quarters (Doratli, 2000).

In historic urban quarters, the necessity of integrating the various exigencies of conservation and revitalization, of balancing economic development while respecting environmental quality, is particularly challenging. Tiesdell's argument therefore, underpins three contextual attributes within this definition of "revitalization": *place assets, obsolescence, and intensities of development pressures.*

Examination of many implementations of revitalization projects in historic urban quarters through a literature survey shows that success of these projects is highly related to the employment of the most appropriate strategic approach, which rests upon accurate identification of these three attributes (Doratli, 2000). Hence, at the analysis stage of any planning study, identification of the three attributes should be given a special emphasis. It can be claimed that the SWOT analysis, which will be targeted to these attributes, would be a help to increase the chance of the accurate determination of the most appropriate strategic approach. Based on this argument, these attributes will be briefly overviewed to provide a basis for the new interpretation of the SWOT analysis.

Place assets: values and qualities that make the areas worthy to be preserved and revitalized

A historic urban core possesses a mix of assets that offers a variety of possibilities for defining its identity and finds its definition in its buildings, streets, squares, and people. In traditional urban environments, urban cores show the most successful qualities of a well-defined urban fabric, namely architectural unity, order and visual continuity. Traditional urban quarters may embrace:

Cultural identity value: including age, tradition, continuity, political and national values;

Scarcity value: resulting from, for example, typology, form, period of construction, design of buildings in the area/quarter, which makes them unique assets when compared with recently built ones;

Resource value: due to the fact that they house a certain amount of existing housing stock, which can also be considered as an economic issue.

Obsolescence: factors and processes contributing to deterioration and decay

Considering the deterioration and decay process under which most historic areas suffer, *obsolescence* is the underlying concept, which can be defined as "the mismatch between the services offered by the fabric and the contemporary needs" (Lichtfield, 1988). Based on this argument, obsolescence can be considered to be a process through which most of the problems of traditional urban quarters are

being generated. The area may suffer under different types of obsolescence:

Physical/structural obsolescence: The traditional buildings would be subject to physical/structural deterioration, which leads to obsolescence. This may occur due to different factors: the effects of time, the weather, earth movement, traffic vibration, poor maintenance, which result in the deterioration of building fabric. Obsolescence of this nature is likely to be—at least initially—gradual (Tiesdell et al., 1996: p 23).

Functional obsolescence: Obsolescence of this type arises due to the functional characteristics of the building/area. Due to its design and the constraints of its fabric, the building may fail to meet the contemporary standards and requirement of the user/potential user. Inadequacy of a building may range from a lack of sanitary fittings in good conditions and spaces to a lack of central heating, air conditioning and other contemporary facilities.

Locational obsolescence: This type of obsolescence is primarily an attribute of the functional activities within the area. When the building was originally built, its location was determined in terms of accessibility to other uses, markets, and suppliers, transportation infrastructure and the like; but over time the location may become unfavorable or obsolete for the activities, for which the building was constructed (Tiesdell et al., 1996: p 25). Examining varied examples indicates that locational obsolescence can be identified through the analysis of the changes in terms of ownership pattern, changes in social composition, land and property values, rate of rents, vacancy rates, incompatible uses, type and amount of new development.

Beside these most basic types, it is also possible to consider other forms of obsolescence:

Image obsolescence: related to the perception of a building or an area. Uncomfortable traffic circulation, noise, smell, vibration in old quarters, which make them unattractive.

Official/legal obsolescence: related to physical and functional dimensions. Restrictions may render buildings obsolete; or in an area, which is declared as "conservation zone", the absence of financial incentives may reduce the willingness of property owners to restore and rehabilitate their property. This, in turn, reinforces official obsolescence.

Intensities of development pressures: factors provoking physical change

In addition to obsolescence, and depending on the economic pressure for development on the

area, a historic urban area may face different intensities of development pressure. These might be considered to be "high", "static" or "declining". Intensities of development pressures are highly interrelated with obsolescence, and it is one of the key issues in the deterioration process that an area faces as possible solutions are proposed to address this process. Physical and functional obsolescence diminishes the competitiveness of a historic urban quarter against newly developing districts, and accordingly intensities of development pressure in the area approach *static* or *declining* states. Or, alternatively, the flight of inhabitants and uses from a historic urban quarter under static or declining development pressure accelerate physical and functional obsolescence, and give rise to other types of obsolescence.

In one of the reports of unchs-habitat about the rehabilitation of existing housing stock, it is stated that: "...Some of the historic urban quarters are affected by structural and environmental decay but which are nevertheless characterized by a very high concentration of economic activities ranging from business concerns and market transactions to crafts and artisan workshops. They normally provide a wide range of employment opportunities and are characterized by steadily increasing densities, which cannot but accelerate the existing process of structural and infrastructural decay. Land values in such areas are potentially very high" (UNCHS-HABITAT, 1982: p 11).

Such areas can be identified as being in a *high state of development pressure*, with too much economic stress for development resulting in pressure for the demolition of old buildings in order to realize the full potential of valuable sites. In that case, the buildings are either in states of physical/structural obsolescence, that is, in poor condition or functional obsolescence, where there would be a mismatch between the fabric and contemporary needs and expectations.

Examination of successful examples of revitalization projects for historic urban quarters in different cities (countries) shows that, aside from the application of effective organizational, legal, fiscal, financial tools, correct identification of the contextual attributes identified above during the analytical stage plays a key role in determining the appropriate strategic approach to revitalization.

A strategic approach for revitalization

Strategic planning has been extensively used in the private sector to provide corporations and businesses with long-term vision and goals and short-term action plans to achieve these goals. Although strategy is the means used to achieve the objectives, it is not just any plan however. The con-

cept of strategy has to be perceived as a plan that is the result of analyzing the strengths and weaknesses and determining what the environment has to offer (the opportunities and threats), so that the objectives can be achieved (Jauch *et al.*, 1988: p 12). Recently, development of strategies became much more popular than ever before, not only in the business world, but also in many other fields due to the rapidly changing environment. Town planning, urban design, architecture and conservation planning are no exception to this general trend.

Considering the main focus of revitalizing historic urban quarters, as it is stated above, the employment of strategic approaches for their revitalization seems to be a major concern. Thus, in order to provide a historic urban quarter with an appropriate level of economic competitiveness and with the basis to channel the various competing demands for spaces within them, determination of an appropriate strategic approach is an important issue to debate.

As in the process of planning in general, strategic planning for revitalization of historic urban quarters also includes various stages,² among which the analysis stage is the most crucial one since both the key constraints and opportunities of the concerned historic area and the external conditions, which would positively and/or negatively affect the area, are identified at this stage. Since the main aim of this paper is to propose a new approach to the analysis stage of strategic planning for revitalization of historic urban quarters, the following will now focus on this stage in detail.

Analysis stage for strategic approach to revitalization

The analytical stage is the crucial basis for successful planning and proposals and therefore should be given due attention and effort. Thus, determination of the most relevant strategic approach should rest upon a thorough analysis. There are two main questions to be answered at this point:

- What should be analyzed? *The analysis topics*
- How should it be analyzed? *The analysis methods/techniques and tools*

The answers to these questions will clarify the scope of overall analysis stage in strategic planning for conservation and revitalization. Accordingly, the analysis topics can be classified under three main headings:

²In general strategic planning includes six steps: mission, external/internal analysis, key results, strategy, operational plan (objectives, strategic action plan, performance appraisal and rewarded), evaluation and control (Hunt, 1996).

- Analysis of the natural environment
- Analysis of the built environment
- Analysis of the socio-economic environment

These analysis topics are dealt with via various techniques and methods which are summarized in *Figure 1*.

Beside these analyses, there is also a need to identify key constraints as well as potential opportunities. This is a necessity for a sound basis for a strategic approach to conservation and revitalization. For such identification, the SWOT analysis method, which has recently become popular in environmental studies and is a prerequisite for strategic planning, should be applied to the area for conservation purposes. Based on the data gathered from the analyses methods shown in *Figure 1*, the stages of implementing the SWOT analysis will include:

- a scan of the inventory of the buildings to identify their value; physical condition and the land-use survey for detection of the functional obsolescence in the study area; and
- the re-evaluation of the socio-demographic, economic, and physical indicators in order to assess the indicators of locational obsolescence—ownership pattern, changes in social composition, land and property values, rate of rents, vacancy rates, and incompatible uses and the type and level of development.

Since this method is specifically developed for strategic planning and borrowed from another discipline (i.e. management), the authors feel that it should be specified in detail for further discussion. Thus, what follows will first give general information on this specific method and then explain how this method has been interpreted and adopted for the purpose of conservation planning and thus revitalization.

SWOT analysis and its new interpretation for historic urban quarters

A derivative of the Harvard policy model, also referred to as the “design school model” (Mintzberg 1994: pp 36–39), the SWOT approach seeks to address the question of strategy formation from a two-fold perspective: from an *external* appraisal (of threats and opportunities in an environment) and from an *internal* appraisal (of strengths and weaknesses in an organization). SWOT generates lists, or *inventories*, of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Organizations use these inventories to generate strategies that fit their particular anticipated situation, their capabilities and objectives (Bourgeois, 1996; David, 1997; Pearce and Robinson, 1997).

This distinction between internal and external conditions is more difficult to apply when assessing the potential part of the physical world such as a city district, or a historic urban quarter. Moughtin (1999) argues that in strict management terms, the analysis could be applied to an organization contemplating a particular intervention in the real world estate but not necessarily in quite the same way for the potential of real estate itself. According to Moughtin (1999), many of the threats facing an inner city area or the opportunities it presents could be considered to be internal to the physical structure being investigated.

Balamuralikrishna and Dugger (1995) point out that sometimes threats can also be viewed as opportunities, depending on the people or groups involved. They also argue that “a pessimist is a person who sees a calamity in an opportunity, and an optimist is one who sees an opportunity in a calamity”. Similarly, Moughtin (1999) states that a weakness can be viewed in a more positive light as an opportunity, while in some instances strength in one area when viewed from a different perspective can appear as the source of weakness. Nevertheless, the structure imposed by the listing and categorizing of aspects and qualities of the project site, or the working district, under these four broad headings, does assist in formulating possible strategies for intervention.

Within the regional development environment, the SWOT instrument is intended to highlight those dominant and determining factors, both within and outside of the territory in question, which are likely to influence the success of the project, as well as to produce relevant strategic guidelines by linking the project to its environment (European Commission, 1999: p 42). The completion of the analysis can also form the basis for questioning the assumptions underlying project goals and objectives. The SWOT analysis can, therefore, assist in the clearer definition of the design brief and point the way to design solutions (Cuesta *et al.*, 1999).

SWOT has been considered as a basic tool, which, while highly subjective, helps to sharpen the focus of the situation analysis (Strategic Approach to Urban Management, 2003; <http://www.dola.go.th/web-pages/m03130000/ResourceBookEn/>; p 12). Although it is a “quick and dirty” technique with a relatively low level of sophistication, when used in a matrix form, SWOT analysis is a powerful tool for identifying the properties and potential of an urban area (Cuesta *et al.*, 1999). If the examination of the data is structured as shown in *Figure 2*, then the strengths and weaknesses of a number of the main aspects of life in a study area can be addressed and analyzed. The properties and potential of the study site or city district can be examined under a number of broad headings or factors, such as physical properties and aesthetic

ANALYSIS TOPICS		TECHNIQUES & METHODS	TOOLS		
Analysis of the Natural Environment	Topographical features	Surveying techniques	Maps Tables Charts Digrams		
	Soil				
	Landscape- Vegetation Plantation - Flora / Fauna				
	Water				
	Climatical Features				
Analysis of the Man-made (Built) Environment	Locational analysis	Documentary research	Maps		
	Historical analysis	Documentary research	Data collected from books, maps, documents; Inventory forms can also be used to document buildings, streets, etc. of historic value		
	Physical analysis	Form of development	Morphological analysis	Maps 3D drawings	
		Urban pattern analysis	Solid-void relations	Figure – Ground analysis	Maps Street silhouettes 3D proportionate or scaled sketch drawings Photographs
			Street pattern; Urban spaces in terms of their quality, enclosure, character, activities	Linkage theory	
			Elements of the area such as paths, nodes, edges, landmarks and districts	Lynch analysis	Maps Photographs 3D sketch drawings
			The gap sites and vacant plots of land, streets or spaces requiring definition or redefinition.	Lost space analysis	Maps Photographs
	Architectural evaluation	Site surveying	With sketch and measured drawings and photographing; information gathered on tables, inventory forms for all buildings		
	Technical infrastructure	Documentary research	Maps and reports		
	Functional analysis	Accessibility / Permeability / Traffic Circulation	Traffic and transportation survey	Maps	
		Functional distribution	Landuse survey	Maps presented with appropriate coloring and technique	
	Analysis of the Socio-economic Environment	Demographic structure of the citizens, users of / within the area	Questionnaire survey Interviews	Tables Graphs Bar-charts	
		The existing economic activities and employment pattern			
The existing laws and regulations		Documentary research	Documents Laws, regulations		
The current local authority/government policies					
The official and non-official stakeholders in conservation activities		Interviews Questionnaire survey	Tables Graphs Bar-charts		

Figure 1 Analysis topics, techniques, methods and tools in an urban environment

qualities of the built environment in the study area; *the natural environment* which would include fauna, flora, air, water and pollution; and finally *the social and economic conditions* in the area, including polit-

ical and administrative issues. The assessment of the characteristics of the natural and the built environments corresponds to the internal appraisals, whereas the assessment of the social and econ-

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
A. Built environment Physical and aesthetic qualities	A1	A2	A3	A4
B. Natural environment Fauna, flora, air, water, pollution	B1	B2	B3	B4
C. Socio-economic environment Including political and administrative conditions	C1	C2	C3	C4

Figure 2 SWOT matrix of Cuesta et al. (1999)

omic conditions stands for external appraisals, in the original SWOT analysis method. Using such a matrix, it is possible to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the study area in terms of the factors listed in the matrix, as well as working horizontally along a line of the matrix, to examine any particular factor for its strength, weakness, opportunities for its development and the potential threat it faces.

The use of a matrix aids the analysis. The result of that analysis will be a statement summarizing the site's potential to achieve sustainable revitalization, identifying those interventions or actions necessary to arrive at such an outcome. However, as a part of a strategic approach for revitalization of historic urban quarters, this SWOT matrix, as utilized by Moughtin, may not be sufficiently detailed enough for historic environments. Since effective strategies will be built on strengths will take advantage of opportunities, and overcome or minimize weaknesses and threats (Bryson et al., 1988: p 23), the historic urban quarters should be scanned for the assessment of their positive aspects (i.e. place assets and sometimes obsolescence and development dynamics) and negative aspects (obsolescence and development dynamics) as well as for the assessment of legal, administrative, organizational, financial conditions of the city and/or the country in which they are located. Based on this argument and the three contextual attributes within the definition of revitalization (which have already been discussed above), the authors have developed an innovative matrix that interprets *place assets, obsolescence and intensities of development pressures* in a historic urban quarter with regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, corresponding to the internal appraisal. Through re-modeling of SWOT analysis within the strategic planning context, it is assumed that this technique will be assigned with a complementary role, which would provide additional information about the complex set of issues in a historic urban quarter.

Considering the *place assets, type and level of obsolescence, and the intensities of development pressures*, the key strategic issues are interpreted as follows:

- Place assets would be considered as the *strength*—the capacity of an area, which can be used effectively to achieve the objective of revitalization;
- Obsolescence and the intensities of development pressures can be considered as:
 - (i) a *weakness*—a limitation, fault or defect that would keep it from achieving revitalization;
 - (ii) an *opportunity*—a favorable situation in the environment;
 - (iii) a *threat*—any unfavorable situation in the environment that is potentially damaging the strategy.

The actions to be undertaken that can be deduced from the four elements of SWOT are: *building* on strengths, *eliminating* weaknesses, *exploiting* opportunities, and *mitigating* the effect of threats (Dealtry, 1992: p 2).

As proposed in a matrix form in Figure 3, the newly interpreted SWOT analysis covers all the detailed criteria for *place assets, obsolescence and intensities of development pressures* at district level. The main intention of this proposed matrix is to penetrate the data to identify the key constraints and opportunities of the area in concern. All data presented in this matrix are actually those gathered through analysis techniques shown in Figure 1, yet evaluated thoroughly in terms of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. This type of overall assessment, which is actually a synthesis of different types of analysis (as a sum of the pieces), provides a full picture of the historic environment. Keeping in mind that revitalization of historic urban quarters has become an integral part of the urban and economic development process in recent practices throughout the world, SWOT

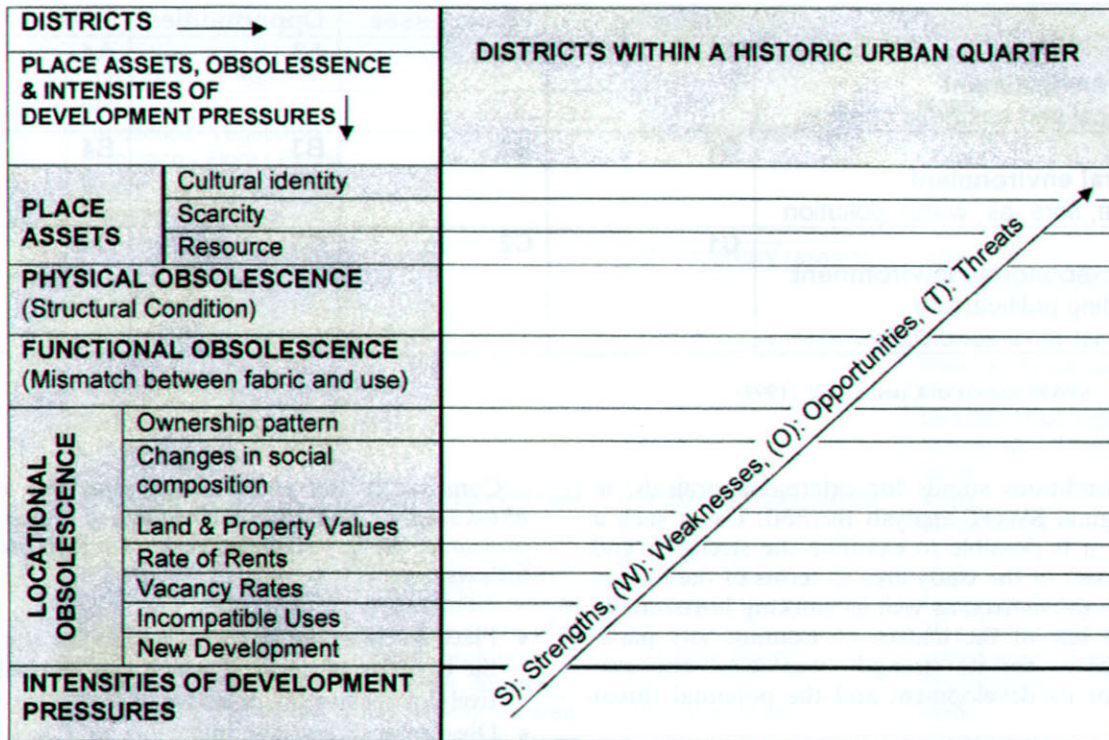


Figure 3 New interpretation of SWOT matrix

analysis has also to be applied to the broader conditions of the country, including socio-political and economic situation, the valid laws and regulations regarding the urban environment in general and conservation in particular, as an external appraisal (Figure 4).

All above discussions will now be illustrated in the selected case study—the northern part of the Walled City of Nicosia, Cyprus, the third biggest island of the Mediterranean Sea, in order to check its validity and to see how it works empirically.

Case study: the Walled City of Nicosia

The Walled City of Nicosia houses traces of intermingling cultures on the Island of Cyprus, and is a historic urban quarter that has been a declared “conservation area” since 1989. However, despite

that declaration, the Walled City has been experiencing only a limited level of changes in practical terms as well as in attitudes towards conservation and development. At a casual glance, it may seem that deterioration and decay continue largely unchecked, and that the political, financial, environmental and cultural deficiencies against conservation and revitalization are too numerous and weighty to be overcome. Therefore, The Walled City of Nicosia is considered as an appropriate case to which the new interpreted analysis method could be applied.

Considering the characteristics of the Walled City of Nicosia and based on the newly developed theoretical framework, both the study area (as territory itself) and the conditions of the country (as external to the area) will now be scanned for the

Strengths	Opportunities
Weaknesses	Threats

Figure 4 SWOT matrix for external appraisal

assessment of its positive and negative aspects and the changes likely to occur for better or for worse.

The detailed data for physical, functional and social characteristics of the Walled City collected through a project completed by one of the authors (Doratli, 2000), have been updated for the purpose of this paper and will be presented with an emphasis on the place assets of the area; different types of *obsolescence* and *intensities of development pressures*.

SWOT analysis of the Walled City

As stated above, the application of the SWOT analysis to the case area has been in three parts, which are complementary to each other: (i) through Moughtin's approach (Figure 2), (ii) through the authors' own approach (Figure 3), and (iii) through the original SWOT matrix for external appraisals (Figure 4). Moughtin's approach has been utilized for the assessment of the Walled City in general terms, thereby preparing the ground for a deeper evaluation (Figure 5). The authors' approach will then take the analysis for further assessment, according to the theoretical framework developed above. Thus, the SWOT analysis has been applied by the authors with an inductive approach to the *place assets*, *obsolescence*, and *intensities of development pressures* in functionally distinctive areas of the Walled City (Figures 6 and 7), since various analytical techniques have been applied to each of these areas separately. It is worth mentioning that all the analysis and evaluation have been carried out considering the current situation where neither a comprehensive approach towards an integrated conservation policy nor a conservation plan exists.

The SWOT analysis for the internal appraisal

The place assets, obsolescence, and intensities of development pressures of the Walled City of Nicosia, which have been summarized in a matrix developed by the authors (Figure 8), will now be discussed in the following section, within the framework of SWOT analysis:

Place assets: With its still standing and listed monumental buildings (including the walls with 11 bastions) most of which are in active use; traditional organic tissue with houses of architectural, artistic and environmental value, its morphological characteristics and date palms, the Walled City as a whole has both *cultural identity value* and *scarcity value*. Furthermore, with its 2149 traditional houses, the area embraces a *resource value* in terms of providing a housing stock. If these values, which clearly make up the capacity of the area, would be effectively utilized, the objectives of revitalization of the area would be achieved. Accordingly, it can be easily claimed that these place assets values make up the strength of the area.

Obsolescence: As it will be discussed later, functionally distinctive areas within the walls are faced with different types of obsolescence at different levels, which sometimes provide good opportunities for revitalization efforts, or, sometimes, a limitation against it. The analysis shows that the Walled City suffers from *physical*, *functional*, *locational*, *image*, and *official/legal obsolescence*:

- *Physical obsolescence:* In the Walled City as a whole, 85% of the buildings were constructed before 1960, and 64% of the buildings are in poor structural condition. Aside from Girne Avenue, where most of the historic buildings are replaced with new structures, in all other districts of the Walled City, through the effect of time and poor maintenance, the building fabric is deteriorated. This is, of course, a *threat* to the existing building stock.
- *Functional obsolescence:* Although not in large numbers, the availability of dwellings without the most basic sanitary facilities as well as dwellings with inferior quality of sanitary conditions are clear indicators of this type of obsolescence. Besides, inadequate parking facilities and the insufficient ability of the organic street pattern to cater to the contemporary traffic and accessibility requirements, make a strong contribution to the functional obsolescence in the area, which presents a clear *weakness*.
- *Locational obsolescence:* Examination of some attributes of the area like ownership pattern, changes in social composition, rent levels, vacancy rates, incompatible uses, land and property values, type and amount of new development all indicate that the area suffers heavily from locational obsolescence.

Ownership pattern: One of the most striking features of the accelerated decaying process has been changes in the ownership pattern especially with respect to housing: amount of owner occupied dwellings were 47.1% in 1985, and 27.7% in 1999. The remarkable decrease in the owner occupation clearly reflects that the area has lost its attraction as a living environment and this can be regarded as a threat considering conservation issues.

Changes in social composition: In the area, change in the social composition is two-fold: (i) the new comers are from lower classes; and (ii) they are immigrant families or workers from Turkey in search for a new existence. The change in the social composition (only 32% original Turkish Cypriot against 68% from Turkey) shows that the area is a pole of attraction for a completely different segment of population than before. The larger segment of the inhabitants has neither cultural linkage

THE WALLED CITY OF NICOSIA	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Natural environment Fauna, flora, air, water, pollution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having Mediterranean climate which is attractive for tourism • Central location of the city on the island • Presence of greenery in almost every house garden • Existence of date palms in public spaces which have symbolic values to the city • Presence of water wells and street fountains • Existence of an urban park attached to the border line 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of maintenance in house gardens • Unworkable street fountains • Scarce amount of water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of many defined open spaces that have potential to be improved • Existence of housing stock • Existence of public building stock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decay of the natural beauty
<p>Built environment Physical and aesthetic qualities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being the traditional core of the city • Existence of star-shape city walls • Existence of identical districts and monumental buildings (e covered Bazaar, khans, baths, cinemas) • Mix-uses within the district • Existence of various reference points in each district • Predominant human scale pattern • Continuous urban form with well-defined streets and cut-de sacs which create sense of place • Existence of special corner defining buildings • Existence of well defined public urban spaces / squares in various dimensions • Existence of traditional housing dwellings belonging to previous cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited area for development • Existence of a buffer zone • Inappropriate additions to the building facades such as architectural elements and advertisement boards • Inadequate lighting • Lack of unity among the definer buildings • Existence of unused urban spaces / squares • Existence of lost spaces • Inadequate and inappropriate street furnishing elements • Scarce amount of places for sports • Car parking problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aids from abroad for restoration of the traditional pattern • High tourism potential • Existence of a tourism encouragement law • Existence of the Cyprus Biological Research Associations • Existence of the Department of Antiquities • Existing of the City Planning Department • Existence of the various chambers of different professions • Existence of the many civilian society organisations which work for enhancing the city • Sensitivity of the local and governmental authorities to the environmental policies • Existence of Ministry of Tourism and Environment • Existence of tourism agents • Existence of U.N.C.R., U.N.D.P. and UNQPS • Increase of interest to the cultural tourism in world scale • Integration process with the EU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of the buffer zone • More deterioration on the monumental buildings • More deterioration in the traditional pattern • More visual misery • Multi-storey building additions to the traditional human scale pattern • Physical, functional, locational and image obsolescence • Lack of maintenance in private, semi-private and public spaces • Incompatible uses in the traditional buildings; such as worker pensions, small industry etc.. • Incompatible / inefficient uses in public open spaces and urban squares • Weaknesses in the Master Plan
<p>Socio-economic environment Including political and administrative conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence of a culture mosaic • Existence of a recently developed master plan • A shared culture • Being the capital city of Cyprus • Existence of two universities within the borders of the city • Existence of businessmen who are volunteer for improving the historical buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improper enterprises of monumental buildings • Static development dynamics • Existence of embargos • Lack of uses after working hours and during the week ends • Uses of the houses over their capacities • Safety problem • Immigration of the Turkish Cypriots (the actual owners of houses) to the new developing areas • Existence of many immigrant low-income male workers • Low education level of the new users • Lack of consciousness to environment • Low income level of the new settlers • Temporary works of the immigrants • Decrease of the social activities in the walls • Not to be recognized by the world • Economic crisis • Problems created by the expensiveness • Inadequate municipality services • Inadequate mass transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of the historical heritage • Increase of the bankrupt shops day by days • Decrease of public activities • Being used by fewer people • Increase of the male immigrant workers in the city • More immigrations of the Turkish Cypriots (the actual owners) from the Walled City to the new developing areas • Not to be recognized by the world • Continuation of the existing embargos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of the historical heritage • Increase of the bankrupt shops day by days • Decrease of public activities • Being used by fewer people • Increase of the male immigrant workers in the city • More immigrations of the Turkish Cypriots (the actual owners) from the Walled City to the new developing areas • Not to be recognized by the world • Continuation of the existing embargos

Figure 5 SWOT analysis of the Walled City through Moughtin's approach

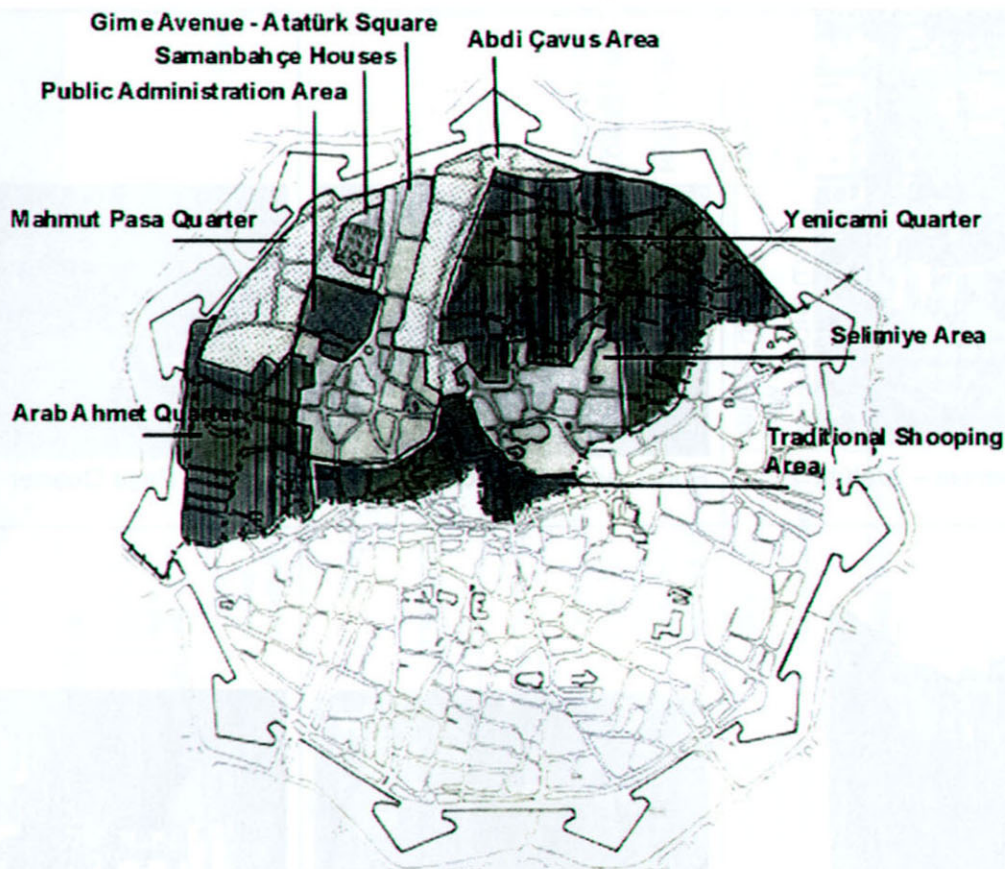


Figure 6 Functionally distinctive areas within the Walled City of Nicosia

nor attachment to the area, which should be considered as a serious *threat* against the revitalization process of this historic area. The new inhabitants would contribute to further deterioration of the housing stock, since the vast majority of the houses are old and in poor condition, and in need of much more and expensive maintenance.

Level of rents: With the exception of the rent levels on Girne Avenue and Atatürk Square, the level of rents in the Walled City is considerably lower when compared with other districts of the town. As the area is neither attractive nor competitive with the rest of the town, this presents another type of *weakness*.

Vacancy rates: There are several alternatives for the vacuum to be filled, which is generated by the flight of the residents and business to outside the walls. It should be kept in mind that the flight is associated with the physical and locational obsolescence: (i) the premises remain empty following the flight; (ii) the vacuum is fulfilled by incompatible uses, such as warehouses, repair shops, small-scale manufacturing, or “pensions” for workers; (iii) the vacuum is fulfilled by a new wave of families from the bottom-most social classes. Based on

observations, it is possible to say that the vast majority of the buildings that are identified as being in “very poor” structural condition are vacant. Most of the time, these are the “listed” buildings. Thus, high vacancy rates can be considered both as *threat* and *opportunity*: threat, because vacancy accelerates physical decay and obsolescence; opportunity, because it may ease inappropriate utilization of vacant buildings according to revitalization policies.

Incompatible uses: Decreasing attraction of historic areas invites uses, which prefer cheaper accommodation but are inherently incompatible with the historic fabric. The Walled City of Nicosia is no exception to this general trend. Many old buildings are used as warehouses or by small-scale manufacturing. Although being concentrated in the adjacent locations of the commercial areas, they are spread all around the whole old city. Alongside these incompatible uses, an ill-treated function, pensions as low-cost accommodation for workers are also spread throughout the Walled City. Pensions create much more serious problems in the area, since they are not only incompatible with historic buildings but they also increase the social

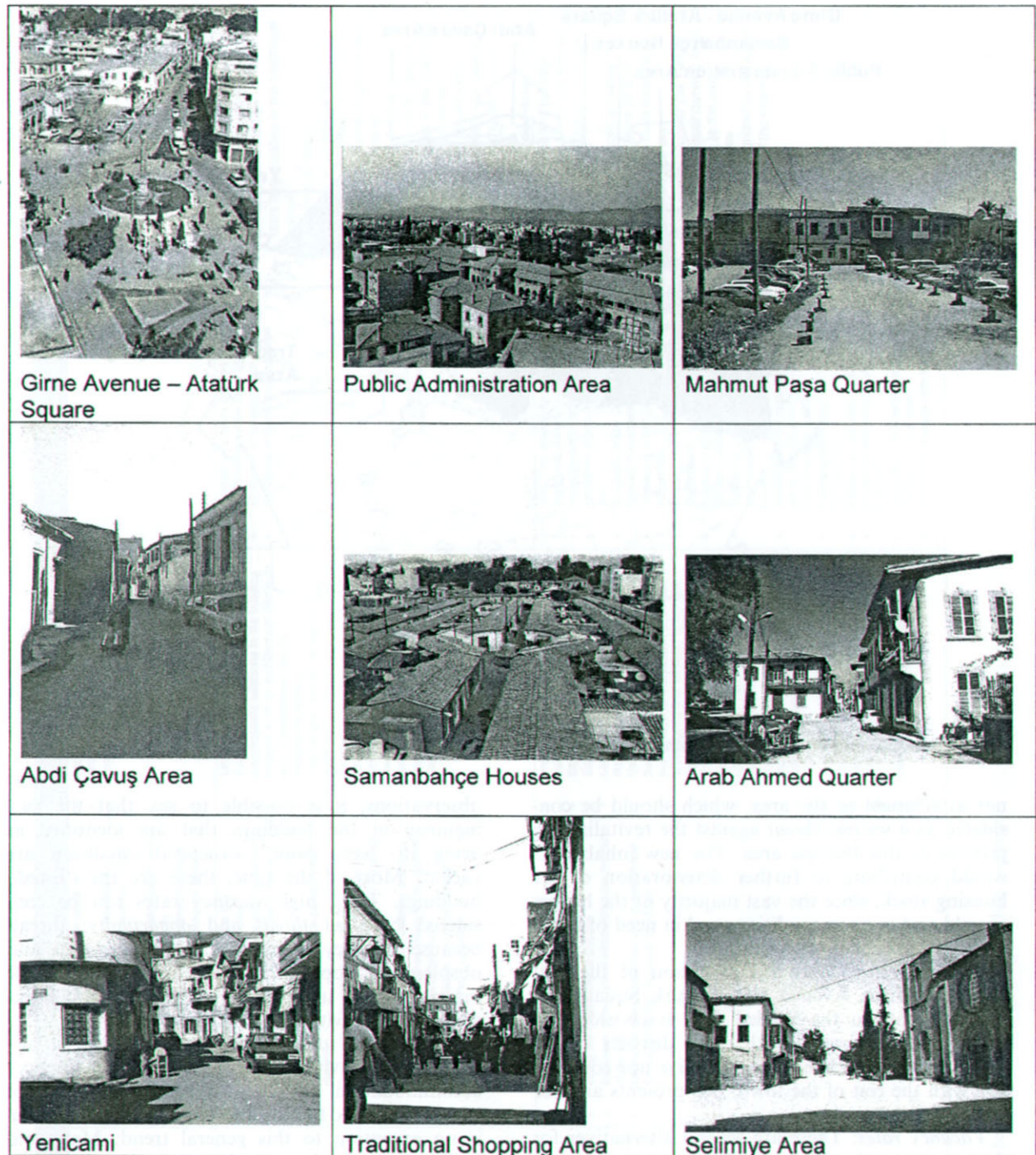


Figure 7 Views from the functionally distinctive areas in the Walled City

distortion in the area. Hence, as a threat they decrease the quality of the area both in physical, social, and cultural terms.

Land and property values: In parallel with the decreasing attraction of the historic areas, land and property values are far below the values at city

scale. In the case of the Walled City of Nicosia, it should be noted, however, that these values show differences in distinctive functional areas within the walls. It reaches its peak on Girne Avenue, which can be dangerous for historic old buildings as a *threat*, whereas these values get considerably lower

DISTRICTS →		←				
PLACE ASSETS, OBSCURE & INTENSITIES OF DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES		←				
PLACE ASSETS	Cultural identity	HIGH (S)				
	Scarcity	HIGH (S)				
PHYSICAL OBSCURE (Structural Condition)	Resource	HIGH (S)				
		MAHİMUT PAŞA & ABDİ ÇAVUŞ	ARAB AHMET	YENİCAMI	TRADITIONAL SHOPPING AREA	SELİMİYE
FUNCTIONAL OBSCURE (Mismatch between fabric and use)	67.2% of the buildings in excellent condition (S)	73.9% in poor condition (T)	70.2% in poor condition (T)	62.4% of the buildings in poor condition (T)		
	Comparably newly built buildings - not apparent (O)	HIGH (W)				
LOCAL OBSCURE	Ownership pattern	Decrease in owner occupied dwellings from 47.1% in 1985 to 27.7% in 1999 (T)				
	Changes in social composition	The new comers are from lower classes (T); they are emigrant families or workers from Turkey (32% original Turkish Cypriots against 68% from Turkey)				
INTENSITIES OF DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES	Land & Property Values	HIGHEST in the Walled City (T)	MIDDLE TO LOWEST (O)	LOWEST (O)	MIDDLE TO LOWEST (O)	LOWEST (O)
	Rate of Rents	HIGHEST in the Walled City (S)	LOW (W)	LOWEST (W)	MIDDLE TO LOW (W)	LOWEST (W)
INTENSITIES OF DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES	Vacancy Rates	LOWEST in the Walled City	MIDDLE (T) (O)	HIGH (T) (O)	MIDDLE TO HIGH (T) (O)	HIGH (T) (O)
	Incompatible Uses	Not exist	NOTICABLE (W)	HIGH (T)	MIDDLE (T)	HIGH (T)
INTENSITIES OF DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES	New Development	HIGHEST in the Walled City (O)	Almost NONE (T)	Aside from restoration by public sector NONE (T)	LOW almost NONE (T)	Almost NONE (T)
		HIGH DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE (O)	STATIC (W)	DECLINING (T)	DECLINING (T)	DECLINING (T)

(S): Strengths; (W): Weaknesses; (O): Opportunities; (T): Threats

Figure 8 SWOT analysis of the Walled City through authors' approach

in the other districts, which may provide an *opportunity* for conservation efforts.

Type and amount of new development: The rate of new developments in historic areas would be considered as an indicator of their ability to induce private investment. If the areas suffer from locational as well as image obsolescence, it cannot be expected that private investment will occur in these areas, nor will the owners take action to enhance their buildings. Considering the Walled City from this perspective, the new developments can only be seen in the most dynamic part, Girne Avenue, where they create *opportunity* for attracting further investment. In the other districts, non-existence of new developments is a threat since it indicates the flight of private investment.

Intensities of development pressures: As emphasized above, there is a mutually exclusive relationship between obsolescence and intensity of development pressures that a place faces. Depending on the characteristics and other qualities of the area, development dynamics may sometimes act as threat or weakness, and sometimes as opportunity. This has been observed in the Walled City as well. In reality, most of the indicators of obsolescence reflect whether there is high, static or declining development dynamic in an area. Since different intensities of development pressures prevail in different parts of the old city, it is preferred to examine the morphology of intensities of development pressures in terms of distinctive areas:

- Girne Avenue and its near vicinity, to a certain degree, still preserve its attractiveness. It is the only area within the walls that can compete with newly developing areas outside the walls. The area owes this characteristic to its "renewed" character. Most of the buildings were built in the last three decades. The area can be identified with *high pressure for development*, which provide favorable situations in the environment, as an *opportunity*. However, the vacant office building next to the Courts, which was built during mid-1980s, might be a sign of decreasing attraction of the area.
- Mahmut Paşa and Abdi Çavuş, the neighboring areas of Girne Avenue, which has been under pressure of the expanding commercial activities during the 1970s and 1980s has undergone unfavorable functional changes. The spatial pattern of originally residential areas is somewhat distorted and in addition to physical obsolescence, the areas started to suffer under both functional and locational obsolescence. As a result of this transformation, the area is currently in *static state of development pressure*, which can be considered as a *weakness*.

- Arab Ahmet and Yenicami (housing depots of the Walled City), which occupy the largest area within the walls, with their vacancy rates, high proportion of poor buildings, lowest property values and rents, high proportion of incompatible uses, absence of development, instable population, low ownership rates, became somewhat of a slum. With these characteristics, the areas are in *declining state of development pressure*, which is an unfavorable situation in the area that is damaging any potential revitalization strategy—a *threat*.
- Traditional Core and Selimiye Area, where the main type of activity is commercial, show all signs of physical, functional as well as locational obsolescence, leading to *static state of development pressure* in the traditional Core and *declining state of development pressure* in Selimiye Area, both representing a *threat*.

Based on all these, it can clearly be stated that the Walled City of Nicosia is a historic urban core, possessing a mix of assets that embrace *cultural identity value; scarcity value* and *resource value*, which set up the *strength* of the area. Any strategy should be built on these strengths for sustainable conservation. The findings also indicate that, apart from Girne Avenue, all other districts within the walls suffer from physical, functional and locational obsolescence to a larger extent and the largest parts of it are in *declining state of development pressure*.

The SWOT analysis for the external appraisal

Assessment of only the characteristics, problems and potential of this historic area would only partly pave the way to formulate the most appropriate strategy for ensuring the success of revitalization efforts. Therefore, in addition to what has been discussed above, the political and socio-economic conditions of the country (Northern Cyprus) as the external appraisal (as existing in the original SWOT method) is discussed in the following section and summarized in *Figure 9*.

The initial step in terms of external appraisal will be about the most vital issues, conditions for conservation and revitalization in Northern Cyprus from a SWOT analysis perspective. When considering the essence of the new trends and practices at the global level, the current local framework for conservation and revitalization of historic urban quarters in Northern Cyprus seems to be in conflict or at least inefficient with respect to international understanding and practices. The *attitude of the responsible authorities; appreciation and consciousness at community level; public participation and involvement; planning approach; legislative basis; and financial and administrative issues* all need to be

argued since they correspond to the overall weakness of the prevailing conditions for revitalization.

Attitude of responsible authorities: The dominating conservation understanding of the authorities that are committed to planning studies with respect to conservation is preservation of the cultural, architectural, artistic identity of a historic urban quarter. Nevertheless, all these values should be protected. However, without taking into account the social and economic values of these places, long-term attainment of the objective of conservation would be difficult.

Making the protection of cultural heritage more preservation-oriented than conservation-oriented results in a *defensive, reactive, and reluctant to change* attitudes towards the process. This creates an obstacle for the revitalization and it is against increasing competitiveness of these areas. When considering the framework of the *Amsterdam Declaration*, which underlines an *interactive, democratic, and communal consensus* as indispensable features regarding conservation, this kind of attitude can be referred to as being "old fashion" or "expired".

Appreciation and consciousness at the community level: "Historic areas" and "conservation" are neither appreciated nor well understood by the vast majority of the public. At a community level, protection of historic areas is considered as if it is the problem and duty of solely the responsible authorities. Protection of historic areas seems to be a "top-down" order, dictated by the responsible authorities to the community.

At the community level, understanding of protection of historic buildings is restricted to the protection of only monumental buildings and sites. A

large section of the population shows resistance to the protection of buildings of architectural value, or more mundane buildings. To summarize, at community level, an understanding from the late 1960s, or early 1970s in European countries about protection of historic buildings prevails.

Public participation and involvement: The new Town Planning Law (55/89) has provisions for public participation at the preparation and approval stage of plans including those for conservation areas. However, when considering the new approaches, especially those dictated by Amsterdam Declaration, it has a limited scope. Provisions on public participation do not call for:

- Participation of local people in every stage of conservation studies, after they are given the facts necessary to understand the situation;
- Setting up special non-commercial agencies to provide direct links between potential users of buildings and their owners;
- Consideration of complementary proposals or alternatives put forward by groups or individuals, as stated in the Declaration.

Although there is no provision in the new Town Planning Law and Law of Antiquities about these, there is nothing against their realization either.

Planning approach: In Northern Cyprus, planning studies for the conservation areas are carried out in many respects differently from the rest of the town. In addition to this, a uniform model with a uniform logic is applied to every conservation area. Since every historic urban quarter is unique and has its own identity, even the best plan would fail

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student population • Social and economic contribution of universities to North Cyprus
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attitude of the responsible authorities; • appreciation and consciousness at community level; • public participation and involvement; • planning approach; • legislative basis; • financial and administrative issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Embargos

Figure 9 SWOT analysis of the Walled City for external appraisal

with such an approach. It is not enough to take only the analysis of the physical, architectural characteristics and qualities and socio-economic features as a basis for determination of a conservation policy. Analysis should be carried out one step further and for every place the type and level of obsolescence as well as the dynamics of the place should be identified. This would convey the understanding of the position of the conservation area with respect to the rest of the city. Consequently, the conservation policies for the historic areas would have a long-term perspective.

It can be argued that, in Northern Cyprus, conservation-area planning practice does not have a long-term perspective—although it may pretend to have—because, following the analytical stage, the conservation policy is developed to include only different modes of renewal: refurbishment, conversion, demolition and redevelopment, aiming at the physical revitalization of the area.

However, as discussed earlier, although resulting in an attractive physical public realm, physical revitalization is a short-term strategy. To sustain revitalization in long-term, economic revitalization strategies should also be pursued. Since this kind of thinking fails, it can easily be said that the planning approaches for conservation do not have a long-term perspective.

Legislative basis: The legislative framework for conservation in Northern Cyprus, provides the basis for identification of the historical, architectural, cultural heritage or conservation areas; preparation of conservation plans; listing of buildings and sites; giving technical or limited financial assistance to the owners of listed buildings; control of development in the conservation areas. However, as a whole, it does not provide the basis for effective implementation of the conservation plans.

Legislation that is directly related to conservation, Antiquities Law and Town Planning Law, provides the basis to draw the picture of conservation of buildings and/or areas. They do not have any provision to transform the conservation plans into action plans. When considering the provisions of the Amsterdam Declaration about the organizational framework for implementation and public participation, beginning with the launching of the conservation plan and continuing throughout implementation, it comes out that the legislation has missing provisions.

Legislation, which, through the development that it permits has an indirect influence on the conservation areas, has no respect to conservation issues. As a result, it is possible that the conservation area would be negatively affected by development which is permitted under 'ordinary' planning legislation.

Financial and administrative issues: The financial means and tools are insufficient for attainment of the objective of revitalization of historic urban quarters. It is not possible to enhance and enliven

the area through only providing technical and limited financial assistance to the owners of listed buildings. Ways and means to shift the resources of the country to conservation should be searched for, in order to increase the financial resources that would be available for conservation. In addition to this, it should be kept in mind that sometimes a cultural treasure will be better preserved and appreciation of it better served by affording it a place in the open market where it can provide an economic return.

Ways and means should be identified to provide the basis through which the public sector does not just give grants and loans but acts as a catalyst and stimulator. This would be possible through the amendment of some laws and regulations. When considering administrative and organizational issues, although the responsible authorities act in collaboration, occasionally certain level of deficiencies arises due to a lack of coordination.

The most striking weakness of the administrative and organizational framework of conservation has two dimensions:

- (i) In Northern Cyprus, there is no sound and stable basis for the allocation of different departments under the authority of the same Ministry. Depending on decisions of every new government, allocation of departments may change. The Town Planning Department is one of the most affected departments from this perspective. Beside unstable placement, departments, which are highly involved in planning and conservation activities, are under the authority of different Ministries. Coordinating activities of the departments under different Ministries and expecting them to orient their efforts towards a shared objective with respect to cultural heritage is difficult.
- (ii) The internal organizational framework of the departments (Town Planning; Ancient Monument and Museums, Environment; Tourism) is insufficient for performing the tasks assigned to them. When considering the requirements of integrated conservation, this becomes more apparent.

Furthermore, since revitalization of a historic urban quarter calls for action and involvement of many different parties and actors, the existing framework is insufficient. The current legislation provides nothing against the development of an organizational framework, which would involve many other agencies in the conservation efforts. Practices in European countries, especially those of UK, might give a certain level of clues. Of course, it should be kept in mind that in the UK, the conservation and its evolution have a long tradition

and it takes its roots much more from the public than the government. However, there are still some hints to be taken and to adapt to the local conditions. For example, the appointment of national agencies, financed by the government, but operating independently, might act much more rapidly than the central authorities to respond to conservation demands. Besides, voluntary groups like those in the UK, which have an important role in conservation, are non-existent in Northern Cyprus. Government would apply ways and means to encourage the establishment of similar voluntary groups, which would bring impulse to conservation and revitalization practices.

To summarize the above discussion, the current situation in Northern Cyprus with regard to conservation practices is far below contemporary standards and represents a fundamental weakness for conservation and revitalization efforts. Beside the above stated national weaknesses, the opportunities that are provided within the country-wide economic activities should also be scanned for two reasons:

- (i) Revitalization of historic urban quarters has become an integral part of the urban and economic development process of a country;
- (ii) Based on the argument of Tiesdell *et al.* (1996: pp 43–44), if (for positive revitalization measures) the creation of growth from “within” (endogenous) a historic urban quarter does not seem possible, growth from “without” (exogenous) (i.e. attracting investment from outside of the area) should be induced. Based on the internal assessment of the Walled City through SWOT analysis, growth from within, which involves development of the area’s existing economic base and retention of existing socio-economic conditions, seems to be insufficient to sustain revitalization. Thus, opportunities for attracting investment from outside of the area should be searched for and identified.

The northern part of the island is under the control of the Turkish Cypriots since 1974. In 1983, the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was unilaterally proclaimed by the Turkish Cypriots, which is still not recognized by the international community. Since then, bolstered by much Turkish aid, the Turkish Cypriots have formed their own governing institutions, fashioned a functioning democracy with a free press, put in place an education system that extended from pre-school to the university level, and laid the groundwork of an economy that, despite a Greek economic blockade—as well as the tight embargo by the international community—has registered respectable growth rates (see also Doratli, 2002: p 59). The existence of five universities, two of which are loca-

ted in Nicosia, plays an important role as a flagship sector of the Turkish sector’s economy in the generation of this respectable growth. The overall student population is around 20,000, which is approximately 10% of the inhabitants of Northern Cyprus. The universities have made a significant contribution to the economy as well as to the social and cultural life of the cities in which they are located. Since attracting investment from outside of the Walled City seems to be vital for positive revitalization measures, the robust financial and social potential of the universities can be considered as an opportunity to be utilized and a university can become the flagship of the revitalization efforts in the Walled City, as long as a good fit between the requirements of the university and physical characteristics of the area is created.

An overall interpretation of the results of SWOT analysis—a synthesis

Literature surveys reveal that SWOT analysis has the ability to synthesize diverse sources of information (Lucas, 2003). The analysis, which has been applied to the Walled City through three SWOT matrixes, has highlighted a number of significant issues that should be addressed in the strategy through a synthesis. It has been kept in mind that, in essence, opportunities represent possibilities and threats represent potential constraints (Allen Parks and Recreation Department, 1999), and each of the factors highlighted within the SWOT analysis has to be considered in the formulation of objectives and actions within the strategy (A Tourism Strategy for St. Albans City and District, 2003: <http://www.stalbas.gov.uk/local-democracy/policies/tourism-strat-2003-5/pdf>).

After completing the SWOT analysis, based on the argument of Austrainer (2003) (<http://www.austrainer.com/archives/1397.htm>) the following questions have been asked:

- How can the strengths be utilized in order to take advantage of the opportunities that have been identified?
- How can these strengths be utilized to overcome the threats identified?
- What is needed to overcome the identified weaknesses in order to take advantage of the opportunities?
- How can the weaknesses be minimized to overcome the identified threats?

It is believed that, in order find answers to these questions, perceiving the results of SWOT analysis in a more compact form would be a great help. Accordingly, strengths and opportunities as positive drivers for revitalization and weaknesses and threats as negatives, which the strategy will aim to neutralize, are re-organized and a summary matrix

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The place assets with cultural identity, scarcity and resource values • Universities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparably low land & property values • High vacancy rates • Student population • Social and economic contribution of universities to North Cyprus
↑	↑
MATCH	MATCH
←	→
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High level of functional obsolescence • Declining development pressure • Low rate of rents • attitude of the responsible authorities; • appreciation and consciousness at community level; • public participation and involvement; • planning approach; • legislative basis; • financial and administrative issues- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High no. of buildings in poor condition • High amount of incompatible uses • Unfavorable changes in social composition • Unfavorable changes in ownership pattern • No new development • International Embargos
↓	↓
CONVERT	CONVERT
MINIMIZE/ AVOID	MINIMIZE/ AVOID

Figure 10 Summary SWOT matrix for the Walled City

has been developed similar to the one proposed by Lucas for marketing strategies (Figure 10). The strategy, which will be based on this final assessment, should be capable of matching the strengths and opportunities; to minimize and avoid weaknesses and threats; to convert weaknesses into strengths and threats into opportunities.

Examination of many examples of revitalization projects for historic urban areas shows that if a historic area heavily suffers under severe locational obsolescence, the economic base of the area should be restructured in order to ensure revitalization in a long-term perspective, which means that changes in occupation with new uses or activities replacing the former ones should dominate the major objectives and decisions about the area.

Evaluations of the area's potential and of its negative factors, together with the internal and external appraisal through the interpretation of the final matrix (Figure 7), suggest that, it would not be possible to revitalize the area through either an indigenous regeneration of the area's traditional activities, or through a functional diversification, since the area heavily suffers from locational obsolescence. Only through restructuring of the area's economic base will it be possible to generate econ-

omic development. This would provide the finance necessary to conserve, maintain and improve the area, and consequently enhance the demographic structure of the area, since the current residents are only temporary "guests" attracted by low rents because of the degraded environmental conditions.

Conclusion

The main motive behind the proposal of the new interpretation of SWOT analysis method has been the idea that it would be a reliable support to the decision process on the appropriate strategic approach for revitalizing historic urban quarters. This new proposal together with its illustration can of course be criticized on their own, and with reference to the pros and cons to the original SWOT method, in terms of its merits and pitfalls.

Taking the discussions on the challenges of revitalizing historic urban quarters, the new interpretation of SWOT can be considered as an optimally designed tool that specifically elaborates the core issues on which revitalization strategies should be based. Focusing on the three contextual attributes of revitalization with regard to strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats makes it possible

both to be more conscious about the key constraints and possible opportunities, and also to have firm control on the area concerned in terms of the parameters on which the analysis is focused.

The new interpretation of SWOT can work efficiently and serves for the strategic formation only if the data on various matters are accurate. Unless the re-modeled SWOT is utilized properly, it may create unreliable inputs into the process of determining the most appropriate strategic approach for revitalization.

The general argument on SWOT analysis about it resulting in a certain value-added for strategic planning is also valid for the interpreted and illustrated version in this paper. Although on a superficial level SWOT seems to be primarily a descriptive exercise, its role as part of the process of strategic decision-making cannot be overlooked. If SWOT is looked upon as a basic analytical structure only, it would possibly not be linked to any subsequent strategic planning application (Koch, 2000: pp 2–3). Evaluation of the new interpretation of SWOT and its application to the Walled City of Nicosia from this perspective reveals that the re-modeled SWOT and its application do not only convey to a contextual understanding of the historic environment, but it safely assists the determination of the most appropriate strategic approach as well simply because the new interpretation of SWOT is comprehensive, well defined, properly verified and thus reliable.

From the viewpoint of SWOT as the core of the analytical texture, its descriptive dimension represents a backward linkage, whereas the strategies that are based on it represent a forward linkage. However, as a part of strategic conservation planning, this criticism might not be valid since any intervention in a historic environment requires accurate data about its past in addition to a futuristic viewpoint. Thus, it can be claimed that there is a consistency between the new interpretation of SWOT and the spirit of strategic approach for revitalization.

Literature surveys show that there are no simple rules of thumb saying exactly how focused or how general a SWOT should be in its approach (Karppi et al., 2001: p 36). Accordingly, the framework introduced in this paper presents both a general and focused approach—general in terms of the external appraisals, focused in terms of the internal appraisals. It can also be argued that the issues included in the analysis through the re-modeled SWOT matrix seldom lend themselves to strictly objective or simply quantifiable indicators. Although this may be considered as a weakness of the new proposal, a literature survey shows that it is an overall criticism of the original SWOT method.

A highly relevant question might be whether the best possible version of SWOT as interpreted in

this paper with its in-built components is technically good at all for historic urban quarters. Since almost all critical issues are covered within the framework of the proposed method, we may say that the answer to this question is positive. Last but not the least, the context question in the strategy formulation stage, of which the SWOT analysis is an intrinsic part, is sometimes seen as secondary to the contextual nature of strategy implementation. This means that one should formulate strategies objectively, but the degree to which their implementation can be objective is dependent on the person/organization implementing the strategy.

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Revitalization strategies in historic urban quarters: N Doratli et al.

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