

## Transcript of the Video

### Pierre Doumet

Hello, my name is Pierre Doumet and I'm a Mediterranean. Actually, I believe that my ancestors originated from one of the three city states on the far eastern shore of the Mediterranean. Tyre, Sidon or Byblos.

Those guys were traders and they traded all over the Mediterranean and they set up counters everywhere, but they weren't just that. It is said that they invented the simplified alphabet that allowed them to trade more effectively.

And if you look at some of the mythology, it's pretty interesting, for example, to focus on the two children of King Agenor of Tyre and his wife, Telephassa. Their kids were Cadmus and Europa. Cadmus was the first hero in Greek mythology, and he was the founder of the Greek city of Thebes.

He introduced the Phoenician alphabet to the Greek.

And what was he doing so far away from his homeland in Tyre? What was he doing in Thebes? What he was looking for his sister. His sister was called Europa, Europe from where Europe's name originated and his sister was seduced by no less than Zeus himself, transformed into a very tame white bull who took her away. So, everybody was looking for her. But actually, where they were where they had eloped was to the island of Crete. And there they had a child called King Minos and the Minoan civilization started right there.

So, between Cadmus, founder of Thebes and the foundation of the Minoans civilization and the name Europe are coming from a princess of Tyre. What we can see here is that the Mediterranean is a place where many civilizations have just been together, worked together or originated one from the other. And this is my purpose today to call for a little bit of this incredible richness of our cultural heritage. So, let's talk a bit about the next phase, ... I'd like to show the island of Sicily about 500 years before Christ.

You can see the map right there.

And on that map, you have an island divided between colonies from Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Greek and Ionians. So there, too, you have this incredible mix of civilizations. Let's go further. Let's go into about 100 hundred years after Christ.

We have the Roman Empire. We focus on the Mediterranean and the sea. The Mediterranean Sea is called by the mighty imperial or Mare Internum, or Mare Nostrum which is a great name. And we should all call the Mediterranean Mare Nostrum: Our Sea. My goal is to see this, that there is an incredible wealth, of cultural wealth in the Mediterranean and here we're talking. Not just of archaeology and history, of course, we should be focusing on all the other cultures of wealth like wine, olives and food, song, dance, theatre... all the rest. As a matter of fact, you hear a lot about the division of north and South North rich – South poor. Of course, I'm not concerned from the far eastern part of the region. But I would have to say that in the Mediterranean, we are all rich.

All of us are so rich with heritage and culture. And one more thing: nature. Nature, I don't know if we all are aware of that. And we are the third richest hotspot for plants in the world in the Mediterranean, 25000 species and one of the most important areas on earth for endemic plants and mammals: there are almost 300 species of mammals in the hotspot in the Mediterranean hotspot, 38 of which are terrestrial endemics birds, 534 species, 63 of which are endemic reptiles, amphibians, it goes on and on. So, let me say again, north and south, east and west, the Mediterranean is so incredibly rich, but unfortunately, it is on the verge of risking to become very poor because it might use it might be losing a lot of its cultural wealth, and more importantly, its natural wealth. There's a lot of species being extinct in the Mediterranean.

There's a lot of loss of habitat. And so, what can be done about that?

This is my purpose basically today is to discuss a little bit the Man and the Biosphere Program of UNESCO. Before I do that, I want to discuss another UNESCO program that's maybe even better known than the Man in Biosphere program is the World Heritage Sites Program. Now, that is where we take a very important site and the fence around it , or we put a wall around it and shut it down, and then we let people come and visit one by one and some nice concept and we preserve the site.

But does it really involve the people around? Does it bring them into the concept?

And here the Man and the Biosphere concept, which is about 50 years old, but I would say is more relevant even today than when it was invented. The man and biosphere put man humans in the middle of the conservation concept. It's a concept where we say we have to preserve nature and culture.

We have to do a lot of research to discover the incredibly rich richness and wealth that we have.

But we have to involve local human beings into activities that are remunerative, that are socially, economically useful to them, that can increase their standard of living. And of course, these have to be sustained over time. So, we call it sustainable development. Might be a word that's been overused, but that is the purpose to have the human being at the heart of conservation. So instead of having a protected area where we put like a box or a belt all over the place and we don't let people in and that's how we protect it, that's not the way we do know. What we have to do is a protecting area, an area that protects nature, protects the birds and the bees and the plants and the forest and the human beings, both the human beings living inside the area. And then they have a vested interest in continuing to protect. And those who visit all of these are inside of a protected area. And that's the Man and the Biosphere concept that I'm talking about. And that concept, I am working with an association called the Association for the Protection of Jabal Moussa, which is one of two very active biosphere reserves in Lebanon. And this is what we try to do.

Now, my purpose today was to discuss the Mediterranean. And so, I'll show you one more chart.

And that chart shows you something called the MedMAB, the Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves. And those biosphere reserves are linked into a cluster that's relatively recent. Previously, we had the AfriMAB , the ArabMAB , the EuroMAB and the IberoMAB and the Asian and Pacific MAB. Now, those are clusters that are started long years, many years ago, and that are forming this MedMAB and showing you is something that we started on an informal basis that we are trying to establish. And that would bring together the incredible cultural and natural wealth of the area into an organization or a sub organization or to at least a link between biosphere reserves that have a lot in common, culturally and naturally, as we already discussed, that hopefully as if you have a future in terms of both conservation and development.

Thank you very much for your attention. We will later talk about in a next video about what has been achieved or was being achieved or what is being tried to achieve in Lebanon in the local biosphere reserve. Thanks