

Fear is a Hieroglyph Fractal Repeated on Different Scales

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Fear in the 21st century is a fractal.

Definition of Fractal

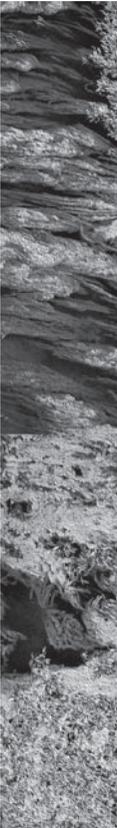
Fractal refers to a geometric object that shows two properties: the property of self-similarity, i.e. the composition and structure of any of its parts is also featured in each detail of the part itself (for as many enlargements as you want); and the property by which the constant ratio between the whole object and each part is continually updated. In a game of zoom-in-and-zoom-out with the observed object, the part can be the whole object and vice versa.

Approaches and withdrawals, balances,
possible readings
affected by viewing distance and by multiple
interpretations.
Groping to interpret and understand fear
in the XXI century.

Appoint fear.
Let's give it a face,
a symbol,
a trajectory,
a luminous trail.
Fear of fear.
Every day on this earth.
Fear of fear.

Fear in the **XXI** century.
In the **XXI** century, fear of suicide bombers,
In the **XX** century, fear of war;
In the **XIX** century, fear of.....
In the **XVIII**.....
In the **XVII**.....

FEAR of agreements and disagreements,
of those other to us, of the different and the non-aligned.
A precise fear of those who deviate from the line, who are not the same.



Signs, lines, faces, symbols, dreams in black-and-white and colour.

Fear, a voice painted on the walls, which animates and gives body to the lines of cities. Walls, lights, transform themselves and become more than that for which they were drawn.

Interpreting fear along lines undefined by boundaries, be they physical, drawn, etched, carved, real or imaginary forms.

Smell the air, trying to identify the cavity, the ravines, the corners where fear was sleeping, resting and preparing to wake up.

Imagine it as a snake coiled in his lair, or as a spore that is near opening.

An entity capable of self-production, regeneration and independent diffusion.

The shape and interpretations of fear are indefinite: first, because it is in perpetual transformation, and second, because it is completely subjective and uncertain.

These features have made fear – in fractal form – capable of crossing borders, crossing thresholds, filtering secret places; have given it the ability to wait asleep behind doors and inside drawers. Powder in envelopes arrived in mail from across the sea. Anthrax spores, daughters of Dr Bruce Edwards Ivins, father of universal bioterrorism.¹

"Powerful political forces can manipulate public opinion to the point where the mass is convinced that black is white and that war brings peace, that ignorance is strength and freedom slavery. A Pandora's Box of parapsychology and metaphysics, opening the door to the display of a struggle between opposites and polarities.

"The universe is the product of intelligent design, a creature defined by holographic and fractal properties – from the quantum level to the universal – that to be interpreted must be studied and observed at different scales".²

Fractal geometry describes nature with a hierarchical language.

Every natural element:

Clouds,

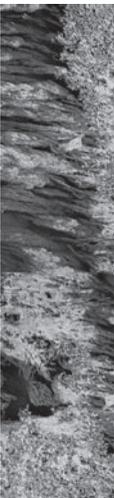
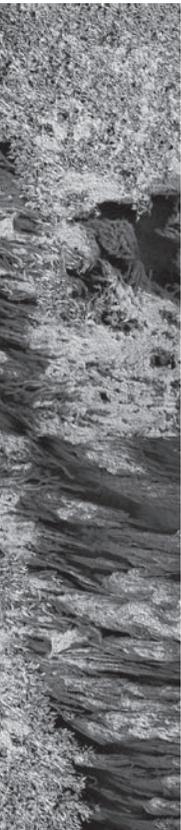
Cliffs,

Rivers,

Trees,

Mountains.....

is described using fractal shapes.



See fear mixed with the forms of nature, camouflaged within them and even capable of changing and transforming.

Fear in crystallisations.

In healing.

In inventories.

In cracks.

In the corners of the walls of the city.

In the interstices of sidewalks.

In the places of the Tiers Paysage of Gilles Clément.

Fear inhabits places not encoded.

Gilles Clément, writer, entomologist, French landscape architect and engineer, finds important resources in residual places. Reserves of diversity:

"Diversity refers to the number of distinct living species of animals, vegetables and simple organisms (bacteria, viruses, etc.), humans being comprised in a single and unique space whose diversity expresses itself in ethnic and cultural variety".³

Residual places may contain within themselves more kinds of fear; they are generators of viruses, in unregulated territory; but they can also be caravanserais for diversity.

Terrains vagues open on to new languages often not easily interpretable – and for this are seen as threatening and frightening.

In these areas occur the biological mutations,

the adjustments needed for survival,

that Gilles Clément considers hypothetical moulds or matrices for future global landscape.

Fear lives in diversity,

the non-codified pen,

urban anomalies,

the gaps between the rails.

(in this sense, residual places appear to have been lined up, flattened out, cleaned up, destroyed...)

"Among these fragments of landscape, none have any similarity of form. Their one point in common: all constitute a territory of refuge for diversity. Everywhere else, it is hunted.

"This makes it justifiable to collect them under one term. I propose 'the Third Landscape', the third term of an analysis that has grouped the main observational evidence in shadow on one side, in light on the other. 'Third Landscape' refers to the third state (and not the Third World). A space that expresses neither power nor the submission to power". (Clément, 2004)

The antidote to urban fear seems to have been identified as control

Baumann in *The Society of Uncertainty*⁴ identifies three categories of fear: those arising from the physical body and the mind, namely those related to pain and anxiety; those resulting from the world, from external objects and their interaction with the human being; and those triggered by other people during the course of life.

The greatest fear is that of uncertainty, insecurity and ignorance, the absence of knowledge of the present and the future.

In this respect, salvation is equated with the concept of control, for which one may cite examples from Foucault and Bentham. Jeremy Bentham suggested and designed a structure called the Panopticon (from the Greek, the all-seeing eye), a circular building in the centre of which was a tower that accommodated the figure responsible for the supervision of all other beings who, in turn, were located in concentric circles divided into cells. Individuals – students, crazies, prison inmates or workers – would live in a state of perpetual subjection to being checked, to being seen without ever seeing.

Foucault also talked about identifying “factories of order” – prisons, psychiatric hospitals, hospices and industrial settlements – as a method of restoring all order to forge the will.⁵ Panoptic power as power to control can also, in a sense, be interpreted as the power of approval.

Control as standardisation, as normalcy and therefore safety. Normalcy is security. Checks and tests to be passed before entering a closed, controlled community give security; they calm, they are the barriers necessary to cross the fencing beyond which another dimension exists.

Exceeding the threshold, the gate, the passage, crossing a border, are symbolic acts which enable and ensure that once beyond these, all will be in accordance with certain behavioural and existential codes, which are shared and are not frightening and would not generate new and unknown anxieties.

In response to this fear:

fear of what differs from the social code for membership of a certain tribe,
of the unexplored,
of the non-coded,
of the hard to label.

Fractal fear,

unstable and changeable, lurks in the minds of people as well as in inanimate objects and can turn itself into anything.

It can ignite currents between physical space and society,
energy dynamics set in motion by single telluric upheavals
a single electric shock passed from person to person,
from animate object to inanimate object
that grows in intensity to culminate in an event so powerful and definitive
that it cannot pass unnoticed.

An example of a fractal that can come close to this interpretation is the physical and geographical 'butterfly effect', derived from chaos theory.

Chaos theory is based precisely on the idea that the conduct of any action may be conditioned by the initial stages of its evolution and the unpredictable dynamics that can occur during its development. To understand this, one can think of smoke spirals from a cigarette or the movement of flowing water: both trace lines, circles, variations, always different from themselves. Everything is, therefore, in part dependent on infinitesimal variations in initial conditions and marginal conditions, which correspond to changes in output but are completely unpredictable; this could be the approach of a particle in a circuit whose entry activates a series of movements capable of transforming all the actions in the pipeline, therefore also changing the process in its final stage.

From this point of view, even the smallest changes in a system of peace are recognised as potential activators of changes in the system, not in an immediate time frame but over a longer time range. This phenomenon may become interesting if projected and applied in a time frame. That is obtained by imagining hypothetical changes in relation to tiny variations of the same scenario.



DEFINITION OF THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

By **'butterfly effect'** is meant the production of huge variations in the behaviour of a system, considered over a large time frame through small, infinitesimal changes in its initial stages. It gets its name from a story by Ray Bradbury: "Tale of Thunder".

The day after presidential candidate Keith wins the election, a man starts on an experience of time travel in the office of an adventure travel agency which organises safaris that culminate with the trophy killing of animals. The man is, however, warned that it is very important to take care not to kill any living being except those on the point of death by natural causes – animals normally hunted during these expeditions are identified and recorded through a temporal and geographical mapping of the exact time and place at which they will die. The time machine then brings travellers back in time to the exact moment before the death of the beast, or to just those moments needed to kill it.

In the story, the man kills a dinosaur and only upon his return to the office of the agency does he realise that he also killed a butterfly. He sees it under his shoe: a little dead butterfly mixed with mud. Speaking with the man in the agency, he realises that the involuntary killing of the butterfly has led to a semantic shift in language and also to the victory of Keith's sinister rival in the presidential election.

The butterfly effect seems to be able to change events.
 Not immediately but in the future.
 Who knows what a beat of wings could cause today, here,
 in a week, maybe a month or a year,
 here where is now found,
 the person who is reading these words.

We speak, therefore, of the paradox of time and intention.

The paradox of paradoxes is the 'Grandfather Paradox'.

This represents the possibility of travelling back in time and killing one's ancestors in a more or less fictitious manner, an action that would involve the denial of one's own identity, the self as it is today, bringing about a near de-structuring of the ego back in time (and this explains why there is already talk of paradox!).

In the micro scale: a denial of its existential structure.

Fear is a virus that escapes the rational understanding of most, that is rationally understood by few, understood by even fewer, and therefore feared by most.

Fear is a virus that, having germinated in some location, changes shape and consistency, spreads like liquid, permeating places and modifying them in its wake.

Its representation is a fractal in the formula:

$$d(f^T(x), f^T(y)) > \delta$$

Contained in the sense of signs that have meaning in the eyes of the person who shows them, based on which scale the interpretation is applied.

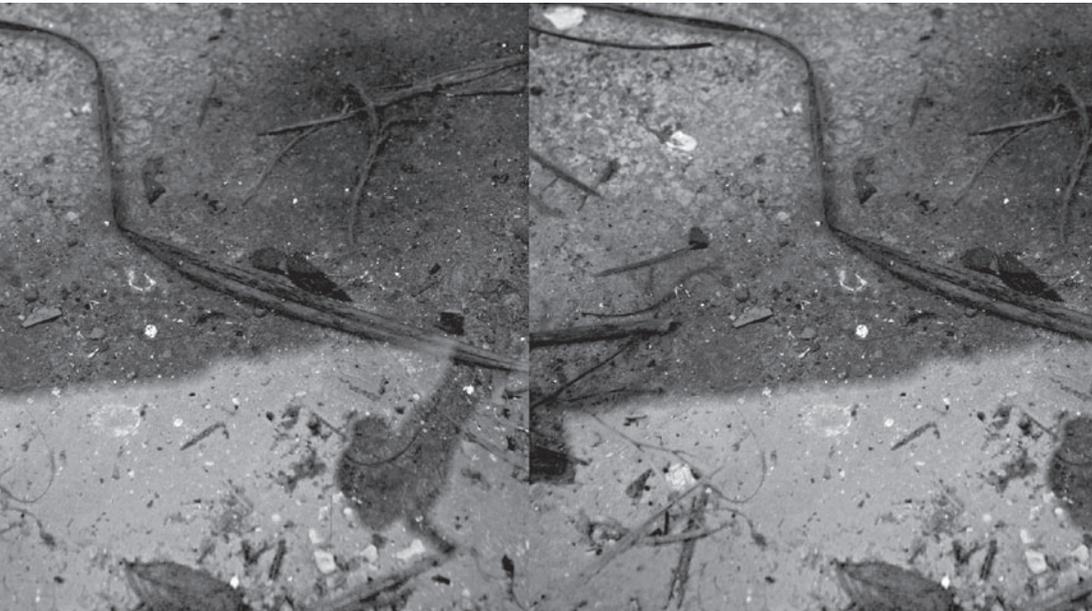
From the satellite to the microscope,
microcosm to macrocosm,

matryoshka ecosystems interconnected with each other.

In macro scale, the paradox of the grandfather could correspond to denial forgetfulness and denial of one's personal history.

Wanting to kill/deny one's past, which means what was lived as the collective memory, removing the roots of why certain facilities and cultural dynamics exist, dismantles the memory and essence of a civilisation.

In this sense, reserves, residual spaces, can be identified almost as sacred spaces.



Sanctity, in its potential to perpetrate a freedom, can give breathing space to the other, to the non-approved, in a sense to evolutionary spaces, generators of habitats uncontrolled, spontaneous and hence potentially interesting as true and real. In *terrains vagues*, it is possible to dance the fear and turn it into a sublimation of contemporary identity.

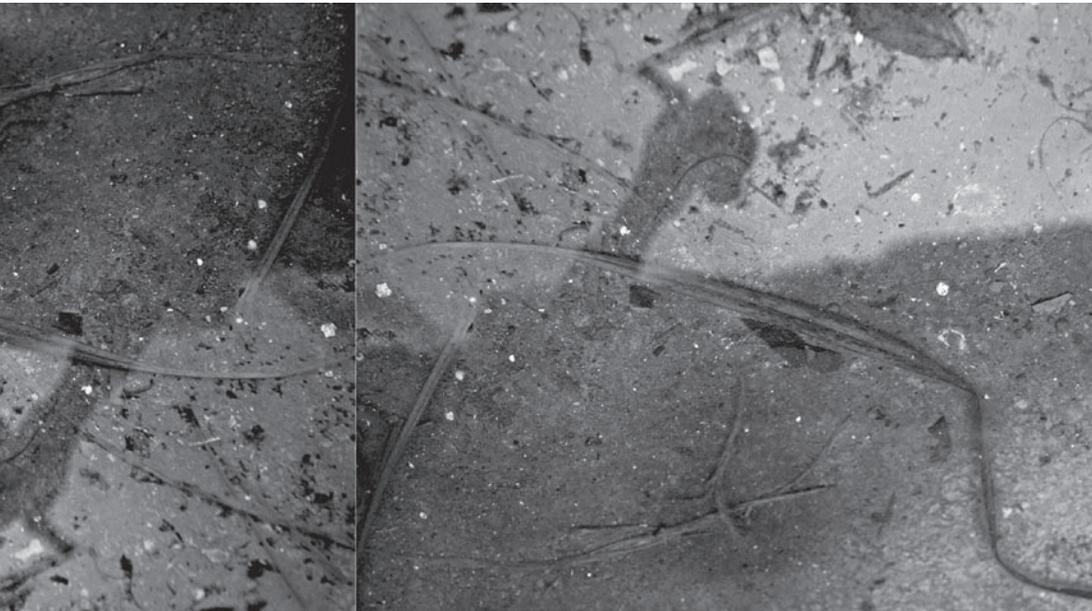
Contemporary identity is often torn between accepting the evolutionary necessities of unstoppable change in society, and its negation.

Refusal and non-acceptance may, in fact, as a reaction, create new fears and forge even stronger ones because they were born from the ashes of those previous.

The fear of difference is the fear of acceptance, knowledge, fear of the consequences of encountering, discovering, new sides of one's selves. (Which would involve a new interior order.)

In the macro scale, fear takes the form of an Other Self, of a cultural melting pot, which could lead to social evolution and transformation, causing subconscious areas and non-coded, unknown places of the imaginary collective to emerge more strongly.

Yona Friedman, architect-urbanist, writer and sociologist, in his *The Complicated Order*, traces aesthetic images of the world not along physical rules universally known, but along the search for harmony and balance between different sensory perceptions.⁶

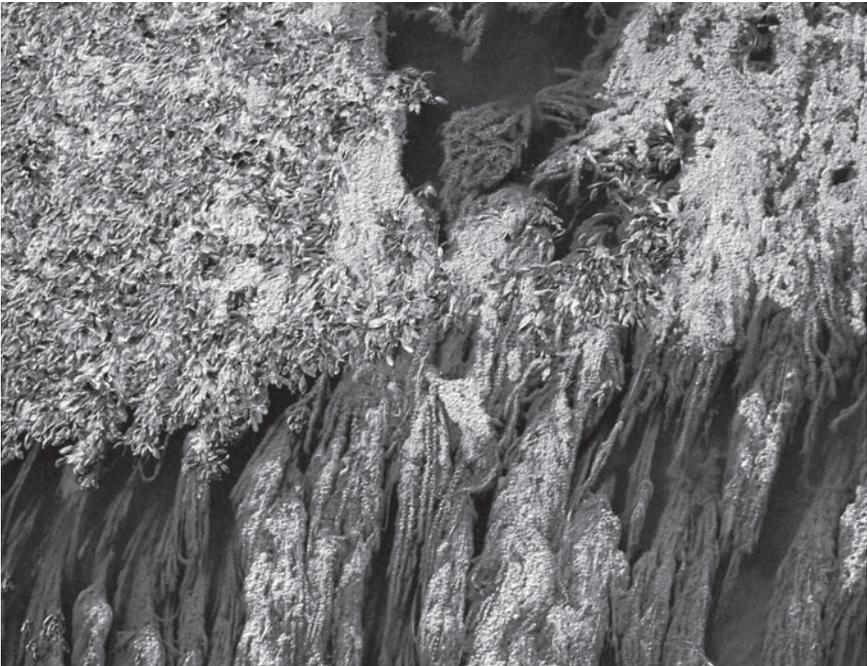


In a drawing representing space and time in granular form: particles, small grains, granules, close to each other. One possible reading of the interactions between the two entities, space/time. Between grain and grain, there are identifiable spaces/areas/sites, spots that are also recognised as non-spaces, non-continuous fields that form, by virtue of this composition, a network that spans all the granular space.

And the existence of the void that gives meaning to the full, forming a network, is precisely the existence of this empty space between granules, within which filled spaces can develop alternatives to connect with each other, leaving open the possibility of a new interpretation of the relationship between the spaces. Friedman identifies this as a thread, an undulation, the impulse necessary for connectivity and processing.

As is the idea expressed through the concept of the fractal butterfly effect and micro earthquakes resulting in a wave of earth tremors of great magnitude.

The existence of VOIDS or RESERVES or OTHER SPACES can create the possibility of alternative languages. (Here, we could open up the abyss of the possibility of speaking of the limits of and the ambivalence between fear, risk margin and the likelihood/possibility of salvation.)



Other spaces, ambiguous and not identified, not labelled and therefore frightening and awful for most people, are themselves (at least potentially) carriers of the possibility of renewal and the experimental results of the probable adjustments of profit and saving of and in contemporary society. Space bubble reserves as possible responses to change. Yona Friedman's theory introduces the concept of impermeability and the wandering harbinger of positivity, not of fear.

Impermeability forced to seek alternative solutions. The inability to cross a wall forces us to develop other methods of communication with those who are beyond.

Each grain represents individuality and the ability of any person to trigger a hypothetical global transformation, starting with the uniqueness of the individual and the interrelationship that allows for each person to connect with the whole network and with each single individual grain.

It isn't possible to predict what will happen in the present and in the present next, one can only depend on the activity which is immediately before one.

How to say: everything is in the eye and in the bodies of the beholder, and in the transmissibility of perceptions.

Notes

1. On 6 August 2008, ten days after his apparent suicide, United States federal investigators charged Bruce Edwards Ivins as the sole culprit in the 2001 anthrax attacks. The attacks killed five people and are said to have infected nearly 70 others. Ivins was a senior biodefence scientist and an anthrax vaccine co-inventor, listed on two US patents.
2. From YouTube: words spoken in a video recorded under the heading 'Fractal'. In the video, a man sits behind a desk talking like a robot of the relationship between political forces and power and a possible interpretation of the universe conceived and read as a complete fractal emanation.
3. Gilles Clément, **Manifeste du Tiers Paysage**, Copyright © 2004, Copyleft: This work is free; you can redistribute it and/or modify it under the terms of the Free Art Licence.
Available at:
http://www.gillesclément.com/fichiers/_admin_13517_tierspaypublications_92045_manifeste_du_tiers_paysage.pdf (accessed 18 November 2009).
4. Zigmunt Bauman. **La società dell'incertezza** (Il Mulino, 1999, Bologna).
5. Michel Foucault [1975]. **Sorvegliare e punire: la nascita della prigione**, (trans. it.) A. Tarchetti (Einaudi, 1993, Torino).
6. Yona Friedman. **L'ordre compliqué et autres fragments** (Editions de L'éclat, 2008, Paris/Tel Aviv).