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Η ταινία Les Témoins, είναι μια γρήγορη και (φαινομενικά) απλή ταινία. Το πρώτο χαρακτηριστικό, αυτό της ταχύτητας, γίνεται άμεσα εμφανές από το πρώτο κιάλας πλάνο της ταινίας, όταν μέσα σε λιγότερο από 3ο δευτερόλεπτα (δεν τα μέτρησα κιάλας, είναι απλώς μια εκτίμηση) περνούν από την οθόνη ο τίτλος και όλα τα ονόματα των ηθοποιών, πάνω από μια συγγραφέα (Emmanuelle Béart) η οποία δακτυλογραφεί και διορθώνει κείμενα μανιωδώς. Ο καταγιμιστικός αυτός ρυθμός συνεχίζεται στο σύνολο σχεδόν της ταινίας. Το δεύτερο χαρακτηριστικό, αυτό της απλότητας, έγκειται στο γεγονός πως τα γεγονότα της πλοκής, απογυμνωμένα από οποιαδήποτε ερμηνεία και τοποθετημένα απλώς σε μια σειρά, μπορούν να περιγραφούν εύκολα μέσα σε λιγότερες από 5 προτάσεις. Το γεγονός δε πως η ταινία παρουσιάζει μια κυκλική, επαναληπτική μορφή, επιταχύνει αυτή τη διαδικασία επιτρέποντας σε αυτόν που περιγράφει τα γεγονότα την προσθήκη στο τέλος της αφήγησής του της λυτρωτικής φράσης «... και ούτω καθεξής.» Έχω την αίσθηση όμως πως, πίσω από αυτά τα χαρακτηριστικά, υπάρχει κάτι παραπάνω...

Η απλότητα και ο τετριμμένος χαρακτήρας των γεγονότων ενισχύεται από τις επιλογές του σκηνοθέτη (André Téchiné) στην ανάπτυξη των χαρακτήρων. Οι τελευταίοι, μέσα από τους τρόπους και τα χαρακτηριστικά που τους έχει προσδώσει ο σκηνοθέτης, αποκτούν την μορφή καρικατούρων. Όσο κι αν αυτό ακούγεται υπερβολικό για μια ταινία που θεωρεί πως πατάει σε μια παράδοση ρεαλισμού (ίσως ιστορικού fiction), οι σημειολογικοί παραλληλισμοί είναι μάλλον καθαροί: ο ισχυρός αστυνομικός αντιμέτωπος με την σεξουαλικότητά του (ο Sami Bouajila σε μια εξαιρετική ερμηνεία), ο γιατρός σωτήρας των άλλων (και όχι του εαυτού του), ο ανέμελος και με δίψα για ζωή και εμπειρίες νέος, η αφιερωμένη στην καριέρα της αδερφή του και, τελικά, η απόμακρη και εγωκεντρική συγγραφέας. Είναι τέτοια η σύνθεση αυτής της συνάθροισης χαρακτήρων που η πλοκή, και η συμ-πλοκή μεταξύ τους, δεν μπορεί να ξεφύγει από μια προκαθορισμένη και ίσως χιλιοειπωμένη πορεία, μια ιστορία απιστίας, παράνομου και ανεκπλήρωτου έρωτα, θανάτου και εξιλέωσης. Το γεγονός δε πως η αφήγηση στην ταινία (από την φωνή της συγγραφέως, Emmanuelle Béart) δεν είναι ξεκάθαρο αν γίνεται λίγο διάστημα μετά τον χρόνο των ιδωμένων γεγονότων, ως ανάγνωση του βιβλίου που καθόλη τη διάρκεια της ταινίας γράφει, ή αν γίνεται σήμερα, εν έτη 2008, περίπου 20 χρόνια μετά τα γεγονότα, προσθέτουν σε αυτήν την ιστορία έναν χαρακτήρα διαχρονικό. Την μετατρέπουν σε ένα είδος τελετουργίας που ακολουθεί το ανθρωπινό είδος με τρόπο συνεπή και αναπόφευκτο, από τότε μέχρι σήμερα.

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Design as a process, yes, it could be considered as an act of visualizing your thoughts. However, I would describe this process more as sketching – the act of putting down on a piece of paper your thoughts in a visual way. Sketching is an excellent medium for externalizing tacit knowledge and shaping design ideas. It could be said that a sketch is nothing less than materialized thought. As such, it is an important part of the design process. But I wouldn't go thus far as describing design (as a whole) as thinking made visible (at least not design as the final product of a structured process). I think there is more to (any kind of) design than just visual thinking (e.g. considering user needs, framing a design problem, evaluating design solution spaces, analyzing/optimizing tasks, testing a final design's usability, etc.). And there should be.

I never thought of Greece as a non-homogeneous state. I think that political differences have always been more important in Greece than regional differences. Let's not forget that there was a civil war just 70 years ago (just after the end of German occupation). Even though the wounds of this conflict have been largely healed (especially during the days of prosperity in the 80s and 90s), there has always been a subtle, underground tension inside the Greek society with its origin rooted back in the days of the civil war. Unfortunately, the economic crisis has incited instincts that breed polarity and intolerance. The rise of the far-right in Greece is a strong example of how some things that have been collectively left behind, were in fact never truly forgotten.

One has only to compare a film by Fatih Akin (a Turkish film director) and Σωτήρης Γκορίτσας (Sotiris Goritsas, a Greek film director) to understand how close the Greek and Turkish people are when it comes to the way they cope with life, happiness, tragedy, and so on. We have been neighbours forever, and, apart from any differences that do exist and the conflicts that have occurred in the past (again, due to political failures and religious selfishness from both sides), we are closer than some might want to believe. I know that it's not always easy to see or accept that – especially nowadays with the rise of extremism in the Turkish (and Greek to some extent) political scene. Still, I strongly believe that the similarity of the two peoples is a fact that should be embraced rather than concealed. We have both to gain from this.

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Design as a process, yes, it could be considered as an act of visualizing your thoughts. However, I would describe this process more as sketching – the act of putting down on a piece of paper your thoughts in a visual way. Sketching is an excellent medium for externalizing tacit knowledge and shaping design ideas. It could be said that a sketch is nothing less than materialized thought. As such, it is an important part of the design process. But I wouldn't go thus far as describing design (as a whole) as thinking made visible (at least not design as the final product of a structured process). I think there is more to (any kind of) design than just visual thinking (e.g. considering user needs, framing a design problem, evaluating design solution spaces, analyzing/optimizing tasks, testing a final design's usability, etc.). And there should be.

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