

belonging element of order in chaotic situations

games of hide and seek

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It's no secret that the smartphone, the internet, and google manage to shorten the distance between Tokyo, New York, Tel Aviv and blur the difference between actual reality and a virtual dream, pulling to pieces the personal identity that until recently was an important part of the most personal defense mechanisms. The question is – whether and how this boundary-blurring finds expression in architecture.

The automatic answer is – of course it does and big time; after all, architecture is Man's most obvious clothing, whether he is worthy of it or not. And this is precisely what the inventors of phenomenological architecture are referring to - what is ultimately important is not the author's intention, but rather the user's interpretation.

A psychological research study carried out in 1968 at Kansas University entitled "Social Ecology", showed that the design of various meeting places such as offices, houses, restaurants, and parks significantly affects people's behavior, particularly their expectations of others. And it is not surprising; after all, it is natural for people to behave differently at the beach, a theatre, their private homes, or the work place.

1968 - Almost fifty years have gone by. I'd let you off with regard to these obvious "findings" if it wasn't a leap-year (366 days) a year of "monkey fire" – a year prone to disaster according to Chinese astrology, appearing every sixty years to fan the flames of revolution in various places, as if they were a single field of thorns.

Fact – In the course of that year, there were worldwide, highly significant social upheavals, such as the student revolt, which began in France against the backdrop of the Vietnam War inspired by the philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and led by Pierre Victor and Red Danny (Daniel Cohen Benedict), later leading to the "germ" that brought about the establishment of many protest movements, among others - the Black Panthers in the US and the Black Panther movement in Israel. A year when the Soviet Union invaded Prague; Apollo 6 circled the moon; the eternal Mapai disbanded; Martin Luther King and then Robert Kennedy were assassinated; an El-Al plane was hijacked (for the first time) to Algiers; France became a nuclear power;

Israeli television started broadcasting; the submarine Dakar disappeared; the Long Short Cut, a novel by Paul Winterton (under the pen name of Andrew Garve), was the first book entirely written and printed electronically – without Tippex, erasers, or notes attached acknowledging mistakes, as any self-respecting book did then.

At this point one may ask: what is the organizing principle underlying all these events and how does it work?

To answer this, I propose "recalling" Émile Durkheim, father of modern sociology, who claimed that organic solidarity explains the underlying rules of universal situations.

No need of much imagination to understand that what lies behind this is the "germ of belonging" which, as a result of the communication revolution, has become an invisible virus managing to reduce the speed of gossip to a mere "like".

Evidence of this is the "Islamic Spring" that swiftly ended all the corrupt (but stable) Arab regimes to become a threatening "winter", the most extreme expression being the Islamic State - or simply - Daesh (ISIS).

To return to the "astonishing" 1968 findings whereby "the clothes make the man", we cannot ignore the fact that this is also particularly true in reverse - namely, man makes the clothes (and architecture as well); likewise, the relationship between

two polarities is not always mandatory. The Midrash Tanhuma relates specifically to this: "The clothes are worthier than the person who wears them". That is - there are those who receive good architecture, but mess it up.

José Ortega y Gasset, one of the most important Spanish philosophers, was preoccupied with the reciprocity between environmental circumstances and human beings. Ortega's elaboration was reflected in the sentence "I think, therefore I am", meaning it is not enough to think (as Descartes and others believed) one must take action.

Ortega's intention was that while the person is indeed a product of his environment, he always has freedom of choice, and may do with it as he pleases, according to his culture and understanding.

No research is needed to illustrate this sentence, although there are many studies that actually "discover" that behavior patterns are a significant factor in creating a place, giving it a cultural value or, alternatively - taking it away – supported by basic terms in sociology such as "neglect", "bad taste" and "vandalism".

This connects directly to the herd-behavior phenomenon (flocking) whereby if you want to ensure that your behavior is appropriate, do what everyone else is doing, assuming they know what they're doing".

This principle also explains the popularity of