Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

From Six Millon to Seventy Years

Rick Meghiddo · Wednesday, May 2nd, 2018

Within a week difference, Jews around the world commemorate Yom HaShoah, commonly known as the Holocaust; Yom Hazikaron – Memorial Day for the Fallen Soldiers of Israel and Victims of Terrorism; and Yom Haatzmaut, Israel's Declaration of Independence in 1948. In parallel, we witness a resurgence of anti-Semitism in Europe and in Islamic countries. In view of these, I decided to produce a short documentary as a reminder that visualizes aspects of these conflicting forces, brings personal stories and testimonials, and shows Israel's life and architecture today as an extraordinary "human laboratory" to change the world for the better. To set this reality into a global context, I include here a Humanistic Agenda for the 21st Century.

(Full version of video at the end of this article.)

1. Shoah and "Leprosy of the Spirit"

On April 11, I assisted a commemoration of the Shoah at the Congregation Ner Tamid of South Bay in Rancho Palos Verdes. The mass murder of six million Jews by the German Nazi regime and its collaborators during 1941-5 was reminded through the lighting of six candles and the presentation of the documentary, "Never Again is Now," about Evelyn Marcus' family journey in her native Netherlands, and her personal confrontation with the current rise of anti-Semitism in Europe.

Evelyn Markus is a psychologist and expert on managing resistance and conflict at work, and emotional self-control. When asked during the Q & A "how one confronts xenophobia and hatred," her answer was: "you first show that it is wrong and that should not be rewarded." Sure, but that is not enough. Bernard Henry-Levi defined anti-Semitism as the leprosy of the spirit. In an article published four years ago,"A 100-Year Cease-Fire," I proposed a "carrot and the stick method" to solve Israel-Arab/Palestinian conflict.

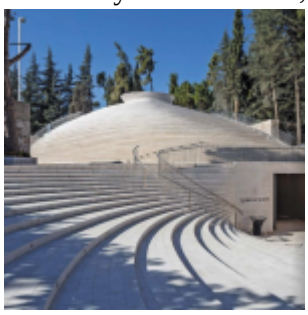
2. Dreaming + Will vs. Xenophobia

Theodor Herzl, considered to be the father of political Zionism, believed that antisemitism could not be defeated or cured, only avoided, and that the only way to avoid it was the establishment of a Jewish state. Today we all know that even the Jewish State, that this year celebrates the seventieth anniversary, is not a cure for the leprosy of antisemitism, yet it offers a strong "antibiotic" through a combination of creativity and military strength.

Architecture and planning in Israel played a vital role in Israel's development, from the foundation of Tel Aviv in 1909 as a modern city on the sand dunes North of Jaffa, to the absorption of Bauhaus and Le Corbusier's ideas into a social agenda, to many examples on forefront architecture today. If and when the many xenophobic Islamic countries that surround Israel will realize how much their own development could benefit through collaboration rather than hatred, Israel's know-how can help the Middle East to become a new Renaissance.



University Senate Center, Ben Gurion University, Beer Sheva



Mount Hertzl Memorial for Fallen



Mount Hertzl Memorial for Fallen



Mount Hertzl Memorial for Fallen



Mount Hertzl Memorial for Fallen



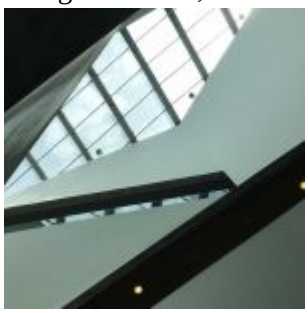
Seen from the Supreme Court



Supreme Court, Jerusalem



Design Museum, Holon



Tel Aviv Museum of Art



Telaviv Cinematheque Plaza



Multi-cultural ride in Jerusalem



Tel Aviv beach

3. A humanistic Agenda with a Vision

Whether the world's population will be 10,000,000,000 in 2050, 2044 (my 100-year birthday!) or 2060, is not important. We'll get there and far beyond. At a global level of a social agenda, the priorities are:

- **Universal Physical and Mental Healthcare**
- **Universal Income-producing Jobs**
- **Universal Shelter**
- **Universal Education**
- **Sustainable Food Production**

In this context, architecture has a moral responsibility. The social agenda is part and parcel of the architectural agenda and of the sustainability agenda.

In a world where the speed of growth of human needs exceeds the speed of production to satisfy those needs, SPEED OF CONSTRUCTION and AFFORDABILITY are critical.

Also critical is the QUALITY OF THE HUMAN HABITAT. It starts with the DWELLING UNIT, it expands to the URBAN ENVIRONMENT, and it touches every single aspect of human life: the quality of the working space, of the learning space, of the social space.

SUSTAINABILITY brings GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS to the realm of architecture.

ARCHITECTURE AS ART is critical to integrate the physical and the emotional human needs.

MIXED-USE AND MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY are integral components of the sustainability agenda. While mixed-use juxtapose multiple functions (housing, commerce, education) multi-functionality makes possible the multiple uses of the same space, and the multiple-use of the same

component: a stairway as structure, a column or beam as a container of ducts, a wall as a container of storage, a roof as an edible garden.

PROXIMITY BETWEEN LIVING SPACE AND WORKING SPACE are part of the sustainability agenda. It can be, a) Within the dwelling unit; b) Adjacent to the dwelling unit (price Tower); c) Within walking or bike distance from the dwelling.

MOBILITY is integral to both human needs and to sustainability, yet it demands a total revision of how it works. It consists of three categories: a) Emergency access (firemen, ambulances, police, rescue from disasters); b) Public use: air mobility and public transportation of multiple kinds: trains, tramways, air tram cable cars, moving conveyors, buses, taxis (with drivers or driverless;) Pc. Private: bikes, skateboards, cars, trucks (private or rented.)

ART, together with nature, remain an important source of inspiration and, as in the case of nature, it must be read in the context of time and place, and it must be reinterpreted. The sources could be many: the Caves of Altamira, the graphics of mud huts in Africa or of American Indian tents, and the works of Western and Eastern high-art through the millennia.

In all these areas, Israel is likely to play a vital role. Its success is as an antibiotic against anti-Semitic leprosy as one can get.

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