

Architecture of layers

Israel is a country of multiple cultures and communities, with a richness of landscapes and traditions. Its biblical heritage gives it its uniqueness.

Israel was founded in the 20th century -the century of Modernism and social utopia - and was built in that spirit. The early Israeli architecture reflects the tremendous attempt to reconstruct a new society in an exceptional environment.

Practising architecture in modern Israel means dealing with issues of profound values such as:

- The relevance of biblical heritage in the formation of a new Israeli architecture.
- The meaning of a regional architecture in the context of constant conflicts.
- The identity of an Israeli architecture in an era of economic globalization and international media.

Maintaining a vivid dialogue with heritage and tradition, and, at the same time, assimilating new technologies and international architectural texts, is a daily dilemma.

In this complex reality loaded with conflicts and controversies we, as architects, suggest a different attitude towards design: not the traditional way of composition, but rather a critical way of recomposition, as we believe that under the diversity of views and perspectives it is impossible to draw a homogenic path of design.

The process of design begins with a careful examination of the various layers which compose our life such as: history, tradition, time, space, urban tissue, landscape and program. We address each cultural layer separately and argue its necessity and influence. We evaluate its relevance to the present problems of technology, social ideas and culture and the benefit of the community from its presence.

Architecture of layers suggests a contemporary approach to deal with complex issues in various channels simultaneously. This process does not necessarily create harmony and calmness but it definitely confronts the complexity of modern life as it is experienced in our region and creates an atmosphere of pluralism and freedom, a coexistence of minds and ideas.

Architecture of layers addresses the question of aesthetics in an indirect way with much more tolerance and open-mindedness, aesthetics being the representation of the cultural aspirations and hopes of a community.

The issues of ethics and social values are much more existential and must be regarded as the generator of any architecture, especially in that which is in a stage of formation. For this reason the question of the identity of the Israeli architecture is crucial in the discourse of Israeli culture and its relevance to the region and its many cultures and traditions.

Today, technology and mass-production challenge architecture as a cultural expression of any community. The idea of a global village became a reality and we as architects must invent new ways of communication- a language that is able to protect human values and preserve the richness and diversity of the regional cultures.