

**URBAN LANDSCAPES OF SUSTAINABLE COEXISTENCE  
THE DIALECTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TIMELESS  
AND EPHEMERAL CHARACTER OF A PLACE**

DOI: 10.26341/issn.2241-4010-2025-4a-5-K02141

**Petratou-Fragkiadaki Smaragda**

*Architect Engineer, NTUA*

[smaragda.frag@gmail.com](mailto:smaragda.frag@gmail.com)

**Abstract**

*Usually, the term "sustainability" is related to the development of a place, with an ultimate goal the sustainability of that particular place.*

*In this case, we investigate **sustainability as the ability to withstand** the changes that arise in the cities' urban fabric, due to crises, violent and uncontrollable political, social and economic events (a war, a pandemic), natural or man-made environmental impacts, without excluding the ideology of the tourism industry as a driving economic force.*

*These changes and their effects concern both the material and the immaterial (psychological and symbolic) dimensions of the host places, as they are practically and experientially perceived by their permanent and occasional residents. We consider that these changes are related to the **Carrying Capacity of the Places and Landscapes**, resulted either from the settlement of refugees and immigrants around a first core, or from waves of tourists in buildings of the historic center, changing the original use. Therefore, the place acquires a **transit character** –a place of **temporary residence**.*

*The urban areas function as a "calm" & stable attractor, a limit cycle, the timeless limit of an archetypal urban landscape. The points of intersection, of the liminal circle, of a timeless urbanity, with the helical lines (arrivals and/or departures of immigrants, refugees, tourists), of an ephemeral residence, inside and outside the liminal circle, could illustrate the **dialectical relationship between the timeless and the ephemeral character of a place**.*

*These "reception enclaves" enable the exploration of spatial conditions for promoting communication and development through practices of lawfulness, justice and peace for the **sustainable coexistence of people**.*

**Key words:** *place, bearing capacity, attractor, timeless, ephemeral.*

**INTRODUCTION**

In the title of the present essay, "Urban Landscapes of Sustainable Coexistence," is understood as the presence of human beings in the same space for a specific period - a condition capable of developing relationships between them, which does not necessarily mean that those relationships are sustainable. We consider that the sustainability of a relationship **provides its members, beyond their survival, the ability to evolve or co-evolve**. Regarding the spatial level, the term "sustainability" is associated with the development of a place, aiming at the long-term sustainable development of that place.

In the subtitle, "The dialectical relationship between the timeless and ephemeral character of a Place," the question already arises concerning the **sustainability of coexistence** of permanent and occasional users of a place, both on physical and mental - psychological levels.

Therefore, as basic framework of this study we could set **"Sustainability as the ABILITY TO RESIST CHANGES that occur in existing spatial conditions, have a temporal duration, affect established ways of living, and are imprinted on urban tissue"** arising from:

- Unpredictable (uncontrollable and/or violent) events from exogenous factors.
- Natural and/or anthropogenic situations.
- Uncontrolled tourist development.

Despite the widespread opposite view that we live in a world of Euclidean regularity - a linear perception of cause and effect - we daily experience the consequences of multiple continuous changes, which make any certainty deceptive. Especially, when changes are large-scale and occur during periods of crisis, they leave a strong imprint on the structure and function of urban centers, as happened in Greece with the social, economic, political, and cultural crises of the last 20 years!

- The economic crisis, unemployment, poverty, and homelessness were imprinted in images of hopelessness, desolation, abandonment, and devaluation of the city itself.

- Due to unpredictable (uncontrollable and/or violent) events in their country, refugees and migrants were led to settle in some temporary structure (an open or closed shell) - a square or an initial core of residence.

- The excessive emphasis on tourism, the ease of "Airbnb," and the so-called "gentrification" - the "ennoblement" of buildings in the Historic Center and other urban areas<sup>9</sup> - created conditions for altering their physiognomy, oriented towards international aesthetic standards.

The impacts of these changes are imprinted both in material (measurable) and immaterial (psychological and symbolic) dimensions, as they are practically and experientially perceived by the regular/permanent or occasional users of the host places.

We argue that, under these conditions, the place loses its urban character and becomes a place of short or longer-term, but temporary stays and acquires transit characteristics - it becomes, now, a space of passage.

**A place of temporary stay is in complete contrast to urban areas** characterized by elements of stability, order, hierarchical organization, and measure, incorporating the condition of their founding act - **the initial conditions** - and functioning as a **"calm" stable attractor**, a limit circle, the timeless limit of an archetypal urban landscape.

The points of intersection of the limit cycle of a timeless urbanity with the spiral line on the attractor (arrivals and/or departures of migrants, refugees, tourists) of temporary stay, inside and outside the limit cycle, could illustrate the dialectical relationship between the timeless and ephemeral character of a place.

The usual patterns of thought, in unprecedented conditions of unusual events, recycle the problem by creating limit cycles at the same level, while shades of doubt and uncertainty created at the bifurcation point may provide the solution at a new level of reference - a completely new perception<sup>10</sup>. Therefore, we consider that the multiplicity of conditions **requires a non-linear approach**.

Through this non-linear perception, we will attempt to approach **"Sustainability" as a relationship of limit cycles**.

The terms we have already used to describe these two conditions mainly come from the scientific field of Chaos Theory, Fractal Geometry, and Quantum Physics - a space where the primary tool is the computer, and the method is repetition, the feedback.

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<sup>9</sup> Buildings, which with a change of use and the necessary architectural and aesthetic changes, become suitable as entertainment spaces and tourist accommodations.

<sup>10</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat (1991) «*The disturbed mirror*» ed. Katoptro

What is the relationship that this science of abstract fractal equations can have with the things we consider important in our world? Yet, the strange laws of Chaos are behind many (if not most) of these things: from weather prediction models and coastline measurements to the depiction of brain function, insect populations, and the tongue-twisters of children's games!

Even the origin and evolution of life itself are subject to the laws of chaos, which, however, create order, and that order disintegrates into chaos, and so on. Two aspects of the same Truth, whose **connecting link is Myth** and - for modern researchers - **the level of consciousness of the Observer**. A perspective that encourages researchers to shift "their attention from the quantitative features of dynamic systems to their qualitative properties."<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, the goal of this study is to establish **a theoretical framework**<sup>12</sup> for approaching the topic in terms of Modern Physics and Philosophy, to answer the question of whether and to what extent we can indeed attribute, by analogy, spatial changes resulting from the transformation of an urban place into a transit space to limit circle diagrams, and to what extent this change is imprinted on the urban landscape.

## THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

"Creation takes place in the blurred dividing line between Order and Chaos. It is the region of boundaries, where Dionysus lives as Zagreus - the face of Order - and as Bacchus - the face of chaotic frenzy."<sup>13</sup>

## THE ATTRACTORS

For scientists/researchers, a phenomenon or a system has Order if its changes are explained based on the "cause-effect" scheme and can be described by a differential equation. In a dynamically evolving system, which remains stable for some time, exhibiting a significant degree of Order, small changes at some critical point (of its evolution) can cause a large abrupt change - a discontinuity. An explosion, an earthquake, or a collapse from exceeding the breaking limit of structural materials, a critical population value for **the carrying (bearing) capacity**<sup>14</sup> of a place, which can rupture the social and urban tissue," and alter the expected outcome.

The mapping of an area or the recording of changes in graphical representations, in addition to geophysical and spatial planning information, can simultaneously indicate the "presence" of attractors<sup>15</sup>.

**An attractor (from the verb "to attract") is defined as a set of states towards which a system tends to evolve, starting from an (traceable or not) initial condition.** An attractor is a point or, depending on the scale, a structure, a place that attracts like a magnet, a movement, a state, or - by analogy - a behavior. Attraction to a point, in a primary condition of calm, presupposes a periodicity: the repetition of a movement, a state again and again.

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<sup>11</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat (1991) op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> We clarify that this presentation concerns a part of a broader, ongoing study reflected in the title and subtitle.

<sup>13</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat (1991) op. cit.

<sup>14</sup> Stefanou J, «*The Physiognomy of a Greek City*» NTUA - "The carrying capacity of a Place is its potential ability to cope with needs, requirements or pressures without affecting its cultural values, natural resources, and, in general, the possibility of its sustainability"

<sup>15</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat, (1991) op. cit.

A characteristic attractor is the pendulum, just as an attractor is a spatial system, e.g., a monument. If an additional push is applied to the pendulum (without friction) or, correspondingly, if the monument is charged - repeatedly - with mental-psychological energy and actions during anniversary ceremonies, then the movement is imprinted as a closed line perceived as a circle or ellipse in the **imaginary space of phases**<sup>16</sup> and is characterized as a limit circle, and the attractor -the pendulum or the monument - as a **limit cycle attractor**. (Fig. 1)

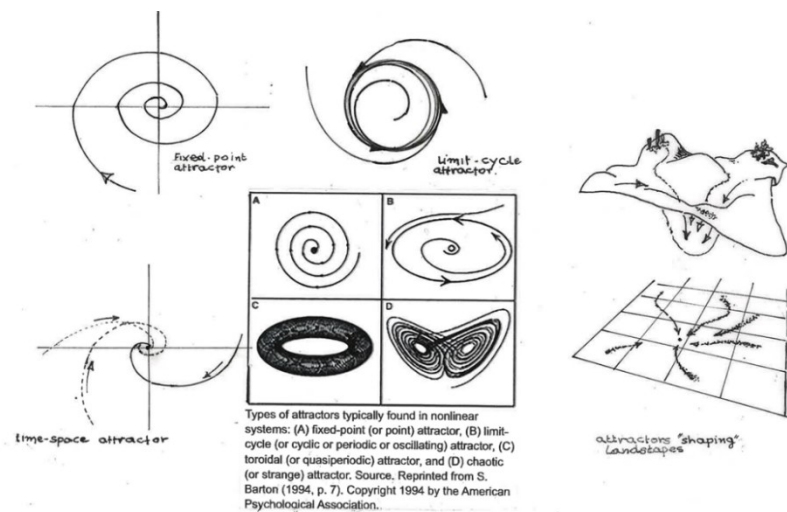


Fig. 1: Forming a limit cycle attractor (Drawings copied from the Greek edition of J. Briggs & F.D. Pit - book "The Terbulant mirror")

The diagram that emerges in cases of spatial attractors illustrates the **map of evolution - the landmarks and time marks of the system within a condition of space - time - behavior**.

However, since we refer to "normal conditions," friction forces act, and the pendulum's oscillation diminishes, and the pendulum comes to rest at point O (zero). Exactly this is the concept of the "attractor," this **strong point** that attracts one or more trajectories and is called a "**stable point attractor**."

A stable point attractor can equally refer to the mapping of more limit cycles that describe elastic boundaries and record events (of order or chaos) in some area of the urban tissue. A Sacred Place is a strong point attractor. Also, limit cycles are formed around some spatial element/reference point or from a use, or from a wider area of special interest, in various temporal phases or states of the system<sup>17</sup>.

The limit cycles formed at intervals of various temporal phases create relationships of **contact, coupling, superposition, intersection, etc.**, and imprint the **dynamic stability** of a calm development or a strong founding act or the change caused by a new – extreme - event that creates a new limit circle which disrupts the stability of the original one.

The stability of a system, achieved over time and having duration and order, already bears unstable states of dispersion and chaos. When a seemingly insignificant event ruptures the limit cycle, causing new circles that intersect the limit cycle and are simultaneously attracted by the original attractor. After some disturbances and repetitions, the system returns to an initial (almost) normality.

Considering that the way we perceive the results of changes depends on the observer's level of consciousness - if we wish to approach the concept of **the Attractor more**

<sup>16</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat, (1991) op. cit. **The phase space** is the recording, the graphical representation of the dynamics of changes—the ways in which a, naturally or violently changing, system moves and transforms. The phase space includes as many variables as required to describe the motion (position and velocity).

<sup>17</sup>We clarify that during the coupling of systems, some of them are linear (e.g., a significant landmark/monument). Their coupling with a non-linear system (e.g., arrival/departure of tourists) makes the whole NON-linear.

philosophically - we could consider that it pertains to the deeper purpose of our lives: What draws us towards a direction, our Virtue, what inspires us, suits us, what we ultimately ARE.

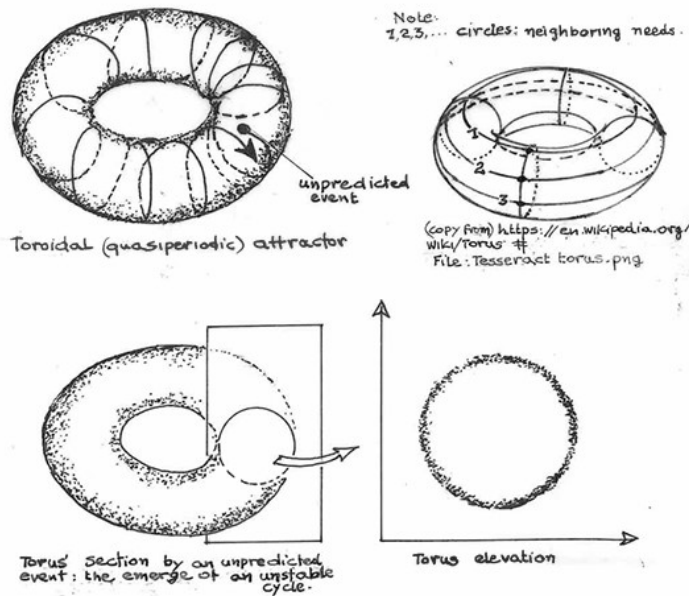


Fig. 2: Torodial & strange attractor (Drawings copied from the Greek edition of J. Briggs & F.D. Pit - book "The Turbulent mirror")

The phase space (where each "phase" is understood as a way of life and a state of space, time, and behavior, imprinted in a limit cycle), within which overlapping circles are mapped from the interaction of different systems around a point of attraction, creates a shape resembling a "donut", a "torus", which in turn transforms into a "toroidal attractor." (fig. 2)

If a new system "meets" the torus - either randomly or intentionally - even if we do not have sufficient information about it—"it will move spirally somewhere on the surface of the torus and will not wander randomly in the phase space... and the ends of its trajectory will

never coincide" (J. Briggs, F.D. Peat 1991, pp. 42-43).

Does this mean that this system will never be able to fully integrate into the torus system and synchronize with it?

Example:

**Victoria Square** functions as a strong attractor for the surrounding neighborhoods, and the torus formed by the **neighboring needs**<sup>18</sup> consists of overlapping limit cycles of mythological, historical, functional, administrative boundaries, etc., as well as elements of individual, collective, and overall perception of the place and the landscape. From these, a common boundary<sup>19</sup> emerges, a **calm, stable attractor** that imprints the character of the place and the physiognomy<sup>20</sup> of the broader area - the neighborhood.

If a section is made in the torus of a system (historically, spatially, temporally, psychologically, urbanistically, socio-politically, and culturally established) by an event that threatens and ultimately may shatter the existing structure of the attractor, then we are faced with a critical turning point of the **Carrying Capacity of the Place and, by extension, the landscape**.

"When instability - e.g., an economic crisis - reaches a critical point, the social system either collapses or transforms into a new state of dynamic stability. These critical 'turning points', the intersection that determines the cultural Carrying Capacity of societies, places, and landscapes, lead the dominant system to disintegration or - as Ervin Laszlo characterizes it -

<sup>18</sup>Petratou S. (1978), "The Neighborhood" NTUA, Chair of Urban Planning, Lecture - Neighboring needs are: Survival. Security. The familiar / Certainty. Education / Work. Identification. Projection. Communication. Transcendence: Religion and Art.

<sup>19</sup>Petratou S. (1979), "Looking for the Neighborhood in the Urban Environment" NTUA, Chair of Urban Planning, Diploma Thesis.

<sup>20</sup> Stefanou I. (1998) "The Physiognomy of the Greek City," NTUA, Laboratory of Urban Composition

to a phase of macro-transformation (change), where the system will be forced **to branch out, to bifurcate**<sup>21</sup> and either collapse or manage to fulfill its cultural role. (fig. 3)

Successive repetitions of events (e.g., the repeated "emptying" of refugees in Victoria Square in 2020, 2023) feed successive bifurcations towards chaos, which, however, **in the midst of a random fluctuation, appear as periods of stability and predictability, an archive -an almost "living" MEMORY** that, in non-linear complex systems of space -time - behavior, concerns:

- The primary point attractor, the founding act.
  - The initial limit circle, the archetypal circle.
  - The individual attractors that compose the system, the torus.
  - The **bifurcation points at the intersections of the torus** and the limit circle of the event.
- The emerging memory shows that in a system, the entire field of change, the inherent order, may be present.**

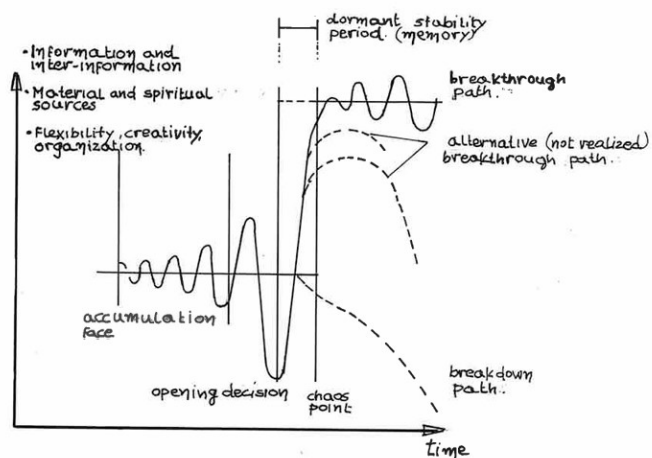


Fig. 3: Basic branching - bifurcation (Drawings copied from the Greek edition of Laslo's book "Quantum shift in the Global Brain", 2008)

We have already considered that an area, **the place of a neighborhood**, is a complex attractor of space, time, and behaviors, a torus that has emerged from **forms of relationships** with other accompanying limit cycles. If the torus intersects with the limit cycle of a random or intentional event (e.g., refugees in Victoria Square), the conditions for one or more branching are created, depending on which of the torus's limit cycles (e.g., "historical elements") the limit cycle or the event's spiral intersects. We observe that:

The event intersects the torus in the shape of an open circle, or ellipse, or spiral, and the points of intersection mainly **concern temporality, thus the enduring or ephemeral character of the results of the intersection - the transit element of the research**. It therefore intersects the limit circles that concern "daily" actions, such as residence, dining, movements, commerce, policing, relations with neighbors, etc. Simultaneously, the overall experience of the past, individual and collective, is transferred **to every present moment** and emerges in the dynamics of the new system! (see fig. 2)

## SELF - SIMILARITY - SELF-REFERENCE

Understanding **the memory** inherent in the process of change leads us to investigate two strange - almost metaphysical - concepts that originate from Chaos Theory and Fractal mathematics. These are **Self-Similarity and Self-Reference**<sup>22</sup>.

**Self-Similarity** is defined as the ability to "see the image of the whole in a region, in a part of it", a property of Fractals, which could analogically be transferred to the field under

<sup>21</sup> From chat GPT online site. The term bifurcation is used to describe the point where a system suddenly changes behavior, as if branching into new states. This usually happens when a parameter of the system passes a critical point. Then a "change of course" occurs. We consider that the idea of bifurcation (branching) can be better symbolized by the Greek letter "Y" - a mystic sign of the Orphic - Pythagorean philosophy.

<sup>22</sup> Basios V. and Adamopoulos I. (1992), "Introduction to the World of Fractals," 2nd edition, ed. Anubis and Cleick J. (1990), "Chaos, A New Science" ed. Katoptro.

investigation. The word itself means "similar to itself" and could be traced back to the analogous similarity to the **Archetypal Idea of Platonic philosophy** or - based on Chaos Theory - to **the detection of the system's unique characteristics in its initial conditions.**

Therefore, the change resulting from any section of the torus by the limit cycle of the event now concerns the overall and collective perception that could emerge from the **image of a complex landscape - a new condition of space, time, and behaviors.**

In direct correlation with self-similarity is Self-Reference, a concept based on the repetitiveness of a process that is perceived at small, even very small scales. Where repetition (or feedback) involves the continuous feedback (and folding of results) of the initial system.

Self-Reference, which is lost behind the glamour of self-similarity, lies at the root of the most unexpected everyday applications and situations. We could call it **"Repetitive Magic"**<sup>23</sup> as it appears almost everywhere:



Fig. 4: Cycladic clay pan-shaped

- In weather systems.
- In the toilet flush, the flutter.
- In phrases - tongue twisters.
- In the froth of Greek coffee.
- In Cycladic clay pan-shaped vessels. (fig. 4)
- In the prayer of the hesychasts of Mount Athos, in the mantras of the Hindus, in the koans of Zen Buddhism.

**Mainly, however, Self-Reference appears in Mythology: where every tragedy requires "imitation of a serious and complete action" again and again until the heroes are led to the "catharsis of these passions."**

And in Oedipus, the question is posed again and again: "What is human

being?"

Self-Similarity and Self-Reference show us the **change of a system that owes its stability, not to some permanent or static quantity, but to a dynamic, circulating quality or to some repetitive process that aims at the transition from one state to another.**

## TIME AND THE LOST INFORMATION

We often perceive that "the game is played in the cracks." Symbolically, this is where **"lost information"**<sup>24</sup> escapes – those subtle, imperceptible clues about initial conditions. In reality, the information is "lost" from the framework of my space and time, that is, **the way I feel and think each time, the way I try to represent the (my) World.** Alternatively, to be more specific, information is not "lost", but "camouflaged," remaining visible in **the energetic ocean of the Aether**<sup>25</sup> (per the Orphics, Pherecydes, Pythagoras) or the **Akashic Field**<sup>26</sup> (per

<sup>23</sup> J.Briggs, F.D. Peat (1991), op. cit.

<sup>24</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat (1991), op. cit. and Cleick J. (1990), op. cit.

<sup>25</sup> Petratou-Fragkiadaki S. (2013), "Therapeutic Places", Sustainable Development Journal: Culture-Traditions, vol.1, "The world, filled with forms, is structured through the coexistence, interaction, and analogous blending of four elements: earth, water, air, fire, and a fifth - the Aether. Every form's manifestation from its Ideal concept to its realization (materialization) level, requires the presents of an activating element, that vitalizes and correlates forms to each other, an etheric "substance": Aether is the shining air. The very element that philosopher Pherecydes describes as a dynamic field of the Wholeness. This energetic element vitalizes matter and correlates forms across material, psychic/intellectual, and spiritual levels, given that 'every form contains part of all other forms'."

<sup>26</sup> Dr. Laszlo Ervin, (2006). "The New Science and the Akashic Field", Archetype Publ. - "The Akashic Field: The concept that information exists throughout nature... is new to Western science. It recognizes information not as abstract but as 'inter-information' with its own reality. Since it permeates nature, we should conceptualize it as an extended field." (p.67)

Taoism, Zen Buddhism, and modern physicists like Ervin Laszlo and Fritjof Capra). It emerges as a THOUGHT from this ocean of information.

"Thoughts don't just unfold as causal chains but arise from the information ocean as self-organizing potentials", but they emerge from the ocean of information as requested for self-organized order.

**Could this be a path to observer self-knowledge?**

Even city development stems from self-organized structures, where **all growth information pre-exists in the Place's Aetheric Field**. Among permanent/temporary residents (refugees, migrants, tourists) in a city's torus, seemingly random behaviors reveal:

"The concept of communication/information is deeply tied to how random behavior leads to complex feedback coupling and spontaneous order<sup>27</sup>".

Thus, information about a Place's founding (initial conditions) and evolution connects to random/intentional user behaviors, mentally – psychologically coupled with **the Place's temporal continuum**.

"Time isn't 'something'... it only exists as a mental human construct. Time is a sensation and concept: It is a Human Time" (Tabakis 2012).

It is the time for **Maturity of Conditions** required.

## THE PHYSIOGNOMY OF A PLACE: THE PART IS THE WHOLE

Despite the fact that modern physics deals with abstract conditions of space and time, we believe that we can proceed with an analogous application at the level of neighborhood / broader area / city and approach **the changes in the landscape of the "strange attractor" in terms of "place physiognomy"** as established by J. Stefanou, of **the Place considered as an ENTITY**<sup>28</sup>. We refer to the changes that occur in the urban tissue of cities and their impacts, which concern both the material and immaterial (psychological and symbolic) dimensions / properties of host places that acquire a **transit character** - becoming spaces of passage and/or temporary stay.

We will therefore seek the **changes in spatial forms**, as they are evolutionarily imprinted, **through the recording of ways of appropriating space**, both by permanent and occasional users in the various phases of changes (time and condition).

We have already mentioned how vital it is for a system to have periods of stability where MEMORY is involved, which originated from a critical event in a place, at a nodal point. Then, the system is forced to branch out, and either it will collapse (if it does not have sufficient energy), **or it will adapt to a new cultural role**.

The bifurcation points are **landmarks (time marks and place marks)** in the evolution of a system and crystallize its history: they determine **the RELATION** between the elements of the system and the events of the branching and **give the place a psychological and material shape**. The perception of this shape, this form, this image is the landscape.

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<sup>27</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat. (1991) op. cit.

<sup>28</sup> Stefanou J. (1998) op. cit. – "As a Place, it is understood as an open system of elements of space, time, and behaviors, which concern individual or collective expressions and are observed in action, movement, or stance. The specific—experientially—space is constituted by the set of unique characteristics of the forms that fill it and give it the substance of being. And the place as BEING has a physiognomy. **The Physiognomy** concerns the uniqueness, the identity—the personality—ultimately, of a place, as **it is formulated and manifested through the characteristics of its landscape.**"

Benoit Mandelbrot, wanting to emphasize **the role of the observer as consciousness and as position**, introduced qualitative measures (magnitudes), the "**active dimensions**"<sup>29</sup> of dynamic systems versus quantitative magnitudes. We believe that the analogy holds for all scales, from a piece of furniture to a city, through the repetition of **a module**, a measure<sup>30</sup> - the human as body and spirit, or a simple geometric ratio of (meta)formation, or a structural model. What is the module: We consider it the initial condition, the cause, the analogy, the absolutely necessary, the Archetype, the Logos of Existence.

In anonymous traditional settlements, it was a **minimal structural unit**, the hut, the single-room dwelling - a prototype, the repetition of which - based on a free synthetic principle - gave complex forms of buildings and residential complexes, functionally and aesthetically uncompromised, from the microscopic (e.g., the traditional oven) to the macroscopic scale (e.g., the entire settlement). Everything bears the unique characteristics of its synthetic minimal module, emphatically confirming that: **THE PART IS THE WHOLE** and the physiognomy of the Place is imprinted everywhere!

## THE INTER-INFORMATION

Like other sacred stones, the Omphalos of Delphi was symbolically depicted on a marble phallic column, on the surface of which spreads the "**argenon**"<sup>31</sup> a relief complex of threads and knots. The argenon was also the mantle that the oracle wore.

Or, to use terms from modern Physics, the argenon could be considered a (quantum) **dynamic field**, an environment, where any change in a knot or thread, no matter how insignificant, "informs" and affects all the others. In other words, behind "reality," as we perceive it, there is not only matter and energy but also a more subtle, yet equally fundamental factor: the "formative information" or "**inter-information.**" This dynamic, diachronic, and inter-place information, Archetypes, and Symbols constitute the background of communication among peoples and cultures. They are the decorative patterns that adorn the Sanctuaries and Altars of the Celts, dating back to the Stone Age, as well as the spirals on the clay pan-shaped vessels of Cyclades.

According to Jung, these patterns are Archetypes - universal structures in the collective unconscious of Humanity - **the deep wisdom of our common language.**

"Some images and ideas - universal symbols and archetypes - appear and reappear in the culture of all civilizations, modern and ancient, regardless of whether their peoples communicated or even knew of each other's existence" (Laszlo, 2006, p. 50).

**But what is inter-information**<sup>32</sup>?

"It is a subtle, semi-instantaneous, non-transient, and non-energetic **connection between things located in different positions in space and events occurring at different moments in time.** Such connections are called 'non-local' in the physical sciences and 'interpersonal' in consciousness research. This formative information is not information in the scientific or current definition of the term. 'Active information - in the sense of knowledge about things and events - can be transmitted through inter-information' (Laszlo, 2006, p. 67), **in a vacuum,**

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<sup>29</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat, (1991) op. cit. - Benoit Mandelbrot believes that the dimensions of an object depend on the RELATIONSHIP between the object and the observer. E.g., what dimension does a ball of yarn have? Zero? Three-dimensional? One-dimensional? Flat? Multi-dimensional?

<sup>30</sup> Michelis, P. (1973). "*Architecture as Art*", ed., Panagiotis and Efi Michelis Foundation, 4th ed. "The judgment of every architectural work is based on three measures: the external, which defines the scale of the work, the internal, which defines its rule, and the absolute, which defines its reason".

<sup>31</sup> Encyclopedia "*Papyros-Larous-Britannica*" entry argenon or argenon. R. agra > pursuit / capture of prey / pursuit / persistent search > Zagreus Dionysus.

<sup>32</sup> Dr. Laszlo, Ervin (2006). "*The New Science and the Akashic Field*," ed. Archetype.

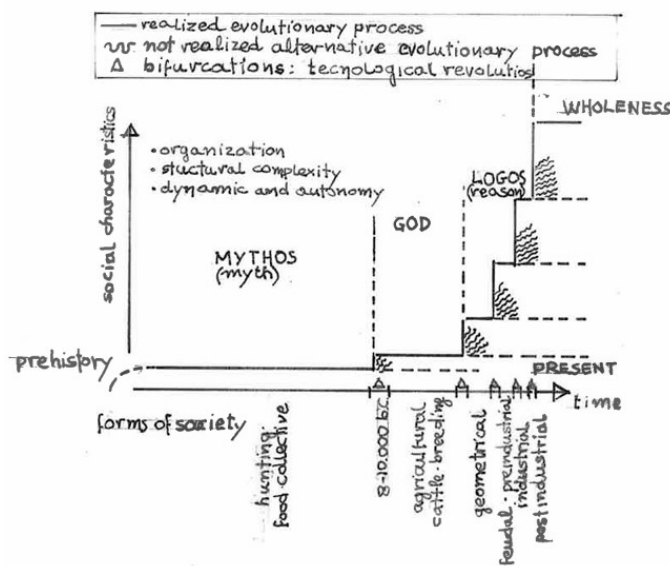


Fig. 5: Main cultural characteristics of old civilizations and the challenge of a new culture able to lead towards a universal civilization (Drawings copied from the Greek edition of Laslo's book "Quantum shift in the Global Brain", 2008)

a dynamic physical void, the Quantum Void, which is essentially a Cosmic Fullness, the amorphous "Aetheras" of Pherecydes, the matrix of all Forms, the Platonic Chora: The Quantum Field<sup>33</sup>. And in consciousness research, we perceive inter-information as 'transference,' as 'sensibility,' as 'receptivity'.

However, although **the world exists because there is coherence** (and not necessarily "logical" consistency and temporal "sequence"), **evolution occurs mainly thanks to synchronicity**. Events that do not seem to have a causal relationship appear and contribute to the bifurcation points, where, although the relationship has been forgotten they essentially embody the primordial memory of

their creation in the traces from the initial conditions - **the Root of Coincidence: Being and Becoming**.

By analogy, concerning human groups, societies, cultures, their evolution, more than from violent competition, emerged from **cooperation and the way they self-organize and mature as cultures and CO-EVOLVE** <sup>34</sup>. (fig. 5)

Could we, perhaps, claim something similar for **the different cultures/backgrounds of events** that fix their phases - their time marks - within the framework of the material reality of a (peaceful or violent) temporary installation/integration, in a reception enclaves? We believe that a process of coexistence/integration is already imprinted (as intention and as possibility) in the Aetheric field, as a synchronization of vibrations - the unique oscillation of the individual systems.

We refer, on the one hand, to the Aetheric of the Place (of reception), as it is shaped by its natural and anthropogenic elements, the mythology and historical events that have marked it, the works of its inhabitants, and the thoughts, emotions, and dreams with which people invest this Place.

And on the other hand, to the individual and collective Aetheric of the temporary visitors, which is disturbed by the anxiety of survival and the fear of the unknown or the expectation of "live your Myth" and collides or simply meets with the Aetheric of the Place.

<sup>33</sup> Capra, Fritjof, (1982). "The Tao and Physics," ed. Aurora. - The quantum field is recognized as a fundamental physical entity. A continuous medium that is present everywhere within space, where particles (of matter) are considered as local concentrations of the field, accumulations of energy, which from a certain point onwards lose their "personal" character and dissolve into the unified and omnipresent field. Einstein says about this: "Thus we are forced to consider matter as a composition of regions of space where the field appears with a particular intensity... In this new kind of physics, there is no place for the field and matter. The only reality is the field."

<sup>34</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat, (1991). op. cit.

## THE APPROPRIATION OF SPACE

Henri Lefebvre, in his seminal work "The Right to the City," focuses his attention **on relational approaches to diversity**<sup>35</sup>. Where, as agents of change in the urban pattern, he sees not only the working class but also migrants (in this case, also the refugees), who, through elementary, even, practices of transformation and appropriation of space, attempt to confront their alienation from it, with the hope of an expanded perception of social justice that recognizes the right to preserve their ethno-cultural differences. Is this right - the philosophical stake of Henri Lefebvre - a characteristic of a transit place?

"Genuine urbanity, the essential society of the city, is a society of continuous construction of otherness, a struggle between the potential and the existing, imagination and daily routine, through practices of space appropriation and forms of (self)management (of material and intangible resources)<sup>36</sup>."

A potential possibility of "BELONGING."

The temporary presence of migrants/refugees in public spaces constitutes the cornerstone of their survival within the urban tissue. The public character of a square makes it a fundamental place that functions as a survival refuge and a space of self-protection - especially under conditions of homelessness<sup>37</sup>. **And despite the lack or prohibition of access to rights and goods, the way they appropriate the space makes the square a creator of new social dynamics.**

Therefore, by giving more emphasis on human activities and not on reactions to environmental stimuli, the understanding of the environment's impact is achieved by highlighting the processes that occur "through" the individual - the distinction between the natural and psychological views of reality. Just as in physics, the natural or anthropogenic environment, a discrete element of spatial dimension, **a quantum of space**, is always present<sup>38</sup>. We believe that we can correlate the quanta of space with the active dimensions of a minimal structural unit - **a repeated module**.

Example: a quantum of space in Victoria Square could be a bench! Potentially, then, spaces - the environment, are considered as primary elements for understanding the actions that people "place" in it: the setting of a role, rules, and codes.

The use of space by individuals or groups means that (mainly permanent users) through codes of common perceptual systems and similar experiences - "stable space codes" - **have some sense of the prototype of activities** which, as expected actions/behaviors, are anticipated in this place.

Therefore, the way the environment is perceived and the use of space by occasional users, even if it gives it a transit character, presupposes the establishment of some behavioral rules, aiming at temporary or occasional **harmonious coexistence**, which is influenced by the roles that, intentionally or inductively, both permanent and occasional users serve in this place.

In conclusion, public spaces (streets, squares, designed communal spaces, groves, etc.) are transformed, changed, and evolved by the action and presence of "**strangers**", but also by the dynamics that arise from their relationship with the local society, determining the terms of inclusion in the urban fabric and the life of the city: a difficult and sometimes catalytic process. An extreme, perhaps, example, but indicative of the catalysis of the urbanity<sup>39</sup>. of

<sup>35</sup> Arapoglou, V. (2013) "*Theory Travels to Cities*." - European Urban and Regional Studies.

<sup>36</sup> In parentheses, the interpretation of the author.

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.lifo.gr>, Ervin Sehu "*The Migrant in the Square*" article, LIFO 20/04/2023.

<sup>38</sup> Canter, D.,(1988). "*Environmental Psychology*," ed. University Studio Press.

<sup>39</sup> Petratou-Fragkiadaki S. (2019), "*Exploring the Natural and Anthropogenic Conditions of Maturation of the Three Great Civilizations of Syros*", 9<sup>th</sup> Interuniversity Seminar on Sustainable Development of Culture and Tradition. Syros Institute.

Victoria Square is the "installation" of the refugees under unimaginable living conditions: sometimes the planting beds were turned into toilets.

How do we define "urbanity":

**Urbanity is the unique characteristic of the Urban Landscape, which is imprinted in the Mythical Analogy, the Logical Consistency, and the Internal Harmony and Order of the Place - the City.**

**It is detected**

- In the Name, the Monuments, and the History of the city.
- In the coherence of structures and the continuity of the urban fabric, i.e., in the existence of networks.
- In the positions, scales, sizes of forms (open and closed shells) and their interconnections, which shape natural, functional, cultural, psychological, and mental boundaries and limit circles.
- In the accesses, movements, distances.
- In the city center (core) and the individual centralities and their radii of influence.
- In the landmarks, time marks, and events, as well as the happenings in the present.
- In the hidden dimensions of the city - of the Place, the materials, the smells, the tastes, and the sounds.
- In the totality, the fullness, and the dynamic of change of a living organism.
- In the realization of Self-Similarity and Self-Reference of the whole to the initial condition, the Archetypal Module.
- In the functional coverage of the Needs of the user, at the level of Justice, Goodness, Beauty, in other words, at the level of culture.

**It is recognized** in other formal units - individual landscapes.

**It creates relationships** of coupling or disjunction with the individual landscapes, with the broader natural environment, with other forms of use.

As an example, we would say that the urban character of Victoria Square<sup>40</sup> is imprinted

- In the name and historical elements, in its location - a strong landmark of the urban tissue - and its relationship with the nearest significant landmarks and their radii of influence.
- In its quintessential unique characteristic of recreation/entertainment, surrounded by coupled forms of use (residence, education, dining, commerce, etc.) and the limit cycles of their functions.
- In the neoclassical buildings and the buildings of notable architecture that frame it and in the design of the square, whose significance is reinforced by the significant sculptural complex "Theseus Rescuing Hippodameia."

All these make Victoria Square an urban landscape with elements of romanticism, characterized by the participation in the form of this place of a series of **psychometric magnitudes**<sup>41</sup> (such as the force of imposition, recognizability, the possibility of orientation) which are carried as denotes in specific forms and functions of the square and **determine the degree of space appropriation** by the permanent users: (fig. 6)

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<sup>40</sup> [https://el.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Victoria\\_Square\\_\(Athens\)&oldid=10518999](https://el.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Victoria_Square_(Athens)&oldid=10518999)

<sup>41</sup>Stefanou, J. (1984), "Notes on Urban Composition – Urban Approach," NTUA Chair of Urban Planning A'.



Fig. 6: Victoria square  
The Statue of Theseas  
rescuing Hypodamia



The Refuges ('20-'23)



This place **holds a position** (ideological, mental - psychological, metric) within the urban tissue of Athens. What happens when it is transformed into a transit space?

But what about the occasional users of a reception enclaves - the square, in this case? Seeking "a place in the Sun" and, perhaps not a site in the place? **How is their relationship with the Place determined? In what way can a degree of space appropriation be achieved** in unbalanced living conditions, in a state of uncertainty and expectation, under conditions of space, time, and behavior pressure, within a framework of limited freedom?

The physiognomy of a Place - an entity - is expressed through the characteristics of its landscape and is specified as a formal unit, articulating an aesthetic judgment.

**Given that the physiognomy of a Place is a fundamental cultural value, we believe that its preservation pertains to the Carrying Capacity of that Place**, in terms of utility, suitability, significance, connection with other forms and uses, organization, and order, both in terms of utility and temporality. The question arises as to how the physiognomy of a Place is affected when, for some (limited or longer) period of time, it acquires transit characteristics.

In this context, reception enclaves (as islands) may be indicative of their carrying capacity, especially with emphasis on the temporality that derives from the differentiation of the characteristics of a place that, for some time, acquires a transit use - it acquires a transit property.

"The Carrying Capacity of a Place at the physical level is quantitative and measurable. However, concerning the ideological and psychological level, any counter-text (human presence, natural or anthropogenized elements, or constructions) placed in an area - a Place, changes the Carrying Capacity because it changes the conditions for the development of the Myth, which is usually interwoven with the Place," says J. Stefanou<sup>42</sup>.

And such an intervention (placement) obviously differentiates the initial formal unity, which could be a torus of properties, a set of limit cycles of functions, forms, and uses. The presence of a limit cycle arising from an event of a "foreign" element intersects the torus, creating relationships of analogy, coupling, or disjunction, coordination, and finding a rhythm of coexistence through the **maturation of conditions of ethical, logical, and emotional order.** (fig. 7,8,9)

<sup>42</sup>Stefanou, J. (2004), "Anthropological Approaches to the City" Postgraduate Program, Winter Semester. "The development of a Place aiming at its sustainability (and its evolution at the level of collective consciousness) is **related to the teleological substance of space** (the initial condition), **which determines the Carrying Capacity**—the Response of the Place to the Receptivity of the users," says Joseph Stefanou. (8/11/2004. Notes from the lecture and the parentheses, by the author).



Fig. 7: The neighborhood around Victoria square. Kids, 11y.o. (Petratou S. (1979) "Searching for the Neighborhood in the Urban Environment" NTUA, Department of Urban Planning, thesis)



Fig. 8: The neighborhood around Victoria square. Girls, 15y.o. (Petratou S. (1979) "Searching for the Neighborhood in the Urban Environment" NTUA, Department of Urban Planning, thesis)



Fig. 9: The neighborhood around Victoria square. Adults (Petratou S. (1979) "Searching for the Neighborhood in the Urban Environment" NTUA, Department of Urban Planning, thesis)

Interventions arising from a perhaps completely different cultural condition could be assimilated through neighboring relationships in an effort to find **a commonly accepted way of appropriating space<sup>43</sup> and a sustainable rhythm of life**, in which time has the first say, because "people and societies seem to be 'nailed' to a very different sense of time" than that of clock time<sup>44</sup>.

In our view, the coordination of these different systems is a matter of synchronicity<sup>45</sup>: when events that occur simultaneously or almost simultaneously and seem to be experientially, meaningfully, or symbolically related to each other converge in a specific place, without any causal relationship." But how?

The answer, we argue, lies in the transformation that occurs when a random behavior becomes collective. When, that is, a strong Need arises, such as that of Neighboring. Here, my

<sup>43</sup> Stefanou J. (1984), "Notes on Urban Composition – Urban Approach," NTUA Chair of Urban Planning A'.

<sup>44</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat op. cit.

<sup>45</sup> Term introduced by C.G. Jung

place - the "unfamiliar" for the refugee, the migrant, the tourist - becomes OUR PLACE, and my time - the difficult time of the other - becomes OUR TIME, the chronical we will write together. **When a psycho-intellectual and practical approach is achieved so that the ephemeral and the enduring meet dialectically and are experienced individually and collectively, then chaos transforms into a sustainable OPPORTUNITY, and the urban landscape of the reception pocket acquires a new aesthetic character.**

## THE MATURITY OF CONDITIONS

This practical and mental - psychological approach means a mature, open communication between permanent and temporary residents, a maturation of coexistence conditions with terms of Justice (Dike), Good Governance (Eunomia), Peace - names of the Hours<sup>46</sup> of the deities who oversee human works.

**Dike (Justice).** It is Justice, the higher moral order, the evaluation of individual and collective actions. Above all, it is the right to life, not only as survival but as the possibility of transcendence. It is expressed through mutual respect for the rights of permanent and temporary residents entry Horai < hora – hours The Horai in Mythology. Daughters of Zeus and Themis, goddess of justice, Deities of moral order, protectors of the hours, seasons, the maturity of fruits, the beauty of Nature. Their responsibilities included guarding the Gates of Heaven and Olympus, but also the Gates of Hades. They impose justice and equality among people, but mainly they are responsible for overseeing human works.

**Eunomia (Good Governance).** It is legality, good governance, alignment with the natural law, coordination with the Aetheric field of the place. It is integration into the existing social framework. Respect and preservation of customs, traditions, and elements of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

**Peace.** To live without violence, without haste, following the rhythm that arises from trust in the vibration of the present moment, the condition of coexistence of all these people. It is the deep sense of security and certainty that good neighboring within reception pockets could ensure.

A conscious - social networking that practically, mentally-psychologically, symbolically, and spiritually creates structures at the level of neighborhood, broader area, city. A network - a mantle of protection and inter-information. However difficult it may seem to understand this in the scales and times of everyday life, we live in a world of imperceptible indeterminacy, where the observer's level of consciousness plays a major role in its perception.

Einstein<sup>47</sup> had said that "space and time are not absolute conditions" to conclude that "within the 'material frameworks,' each 'observer' defines - individually and collectively - their own place and time." Their own place and era. And we have already mentioned that the time during which an event unfolds seems to have greater significance than the spatial framework. We could refer to something similar for the different cultures/backgrounds of events that fix their phases, their time marks within the framework of material reality - the reception pockets in this case. The process of coexistence/integration, we believe, is imprinted, potentially outside place and time, in the Aetheric field as a synchronization of vibrations - the unique oscillation of the individual systems.

If we project the points of intersection or interaction of the limit circles of two or more systems into two or more different frames of reference, we approach what Arthur Koestler, in

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<sup>46</sup> Petratou-Fragkiadaki Smaragda "Exploring the natural and anthropogenic conditions of maturation of the three great civilizations of Syros" Syros Institute, 11th Seminar

<sup>47</sup> J. Briggs, F.D. Peat op. cit.

his classic work "The Act of Creation," characterizes as "bisociation"<sup>48</sup>. Under the influence of an insignificant event or "a lost piece of information," the line formed by these points, as part of a new limit circle, branches out as a new way of thinking<sup>49</sup> at a new level of reference, where an identical and simultaneously different landscape is mapped. (Fig. 10)

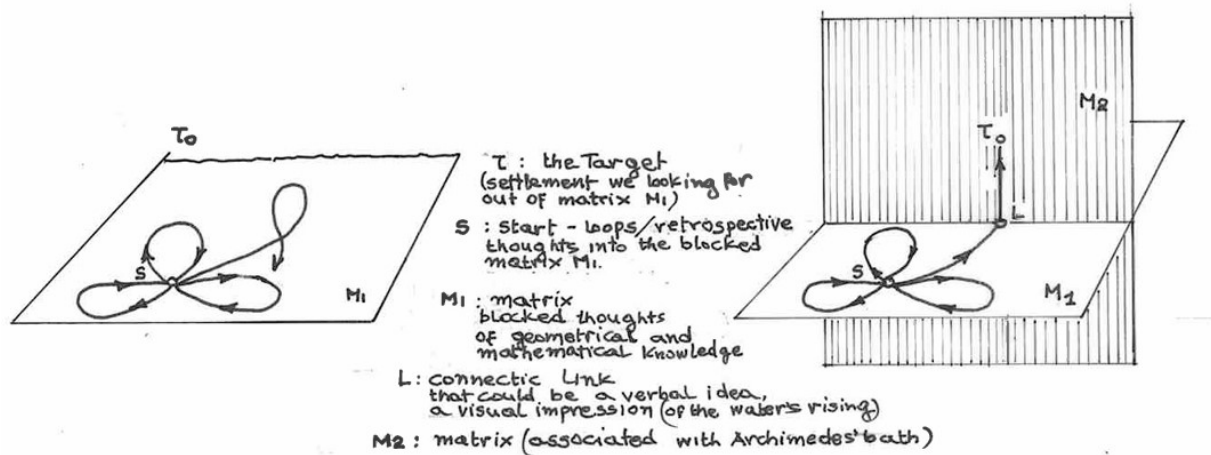


Fig. 10: The mechanism of bisociation

Taking as a model the event that made Archimedes exclaim "Eureka!" Arthur Koestler writes: "It has been said that a new idea, a discovery consists in the revelation of an analogy that no one else had seen before." A discovery breaks down the rigid patterns of a mental structure to achieve a new synthesis. A blocked access to the goal, and every thought revolves around it - returns again and again to the starting point.

In the case of the coupling of two levels of reference<sup>50</sup> - bisociation of two matrices, as Koestler calls it - the process that led to the formulation of his principle is analyzed: Archimedes knew from the beginning that when immersed in his bath, the water level rises accordingly, yet, until then, he had not consciously formulated it within himself.

The bisociation resulted in the discovery of the hidden rules governing the two different systems (matrices) concerning the "golden crown" system and the "bath, water level rise" system or "the lost information". Luck, insight, and the sudden illumination of a long unconscious process provided the connecting link created by the line of the limit circle that "escaped" from the pull of feedback to meet a completely different matrix, which "falls" vertically onto the blocked problem of the horizontal plane. Just as the hand that repeats the line again and again in the same shape gives the "solution" to the architectural design!

<sup>48</sup> Koestler Arthur "The act of creation," ed. Chatzinikoli 1976

<sup>49</sup> Petratou-Fragkiadaki S. (2019), "From Hermes, to Hermou" Syros Institute (SDCT journal, vol.1A 2019)

<sup>50</sup> simplified for understanding

Extremely successful examples of dialectical coexistence (inter-information and bisociation) are the large thematic GRAFFITI<sup>51</sup>, where a work of Ephemeral Art dialogues with the large blind walls of old apartment buildings, on the adjacent plot of the old continuous system, changing the urban landscape. (fig. 11)

However, for this synthesis to succeed, the term "maturation of conditions" must be fulfilled, a necessary, but not sufficient condition (the observer must also have a keen perception!).

"...(today) we are on a more solid empirical ground to approach the problems of Consciousness and Time. We have stepped onto the Theory of Experience of Invariants – a specific way of perceiving reality... ..a way of the human brain to represent the World – to create representations, to compare them and to search for their common invariant elements." (Tambakis 2012, p. 205)



Fig. 11: Thematic graffiti

By comparing the “Representations of the World” of permanent and occasional users of a place, we searched for their common elements. These - if they exist - compose an objective representation – what mathematicians call Topologically invariant properties<sup>52</sup>. Which means that this “reality” is a function of the stage of evolution of both occasional and permanent users of the Place – an Inner Landscape.

It’s the Landscape that is shaped by the view of the Unchangeable – the Archetypes. What is recognizable by the Other Human, can be the familiarity’s common background with the place. The time of maturation required for this, creates conditions for the synthesis of a new culture, on a daily basis, a culture of CO-EVOLUTION.

From the research of the condition of "sustainable coexistence" we are led to a landscape that has emerged from a joint appropriation of urban space (an "by-appropriation"!) where the importance of the relationship between permanent and occasional users with each other and with the place in which the ephemeral and the timeless coexist is also evident. As timeless characteristics, we consider Myth and Logos (Reason) – the unchanging elements of Place, and as ephemeral elements we record those that arise from the practical and psycho-intellectual processes of appropriation, which cause alterations in the structure, the form and the function of the place.

Their dialectical relationship emerges when Myth and Logos of a Place remain – despite possible alterations – recognizable in the image/representation of the Place and in the landscape itself.

## CONCLUSIONS

With this essay, which forms part of a broader research effort, we have outlined the framework of a theoretical approach, through which we examine Spatial Sciences via Modern Physics and Philosophy.

We proposed certain methods for visualizing urban data as limit circles - for instance, the total limit circle/torus of an urban area. We considered that certain (uncontrolled) events result in the occasional presence of "outsiders" within reception zones. The line drawn by the points of intersection (of interest) between their actions and the limit circle of the reception

<sup>51</sup> Petratos S., Stefanou I., "Graffiti as a Target of the Physiognomy of Cities" Ed. NTUA and Ypechode 2001

<sup>52</sup> Tampakis N. (2012), "The Time of Man", Govosti Publishing House.

zone marks the way space is appropriated and the resulting coexistence between permanent and temporary users.

We examined the **Carrying Capacity** of reception zones of significant cultural importance, within the framework of perceiving the **Physiognomy of Place** and the articulation of **Landscape**, which emerges through the interplay of boundary circles.

At the points of intersection, we sought the common elements between permanent and temporary users of a place by comparing their "Representations of the World."

However, since we did not conduct experimental field research (questionnaires and on-site documentation), we cannot draw definitive conclusions that either confirm or reject our working hypothesis. We reserve judgment on this matter.

We highlighted the importance of the "**observer's degree of awareness**" in how they experientially perceive and practically engage with a **Place**, as well as how they describe the **Landscape** based on its distinctive characteristics and physiognomy. We emphasize that the observer's level of consciousness allows them to gain insight into the **internal landscape**—the one shaped by their inner **Attractor**, a **Representation of their World**, yet one that remains embedded within a transient, finite world of stay and wandering. Thus, they themselves resonate with Empedocles: "*...Now I am a wanderer, an exile, god-sent...*"

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