

P2\_Research Paper

Independent Group\_2023/2024



Seed Of Resilience

*Redesigning the table of comPAnionship*

Aimilia Nteka

*“What is the new micro-scale of architecture? Can a tiny intervention bring about a large-scale change? Thom’s theory of catastrophes to redefine the **relationship of the mountain to the city** in terms of geological space and time, from the **background it becomes a figure**, it becomes animated. Through the flow, we perceive the relationship between **water** and the **city** on the one hand as geology - as a bed and matter running through a **geographical unity** from the **slopes of Pelion to Pagasitikos**, but also as a **supply**, as a network, as an economy and politics - forming a community”*

-Zisis Kotionis, PhD architect, writer and artist. He is a Professor in the Department of Architecture, University of Thessaly



VOLO: WITH PELION IN THE BACKGROUND

## ABSTRACT

Volos, the capital of the Magnesia regional unit in central Greece, lies in a flat region bordered by Mount Pelion to the northeast, the sea to the south, and the Thessalian plains to the west. Mount Pelion overlooks the rural Thessalian plain, Lake Karla on one side, and Volos’s urban and industrial areas on the other, united by their relationship with water.

Daniel and Elias floods caused damage to infrastructure works, crops, ecological disasters, and social difficulties. Most importantly, despite the natural disaster, different sensitivities emerged in the social whole. One of the biggest disasters occurred in Lake Karla, which is located at the junction between Volos and Laria, the two largest agricultural cities, and returned to its original dimensions before it dried up, a fact that destroyed a large part of the agricultural land and hence also the local economy. Over-extraction of water, restriction of rivers, and unauthorized interventions in ecosystems have all led with mathematical precision to the disasters of recent years.

“Already, since the 1930s, there have been dramatic changes in the landscape of Thessaly. Hundreds of hectares of flooded areas and tens of thousands of wetlands have all been drained and converted into arable land. Rivers were abolished or ‘canalized’, erected embankments, and rivers were cut off from their floodplains. The region’s hydrology changed, and the cause of the floods lies there.

The concepts of proximity, neighborhood, and

collectivity contrast with distance, dispersion, and networking. Floods cause environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity around Lake Karla, impacting natural ecosystems and agricultural productivity.<sup>1</sup>

The region’s loss of place identity due to environmental mismanagement and extreme weather events has profoundly affected it. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between human activity, natural ecosystems, and cultural heritage. The intervention aims to bring together the micro-scale of architecture and the community initiatives of the local community. This is attempted through a series of interventions at critical points along an axis, where the links between different times have existed over time, and now they need to operate collectively around the standard waterbody, with spaces for exchange, discussion, education, and sharing. This strategy is complemented by the placement of the program’s landmarks in zoom in and out of the problem, giving a different perspective and leading to its understanding from the smallest to the most extensive scale, with the eyes of the explorer.

<sup>1</sup> Αλεξία Καλαϊτζή, ‘Θεσσαλία: Το αποτύπωμα της καταστροφής στην αγροτική παραγωγή’, Η ΚΑΘΗΜΕΡΙΝΗ, 18 September 2023, <https://www.kathimerini.gr/economy/562618804/thessalia-to-apoty-poma-tis-katastrofis-stin-agrotiki-paragogi/>.

## INTRODUCTION

City-territory relations and social involvement in public affairs related to the natural environment have ignited a growing interest within the design community. My interest in the Magnesia region on the Thessalian Plain, Greece's second-largest agricultural area, arises from its immense potential for fostering self-resilience, sustainable practices, and deeper community bonds. This proposal emphasizes understanding networks, borders, and synergies, particularly in light of recent floods and the ensuing devastation. The body of Thessaly breaks out of the ferments, and what looks like a background becomes a figure. The mountain and water become one mixed with the brought objects. Amidst the debris left by the floods, mundane objects like a pickaxe serve as poignant reminders of the convergence of rural and urban realities.

What can be cultivated and sown in the wake of adversity, and how can these efforts shape the region's recovery and development trajectory?

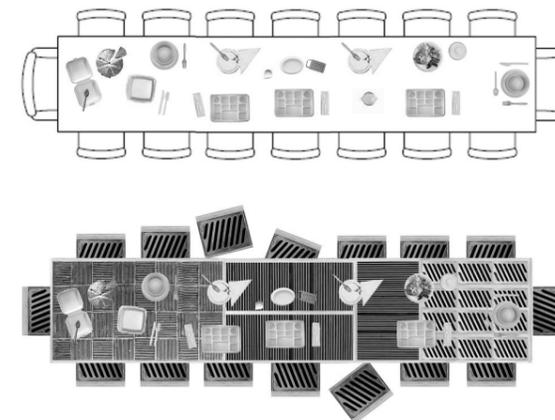
This research project is about more than just addressing the immediate challenges of climate change or management deficiencies. It is about exploring our connection to our origins and aspirations for change. Despite the seemingly small scale of this project, it is within this scale

that the fundamental questions of 'beginning' and 'evolution' can be most effectively explored. The project argues that designing 'flexible soft infrastructures' to address local issues is a tangible demonstration of an approach that not only relies on a general strategy but carefully crafts interventions tailored to the place, time, and culture of the place. The project explores the possibilities expressed by the local communities regarding their self-organization and solidarity actions, a testament to their rural identity that has been explored through various mediums.

The landscape of the Thessaly region, as a unique city territory, was the main territorial field for accelerating economic and social modernization in Greece in the 20th century. As the country's main productive engine, it is an expanded metapolis with density variations and hybrid urbanity characteristics. Specific infrastructure, smaller-scale building structures, and a vast patchwork of cultivated areas make it the ideal example of how power and control over the environment manifest physically.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Yorgos Tzirtzilakis, Afroditi Maragkou, and Yorgos Rimenidis, 'Ambiances of Anthropocene on Thessaly Territory, Greece: A Critical Dictionary', in *Proceedings of the 4th International Congress on Ambiances, Alloaesthesia: Senses, Inventions, Worlds*, ed. Damien Masson, vol. vol.1 (e-conference, France: Réseau International Ambiances, 2020), 92–

Through a comprehensive exploration of the region's agricultural roots and communal identity, this research positions Lake Karla as the place that best demonstrates the delicate balance between human activity and natural ecosystems and would carry the responsibility of giving the people a place to redesign the 'table' of Thessaly.



The word “συντροφικότητα” in Greek can be translated into English as “companionship”

Breaking down the Greek word:

“Συν” (syn) means “together” or “with.”

“Τροφή” (trophē) means “food” or “nourishment.”



## CULTURE & CULTIVATE

The etymology of the words “culture” and “cultivate,” stemming from the Latin word “cultus,” reveals a rich narrative of humanity’s deep-rooted connection with agriculture. In ancient cities, festivals aligned with the agricultural calendar underscored the profound bond between humankind and grain. Caroline Steel, in her book “Hungry City” emphasizes the role of local food production and distribution in enhancing resilience and community well-being.

Roman villas served as retreats and functioning farms, producing crops like fruit, vegetables, and poultry for the urban market, often relying on slave labor. This intertwining of urban and rural life was exemplified by the vast suburban farms surrounding Rome, seamlessly merging with the cityscape. Conflicts over territory, including disputes involving monasteries vying for control over forests, were common during this era. The notion of good and bad government, as depicted in Lonzeretti’s work, reflects a pivotal moment in urban history when cities and the countryside coexisted in relative harmony. The Ramesseum in Thebes serves as a testament to the importance of grain as a symbol of wealth, with temples doubling as public granaries and reserve banks. The Palazzo de la Ragione in Padua, known locally as “Il Salone,” served as both a council chamber and a market hall,

showcasing the multifunctionality of such structures.

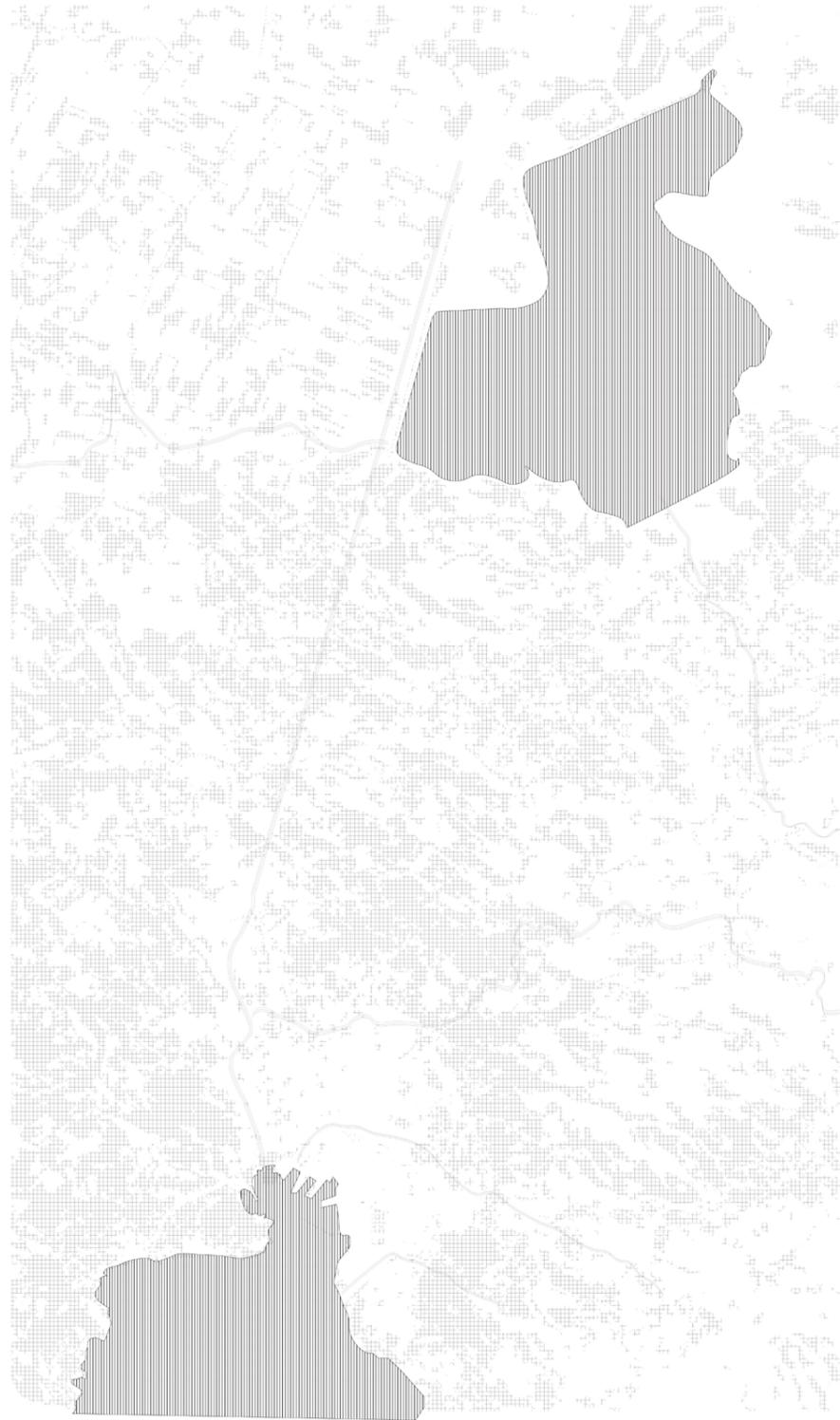
Similarly, the Athenian Agora, flanked by stoas and renowned for its oratory, epitomized the essence of public action in Greek society. The shared meal, symbolized by the Latin root of “companion,” underscores the significance of communal dining in human interaction. Even in ancient times, extraordinary dining chambers, like the Tholos built in the Agora, were dedicated to political dining, emphasizing the communal aspect of governance.<sup>1</sup>

“The ‘Old Seeds for New Cultures’ exhibition curated by Zisis Kotionis and Phoebe Giannisi for the Greek Biennale serves as a focal point of exploration, encompassing all the qualities and forms of expression that best capture my interests. It serves as a bridge between the present and both the recent and distant past, while also aiming to present a vision for the future. This exhibition is rich in its connections to myth, allegory, symbolism, metaphor, and archetypes.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carolyn Steel, *Hungry City: How Food Shapes Our Lives* (London: Vintage Books, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> ‘Η Κιβωτός: παλαιοί σπόροι για νέες καλλιέργειες’, Βιβλιοπωλείο MIET (blog), accessed 11 June 2024, <https://mietbookstore.gr/product/i-kivotos-palaioi-sporoi-gia-nees-kalliergeies/>.



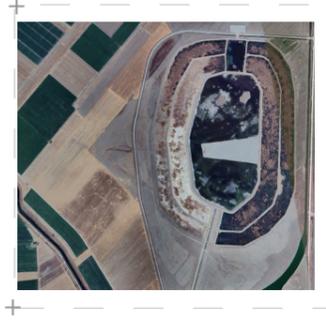
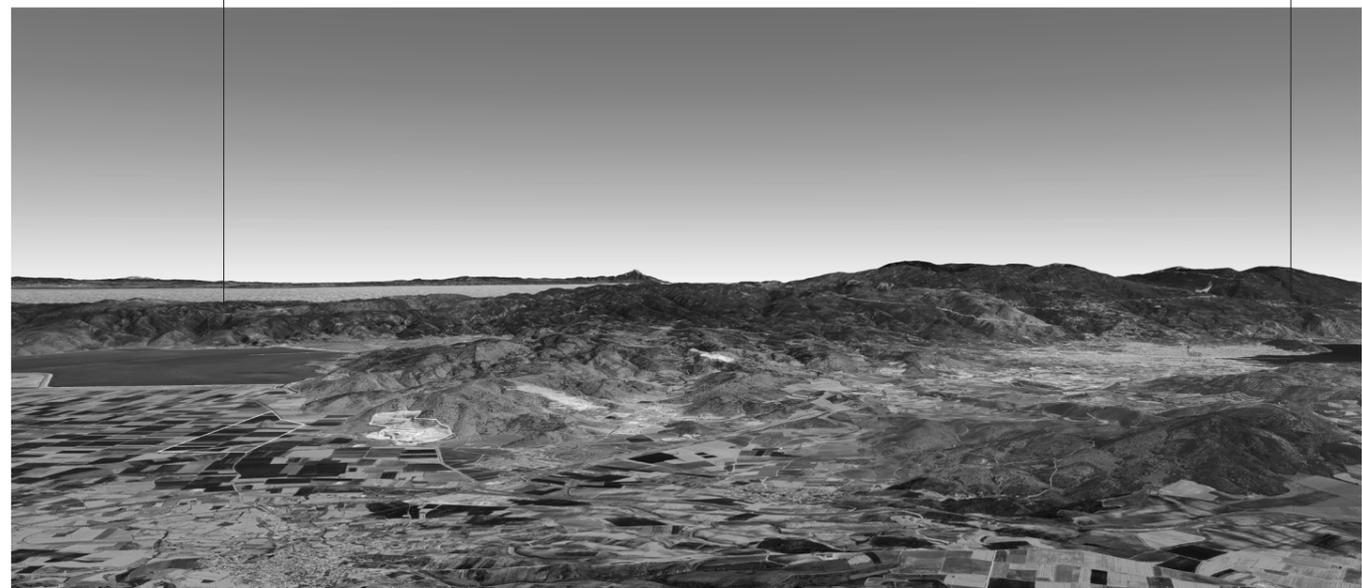


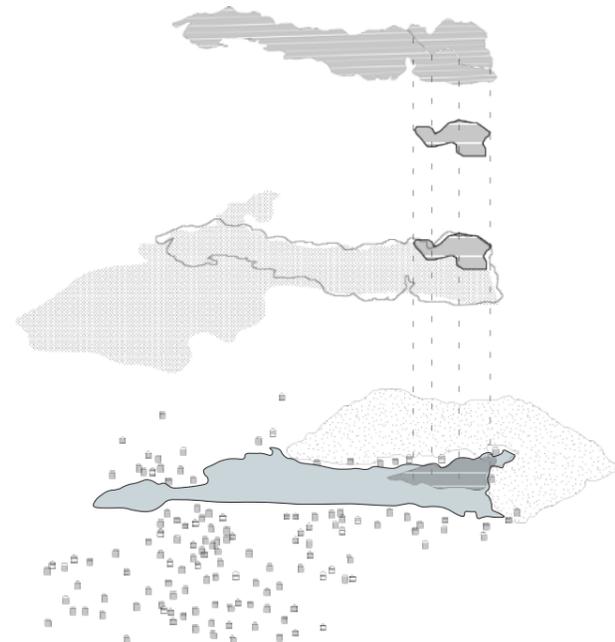
## CITY-TERRITORY

The image of the Thessalian landscape, consisting of a vast combination of arable land crossed by infrastructure such as roads, highways, bridges, and dams, shows how it was the primary terrain for accelerating settlement in Greece in the 20th century. This hybrid character of the region of Thessaly, is the result of two broader processes of transformation, modernization, and globalization, consists of the high density of urban centers expanding in the plain and small unrestricted residential settlements incorporated into the extensive arable land. In the aftermath of the floods, much of the dialogue concerns monocultures, to which a large amount of the region's water resources is diverted. Continuous irrigation in the summer months is intensified by private water drilling, drying up underground aquifers, and, at the same time, dramatically increasing the rates of surface moisture emerging from arable land.<sup>1</sup>

Echoes of myth and legend resonate around Lake Karla, a place steeped in Homeric tales and heroic exploits. The area is recognized as having

<sup>1</sup> Yorgos Tzirtzilakis, Afroditi Maragkou, and Yorgos Rimenidis, 'Ambiances of Anthropocene on Thessaly Territory, Greece: A Critical Dictionary', in *Proceedings of the 4th International Congress on Ambiances, Alloaesthesia: Senses, Inventions, Worlds*, ed. Damien Masson, vol. vol.1 (e-conference, France: Réseau International Ambiances, 2020), 92–97, <https://doi.org/10.48537/hal-03220250>.





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## LAKE KARLA

Echoes of myth and legend resonate around Lake Karla, a place steeped in Homeric tales and heroic exploits. The area is recognized as having human settlements from the Paleolithic period through the Hellenistic period. Archaeologists have established settlements, probably dating to prehistoric times, that are thought to have fallen just along the actual perimeter of the lake coast, thus confirming the former extensive coastline.

People fished its waters, thus creating a prosperous “water empire,” a well-organized community spread over small islands. The lake became the home of a particular water culture, with fishing settlements that stayed there for several months.<sup>1</sup>

The lake was drained in 1962 to make land available for farming, and later, it was rebuilt due to the erosion of the ecosystem and the changes in the microclimate of the wider area. Aside from the fact that the land was unsuitable for cultivation due to its saline soils, as it was the former lakebed, the drainage caused significant problems for the area’s ecosystem, as part of the ecological chain disappeared. Some aquatic plants vanished, leading to the extinction of fish and birds, which caused further issues for the surrounding rural land. The catastrophe was not only economic and ecological but also

profoundly cultural. The progressive change of the color palette in the goddess of the Thessalian Plain from green to yellow betrays the elements of desertification.

The text provided by the wetlands walking guide offers an evocative description of the area surrounding Lake Voeveis-Karla, which was often portrayed by writers and travelers as a paradise on earth. It highlights the historical coexistence of local people and nomadic tribes, emphasizing the symbiotic trading relationships that sustained their livelihoods. The exchange of goods such as wheat, cheese, wool, olive oil, meat, chestnuts, and cherries between the mountainous villages of Mt Pelion and those on the plain of Thessaly facilitated their interdependence and economic stability. Overall, the text paints a vivid picture of a bygone era when rural life flourished amidst a backdrop of natural beauty and cultural diversity.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ‘LAKI\_KONSTANTINA\_DIPLOMATIKI\_A4.Pdf’, n.d.

<sup>2</sup> ‘ENG-Karla-Web-Extra-Low.Pdf’, accessed 12 June 2024, <https://med-ina.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ENG-Karla-web-extra-low.pdf>.

Krines



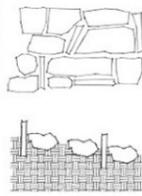
Water



Bridges



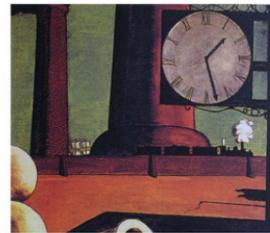
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Myths



"Moutzouris" Train



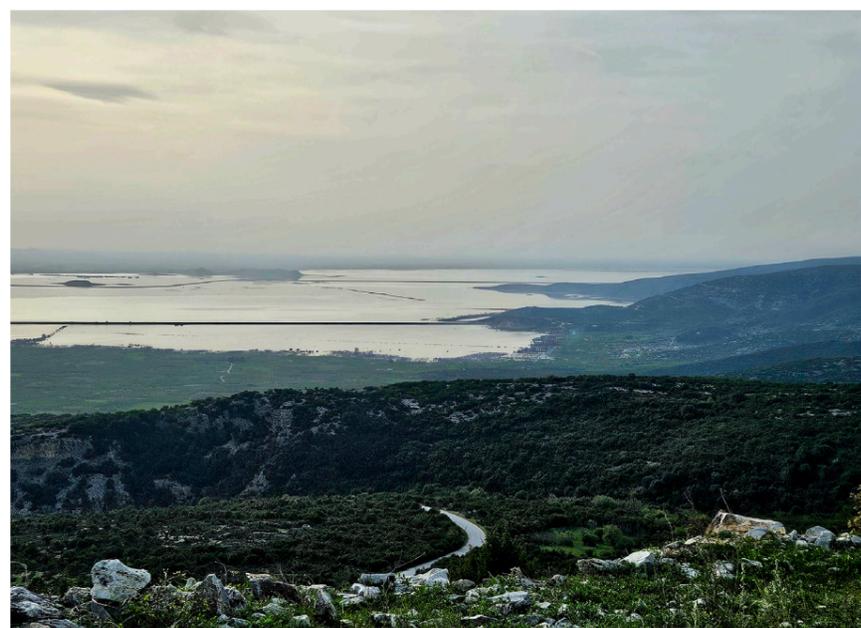
*The ancient states that the river Pineios used to overflow, and its waters would flood the area: «For the Pineios, flowing through the middle and receiving many rivers, often overflows; and in ancient times, it would even form lakes, as the account goes.»*

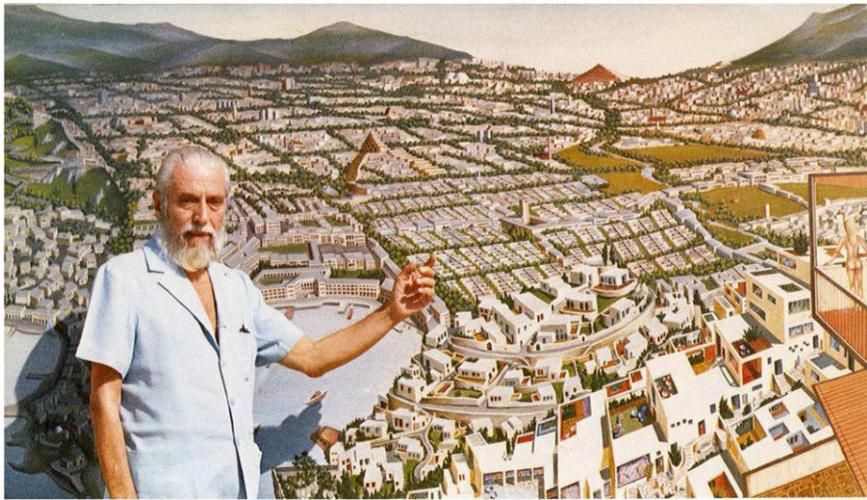
## MOUNTAIN'S EYES

The region of Magnesia, nestled within Thessaly, is a living testament to the profound intertwining of myth and nature. According to ancient tales, Mount Pelion was the home of the centaurs, mythical creatures that embodied the blurred boundaries between humans and animals. Their presence in the region not only underscores the deep-rooted connection between humans and nature but also serves as a vivid reminder of the reverence and respect ancient societies held for the natural world. This mythological heritage is a significant part of the region's identity.

The mountain located between the plain and the city embraces the Pagasitiko Bay and Lake Karla while hosting the combination of mountain and sea, history and mythology, natural beauty and traditional architecture—mansions, monasteries, bridges, fountains, cobblestones— together with the infrastructure for tourism and proximity to a modern urban center.

Systematic settlements started in the 12th century and were mainly for monks. The 24 villages of Pelion began to take their current form and flourish during the Turkish occupation. At that time, many inhabitants of the surrounding areas fled to the mountain of Pelion to escape from suffocating slavery. These villages had been granted special privileges to organize themselves well, create crafts and businesses, and experience prosperity



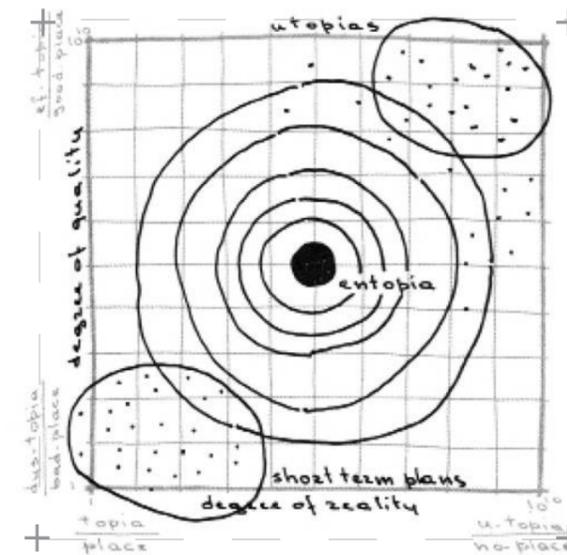


Seasons Greetings Card 1975



All the elements of the area whose links are perfectly connected need to work together, respect and honor the traditional functioning modes within a complex, demanding present, recognizing their invaluable contribution to the region's identity and sustainability. The city's last house, the industrial area's last factory, the lakeside settlements, and the mountain villages must be treated as one body to create their own entopia.

Doxiadis coined "utopia," meaning "in place," to describe a realistic city blending dreams with scientific reasoning. Unlike unattainable utopias or current dystopian cities, utopia is achievable and desirable, satisfying both dreamers and scientists by merging artistic and architectural visions. Influenced by Theofilos, a renowned Greek folk painter known for his vibrant and earthy tones, Doxiadis' depiction of utopia draws from Greek folk art.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> 'Between Dystopia and Utopia: Constantinos A. Doxiadis: 978111210458: Amazon.Com: Books,' accessed 15 April 2024, <https://www.amazon.com/Between-Dystopia-Utopia-Constantinos-Doxiadis/dp/B000PKV3GK>.

Diagram placing *Entopia* Between *Dystopia* and *Utopia*



## SYNERGIES AMONG THE VALLEY

Has the capacity for smaller, more flexible infrastructures to address local issues diminished, and if so, why?

The 2010 Law 3852/2010 in Greece restructured municipalities and communities, reducing the number of entities and transferring responsibilities from the central administration to the local government. The effectiveness of financial management has improved, but challenges remain in decentralizing authority in the minor administrative units (villages, settlements, districts) and engaging citizens in democratic planning and local affairs, especially in rural and island areas.

The topic of local communities, villages, and even neighborhoods, as the more minor, fundamental elements of Local Government, is intriguing. If the local communities at the municipal level are functioning well, then the larger units of Self-Government (municipalities, regions) can more easily and swiftly address issues that arise. Ultimately, there is no more convenient and democratic approach to resolving a problem in an area than by convening the residents who live there, understand it, and are invested in finding solutions or improving the livability of the village and its surroundings.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> : 'Πόλεις Και Πολιτικές', accessed 12 June 2024, [https://www.citybranding.gr/2012/11/blog-post\\_12.html%20/](https://www.citybranding.gr/2012/11/blog-post_12.html%20/).

The project's physical and theoretical application begins with an in-depth exploration of Patrick Geddes Valley section, a prime example of interconnected social and ecological systems. In Magnesia, this concept is further examined, considering the diverse landscapes, from mountains to coastlines, and their direct influence on human settlement and resource distribution. The mountain, often perceived as a barrier, is ingeniously transformed into a connection point through its natural flows.<sup>2</sup>

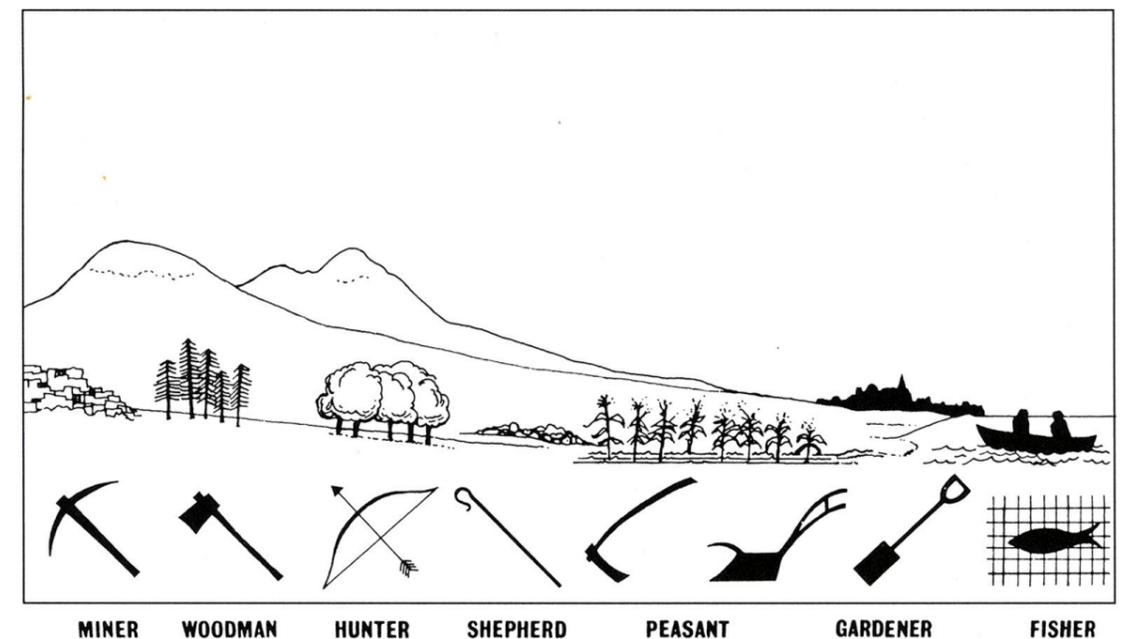
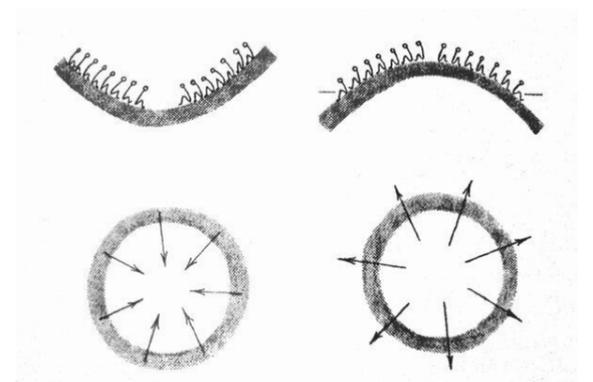
The core objective is to develop a network of significant nodes along an axis, enhancing meaningful interactions. These interventions connect lowland communities, mountains, seasonal farmers, explorers, and the agricultural cities of Larisa and Volos. The site allows for a decentralized interaction between the city-located government and immediately localized needs, unburdened by the practical barriers of time and distance. This is supported by experiential accessibility through the facilitation of community gatherings on multiple levels of interaction.

Geddes book think global act local perfectly describes the effort of this project to hug all these characteristics and highlight the importance of

<sup>2</sup> Walter Stephen, *Think Global, Act Local: Life and Legacy of Patrick Geddes: The Life and Legacy of Patrick Geddes*, 2nd edition (Edinburgh: Luath Press Ltd, 2015).

addressing global issues through local actions.

Geddes tells the story of a city, one that starts hundreds of miles away as he describes, "... pastoral hillsides, below scattered arable farmland and sparsely dotted hamlets, leads us to the small upland villages of the central valley: from this, one descends to the large and prosperous town of the foothills and its railway terminus, where the lowland and the highland meet; while central to the broad agricultural valley with its slow meandering river, stands the prosperous market town.



A day's walk further down, the larger county town stands at the convergence of several such valleys. Finally, at the mouth of its estuary rises the smoke of a great manufacturing city, a central world market in its way...<sup>1</sup>

The treatment of the surrounding nature through several scales, zooming in and out of the boundaries till they are not visible anymore, is a suggestive move that only allows for the careful interaction with the physical environment planted in places where unofficial meetings happen, guiding the visitor's gaze but is as well a philosophical move that compliments the different perspectives that ones have over the same problem.

As Suzana Antonakaki describes in her text regarding symbioses, Aldo van Eyck's diagram reciprocity sits opposite the earth's cavity and sees its interior, the relationship of seeing and being seen, emphasizing inwardness. While on the hill and the curved surfaces, they sit with their gaze toward the open horizon, stressing the need for distance from things for a clear and accessible look.

A fertile relationship with the outside world. Two types of centralities, two types for whether they are together or alone. This duality reflects the project's focus on social elements and the synergy between community members and nature.<sup>2</sup>

Focusing on the social elements already exist in the area, the need for synergy between the members and coexistence with nature is suggested. As articulated by Felix Guattari An ecosophy must articulate the three ecological registers (the environment, social relations, and hu-man subjectivity) as a whole."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> ΣΥΜΒΙΩΣΕΙΣ, accessed 12 June 2024, <https://www.politeianet.gr/books/9789600359664-sullogiko-kastaniotis-symbioseis-253278>.

<sup>3</sup> 'Guattari - 2005 - The Three Ecologies.Pdf', accessed 13 February 2024, [https://monoskop.org/images/4/44/Guattari\\_Felix\\_The\\_Three\\_Ecologies.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/4/44/Guattari_Felix_The_Three_Ecologies.pdf).

<sup>1</sup> 'The Living City – The Rise and Fall, and Rise Again of Sir Patrick Geddes :: The Oval Partnership', accessed 12 June 2024, <https://www.ovalpartnership.com/en/article/The-Living-City-The-Rise-and-Fall-and-Rise-Again-of-Sir-Patrick-Geddes>.



## TRAILS, TABLES AND CHAIRS

How are experiences of embodied communication, self-organization, and solidarity exchanged and codified in Pelion communities? -How can the design of communal spaces be influenced by everyday practices?

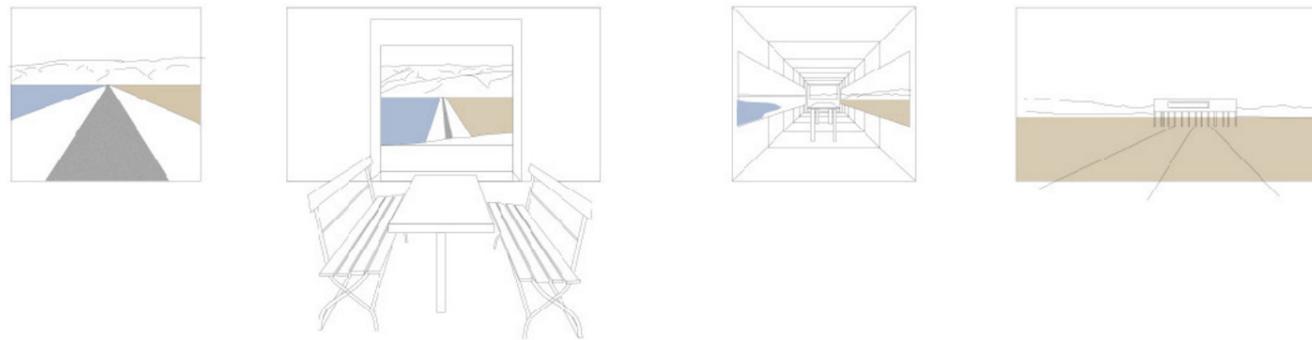
The trajectories are already shaped by existing elements and structures hosting unofficial meetings of people and animals. Water fountains held as unique cultural heritage places in the region always worked as reference points for the area as a meeting place or where disputes would be sold around the community. To this day, they are priced as valuable architectural and social structures. The project interventions planted among shepherd's routes, the canteens, and chapels that work as satellites of the surrounding lake all work as invaluable parts of the program. In this case, the environment is treated as a complex and sensitive receptor of human activity.

In the book *Symbiosis* Marina Lathouri and Philippos Oraipoylos describe that emerging micro-geographies are becoming significant places of exchange, where the institutional and territorial spatial, experiential, personal, and community biological functions of life and the political aspects coexist and engage in dialogue.

Focusing on the problem, understanding it from various perspectives, and integrating it

into people's daily lives is a strategic necessity. Creating a space where each person can share their experiences and knowledge in a collaborative setting is essential. Where would everyone sit if they had to gather around a standard table? This question helps us identify critical points for intervention on both theoretical and practical levels. In Karla's region, you are likely to find discussion chairs under the shade of trees in fields, inside chapels, at local festivals, or in village squares. Theories and the space in which they are cultivated. The bio-theory of Epicurean hedonism could only develop in the garden. Outside the house, like the bio-theory of the Stoics, is the public space and the entrance. While Platonism found refuge in a private school in the Academy. Garden, Portico, School.<sup>1</sup>

Central to this exploration is the symbolic significance of the Thessalian table, which serves as a nexus of survival and culture. Beyond its role in preserving recipes, aromas, and memories, the table also serves as a stage for difficult socio-political discussions. In the discussions, various arguments have arisen regarding the area's future. While some points align, there are also differences leading to a confusion of ideas. It is essential for different groups, such as farmers, biologists, visitors, and ornithologists, to work together. What is essential is training, cooperation, and open dialogue in the landscape. It is necessary for everyone to come together and share their perspectives in order to address common issues. Just as biodiversity in nature is





essential, a diversity of viewpoints is also crucial, as noted by a biologist from the region.

Raphael's painting "School of Athens" directly opposes two currents of thought: on the one hand, the world of ideas and the contemplative, developed by the sage Plato; on the other, that of Aristotle, which focuses on experience, the sensible and the earthly. Everything is done here to highlight the rivalry between the two intellects.

In this case, the table is presented in the solution both design-wise and metaphorically. It functions as a space that will incorporate the knowledge and experience of each user, inform, educate, and share resources. Just like organic farming uses collaboration and mutual nutrition to improve and regenerate the soil, which is different from the isolated and non-collaborative methods of modern crop production, this approach should guide the planning of programs and meetings with people from diverse backgrounds. Like organic farming combines rural crop and livestock economies to promote a healthy ecosystem, discussions and programs should be rooted in collaboration and mutual enrichment.

The cooperative production model ensures the most efficient organization of the production process and promotes rational development. In the context of cooperative agricultural structures, new technologies are practically implemented, new ideas about crops and their methods are documented and experimentally validated, and

existing scientific knowledge is disseminated more accessible.

The cooperative structure serves as a collective support system for its members, providing help and protection. It also guarantees the stable, robust, and lasting presence of the productive world of a region in its productive sector and its connection with its land.

It thus confronts the fragmentation of crops and the division of the geographically limited territorial productive "canvas" of Greece and potentially throws off the primary sector, which constitutes the traditional and perhaps most critical constant of the Greek economy, society, and tradition

The bio-social model of co-nutrition symbiogenesis is anthropologically articulated through community preservation, as this is ascertained at the communal table. According to Strabo, shared meals, feasts, and celebrations have permanently cemented friendship ties. One such example is the festivals with soups of panspermia offered in ancient Greece at times when some form of crisis endangered community bonds. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> bloomsbury.com, 'Remembrance of Repasts', Bloomsbury, accessed 12 June 2024, <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/remembrance-of-repasts-9781859734742/>.

## ANONYMOUS ARCHITECTURE

During my visit to Magnesia, I encountered a diverse architectural landscape that included the industrial city of Volos, the traditional stone-built Pelion mountain with its cobblestones, and the lake architecture of “planted” shepherds’ rooms. As I explored, I found Karla to be a crucial focal point due to the challenges it presents, which must be addressed, and its rich biodiversity that can greatly contribute to the reconnection between humanity and nature. Architecturally, I was particularly drawn to the buildings that utilized stone from the mountain and the small warehouses/offices of the farmers positioned under the trees. These spaces, equipped with a chair and a roof, created a microcosm that integrated the triptych of the room, roof, and courtyard, using the land itself as a natural courtyard. This is the most charming element when this courtyard is protected and watered as much as it needs not to get “burned”. Architecturally, this spontaneous search for familiar structures, reminiscent of the childhood constructions we used to create while playing in the village, was quite compelling. These structures have the potential to accommodate various functions with a touch of imagination

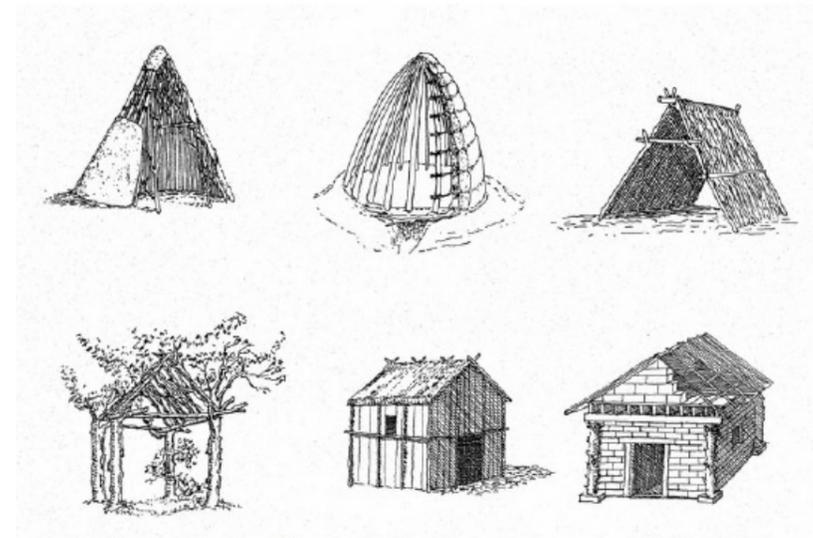
Frampton notes that, according to Ricoeur, the preservation of any authentic culture in the future will depend on our ability to create living forms of local culture while simultaneously adopting foreign influences. It creates a new appropriation of place through dichotomies and dialectical relationships, in a different way from

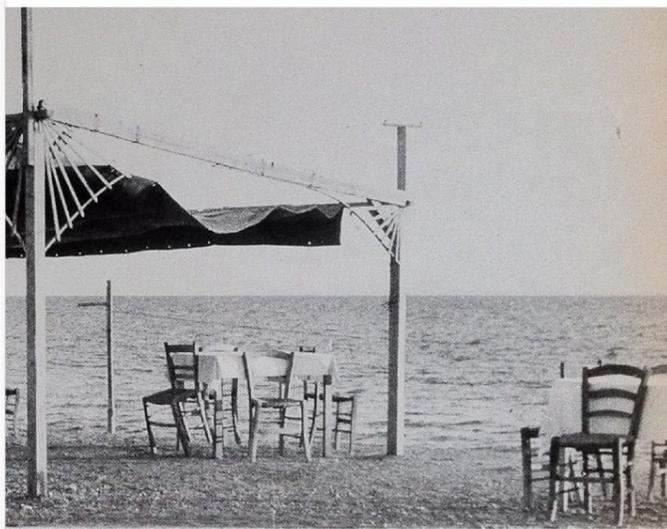
what John and Lefaivre suggest for relationships between space-place, typology-topography, scenographic-architectural, artificial-physical, and visual-tactile.<sup>1</sup>

As presented in the book of George Triantafylos, from the Neolithic era, Thessaly presents a series of improvised constructions from the pre-historic to the modern era. Nomadic and seasonal movements created shelters using natural materials, demonstrating an innate ability to construct structurally sound dwellings with precise geometric forms.

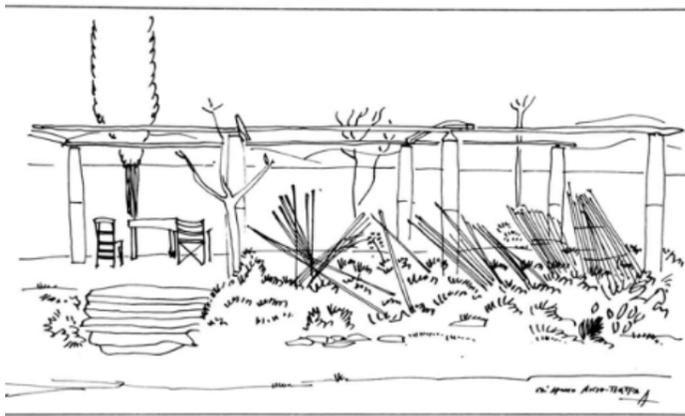
Giorgos Triantafyllou writes in his book “Archetypes,” that sheepfolds are cells of a life singularly adapted to the landscape with good orientation and ventilation, natural materials used, and structure simplicity. While always unauthorized buildings, they are legitimized by the forces of nature, the abundance of pasture, the climatic conditions, and the concept of nomadic life. I will endeavor to highlight through selected details the resourcefulness and simplicity of construction, the power of the minimal, and the warmth of the interior spaces. From small independent units to entire complexes of sheepfolds, pens, and huts, such buildings are scattered throughout the Greek countryside, particularly in areas with a strong tradition in

1 <sup>8</sup> ‘OASE 103 Critical Regionalism Revisited | Tom Avermaete, Veronique Patteeuw, Hans Teerds, La-Catherine Szacka | 9789462084865 | Nai010’, accessed 15 April 2024, [https://www.nai-bookellers.nl/oase-103-kritisch-regionalisme-revisited-critical-regionalism-revisited-kenneth-frampton.html?\\_\\_store=english&\\_\\_from\\_store=default](https://www.nai-bookellers.nl/oase-103-kritisch-regionalisme-revisited-critical-regionalism-revisited-kenneth-frampton.html?__store=english&__from_store=default).





Αρης Κωνσταντινίδης, Στοιχεία αυτογνωσίας



husbandry and livestock transhumance. The known nomadism has its roots in the Balkans and the Mediterranean.<sup>1</sup>

The similarities with modern huts are evident, especially in articulating the timber frame and its twigs and thatch cover woven into the timber posts. Timber, clay, and stone are the three basic building materials that comprise the bearing structure. In his quest, he discovered authentic architecture in the “vessels of life,” which stand “ephemeral in their use but eternal in their essential meaning.” He sought to find authentic buildings to study and simultaneously design.

Aris Konstantinidis had christened “theochitista” (god-built) these samples of “decline and deprivation”?he was the first Greek architect who deliberately documented, highlighted, and utilized in his work the quintessence of these humble structures.

The sensibility of Demetrius Pikioni, among which Greek architecture is directly intertwined with the tradition of each place (island or mountain) and overall with a national tradition. He praises folk art and urges us to study the farmer’s life to find the truth of folk art. In the way he addresses the issue of tradition, we find common elements with Aris Konstantinidis, as he, too, searches for the “essence of tradition.”<sup>2</sup>

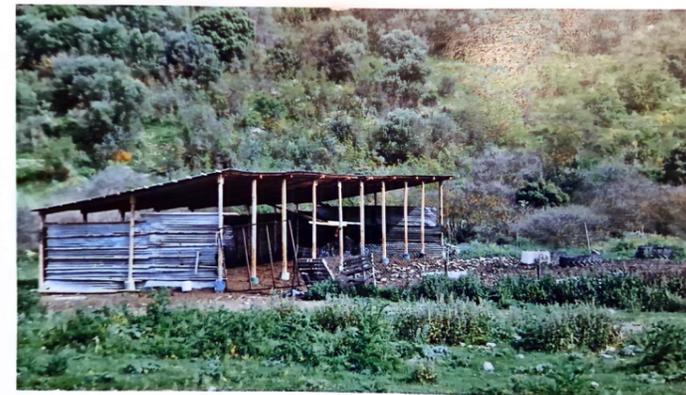
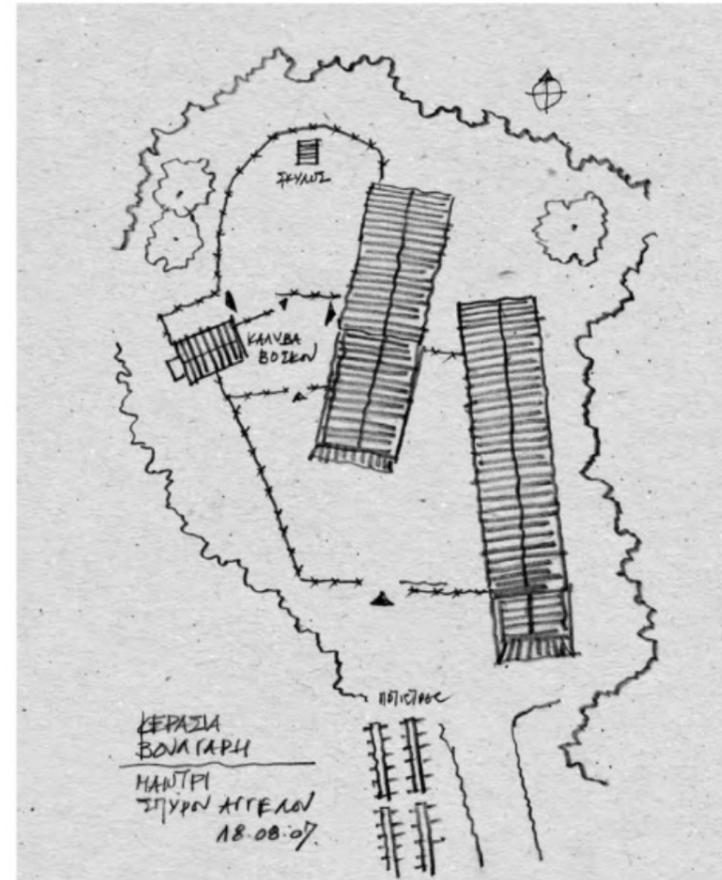
The contribution of George Mega and Angeliki Hatzimihali in a series of folk construction and systematic records of huts and sheepfolds covering much of the Greek countryside, the explorative eyes of local photographers Tasos Tloupas, Dimitris Letsions, as long as the clear vision of Aris Kostnantnidis with the sensitivity of Dimitris Pikionis all wisely collected under Giorgos Triantafyllou words makes the guiding shift towards the design process. The combination of these people around their shared interest in folk architecture through different prisms is another table full of contrasts but a rich reserve for creative dialogue and design.

1 ‘Αρχέτυπα\* | Archetypes\* PART 1 by Giorgos Triantafyllou - Issuu, 22 February 2016, [https://issuu.com/30fyllou/docs/archetyra\\_part\\_1](https://issuu.com/30fyllou/docs/archetyra_part_1).

2 ‘Αρχέτυπα\* | Archetypes\* PART 1 by Giorgos Triantafyllou - Issuu.



47 Βόρεια Εύβοια, Κερασά, περιοχή Βαϊκίγερη, Μαντίρι Σπύρου Αγγέλου, 17-08-2005  
 47 North Euboea, Kerasia, Voulgari's area, the sheepfold of Spyros Angelou, 17-08-2005



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