

N. Lygeros - No human without Humanity

TEDx Rhodes

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I'm thinking of sitting down. But because they played bouzouki, I couldn't have sat the other way around, the classical, because I felt more like being in the traditional café. Sometimes in Greece when someone says the word 'revolution' he thinks he is revolutionary. (Looking at Manos-The host) I was told that I can do anything I want. This is why I came. Additionally when they told me that it is here, in the palace, it was difficult for me not to return. So I would like to tell you something regarding Hellenism and I'll start with the title, so that I seem somewhat regular, at least in the beginning, with regards to TEDx.

I liked the title from the beginning because it has substance in that which we do as continuation, but I want to tell you the following: There is no definition of 'island'. The island is simply the level of water of the sea. Remove the sea, which is the island that remains? We could say that the islands are the mountains of the sea. The best definition is to consider that the island doesn't exist without sea so essentially it would best to call it 'medisea' as we say 'Mediterranean' for the sea. This means that if we accept that the island exists only through the sea then we will see that it only comes afterwards and not prior. When we transfer this to humans many, I heard it here too, we will take some corrective routes, especially if we continue this route together

They say that at some point we need to realize something, I would like to tell you that one tessera never becomes a mosaic. The mosaic is a hyperstructure which comes before the structure. The hyperstructure for us is Humanity. So the question is, why do some delay to find that the most important is Humanity and they occupy themselves so much with societies. Because it is easier, because when you are born, you are born within a society, but then you understand that you need to put up a struggle to enter Humanity. An island initially may think that it is very important and you should know that the small islands very quickly realize that they are not significant on their own but are significant as a network and you see it quite often that in the islands you have those who we call maritimers who are strange fellows if we think about it because you place them on an island and the first thing we do is to leave from the island. But they are even stranger because they return. This means that they have realized that it is medisea and that the richness of the island is the sea. The richness of a human is the others. Only, and nothing else. It is a bit heavy in the beginning when we say it like this but how good it is when we live it. So we have to think things a little different. That is, first it is the sea then the islands appear. First it is Humanity then appears the concept of the human, and it is not the opposite.

The mosaic as I said in the beginning is prior to the tesserae. He who invents a mosaic he doesn't invent it simply as a collection of tesserae which is one beside the other. And here enters another idea which is wrong, socially. We pay much attention to

the fact that we are near. And you probably have to be careful with this. Because when you told us to look to those who are beside us or near us or behind us, it was always our neighborhood which wasn't chosen. And I think that the people who spoke here told you in essence: 'Don't stay in your neighborhood'. Find who will be your other others. (Towards Manos) I didn't go back, I confess it to you.

Because I come from the back. When you are the last one and someone asks you to come back, you say: 'He has humor'. Us Greeks, we will always be the last ones. When I say it like this you think it is criticism. You will see where I'm going with this. Because we push everyone else. And I liked it because I saw a picture that said that those who push are more important than those who pull. So you say (Greek idiom): 'What am I going through pulling and don't confess it.' and you don't say 'What am I going through pushing and I don't confess it' because someone does it. So, it is important that we push. So, it is important that we push. So when we push together, when we are together when the islands understand that they are a complex then they acquire a different dynamic.

In Dodecanese, everything is strange. When we are in Rhodes, everyone talks about Rhodes. (Looking up for an airplane) I'm looking to see if we still have indication of tourism. You know, everyone is whining but we have the airplanes now they suddenly stopped. I will see. We call Dodecanese, twenty three islands. You must be something. That is, we invented mathematics but we certainly did it strategically. If we say twelve they will capture only twelve and the rest will remain to us. This means that to follow the thinking of the Greeks you have some difficulties. You have such great difficulties that even the Greeks have them. This is very good because it protects us from the enemies because they too don't know what we want exactly, this is why it is difficult for us to be traitors. What is there to betray? Since we don't know what we wanted to betray exactly. Where in other countries they all know what they want so you take one, he betrays everybody.

We have difficulty with the issue of betrayal and this is why we usually get sacrificed. We are a people of sacrifice and of resistance. I would like to tell you again something, Manos. Be careful when you make analogies and when here is he who talks to you now. Because it is not important who made the stones. It is important on which side of the walls were our people, at the time the siege was taking place and then you will see that the analogy you made is clearly wrong. And if you think that we are now free it is because we chose the right side which was not always the easy one, because something that we don't like is someone telling us what to do and it is logical since we don't ever know what to do so why should someone else tell us? (Airplane flies over) At last! It came! I got afraid that you had no tourism at night time. I will make a pause, but I promise you I will make a pause, but I promise you that even if there is noise I will come to do it again I'll say the same, I always say the same things.

So I say this, we have to think that our walls as you see them here are the books it is knowledge it isn't the stones. Hellenism managed to take stones and make art. While others see only the stones. And when Hellenism becomes Grecism they see only ruins. But we are a people of ruins. While the others, do you know what they would give to have ruins? They find three stones and they call it museum. We have thousands and we

call it storage. And we wonder if at some point it has to become a museum. So when you live within this space which for us it is only space of Time.

We are a people of Time and not of space. The good thing about this island it has direct contact with the sea. It has direct contact with the relations. And we have to lose time in our relationships. We have to lose a lot of time. And it is interesting because it is the right institutional framework for you to lose time is Democracy. Democracy is the ideal because we need to discuss. So since we discuss we have to lose time. So since we make discussions we have to lose time. But it is the only way to invest within time and to generate a work in time. Because everything that happens quickly, leaves quickly. We are of 'slowness', this is why I tell you we'll be the 'last' ones and surely from God we will ask for an extension. We'll tell him ' If you knew how many we pushed to get here... how could we be on time!'

So we more of the 'beautiful' than 'horeo' (beautiful) . Because 'horeo' it is when you are on time. Us, as you know we have various times in Greece depending on the colors and as chameleons, we change them often. What is important is to think about this: How can a people of Time could has given so many paradigms to people of a space. We are of Time because we are of the sea. We were born on the islands. In essence, we were born where the islands were many not one island. If you ask someone, in Greece, 'Do you prefer to be of the mainland or of the island?' In terms of strength. He will tell you 'of the mainland', If you take a large island and tell him. 'Do you want to be on a large island or on small islands?' He will say: 'Large island'. He responded wrong to both answers. The most enduring in strategy is the many small islands' because they work with a large shield. I will make a small pause which will surely be counted. And I will tell you that if here we still speak Greek. If here we still work with knowledge, with Humanity and humanness if we still speak of the word 'filotimo' it is because we have the sea. I would like you to imagine, for a moment Greece without sea. It is very simple, Hellenism disappears. And because Hellenism disappears Greece no longer has protection.

On the contrary we have to think of this: Hellenism always works with Humanity. It doesn't only work with the country but with Time. He looks at what will remain. Because a significant characteristic we have and this is why we are robust, it is that, we have decided that we will also be here after. Those who have come to trespass us usually they have decided to be here but they fail on the 'after'. but in the 'after' it is us who are here. Again. So it means that we have entered in a space of resistance which is Time. And we say: 'When will they leave?' We are of the countdown. Every time someone conquers us, immediately we start counting in how long he will leave again. Yes. And we, because we are of slowness we count in centuries. I see that there are a lot of Greeks here. But anyway. Why do we count in centuries? Because what matters is the perennial and not the years. If you think that we managed to place in a parenthesis 400 years of occupation. Which people would dare to do this? We say: 'Ok fellows, it was occupation, it's over. And we continue. Do you know why? Do you know why? So, the other comes and even if he wants to stay for 400 years. We say: 'Look here you won't endure that long.' We have bureaucracy, we don't know exactly what we want, we don't know exactly what we want, Therefore, it would be good to start packing. and this is where we usually help him

so that he leaves a little faster. Because at some point we think, ok , it's enough. It is like : 'We've had it up to here'.

So a Greek has great robustness. Because he endures, because he counts in centuries, and because there are also the 'A thousand years' Why do you laugh? I don't understand. Haven't they ever wish you (to live) 'A thousand years'. And you know, as we live very slowly you don't dare wish 'to live a hundred years'. Someone is already 97 years old. So a thousand years, we say more or less, we 're close. What I want to tell you is this: This collective memory that we have is that which affects the given situation and it is interesting, as you know it usually, for us to know how good we are, we need to hear it from abroad. That is, if you take the Greeks because we were always very few, and the few (three) always protected the one and the one protected the few (three) because we didn't have any others we paid much attention to humanness a lot of attention to relations a lot of attention to the network a lot of attention to the fact that we have to be together and not only near. With diaspora, we managed to remain together while we were far away. While society proves that we can be near without being together. Many divorces. The Greeks don't get divorces, do you know why? Because they don't like yoke. They don't move like this (slightly bowing head). We have a problem. It's difficult for us to bow our head. It's difficult for us to bow our head. Never mind going down on the knees, that is another issue, it is too tiresome. So if we have to kneel down in front of someone who also tells us to do it. It gives us difficulties. And we say, at least, as you know since they played bouzouki for me. Why should I be a slave? We don't like enslavement and unfortunately we forget some concepts. We forget, let's say, that we have chosen as a motto. Liberty or death. As compromising solution there are better ones. What does it mean? It means that I don't accept anything else but the word 'liberty'. But some try to explain to us, that if we accommodate, if we compromise, it would be so and so. But we never did it like that, neither will we do it

We crossed antiquity, we continued with Byzantium we continued with the revolution. By the way I remind you that we haven't yet finished our liberation, because the point of liberation, as you know, depends from the point of initiation. The point of initiation, as you know was in 1453. So if you think that we count in centuries you need to understand that we haven't finished our job Now I see you are not smiling. Because you say 'I see where he is going with this.' So I remind you something: that the islands are fortresses just and only when they are connected. If you think now that the sea is a moat. Whoever doesn't know that the sea is a moat for an island, they live in a grave. Each time we make a castle, the first thing we do is put water around it. You have to be abnormal, since it is land. No! Since we know that which protects humans more, is that marine element. Or it brings difficulties.

The sea brings difficulties. Or it brings difficulties. The sea brings difficulties. I give you a very simple paradigm: If you walk on land, even if you are ignorant you will make it. When you are on the sea, even when you are smart it is difficult. So, if you think that Hellenism decided to build houses on ships. So our houses are our ships. We decided to build an entire civilization on the water. What could be stranger? If you think about it though, in essence, what did we do? We made a network before the internet. We don't know where we are exactly we are constantly moving, I remind you we have the No1

commercial fleet in the world. (Looking towards Manos) I didn't hear it earlier... Shouldn't we say that?...Yes we should say it. Of course the Greeks have it, not Greece. Which is somewhat different. So, remember that the Greeks are of Hellenism Greece, not always. Because we have occupations, what can we do. What matters is that if we are together, and if we continue this route diachronically.

Because of course we are only of the diachronic, we don't care if it is ephemeral. I remind you that we know that we are mortals. So, because we knew it, we didn't get into the process like the Persians, who had immortals. And I remind you that we even taught the Persians to die. Because we are mortals, we decided that we have to do something to remain so if you want, it is the paradox of how does the ephemeral can become eternal? Well the only way is to generate a work, which is diachronic. That is, generally from antiquity, you know nothing that is personal, not even from Byzantium, but we know the work. This work is what all these people managed to do, pushing towards the same direction, the evolution, in a polycyclic manner. Namely, about the same point, but never exactly the same. Many things look alike, but are always a little different. When they tell you that things look alike, immediately look at what they differ, otherwise they would tell you they are identical. As they differ somehow, the others say that they look alike.

History is alike to the story, but becomes history only when it reaches the stage of the myth. Earlier I heard interpretations of the myth, which weren't Greek. And it was obvious. For us the myth is very important, and is much more important than history. Because the myth is the substance of the history. While history, when it tries to become myth, on its own, it is only description. It is the difference between the newspaper and the book. Every day we make a newspaper, now of course there are some that make a blog, and every day that newspaper has expired. It is born with an expiration date. While you need many days, maybe weeks, even years to make one book. but which, will last for centuries. Because it wasn't made with an expiration date. It was only made with an initiation date. It needs more time, It needs more thought. It needs invention and robustness. Because that book has to remain. So the books, the icons, the great picture, the great books, the Bible, are items which we hold, we maintain them, because we know that this will be important. It won't be important only for us because we are already thinking of the unborn because we respect the dead.

We heard about 'filotimo'. It is right, it is right. I don't want you to change the name. But I would like to speak about 'value'. Because know Manos, that even if you have 'filotimo', in the end, when you die, if you have created a work with regards to 'filotimo', they won't say you were 'filotimos'. They will say 'worthy'. We are of Sparta when we express ourselves, we say only that word. You have to understand all the Greeks that are here, and I mean it in a sense of Hellenism. There are strangers too, don't think otherwise, because Hellenism always dealt with the strangers. It considers, the normal space of thought is Humanity and not a state. This is why, for those who worry if and when we'll have a normal state. Simply think that we never had a state, we don't have a state and we will never have a state. Because we are Greeks. So don't get into that way of thinking, reproduce the states of others to bring it here. We don't need it. We have centuries where we manage fine. Simply in Greece there is the expression 'Serious state'.

They say: 'A serious state'. Where in other countries they don't say 'serious or not', they simply say 'state'. It means that we even have this humor for centuries. Let's leave it as it is. It doesn't matter it belongs to societies.

What is important is what we leave for the subsequent. And we have to understand that in essence, even if we are here, we believe that we are a continuation, we believe that we are a link and we don't accept bounds. Link is different. It is when both have agreed to be together. We are of link, link with Time. What touches us it is that which remains, that which endures. It doesn't touch us that which is impressive, even when we see something impressive and ends. We say: 'Was that it?'. While when you see the fortresses, when you see the temples when the churches that they are admiring you at that moment as an ant compared to the centuries they exist. They say 'Look, he is here again'. Do you know what it is for a church which has almost 10 centuries to see you here again? And say 'Our people still speak the same language', when supposedly they don't speak Greek any longer. Because they say this to us. But remember this before I finish: Never in the history of Hellenism were there so many speaking Greek. Never in the history of Hellenism were there so many people speaking greek, never in history of Hellenism was there so much dissemination. And indeed never in the history of Hellenism was there some much grumbling.

So do remember we are grumblers but what is important is that we will continue to be grumblers, which means we will continue to still be here and afterwards. For all the others, we are always hospitable, as many as may come, up to a point. Then goodbye.

Thank you very much, be well.