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For a Humanitarian City! (Brochure)

Historical Note

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Content

For a humanitarian city!

The regeneration of the Nicosia of the inhabitants and not of the investors

Pompos gets in the taxi... 'To Time', he says to the taxi driver. After fifteen minutes of being stuck in the traffic, '12 euro,' he answers. He pays 20 euro at the entrance, sways for 2-3 hours to the music rhythms, reenters a taxi, pays again 12 euro. The next day, while watching the evening news, he complains about the immigrants and the problems of the Old City. At the same time, lying on the sofa, he raises his feet high so that his immigrant domestic housekeeper can scrub the table.

Lately, Old Nicosia has become the subject of many a discussion regarding the problems it's facing and the necessary regeneration. Still, most of these discussions merely scratch the surface instead of penetrating into the heart of the problems, and, as usual, they target the immigrants and the youngsters that hang out there. Recently the Old City is used by many people just for entertainment purposes, them not really caring about its welfare.

Mass entertainment centers have been created at the historic center and Old Nicosia is now a pole of attraction for investors. These investors do not care about the Old City's character, but just for profit. For them, the locals and everybody else that is active in the area are obstacles to their plans as these groups are mostly against the commercialization of their own neighborhoods. The immigrants are also an obstacle as, according to the investors' opinion, they harm the nice image that they themselves are supposedly creating. The Media, as the sponsor of communication in their game, and the police as the physical perpetrator, provide full assistance in the investors' attempt to overcome these 'obstacles'.

This inconsiderate development they aim for creates a myriad of problems:

- Piles of waste in the streets, especially on weekends
- Traffic, noise pollution and air pollution due to the multitude of cars that accumulate there. Danger originates for the pedestrians in the narrow alleyways, as well as parking problems for the locals that simply want to go home
- It contributes to the alteration of the traditional character of the area, e.g. the Popular Market at the Old Town Hall's

square which is forced to close earlier due to a recently-build amusement center.

Pompos, holding his juice, walks...in the streets of central Nicosia in midsummer. As the heat gets unbearable he finds shade under a tree, in the park next to Eleftheria's Square. He likes the trees' shade, as a matter of fact he voted in favour of the creation of green space at the referendum for the Old GSP Stadium. Looking around he thinks that the decision of the authorities for a regeneration of the square is really good and necessary. However, he is unaware of the real plans...

The regeneration plan of the square conjectures the cutting of the park's trees and the establishment of shops, the destruction of historical monuments and part of the Venetian wall that is situated there, and the construction of a huge, concrete airlift for cars. In the summer, with the absence of trees and the existence of so many tones of concrete, the situation will be insufferable. Trees make the air cooler and give life to the area; their presence is what makes a great square. We're wasting so much money in order to remove what is most precious there.

As for the business with the Old GSP Stadium, that has become another big joke. Despite the result of the referendum, calling for 'an open public space / a green space', the authorities had other plans; they decided the construction of a skyscraper in Dubai standards, which will be visible from the entrance of Nicosia at the 'Kalispera' traffic lights. Once again, the will of the investors outweighed the wish of the citizens. A possible green oasis has been sacrificed on the altar of money.

We support the people's direct involvement in the city's daily affairs. Through general meetings and direct democracy procedures a lot can be achieved. We demand referendums for every problem and topic that concerns us. We want to control our lives ourselves, not to see them controlled by the 'authorities' and the investors.

Suggestions for a more humanitarian city:

- The conservation of the traditional character of the Old City's houses. As many houses as possible to be restored, not only from the outside but also from the inside.
- The construction of more pedestrian roads and the installment of electric buses and bicycle stations at key points around the city. In this way the number of cars will decrease and there will be an impetus for the creation of a friendlier, to man and nature, environment.
- In addition to the pedestrian roads, various small squares can be created, at places that free at last from the 'occupation' of cars can now be used differently, promoting socializing and human contact.
- We support the city's regeneration provided that it protects the city's character, it is environmentally friendly and it takes into account the people and not profit.

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