

# Resilient Territories & Territorial Cohesion Complementary or Contradictory Concepts?

Regional Studies Association Global Conference  
Fortaleza, 27-30 April 2014

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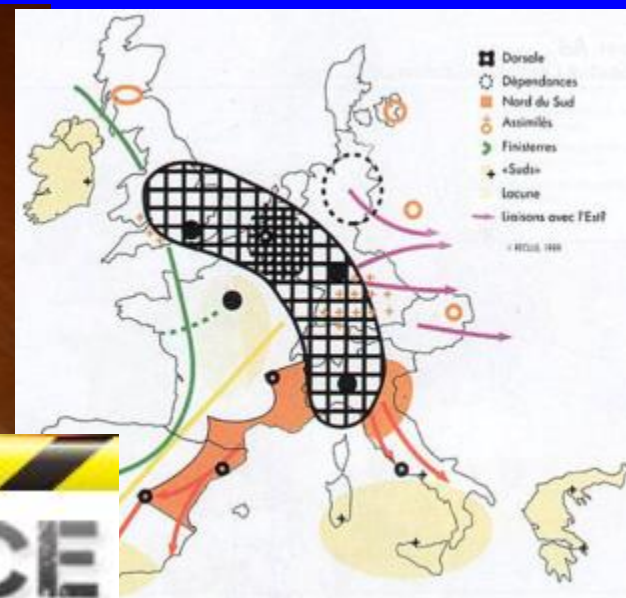
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# New buzzwords?



# Aim and Outline

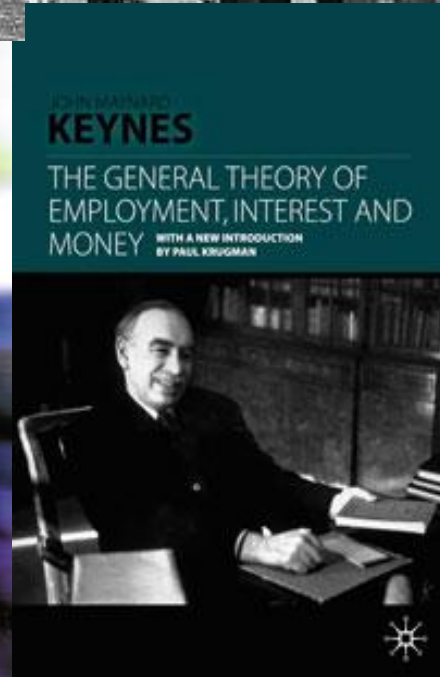
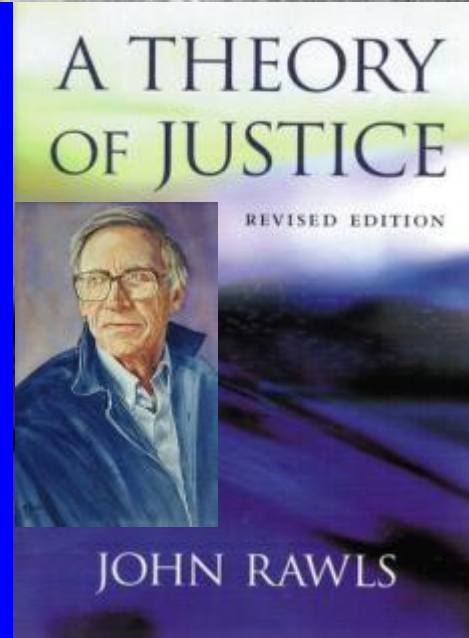
- Where do these concepts come from?
- What do they mean?
- What kind of ideological baggage do they carry with them?

**Key proposition:** *Different genealogies and political philosophies but a great deal of overlap in application*

1. Territorial cohesion
2. Resilience
3. Summing up

# Territorial cohesion

- *Cohesion Territoire*
- Rooted in social democratic ideals of the welfare states:
  - Intervention
  - Regulation
  - Redistribution
  - Equity and fairness





# Rights and duties of the welfare state

- Pursue national economic growth and distribute it across national territories
- Correct social and spatial injustices of the free market economy
- Ensure full employment through Keynesian demand management
- Provide life-time social security for people
- Reduce inequalities and territorial disparities

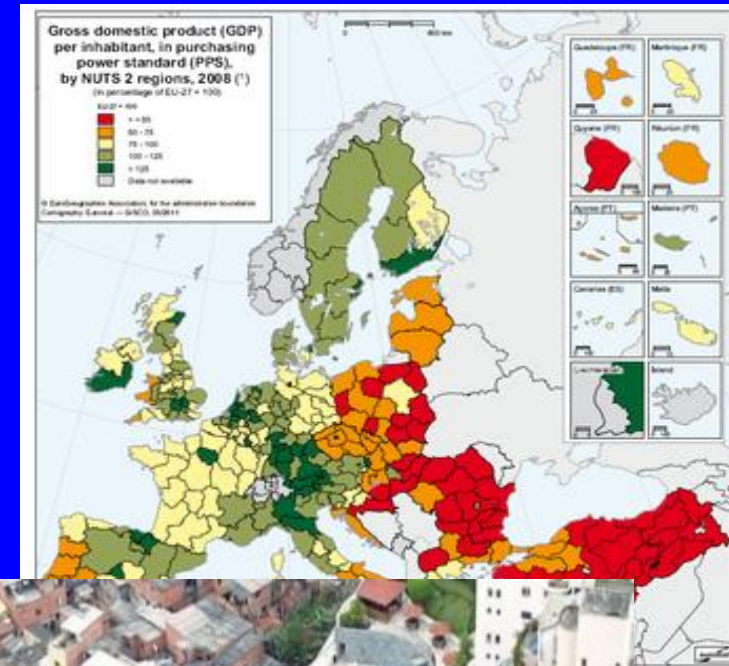
# Citizen- society relationship

- Citizens are seen as free individuals, yet firmly bound into a system of mutual inter-dependency.
- Society is understood as a coherent whole in which solidarity prevails.



# Regional policies of the welfare state

- Narrowing the gap between rich and poor
- Channelling investments to the lagging regions
- Creating Growth Poles



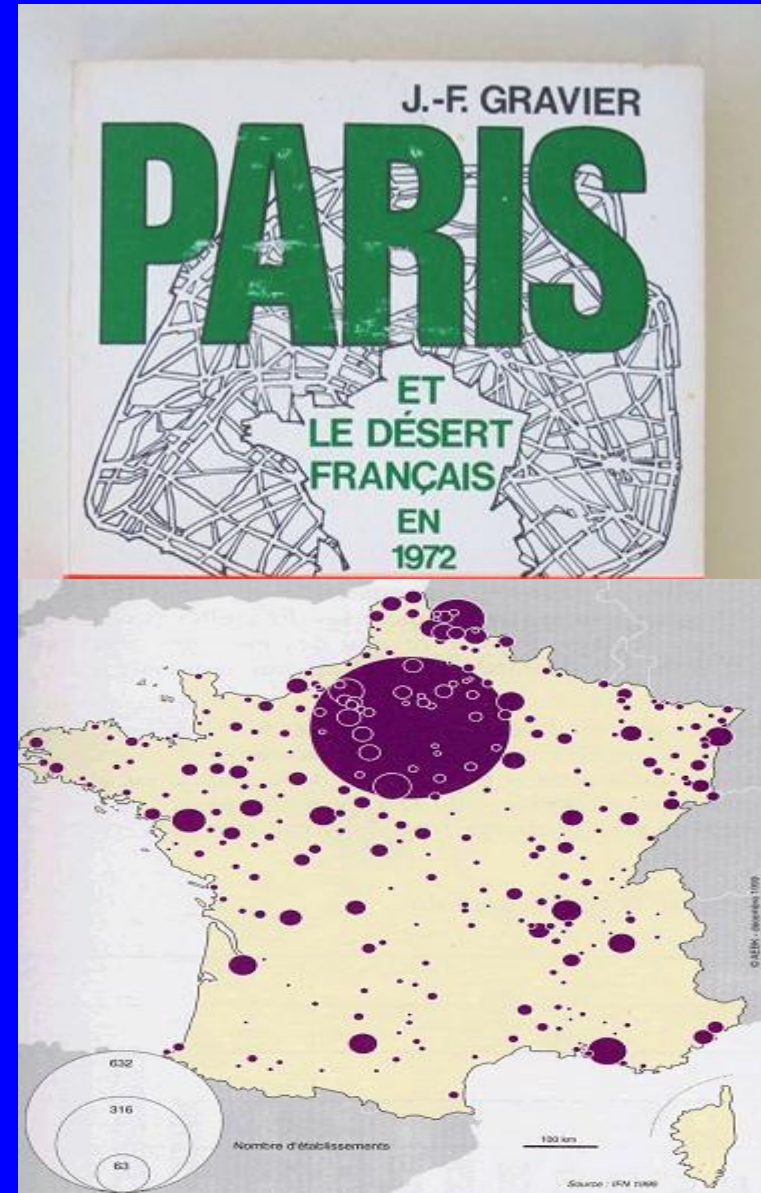
# Balanced Development

- Embedded in the French planning culture
- Hallmark of *aménagement de territoire*:
  - ‘Regional economic approach’ to planning
  - Focusing on reduction of regional disparities through public policy and redistributive measures



# *Métropoles d'équilibre*

- Jean-François Gravier's *Paris et le Désert Français*
- A counter-Parisian spatial strategy based on:
  - creating growth poles outside Paris
  - pouring resources into French provisional cities
- Making France territorially more cohesive!



# Ascendancy of Territorial Cohesion

- Promoted by:
  - Jacques Delors
  - Michel Barnier
- Introduced into the Amsterdam Treaty, 1997
- Sustained through the EC triennial Reports on *Economic and Social Cohesion*



# Territorial cohesion incorporated in the Lisbon Treaty, 2009

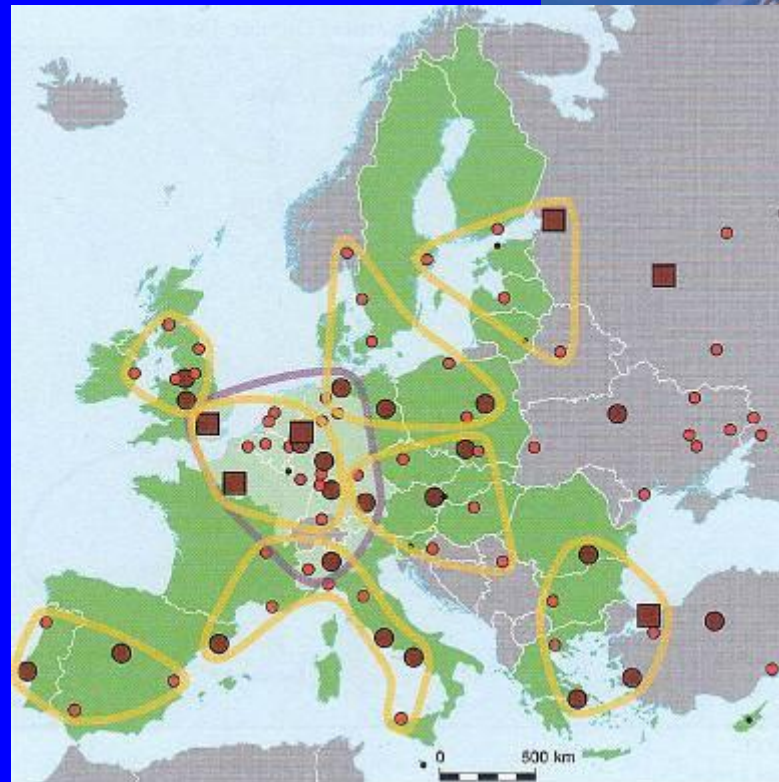
- “The Union shall develop and pursue its action leading to the strengthening of its economic, social and **territorial** cohesion”. (Article 158)





# From France to spatial strategies across Europe

Territorial Cohesion  
created the rationale  
for **polycentric**  
development



# **Territorial Cohesion as the spatial manifestation of European Social Model**

- ESM: an ‘ideal type’ model which:
  - Refers to a regulated market economy with comprehensive system of social security
  - Is defined in contrast to Anglo-American model
  - Offers greater social protection against economic insecurity and inequality
  - Relies on public institutions and collective choice



# Territorial Cohesion and ESM

- Territorial cohesion extends the ESM beyond *individuals* and social groups to *places* and territories
  - Individual's life chances are shaped by not just *social* but also *spatial* policies that affect the quality of places where people live and work.
    - “*People should not be disadvantaged by wherever they happen to live or work in the Union*”.
- (EC 3<sup>rd</sup> Cohesion Report, 2004)
- Solidarity between people and places

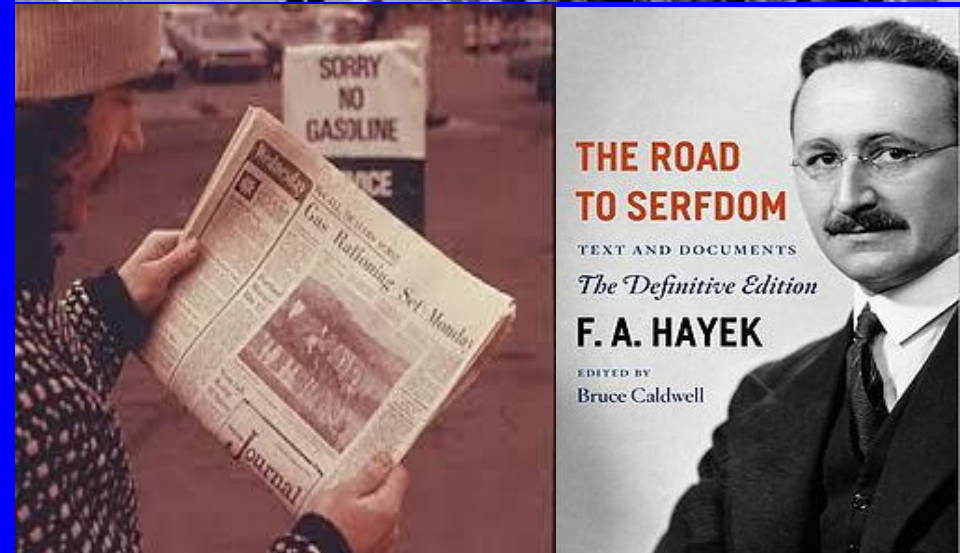
# Why Territorial Cohesion in EU?

- “Competition in the Single European Market is one of the driving forces for spatial development in the EU and will be intensified even more by EMU.
- ...regions... compete with each other for economic activities, jobs and infrastructure.
- ... however, not all European regions start from a similar point.
- It is therefore important gradually to aim at a spatial balance designed to provide a more **even geographical distribution** of growth across the territory of the EU” (aiming at **cohesion**).

(European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP), 1999:11, emphasis added)

# The different Europe of the 1990s

- Rise of neo-liberalism
- Criticism of the welfare state for being:
  - Ineffective, interfering, *dirigiste*, centralised
- Advocating:
  - Free market, small state, privatisation, deregulation, liberalisation



# Some Europeans questioned...

- “Does Europe continue with the old social model, that has an attitude to social legislation and welfare often rooted in the 60s and 70s,
- Or, does it recognise that the new economy demands a re-direction of European economic policy for the future?”

(Tony Blair, 2006)



# Other Europeans suggested...

- The (EU) Constitution is 'too Anglo-Saxon oriented' and 'ultra-liberal'
- It would lead to erosion of the European social model.



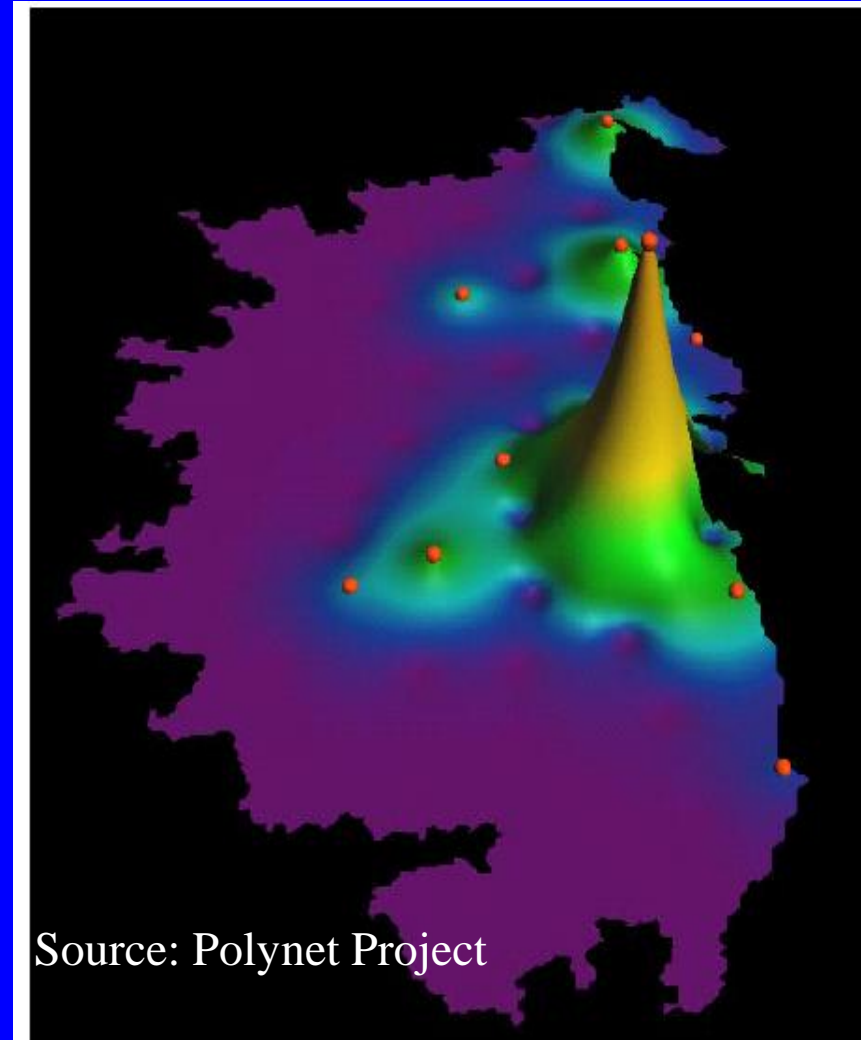


# Change of emphases

- To market efficiency and competitiveness
- From investing in places that are most *in need of* growth, to those that have the greatest *potential for growth*.
- From the *redistribution-based* to *potential-based* territorial policy
- Peripheral regions to be lifted out of decline by themselves

# Irish National Spatial Strategy

- A polycentric development strategy
- Based on *mobilising the potential* of smaller cities
- Without diverting the resources away from Dublin



# **Territorial Cohesion: sum up**

- TC is still an EU objective but, the means to achieve it have changed.
  - from a focus on public policy intervention and concern for equity
  - to a focus on market competitiveness, territorial self-reliance.
- **Territorial cohesions meets resilience**

# Resilience

- From Latin root *Resilire*: to spring back
- Used by physical scientists to denote **resistance** to external shocks
- Buzz Holling (1973):
  - Engineering resilience
  - Ecological resilience



# Engineering Resilience

## Persistence

- “The ability of a system to return to equilibrium state after a temporary disturbance”

(Holling, 1973:17)

- Rooted in Newtonian view of the world as:
  - a giant clock
  - with predictable behaviour
  - kept in order by command and control



Wetherell's  
**Clockwork Universe**  
sculpture, Canberra,  
Australia, 2009



# Dominance of equilibrium-based resilience

- **In economic geography:** economic change as “a process of punctuated equilibrium” (criticised by Simmie & Martine, 2010: 3)
- **In disaster studies:** “the capacity of a city to rebound from destruction” (Vale and Campanella 2005)
- **In psychology:** “the ability of adults who are exposed to an isolated and disruptive event to maintain stable level of functioning.” (Bonanno, 2004:20)
- **In public policy:** Resilience is the “capacity to absorb shocks and to *bounce back* into functioning shape” (D. Omand, quoted in Demos, 2009:18)

# Bounce-back-ability / Pop-up recovery

- Static characteristic to:
  - Preserve what we have, recover to where we were
- **Returning to ‘normal’?**
  - Desirability of the ‘normal’?
  - Possibility of ‘new normal’?



The aftermath of 2005 Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans

# Ecological Resilience

## Adaptability

- “The magnitude of the disturbance that can be absorbed before the system changes its structure and functions...”.

(Holling, 2001:33)

- Not just **how long** it takes for the system to bounce back, but also **how much** disturbance it can take and stays within critical thresholds.



Liberty Lake, WA  
with summer algae blooms

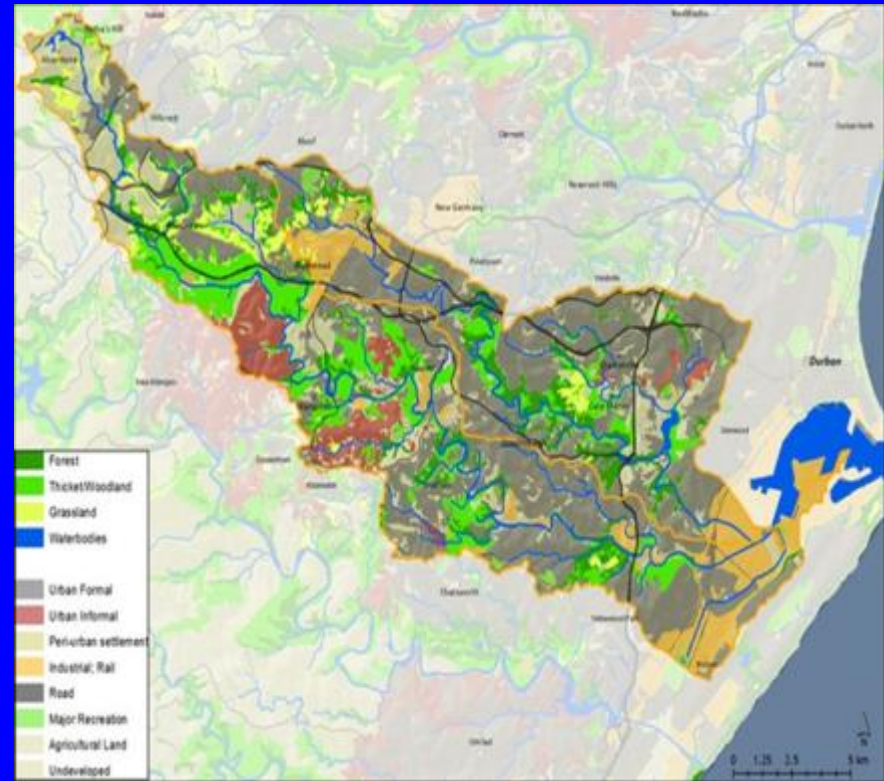
# Evolutionary Resilience

## Transformability

- The ability of complex socio-ecological systems to change, adapt, and transform in response to stress.

(Carpenter et al, 2005)

- Creating untried beginnings
- Breaking away from undesirable ‘normal’



A watershed system, Durban, SA

# Evolutionary resilience

- Challenges equilibrium
- Views the world as: complex, disorderly uncertain, inherently unpredictable
- Regime shifts happen:
  - With or without external shocks
  - With or without proportional or linear cause and effects.
- Faced with adversities, *we hardly ever return to where we were!*



# Evolutionary Resilience

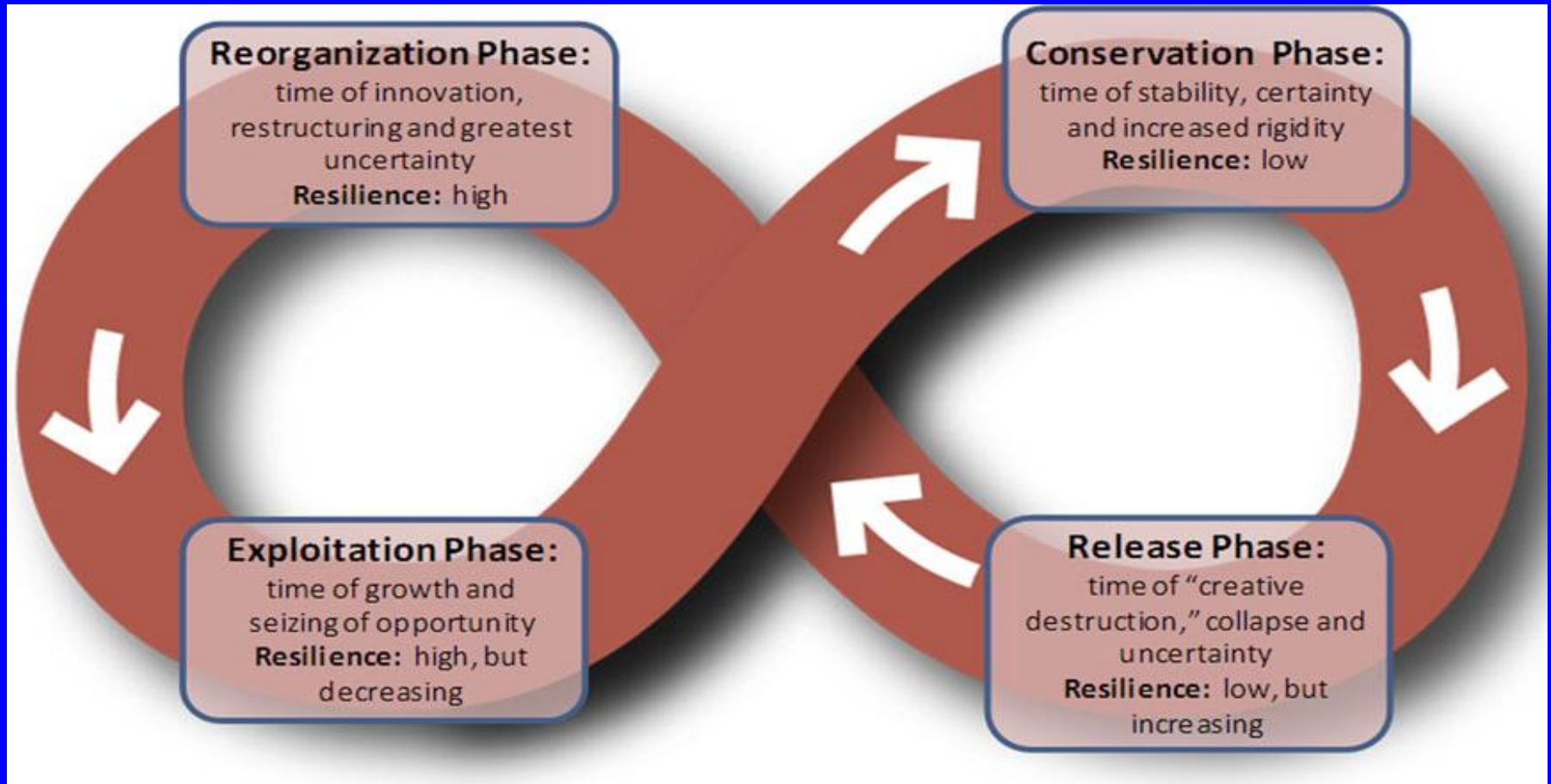
- Not as a fixed *asset*, but as a continually changing *process*
- Not as *being*, but as *becoming*
- Performed when systems are confronted with stress

*The world breaks everyone and afterward  
many are strong at the broken places.*

Ernest Hemingway, *A farewell to Arms* (1929)

# Adaptive Cycle

(Holling, 1986)

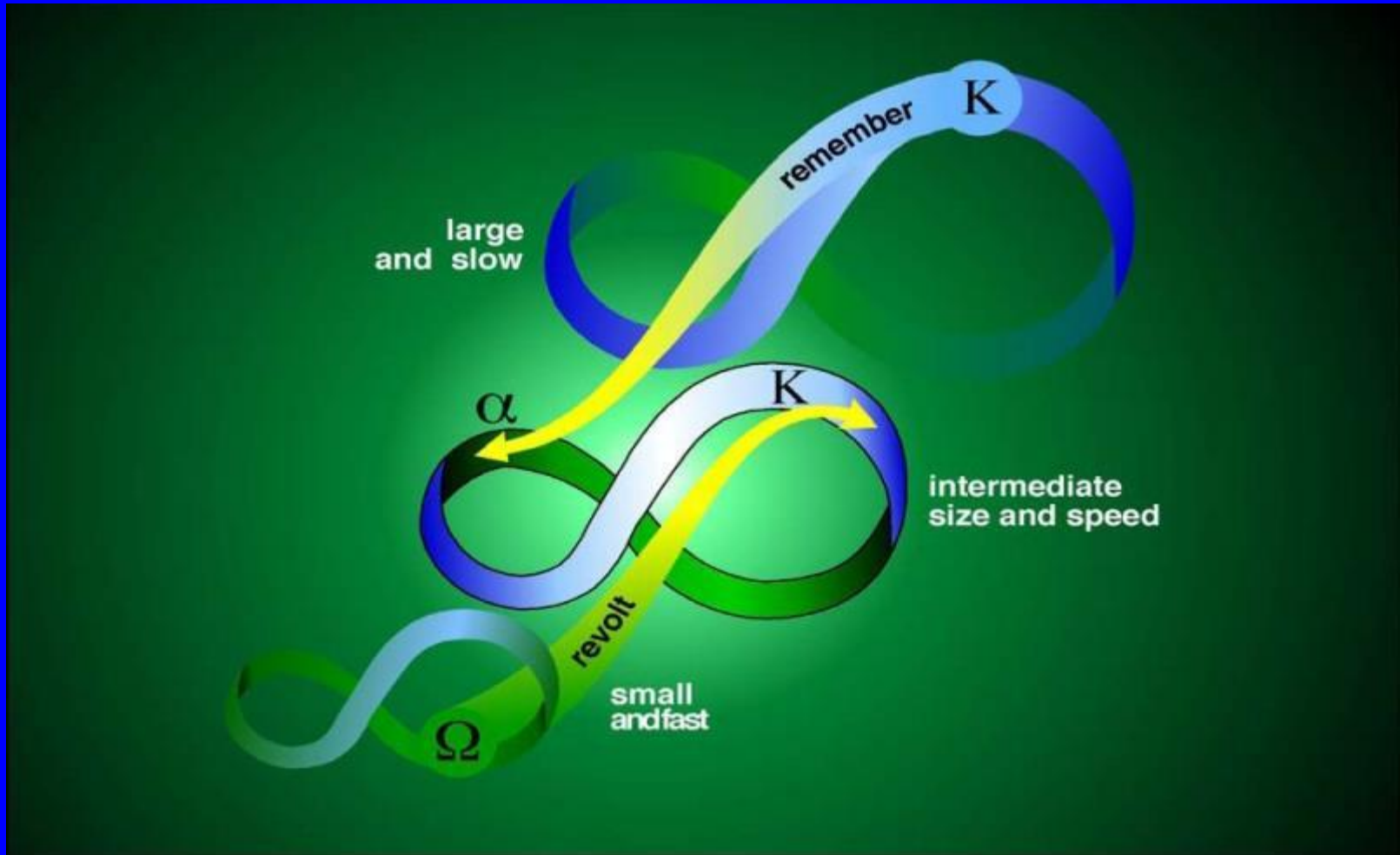


(Pendall, et al, 2010:76; adapted from Gunderson & Holling, 2002)

# Adaptive cycle

- As systems mature, resilience is low: ‘accident waiting to happen’
- When systems collapse, a window of opportunity opens up for alternative pathways
- Creative destruction phase is the time of transformation, when a crisis can be turned into an opportunity

# ‘Panarchy’: a general systems theory



(Gunderson, 2009:5 adapted from Gunderson & Holling, 2002)



# Systems function at multiple scales, speeds and timeframes

- Small changes can amplify into a ‘regime shift’.
- Large interventions may have little or no effects.



The butterfly effect (Edward Lorenz, dynamical systems, 1963)

# Capital is:

- “The inherent potential of a system that is available for change, since that potential determines the range of future options possible’ Holling, 2001:393)
- “Local endowments and territorial characteristics have growing importance for regions in order to cope with and recover from external shocks”.

(EU Territorial Agenda 2020, 2011, para. 16)

# Resilience in the social context

- Intuitive ideological fit with neoliberal philosophy
- Systems as complex, non-linear, and self-organising
- Self-organisation is translated into **self-reliance**

# Self-reliance

- Expecting people to, “pull themselves up by their bootstraps and reinvent themselves in the face of external challenges”.

(Swanstrom, 2008:10)



# Withdrawal of government's support in the name of resilience

- “If the Government takes **greater responsibility** for risks in the community, it may feel under pressure to take increasingly more responsibility, thereby **eroding** community resilience”.

(RRAC, 2009:6, emphasis added)

- Hayek's theory of ‘**spontaneous order**’:
  - Social order emerges from the interaction of self-serving individuals using market mechanisms
  - No need for the state to intervene.

-



# Proximity to neo-liberalism

- Hayek's criticism of the state-engineered equilibria of Keynesian demand management.
  - Social systems are like biological systems defined as complex, adaptive and non-linear.

(Hayek, 1974)
- Hayek called for a reform of “all social institutions in accordance with the self-organising dynamics of the market.”

(Walker and Cooper, 2011:150)

# Citizen - society relationship

- Liberal individualism “amputates the individual from the organic body ... plunges him into the unknown and perilous world of the struggle for survival”

(Norberto Bobbio, 1990:43)

- The emerging consensus on resilient growth seems to reiterate the Darwinian law of natural selection and the survival of the fittest.

# Summing up

- **Territorial cohesion and resilience:**
  - Different origins but same destination
- Complexity and uncertainty are used to:
  - maintain the status quo and justify inaction, rather than,
  - open up windows of opportunity and possibilities for alternative actions; for breaking away from undesirable ‘normal’

# Value choices!

- Follow the path of:
  - Neoliberalism, social Darwinism and competition? Or,
  - Welfarism, social justice and cohesion?
- Pursuing resilience is not a value-free, neutral goal
- It is charged with normative questions of:
  - **Resilience from what, and to what end?**
  - **Resilience for whom, and who gets to decide?**

## Based on:

- Davoudi, S. (2012) Resilience: A bridging concept or a dead end? *Planning Theory and Practice*, 13 (2) 299-307
- Davoudi, S. (2005) Understanding Territorial Cohesion, *Planning Practice and Research*, 20(4): 433-441
- Davoudi, S. (2003) Polycentricity in European Spatial Planning; from an analytical tool to a normative agenda, *European Planning Studies*, 11(8): 979-999