

Introduction

Years ago

Isolation has been present since human beings started to inhabit the land of Earth, a safe ground isolated from waters of ocean. Humans start to build first settlements, first houses shelters resistant to wind, rain and sun. This isolation from inconvenient wather conditions united humans and made population grow.

Yesterday

7.8 Billion people inhabited the Earth. Isolation became a part of everyday life. We are getting used to isolate from each other more and more. Isolation is a way of solving problems. We developed a huge amount of tools that help us to divide, to separate, to segregate, to disconnect and to exclude. We are building walls, fences, gates, all kind of separators without thinking about the consequentions it brings. That make us isolating and being isolated and this duality reflects on society structure. Class distinctions are deeper than ever. The wealth class is getting more powerful and more things becoming inaccesible for lower social classes.

Introduction

Now

For the first time in 21st century, people all around the world have been forced to lock ourselves in houses because of the pandemia of Covid-19. All of us have to adapt very quickly to the constantly changing restrictions. We still find it hard to accept that a major part of our social life has been frozen for indefinite period. We are all vulnerable to the crisis that came with Covid-19. For now, all of a sudden, people from different backgrounds share the feeling of uncertainness about future that in pre-pandemic times, both conscious and unconscious, was reserved for precariat. We share this feeling of anxiety, of not belonging to a bigger group anymore — a feeling of isolation.

Tommorow

Lockdown, again.

Future

Unknown.

Dictionary

isolation (n.)

synonyms:

solitude retreat concealment withdrawal disconnection reclusion quarantine aloneness monkhood alienation detachment aloofness privacy segregation seclusivness exclusion division

to isolate (v.)

synonyms:

confine detach disconnect disengage divide insulate remove segregate separate sequester abstract divorce part quarantine seclude sever sunder block off close off island keep apart

antonyms:

attach combine connect couple desegregate gather join link unite include incorporate integrate

Dictionary

isolated (adj.)

"standing detached from others of its kind," 1740, a rendering into English of French isolé "isolated" (17c.), from Italian isolato, from Latin insulatus "made into an island," from insula "island"

isolation (n.)

translations:

isolasie	Isoléierung	izolasyon
izolim	separatio	izolýasiýa
izolə	izolācija	izolyatsiya
isolatze	iżolament	ynysu
izaliacyja	isolatie	elkülönítés
izolacija	leithlis	isolamento
izolatsiya	einangrun	isolaasje
izolacija	eristäytyminen	isolering
izolace	Isolation	isolasi
isolation	isolering	
izolo	izolacja	
isolatsioon	isolamento	
isolement	izolácia	
Ā'isōlēśana	isolasi	
aislamiento	leth-oireachd	

Postcards from Isolation

Main part of the "Luxury/Precarity - Architecture of Isolation" project is a collection of postcards sent from islands of isolation. A form of postcard allows to create a kind of personal message that can be read differently by each of us. It isn't a very official way to share thoughts, but rather a very short and emotional report sent in certain circumstances and in specific time.

We divided postcards to 7 categories depending on which kind of isolation it described:

out of touch
home sweet home
splited up
gilded cages
gated
trapped inside my head

Postcards from Isolation

out of touch

Staying out of physical touch, because of distance barrier or staying isolated in one group of people because of beliefs and traditions. Some people's decision lead to their enclosement and a place of "wanted isolation". They choose this way of living over another with more modern facilities or advantages, but it is up to them. It is their own private decision that leads to a feeling or a place of isolation. This is not forced by anyone, so we can say these people want some kind exclusion, individualism or isolation.

Out of touch

Uncontacted Indians of Brazil, Brazil, 2020



Brazil's Amazon is home to more uncontacted tribes than anywhere in the world. There are thought to be at least 100 isolated groups in this rainforest. Their decision not to maintain contact with other tribes and outsiders is almost certainly a result of previous disastrous encounters and the ongoing invasion and destruction of their forest home.

The Amish, USA, 2020



The Amish are known for their isolated lifestyle based on simple living, plain dress, Christian pacifism, and are slower to adopt many conveniences of modern technology, with a view to not interrupting family time, nor replacing face-to-face conversations whenever possible. As time has passed, the Amish have felt pressures from the modern world. Their traditional rural way of life is becoming more different from the modern society.

Monkhood, Roosenberg, Belgium, 2020



The word monk derives from the Greek: monos, which means alone. But the monk is alone as a consequence of his celibacy and the distance he chooses to take from the manifold attractions of his environment. More deeply, the term "alone" applies not only to someone's exterior life but also to the inner person; alone, in the sense of being unified, of having a single undivided purpose. This specific way of living reflects on architecture of abbeys where monks are living. One of the greatest example of how the spiritual character

Out of touch

can be implement into space is Christian Roosenberg abbey designed by Hans Van Der Laan - the. Its architeture purely depict duality of monks life, linking mass to space in an interplay of inside and outside.

Mauro Morandi, Buddeli Island, Italy, 2020



The story of Mauro Morandi's isolation by choice started over 30 years ago, In 1989, Mauro's catamaran engine crippled and anchor adrift washed up on the coast of Budelli Island, located on a stretch of water between Sardi- nia and Corsica As luck would have it. Morandi learned that the island's caretaker was retiring from his post, so he sold his boat and assumed a new role. Morandi passes the time with creative pursuits. He fashions juniper wood into sculptures, finding faces hidden in their nebulous forms. He reads zealously and meditates on the wisdom of Greek philosophers and literary prodigies. He takes pictures of the

island, marveling at how it changes from hour to hour, season to season. This is not unusual for people who spend extensive periods of time alone. Scientists have long posited that solitude generates creativity, and point to generations of artists, poets, and philosophers who produced their greatest works in seclusion from society.

New accent. Antarctica, 2018



Two years ago a very, very cold March day in Antarctica, 11 people people sat down to go over a list of simple words. It wasn't free association but rather the words are considered important markers in a larger effort among linguists to discern what happens to language when a group is separated from the rest of the world pecifically, how quickly they begin to develop their own accent. Slowly the Antarctica group's speech changed, as they all began to sound a bit more like one another and less like people on the other six continents.

Out of touch

Bakhta Happy People, Russia, 2010



Bakhta is a rural locality situated in the heart of russian Taiga forest. The land of Bakhta is isolated for major part of year by harsh weather conditions. Winter lasts here almost all year around. In the movie "Happy People" Werner Herzog, depicts everyday life of inhabitants of Bakhta and how they construct they are constructing happines in Siberia.

Royal Family, Great Britain, 2020



Being part of the royal family is much more tedious and taxing than one would think. It is not like a Disney movie, but instead filled with a lot of rules and obligations that one must follow. Following their strict etiquette Royal Families became closed to public and completly isolated luxurious community, but on the other hand, being born as its member is an example of forced isolation.

International Space Station, 2020



NASA astronauts have been flying to space for more than 50 years and for nearly 20 years, crew members have been staying in space for months-long missions living on the International Space Station with only a few other people in about as much space as a six-bedroom house. Astronauts experience various aspects of social isolation and confinement during their missions.

Postcards from Isolation

home sweet home

Living in different cultures, countries, surrounded by different people and societies have an impact on what home means to us and how we want it to look like. Usually we want to equip the house in everything we need and make it a safe and cozy place to come back to after a day full of work. During pandemia of covid-19, our homes because of quarantine became our cages as we were forced to stay there longer than we wanted to. Some human interactions were banned, but for some people a decision not to socialise and stay home was already made long time ago...

Home sweet home

Cage house, Hong Kong



The density of the population in Hong Kong is huge and that's why the city keeps growing upward. The majority of the population lives in skyscrapers that are deservedly called cage houses. Living in these terrible conditions still costs them about \$180-200 per month. Not all of these people are unemployed, many sell things at markets or wash dishes, but still, they can't afford better living conditions for themselves and continue to live in these cages for years.

Hikokomori, Japan, 2018



In Japan half a million men live as modern-day hermits, closed in their

rooms by choice. They are known as hikikomori – recluses who withdraw from all social contact and often don't leave their houses for years at a time. The trigger for a boy retreating to his bedroom might be comparatively slight - poor grades or a broken heart, for example - but the withdrawal itself can become a source of trauma. And powerful social forces can conspire to keep him there

Mustang, 2015 movie directed by Deniz Gamze



The home of five turkish girls, main characters in the movie directed by Deniz Gamze Ergüven, illustrates isolation in cultural context. The sisters feel stifled in their home as their grandmother tries to make them suitable for marriage. Physical four walls are just a metaphor of struggles that young women living in conservative families have to overcome everyday.

Home sweet home

Gamers' villa Shanghai, China



When today's modern type of jobs like online dating coaches, lime juicers or food deliverer are no longer something unsual, life game streamers closed in their villas, eating only chips and drinking energy drinks aren't anything odd right now. They live in the world of game unconnected to the real world

Biosphere 2 complex Oracle, Arizona, USA, 1991



In 1991, eight crew members - vicionaries, walked into Biosphere 2. They were charged with the task of growing their own own food and conducting environmental experiments while sealed for two years inside the complex. The complex of domes was built in the middle of the desert and fund by a multi-millionaire Texas oilman. In the end, the idea of recreating the conditions for an autonomic biosphere of a rain forrest, desert, marsh and a mini-ocean was largely dismissed as a scientific failure, but it had definitely put an interesting light on people being closed in a bio-dome for such a long period of time. The quarantine of 1990's we could describe it.

Oppidum, Czech Republic



Projecting the end of the world and getting ready for the survival part, while preparing food, gathering the most needed things and designing the most luxurious bunker in the world. The Oppidum is designed to be one of the most luxurious bunker in the world. This kind of isolation is not only a way of living, but also a way of looking at life and future of the world.

Home sweet home

Underground shelters, Fall River County, South Dakota, USA, 2020



xPoint is an abandoned military facility-turned-survivalist community at the base of the Black Hills in Fall River County, South Dakota. As COVID-19 brings the real estate market to a standstill, demand for doomsday bunkers is at an all-time high. The shelters were once signifiers of fringe prepper communities worried about the coming apocalypse. During the pandemic, they've become vacation homes.

COVID-19 Lockdown, 2020



"Lockdown" has been declared the word of the year for 2020 by Collins Dictionary, after a sharp rise in its usage during the pandemic. According to the dictionary, lockdown is defined as "the imposition of stringent restrictions on travel, social interaction, and access to public spaces". Because of Covid-19 restrictions to stay home, its' definition had been redefined to something like a cage.

La Rinconada, Peru



A place that is located at a height of over 4800 m is a home to more than 50 000 people. The community of La Rinconada is one of the most isolated in the world. The town is accesssible only by braving a precarious mountainside road covered in grass and the journey can take several days. Because of the height the density of air is dangerously thin. Breathing is difficult for outsiders and that makes the place free from tourists. Inhabitants of La Rinconada got used to brutal living conditions and hard work in golden mine. This is a price they pay for having a home above the clouds.

splited up

Splited up by the distance, by war, by political issues, by governmental restrictions

We have to split up in smaller groups. We have to split up to use different toilets. That's what we hear.

We are all being forced to split up by higher ideas or labels. Sometimes those actions taken by institutions didn't even mean so much to seperate, divide, segregate or exclude us. It just had happened naturally.

Splited up

Armrest, archisuit, USA, 2005



By creating buffers between bench sitters, armrests can produce a sense of privacy that may actually encourage people to sit closer together. On the other hand, such armrests deterring the homeless from sleeping in public spaces. For artist Sarah Ross this observation became a trigger to design one of her "archisuits" - special jogging suits that allows a wearer to fit into structures designed to deny them.

Sex segregation in public toilets



The policing of gender in bathrooms is an exclusionary spatial practice that has been critical to maintaining certain gender norms.

The public bathroom has been a space whereby the gender public could determine who enters and who does not on how one "performs" one's gender identity.

Hug tunnel, 2020 Senior home in Brazil



A care home in south Brazil has created a "hug tunnel" to allow residents to embrace their loved ones during the coronavirus pandemic. It is said that the facility, which is home to 28 senior residents who have been in isolation since March 17, took inspiration from a video in the US, where a woman used a plastic curtain to hug her mother.

The wall



Splited up

Donald Trump, the ex-president of United States, wants a physical barrier along the border between Mexico and the US to prevent people from crossing over it illegally. Originally he suggested that Mexico should pay for the wall, but it became clear early on that the Mexican government would not pay. Then, President Trump was appealing to his own government - and therefore, to US taxpayers - to pay for the wall.

Robert Moses Low-Bridge, Long Island, USA, 1931



The primary role of the bridge is to connect people, but sometimes they can also keep people apart. By designing extra low bridge Robert Moses make impossible for most buses to pass underneath and get to the city. Since that the poor bus-riding part of society, that includes lower-middle class African Americans, in particular, couldn't enter.the Jones Beach.

Al Azraq, Jordan, 2017 Azraq Refugee Camp



Azraq is situated in the stony desert 100km north of the Jordanian capital city of Amman. Architects try to redesign refugee camps and improve the lifestyle of refugees. The Al Azraq Refugee Camp is using renewable energy sources. Refugees often find themselves separated from their familiesby their brutal experiences of conflict and persecution, just at the time when they need each other the most.

Splited up

Penguin Pool in the London Zoo, London. 1934



The days of the Victorian menagerie are over. but modern zoos are much more than a collection of animals and more important than ever. Spliting up the animals from their natural environment and closing them in cages may sound cruel however the zoos are helping some species to survive. It's not an exaggeration to say that colossal numbers of species are going extinct across the world, and many more are increasingly threatened and at risk of going extinct. Some of these collapses have been sudden, unexpected or were simply discovered too late.

KTH, Stockholm, 2020



Many architecture students all around the world are struggling with studying in corona times. Most of schools provided online form of classes using digital tools, but group projects are barely possible to happen because of the lockdown. Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm decided to try make studying as "normal" as possible. To protect students, group projects are taking place outdoor. Moreover each student has its own square drawn with chalk onto flooring as a working space and is not allowed to cross its horder

School, Taiwan, 2020,



In the pandemic times of Covid-19, education of kids still had to proceed. New ways of teaching were implemented in schools. For example in Taiwanese schools, kids had to sit in a distance of 1,5 meters between each other and be surrounded by the partition boards.

living in a bubble

The concept of the architectural bubble had been around since Le Corbusier's Towards a New Architecture. In 1960 Bubblewrap was invented by pneumatically filling shower curtains into a gridded field of bubbles. That same year, Buckminster Fuller and Shoji Sadao proposed to cover New York with just one.

Closing ourselves in structures resembling bubbles like domes, inflatable structures or creating immaterial bubbles are ways of isolating.

Living in a bubble

Basel, CH, 17. May 1971 Coop Himmelb(l)au/Restless Sphere



In 1971, Coop Himmelb(l)au ran through the streets of Basel inside their own inflatable performance. With each bubble, "Himmelb(l)au and co" strove to internalize architecture so that the individual could formulate it. The bubbles signified their own importance over what was around them.

The Flaming Lips concert Oklahoma City, USA, 2020



American rock band the flaming lips has brought back live music in a safe, socially-distanced manner by encasing themselves and the audience in giant plastic bubbles. Held at their hometown Oklahoma City, the musicians literally blew up 2020 to protect themselves and the fans from COVID-19. But it's not the first time the lips have enclosed themselves inside huge plastic bubbles. In fact, its frontman, wayne coyne, is known to walk on top of crowds during the band's shows. The venue, which has a capacity of 3,500, was filled with one hundred inflatable orbs, and became a test run for future concerts amidst the pandemic.

Beach camp, Antofagasta, Chile



Domes are one of the most familiar features in architecture. They are used for government or religious buildings to show power. The hollow shape of a sphere resembles a bubble in which people can enclose themselves and isolate for the time of holidays. The beach house in Antofogasta, located in the north of the country is one of the main gateways to discover the Atacama Desert.

Living in a bubble

All the Ways Facebook Tracks You illustration: Elen Lacey



Mixing and sharing different points of view lead to better understanding the world and people around us. Technology such as social media let us 20-off with like-minded people. Separated from information that disagrees with our viewpoint we are becoming isolate us in our own cultural and ideological bubbles. It is a result of personalized searches and all data about users such as location or past behavioir that is collected online. Website algorithm selectively guesses what information user would like to see but the problem is that choices made by these algorithms are not transparent. Internet activist Eli Pariser named it filter bubble which is a state of intellectual isolation caused by social media.

Thermal baths at Vaals, Switzerland



Buildings, such as Thermal baths in Vaals, Switzerland, seen as monuments of architecture are meeting places for two isolated groups of people - so called bubbles. One of them is a group of architects and architecture students joining architectural pilgrimages to see and explore temples of sophisticated architecture. Second group of people is visitors and rich guests looking for luxurious ways of spending holidays. Thermal baths are beautifully located in the mountains and their walls disappear in the calm and idyllic landscape.

gilded cages

Living in air-conditioned spaces, in self-sustainable yachts or beach resorts and using transportation circuits - airports, cars, private jets - all that shelter rich people from real contact with society.

But a lot of people living in luxury are actually trapped or have no freedom. The lifestyle of rich prevents them from sensing what surrounds them.

These islands of surreality within the rich carry out their daily lifes, help shape and direct our beliefs, values and habits, imprisoning and deluding an individual's mind.

Gilded cages

Luxurious archipelago World Islands, Dubai, United Arab Emirates source: NASA



World Islands in Dubai were an artificial set of island created for luxurious holidays. Seen from above, they were creating a shape of the world.

Untill today, this archipelago is not inhabited that makes us doubt the idea of creating an artificial luxurious set of islands.

Will we ever find people willing to live there?

Floating Villas, Bora Bora Island



In Bora Bora Island, you can not only rent a house but the whole resort for yourself. "Welcome to Conrad Bora Bora Nui, a blissful and luxurious resort where relaxation and unparalleled views await you."

We can read on the website of Nui Resort located on a private island. Among other facilities like infinity pool you can enjoy as well "the longest private stretch of soft white sand beaches near to the mesmerizing lagoon."

Khwan Beach Resort, Thailand photo: booking.com



Some time ago, camping used to be a cheap way of travelling for families. Now it has changed its; name to glamping and shifted into totally a new perspective. It's not about spending some value time in nature anymore, or staring at fauna and flora, or waking up with sunrise and enjoying simple pleasures of life. Now camping, or should I say glamping, is all about luxury tents with private pools, art galleries and all-inclusive bars.

Gilded cages

Bristol, UK, 2019 The wave inland surfing destination. photo: LHC Net



The Wave, England's first inland surfing destination, is a pioneering £25m project. Maintenance of the most expensive inland artificial wave resort costs 50 thousands of dollars a day. At the centre of the development is a stunning freshwater lagoon, employing state-of-the-art technology to generate perfect surfing waves for both experienced surfers and beginners alike.

Wedding bungalow, the Maldives island



Renting a floating bungalow for the celebration of your life sounds like a dream. The only downside of that idea is that you have to fly your whole family and friends there.

Is it worth it? Escaping your everday life for one week or a day of celebrations? How easy it is to destroy this bubble of perfect life?

Piz Lunghin, Switzerland Mountain cabin hut. photo: Archdaily



People like to escape in nature, far away from the civilization and technology. That's why we have been building capsules, mountain huts and cabines. In the era of remote work in 2020 y. will we all escape to tiny houses or mountain huts to enjoy the views and nature and still be able to work?

Gilded cages

Solar Boat, 2013



Powered only by the sun, the Tûranor (meaning 'power of the sun' in Elvish, the language that was created by J.R.R. Tolkien for The Lord of the Rings) has managed to break several distance, speed and longevity records of other solar powered vessels.

If you've ever wanted to avoid human contact for the rest of your life, you can now! The luxury boat was designed to be self-sustaining so that you never have to return to land again. As a result, users of the sleek yacht can live out their days on the high seas.

Are capitains of yachts, boats already individual islands?

Buckingham Palace



You might think that royals enjoy lavish lifestyles in opulent palaces, like Buckingham Palace, a 240-bedroom manse with more than 400 servants on hand. You may be imagining beautiful country manor houses, expensive cars, gold- and gem-encrusted finery and custom-fitted clothes. Well, it turns out you're on the right track. The lives of royalty are indeed very privileged, but very isolated from the rest of the society as well. They live behing golden gates, high fences and walls of their huge mansions. They are hiding behind those walls from real people problems.

gated

People are used to dividing spaces from the beginning of the civilization.

We built fences to enclose animals in the banyards, we hid in shelters made out of primitive material and currently we are putting gates in front of our houses to make it impossible for our neighbours to walk on the private land. The enclosement, rules and restrictions gives us a false sense of security.

Gated

The gate of Hidden Hills, Holywood, USA



Although gated communities are eulogized by residents, developers and real estate agents for providing safe environment for families, they have a negative impact on ubran planning of the city. They create private fortresses that destroy the vibrancy of the city through their exclusivity. They enclose public spaces, gate them with guards and make it impossible to explore that space for some.

the Villages, Florida, USA



The villages is one of the largest age-restricted adult communities in Florida state. The inhabitants are allowed to live in there under few conditions; at least one of the family members have to be over 55 years old. In the total area of 15 square kilometers, there are golf fields, parks, pools, fitness trails, restaurants and the Lifelong Learning College. But aren't the senior communities discriminatory against younger buyers?

Playground, Wroclaw, Poland, 2020



The smallest gated playground in Poland shows how ridiculous building law rules are. In this situation that small playground near to the parking lot had to be gated to be safe for the kids and all users of it.

trapped inside my head

Becoming distant from ideas, declining existence of some of the things in life may lead to developing a new philosophical theory.

Quarantine, isolation and being distant from others may cause a lot of psychological issues. We still don't know what will be a long term result of isolation in 2020y.

Being trapped in your mind doesn't only come from a physical situation, but mainly from a place of your mind, where you can't seem to find any good solution for your problem and you can feel powerless against it.

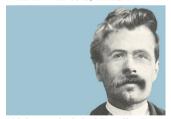
Trapped inside my head

George Berkeley, solipsism



Individuals experiencing solipsism syndrome feel that reality is not ,real' in the sense of being external to their own minds. The syndrome is characterized by feelings of loneliness, detachment and indifference to the outside world. Periods of extended isolation may predispose people to solipsism syndrome.

Friedrich Nietzsche nihilism



Nihilism is the belief that all values are baseless and that nothing can be known or communicated. It is often associated with extreme pessimism and a radical skepticism that condemns existence. A true nihilist would believe in nothing, have no

loyalties, and no purpose other than, perhaps, an impulse to destroy.

Fortitude Ranch, West Virginia Doomsday preppers.



Doomsday preppers live in a fear of unknown future. That is why they are getting ready for natural disasters, building bunkers undeground and gathering different resources of food.

Photo from "Buried" (2010) movie directed by Rodrigo Cortes



"Buried" is a claustrophobic and tense thriller with only one character and location and practically in real time. It is about a man trapped alone in a coffin having only a phone to contact the outside world.

Conclusion

Why we need to isolate ourselves from others?

Is playing with others in school still allowed?

What royal families have in common with amish people?

Are royal families disconnected from society?

Is being born in royal family forced isolation?

Are royal residences golden cages?

Can you buy an island?

Can bridge divide instead of connect people?

Do you have to be alone to realize what you feel?

Do you remember how to dance?

How do you design public space if it is no longer for human interactions?

Does anyone still like isolation?

Are monks using technology? Fortress house – future?

Can we isolate ourselves from information?

Are we becoming islands?

Do we still have desserted islands?

Can online events replace physical ones?

How to keep the distance during concert and still enjoy it?

How long can you stand staying at home?

Are monks ignoring the outside world?

Will shaking hands be banned?

Is it possible to express feelings when we can't touch others?

Can we still hug?

How keeping 1,5m distance will affect on urban design?

Is the commune our future?

Does each country need to be accessible?

Is dividing a good and o bad practice at the same time?

Is hikokomori new lifestyle?

What will happen if we close borders again?

Are we still afraid of being isolated?

Will weather still matter?

Can we hide?

Is bunker a new house typology?

Can isolation lead to the creation of new accents, new languages?

Will isolation change the way we talk?

Conclusion

Is architecture being built for its' designers or for its' users?
Is urban planning important to today's families? Should they value inclusion of different parts of the society more?
Aren't the senior communities discriminatory against younger buyers?
Should we gate everything we can? Is it really safer this way?

Are capitains of vachts and boats already individual islands?

Is it worth it? Escaping your everday life for one week or a day of celebrations?

How easy it is to destroy this bubble of perfect life? Are we seen as selfish creators when we create artificial places like this? Are we trying to be smarter than the nature?

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