The International Competition for the Reclamation of the Hiriya Landfill: A National Israeli Symbol in the 'Global' Arena

Tal Alon-Mozes

The recent international competition for the reclamation of the Hiriya landfill (2004), located in the centre of Israel's metropolitan area, was the climax of a five-year project, in which the fifty-year-old landfill (1948–1998), Israel's largest, became the focus of international artistic, planning and design activities.

This paper discusses the Hiriya project in order to explore the reciprocity between local activity within the field of landscape architecture and the global arena of landscape architecture practice, focusing specifically on the reclamation of marginal landscapes.

For many years, Hiriya served as a symbol of Zionists' environmental neglect. Therefore, unsurprisingly, the reclamation of the site and the design of the metropolitan park surrounding it became a national symbol of regeneration, involving world-renowned experts. By examining the planning process, and particularly the recent design competition, this paper explores the relationship between the local and the global, and significantly, the difficulty of bridging these opposing stands vis-à-vis landscape reclamation. The design process proved that, to be part of the global arena, it is not enough to bring in foreign designers and let them play according to local rules. It requires frankness toward greater global cultural changes that are beyond the sole activity of design. The design proposals exemplify complex and rich interpretations of local and global ideas by both local and foreign designers, but ultimately proving that at times, outsiders are more successful in grasping the site's *genius loci* than locals.

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The Hiriya landfill, the massive mound that rises above Israel's coastal plain in the metropolitan Tel Aviv area, is in a quest for its identity (Figure 1). Is it a sequel to New York's Fresh Kills Park – a project to transform the former landfill into a new public park – or part of the local *genius loci*? Is there anything local in garbage, or in its dumping place? Or is it a monument for Western consumer culture, and as such, similar in its spirit and shape to garbage shrines all over the world?

The recent international competition for the reclamation of the Hiriya landfill was the climax of a five-year project in which Israel's largest landfill became the focus of international and local artistic and planning activity. The dozens of artists, architects and landscape architects from around the world who took part in the Hiriya project – an art exhibition, international advisory committee, design charet and design competition – brought international involvement to the local practice. From a Western or Eurocentric perspective, Israel is situated at the periphery of the global practice of landscape architecture. Located geographically at the far end of

RESEARCH

Figure 1: Aerial view of Hiriya landfill (Albatross Aerial Photography, Tel Aviv, Israel).

the Mediterranean basin and lacking a tradition of gardening or landscape design, the Hiriya project was a great opportunity for the local community to step into the global arena of landscape design.This paper discusses the Hiriya project to explore the reciprocity between local activity within the field of landscape architecture and the global arena of landscape architecture practice, especially on the reclamation of marginal landscapes.

The paper is divided into four parts. The first presents the framework of the exploration, discussing two themes: the subject matter of the project in general – the treatment of landfills as landscape reclamation – and the practice of landscape architecture in Israel. The second portrays the context of the Hiriya project and its initial phases. The third part focuses on the recent competition and its various local versus global components. Finally, the fourth part discusses the findings in the light of the current discourse on the local versus the global in landscape architecture.

GARBAGE AND THE TREATMENT OF GARBAGE AS A GLOBAL AND LOCAL ISSUE

> Waste is part of global networks that are material, technical, social and discursive (Fagan, 2004).

Garbage is not only a local product, or a local problem. As Fagan argues, the production of garbage and its management go far beyond the control of states, and have already become global issues. The trade in contamination rights and the pollution of water sources cross national borders. While there are local and

cultural aspects to the production of garbage, in general, its increasing quantities are the by-product of the Western mass consumer society.

Garbage dumps and landfills[1] have been fundamental fields of operation for landscape architects since the profession was established in the mid nineteenth century. For a profession that aims to make the landscape healthy and beautiful, dumps are the ultimate sites in which landscape architects can display their skill in addressing problems of aesthetics, ecology, engineering and economics. Olmsted's first steps in transforming Manhattan's marginal landscapes into New York's Central Park during the mid nineteenth century became central to the work of landscape architects in the post-industrial era, as well as of other professionals, such as landscape ecologists, environmental engineers and others in related fields. This significant endeavour lately gained a great deal of publicity in various exhibitions and in academic and professional publications (Engler, 2004; Lynch, 1990).

Mira Engler, a landscape architect and researcher, presents five contemporary approaches to the treatment of landfills. These approaches oscillate between the romantic perception, which reconstructs the pristine natural landscape of the site, through an approach that hides the site's past in favour of converting it into a location for intensive recreational activity, to approaches that empower the essence of the site as a ritual field or monument, or as a place for personal investigation and discovery (Engler, 2004). The fifth approach is the integrative one, in which the principles of ecology are combined with the philosophy of art to create 'a healthy, integrated human-nature ecosystem, where work and leisure co-exist' (Engler, p 40).

Despite minor differences in the attitude of Europeans and Americans towards their garbage, reclaiming landfills is a global issue, one that is based on highly advanced technical expertise and cooperation among international specialists. The complexity of such projects and their visibility has created an international elite of practitioners who take part in various projects around the world.

Nevertheless, landscape architecture at the beginning of the twenty-first century is still devoted to the traditional quest for the *genius loci* as a source of inspiration. Its implementation in a world that is becoming more and more standardised is an unresolved issue. Marc Treib (1995), who looked at regionalism and locality in Californian gardens, defined a garden ecology, idea, function, aesthetic and style as the main characteristics of its locality. Are these criteria relevant to the reclamation of landfills? The Hiriya case study is an interesting example for the exploration of this question.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE IN ISRAEL: A LOCAL PRACTICE IN A GLOBAL ARENA

Since its emergence, landscape architecture in Israel has aspired to be part of the Western practice. Lacking any Hebrew-Jewish gardening heritage, landscape architecture as a profession developed as a result of the emigration of gardeners/architects from Europe to Palestine from the 1920s onwards. Despite various attempts of local botanists and artists to develop a unique, local gardening style, the desire to be part of the Western world was part of a Zionist ideology that

shaped the country according to European models, generally rejecting local models (Alon-Mozes, 2004). Later, graduates of American universities dominated the field. They also brought world-renowned Jewish landscape architects, such as Lawrence Halprin and Paul Friedberg, to work in Israel. During the 1980s, and in accordance with similar international trends, the local practice became more attuned to the uniqueness of the Israeli landscape and culture. Scholars began to categorise Israeli designs as reflecting the country's local *genius loci* (Treib, 1995). However, as in other fields of cultural production such as architecture and art, the practice reflects the tension between local and global tendencies, resulting from political and cultural circumstances (Chinsky, 1993; Nitzan-Shiftan, 2004).

Nowadays, cultural production in Israel is discussed as a mode of 'glocalisation';[2] as argued by Hatuka and Forsyth (2005), it questions the adaptation of architectural ideas to a local landscape and the influence of global economic processes on the development of the city (2005, p 73). As an old process that is currently accelerated due to global market changes, landscape architecture in Israel benefits from international prosperity and exposure (Aronson, 1998; Helphand, 2002). Simultaneously, the local practice is devoted to establishing a unique local style.

Within this context, the Hiriya project, and especially the recent competition, can be used to examine the intricate relationships between the local and the global, between local practice within the global arena of landscape architecture, and a local design language within a global discourse on marginal landscape reclamation and landfill regeneration.

THE HIRIYA PROJECT

The Hiriya landfill is situated on Israel's coastal plain, close to the remnants of an archaeological site from the Israelite period (1200 BCE), on the outskirts of the town of Bnei Berak within the territory of the biblical tribe of Dan. During the fifth century AD, the town was a centre for studying the Torah and a prospering agricultural settlement. A traveller who came across a nursing goat under a fig tree at this site coined the idiom 'a land of milk and honey'. Following the Arab conquest of Palestine, a village called El-Hir, which means 'the good' in Arabic, was established next to a small spring. Its residents were expelled during the 1948 war, and two transit towns for Jewish immigrants were established on its ruins. In that year, the municipality of Tel Aviv began dumping its garbage nearby, and as the transit towns were abandoned, the entire site became the major landfill for the growing metropolis of Tel Aviv and its periphery. The site kept its Arabic name, in contrast to most of the Arab villages whose names were erased as they were repopulated and given Hebrew names. Hiriya, which both in Hebrew and in Arabic sounds like 'hara' 'shit', became the official name of the landfill, perhaps because it portrayed the site's character so vividly and expressed the common feeling of rejection towards it. Fifty years of dumping turned the plateau into a mound, a contemporary archaeological site, and a rich habitat for birds, which became a hazard to the nearby international airport. Consequently, in 1998, the site was closed. In the same year, the *Times International Magazine* published an article titled

'Trashing the Holy Land'. The article, dealing with Israel's environmental problems, characterised the landfill as a symbol of the continuing Israeli environmental neglect:

> A symbol of national sloppiness run amok, the overflowing heap lately has proved prone to avalanches....The fact that the site's closure was provoked only by the threat of an imminent air catastrophe was typical of Israel's approach to the environment – which is to ignore it. Because of decades of such neglect, the Holy Land is a rather filthy place. If Israel is the Biblical land of milk and honey, you'd better not drink or eat of it today (Beyer, 1998).

The following events were unprecedented in Israel. In 1999, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art hosted an exceptional exhibition. The museum's space, which is usually crowded with traditional forms of artworks, instead housed installations, schemes, videos and models documenting the present situation and utopian visions for the largest garbage dump in Israel. With the remarkable support of a private fund, the Beracha Foundation, 19 artists and architects from Israel and abroad met the challenge presented by the curator, Dr Martin Weyl[3] (*Hiriya in the Museum*, 1999, Figure 2).

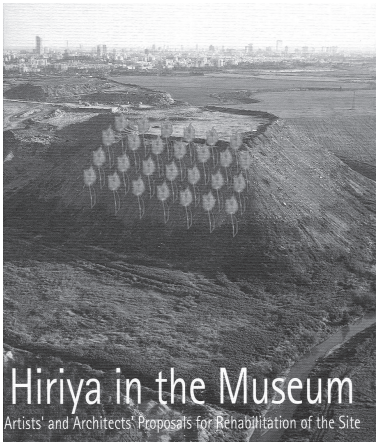

Figure 2: Exhibition catalogue cover (Hava Mordohovich, Tel Aviv Museum of Art and Beracha Foundation, 1999).

The exhibition, which was acclaimed for both its artistic achievement and for the wide public interest it generated, aimed to change the local population's attitude towards the 180-foot-high mound of garbage lying prominently on the coastal plateau of central Israel. After the exhibition, the local reclamation process, which until then had followed the regular planning and design procedure, became a magnet for an international planning effort. In 2001, the vision of a 400-hectare metropolitan park with the garbage mound at its centre was presented at a four-day international workshop (Beracha Foundation, 2001). Two years later, during a week-long charet, a group of 30 foreign and local planners created feasible alternatives for its design (Beracha Foundation, 2003).

In the summer of 2004, the Beracha Foundation announced an international competition to select the visionary architect who would lead the detailed reclamation of the Hiriya landfill, the heart of the metropolitan park. The competition was public, and included eight groups of invitees and the entries were anonymous. Its brief was very general and left the competitors a great deal of freedom for landscape planning and design. The brief portrayed the park as a classical landscape garden exhibiting a humane design, simple and modest, which at the same time, was intended to reflect modern attitudes and to introduce futuristic and fantastic elements (*Hiriya in the Museum 2*, pp 10–11). In short, the park was presented as an experimental laboratory for the design of future landscapes and, as expected, it emphasised ecology, environmental awareness and the use of both natural and recycled materials. Fourteen firms from Israel, the United States, Germany, Spain, England and the Netherlands submitted their proposals. The jury included one international expert – the chairman, Professor Niall G Kirkwood, Chair of the Landscape Architecture Department at Harvard University – senior practitioners of related fields from Israel and a retired president of the Israeli Supreme Court,

who represented the public. In a process of individual review, panel discussion and voting, the panel awarded first prize to the proposal submitted by the German landscape architecture firm Latz + Partner. The second prize was awarded to the Israeli landscape architecture firm Dan Zur & Associates, Landscape Architects and Studio de Lange Design and Architecture. The third prize was shared by Bruce Levin Architects Ltd, Israel, and Benz Kotzen Sustainable Landscape Architecture from England.

The exhibition of the proposals at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in summer 2005 lacked the excitement of the 1999 exhibition. Apart from the lacklustre identical format of the proposals, the less festive ending was the outcome of the ambiguity of the project, which sought a distinguished work of art in the global arena, while the emphasis of the competition brief was to make it a national symbol of regeneration. This ambiguity, apparent since the competition's beginning, weakened the various proposals, influenced the jury's decisions and evoked opposition in the local planning community.[4]

The rest of this paper presents two competing narratives for the reclamation of the Hiriya landfill: 'Hiriya as a local project' emphasises those aspects of the design that celebrate its uniqueness; 'Hiriya as a global park' emphasises the general characteristics of the problem and its solution which are not site-specific but rather a part of the global discourse of landfill reclamations.

HIRIYA AS A LOCAL PROJECT: SYMBOL AND CONTEXT

The competition's brief emphasised locality through two different components: as a symbol and as a contextualised site-specific project. 'It should not seem as mere landscape, but also as an object, a landmark, an icon of national significance, which is seen as such from a distance, from nearby and even from the air' (*Hiriya in the Museum* 2, pp 10–11).

The reclaimed giant landfill was intended to serve as a new national symbol of regeneration – a superior example of the capacity of the modern planning process to turn a heap of garbage into a flowering site. Furthermore, the competition's vision aimed to recreate the site's biblical glory – a land of milk and honey. Perceived as an amendment of sorts, an atonement of the sins of the past, the reclamation of Hiriya became an allegory of the regeneration of the local landscapes by the Zionist enterprise, in contrast to the prevailing environmental condition of Israel.

A few of the competitors wished to make this symbolism prominent and clearly visible to the park's visitors, as well as to travellers landing nearby at Israel's main international airport. The Vista group from the Netherlands integrated the word 'shalom' – 'peace' in Hebrew – into its scheme (Figure 3). Segal–Raayoni, Landscape Architecture and Urban Design proposed planting flower beds to form the biblical verse 'and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks' (Isaiah 2:4) as another means of connecting the visitors familiar with the Bible to the country's past and its cultural identity.

However, Hiriya is a more complex symbol than these designs presented. For the local population, the success of the project symbolised the maturity of the

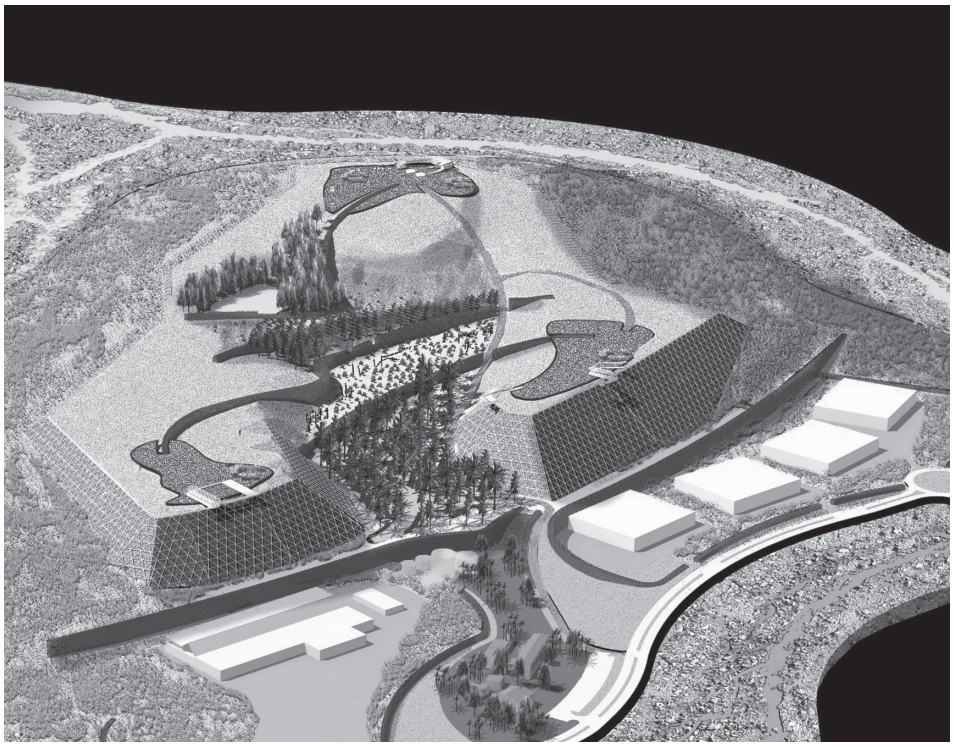

Figure 3: Shalom Hiriya (peace for Hiriya), Vista Landscape and Urban Design, the Netherlands, (Beracha Foundation).

state and its ability to define and realise an environmental vision, despite opposing pressures, including those that sought to build 10,000 housing units within the site.[5] Construction of the park exclusively as an open space was supported by the former prime minister Ariel Sharon who was recently honoured when the park was named after him (Kershner, 2007). For Beracha Foundation, planning authorities, municipalities, environmental organisations, residents and others, the approval of the park became a symbol of a successful civilian struggle for open spaces.

The local context

Apart from creating nation-specific slogans, emphasising the context of the park and its site specificity was another way of relating to its locality. The brief defined it as follows: 'Preference will be given to designs that reflect sensitivity to the inherent qualities, forms, textures, and feeling of the flora' (*Hiriya in the Museum 2*, pp 10–11).

Local vegetation, local vegetation patterns or archetypes that characterise the Israeli coastal plains were the most common way to relate to the local context. Each of the proposals had its own interpretation for 'the feeling of the flora'.

Except for Benz Kotzen and TEAM SUDS (Julie Bergmann, Ken Smith, Laura Starr and Mierle Laderman Ukeles), who suggested reconstructing the local habitats that were destroyed by the landfill, most of the proposals gave up the idea of bringing nature back to the site. As argued by Treib, the park, as a cultural product, is not created by planting natural species in a natural order but rather by challenging the natural order (O'Malley and Treib, 1995).

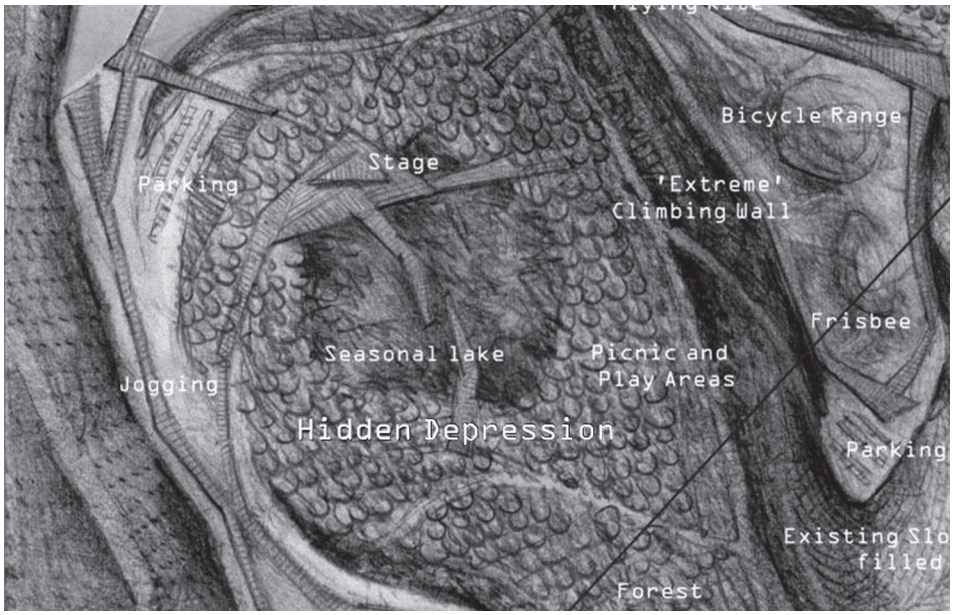

Figure 4: (top) View of Hiriya from the west, Latz + Partner, Germany, (Beracha Foundation).

Figure 5: (right) Mountain grove, Shlomo Aronson and Partners, Israel, (Beracha Foundation).

Peter Latz adopted the agricultural order, especially the orange groves that were once popular in this region, and proposed planting an orchard belt on a new elevated plateau, surrounding the mountain (Figure 4).

In TEAM SUDS' proposal, aromatic herbs that usually only dot the Mediterranean undergrowth formed carpets of violet. The Mediterranean grassland, one of the dominant landscape patterns of Israel, which blooms every spring and dries out each summer, found its way into various proposals. Latz created such a meadow in the heart of the mountain – a secluded oasis. In a similar way, Shlomo Aronson and Partners also proposed a green grove around an annual lake at the heart of the mound (Figure 5).

The sacred grove, a common, local vegetal typology of old indigenous trees generally connected to burial sites, found its way into Kotzen's proposal and, more subtly, into others.

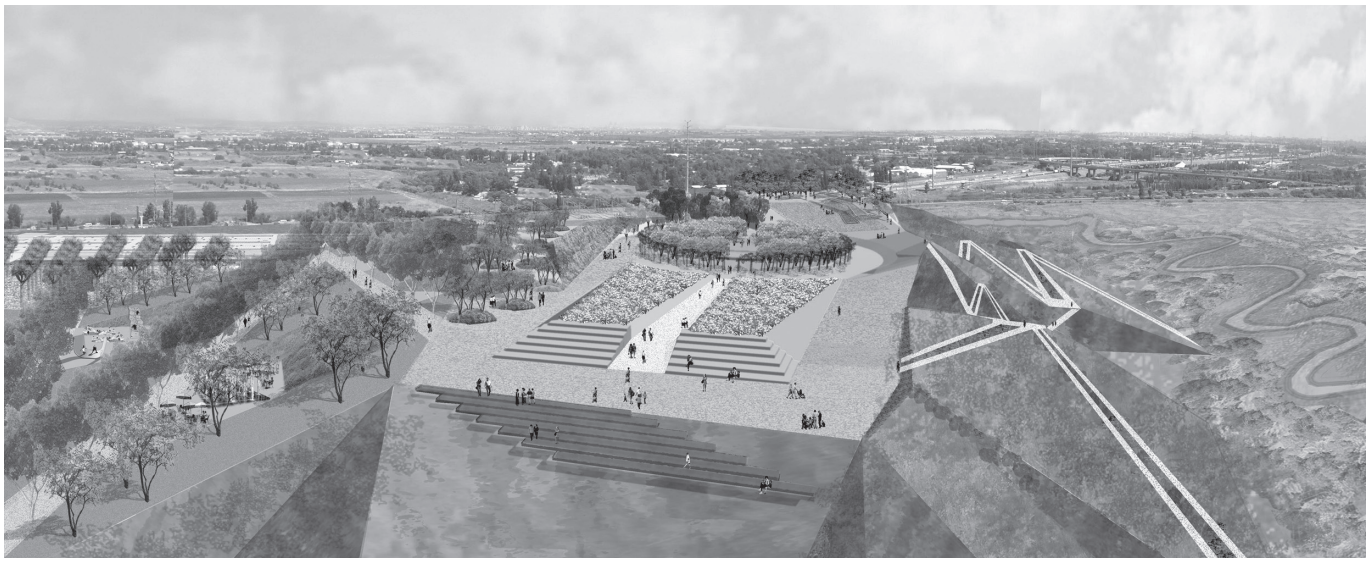

Figure 6: The Oasis, TEAM SUDS, *United States,* (Beracha Foundation).

A special garden archetype emphasised by the competition brief was the Bustan, a utilitarian garden surrounded by a wall, common during biblical times and today mainly associated with Palestinian gardens. Although the first garden model the Jewish settlers encountered as they settled in Palestine in the late nineteenth century, the Bustan was never accepted by the Jewish community as a model for the Hebrew garden, mainly for political reasons (Braudo, 1983). Most of the competitors adopted various alternatives of the Bustan for the centre of the mountain – the symbolic, as well as the functional heart of the park. TEAM SUDS radicalised the local model and turned it into the Char-Bagh, the prototype Islamic garden, which was common in historic Persia rather than in Palestine (Figure 6).

Other proposals ignored the Bustan as a garden archetype and adopted only its vegetal components. These common indigenous trees, such as olive trees, oaks, palm trees and carobs, hold a symbolic meaning for both the local and the international community, as they express rootedness, regeneration and longing for peace.

Other proposals, such as that by Tsurnamal and Bar-Lev, emphasised the new acclimatised species (jacaranda, pine trees and eucalyptus) that the Jewish settlers brought with them to Palestine during the late nineteenth century. These species, planted to make the desert bloom, to dry the swamps or to bring the European atmosphere to the Levant, became a symbol of the Zionist development project as well as a symbol of 'gathering of the exiles' to Israel.[6]

Finally, the local aspect is inherent not only in the visual, symbolic and vegetal characteristics of the park, but also in the activities that are planned to take place there. But are there any unique Israeli outdoor activities? According to the various proposals, there is nothing unique in the way Israelis will spend their time in the park. Slightly exceptional was Vista's proposal that, unlike the others, welcomed cars on the mound top, addressing the common Israeli practice of barbecuing next to their cars.

HIRIYA AS A GLOBAL PARK

The Beracha Foundation and its manager, Dr Martin Weyl, have tried to instil an international or global flavour in the Hiriya project since the 1999 art exhibition and its ensuing design projects. Five of the nine members of the international advisory committee were foreign experts, as well as 11 of the 28 participants in the 2003 charet. Of the eight groups invited to the competition, four were international firms. Apart from the human aspect, Weyl's brief emphasised two facets of the global perspective: symbolically, Hiriya was promoted as a universal icon of landscape regeneration, and practically, it was assigned the role of an advanced laboratory for progressive ecological and technological approaches.

Unlike the explicit Jewish/Israeli symbolism used by some (planting beds in the shape of the word 'shalom' or 'planting' a biblical verse), both third-prize winners, Bruce Levin and Benz Kotzen, incorporated neutral symbols of regeneration. Bruce Levin featured curved reflecting ponds on Hiriya's summit, in the shape of the mythological regenerating swan (Rara Avis), reflecting the sky and illuminated by gas-fed torches (Figure 7).

Kotzen emphasised another facet of metamorphosis – the ecological-biological one. He named his park 'Park Par-Par' (Butterfly Park), which is a Hebrew pun based on the similarity of the sounds of the words 'butterfly' and 'park'. The transformation of the larva into an adult butterfly symbolised the transformation of the site, and served as a source of inspiration for its main content – the creation of various biotopes for indigenous and migrating butterflies (Figure 8).

Second-prize winners Dan Zur and De Lange, had a different interpretation for Hiriya as a global symbol. They proposed the art of gardening as a shared practice of people worldwide. Along a monumental axis that slices the top of the mound, they created replicas of the best that classic and modern gardening culture has to offer, and furthermore proposed that the elite of the world's practitioners will create their gardens on the summit (Figure 9).

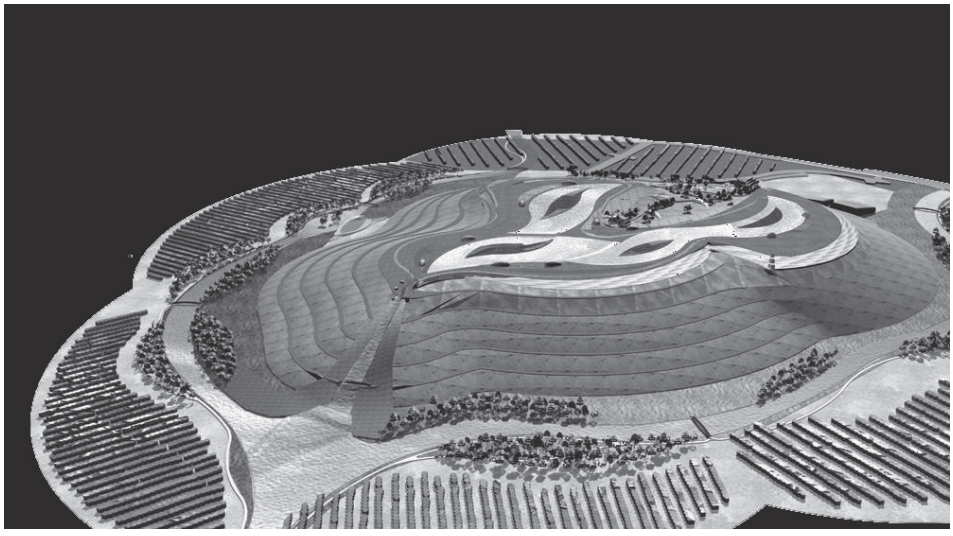

Figure 7: Aerial view from the south-east, Bruce Levin Architects Ltd, Israel, (Beracha Foundation).

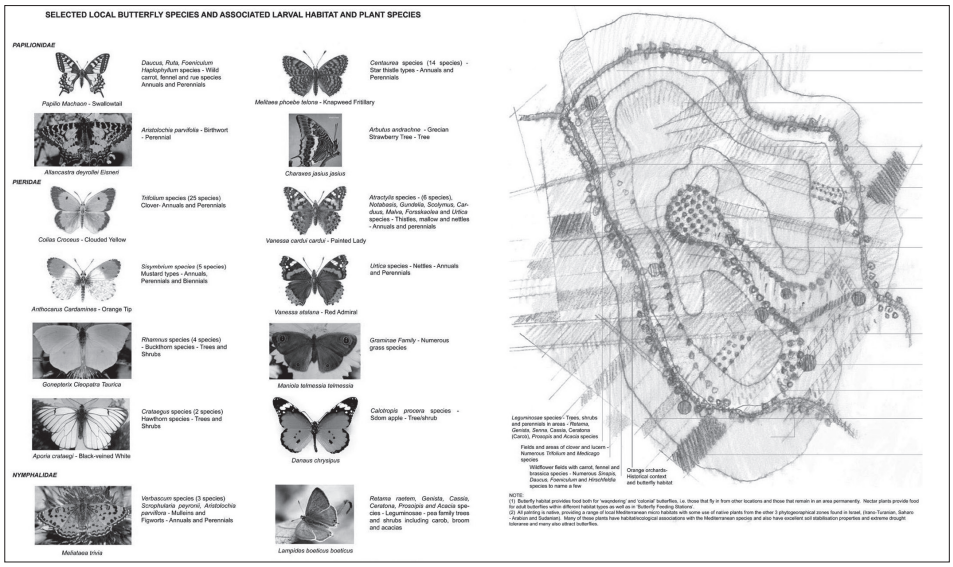

Figure 8: Habitat and landscape typologies, selected local butterfly species, Benz Kotzen Sustainable Architecture, England, (Beracha Foundation).

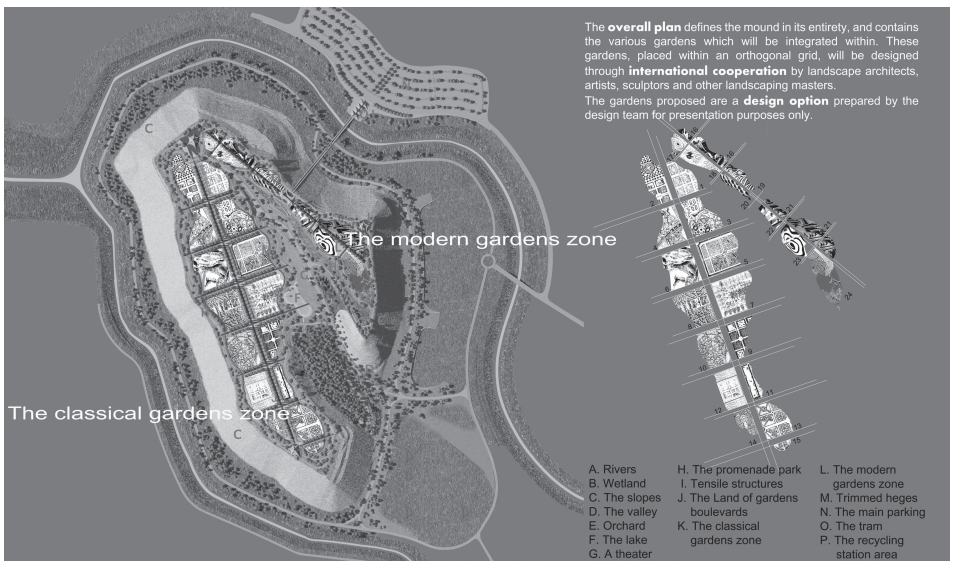

Figure 9: Overall plan 'The Land of Gardens', Dan Zur & Associates, Landscape Architects; Studio De Lange Design and Architecture, Israel, (Beracha Foundation).

Other proposals perceived Hiriya as a completely different global symbol – an icon of the late twentieth-century consumer culture. Shimon Margolin Architecture's proposal bravely advocated leaving the garbage dump free of human interference, letting nature do its work, and allowing the mound to melt away slowly and its gases to evaporate. The proposals from Braudo-Maoz Landscape Architecture and Tsurnamal & Bar-Lev Landscape Architecture were similar to Margolin's but adopted an operative approach. These proposals reflect Engler's categories of ritual ground or exploratory terrain as two postmodern approaches of reclaiming contemporary landfills (Engler, 2004). The heart of the park in each of the schemes is its past. Braudo-Maoz led the visitors through an archaeological section into the bottom of the mound to an enclosed space where a glass floor covered the still-beating heart of the mountain and exposed walls told the story of past dumping (Figure 10).

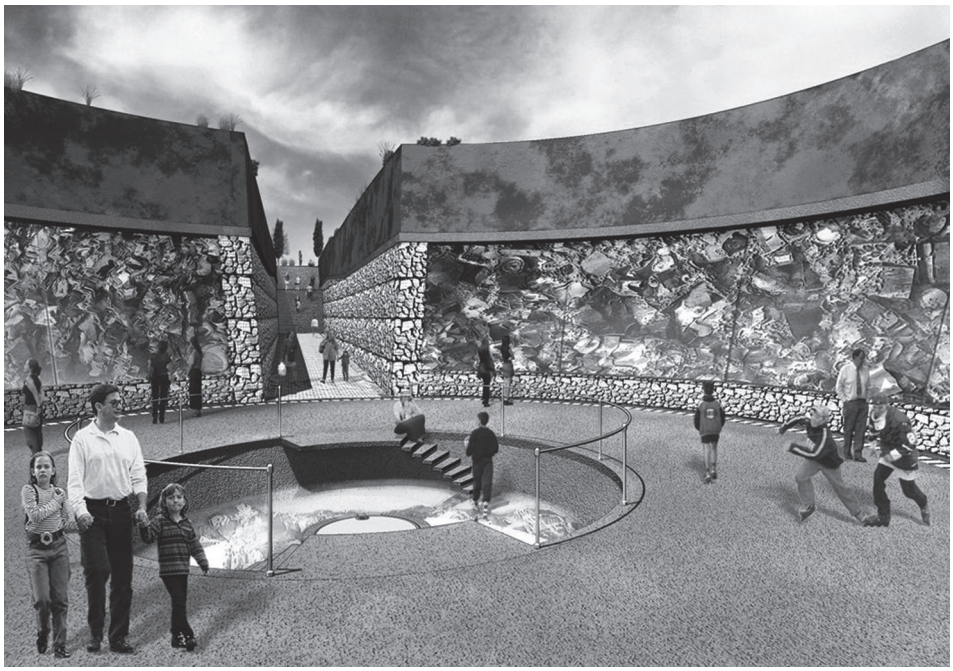

Figure 10: The 'Garb-Age Crater', Braudo-Maoz Landscape Architecture Ltd, Israel, (Beracha Foundation).

Less dramatically, Tsurnamal & Bar-Lev created a valley of rejected artifacts at the centre of the site, where visitors meet the shadows of the consumer culture. There is nothing local in these museums of garbage, only the banality of the Western consumer culture (Figure 11).

A very different, contemporary, global aspect of the project was the way competitors adopted advanced technologies for the site's reclamation. Most of the competitors addressed this issue; Vista suggested the most sophisticated technology for the stabilisation of the slopes with steel structures, while the majority of the proposals used the most innovative water purification methods to create wetlands on and around the mound.

HIRIYA BETWEEN THE LOCAL AND THE GLOBAL

All the proposals submitted for the competition created a dialogue between local and global concepts. A unique proposal, which took the virtual space of the internet and the actual site of Hiriya and crossbred the two, was Segal-Raayoni's scheme. According to the concept, three characters of the global culture – sustainability, the world wide web and the forum as a symbolic activity site – were juxtaposed with the morphological structure of the site, its relation to its surroundings and the nearby landscape patterns.

SUMMARY AND FURTHER DISCUSSION

Among the various articles selected to open the international edition of *Topos*, the European landscape architecture magazine (2005), was one describing Peter Latz's winning proposal for the Hiriya competition (Weyl, 2005). Published alongside James Corner's article on the prestigious Fresh Kills Park competition, and others

Figure 11: 'View of the Valley of Things Cast', Tsurnamal & Bar-Lev Landscape Architecture, Israel, (Beracha Foundation).

describing cutting-edge projects, the Hiriya project gained international recognition in the professional community. Furthermore, *The New York Times*' report on Hiriya: 'Recycling in Israel, not Just Trash, but the Whole Dump' (October 2007) exposed the reclamation of Hiriya to millions of readers around the world (Kershner, 2007).

Based on the various phases of the Hiriya project in general, and the recent competition in particular, the discussion examines the reciprocity between the local and the global in Israeli landscape architecture within two frameworks: the general planning process and the detailed design proposals.

Planning framework and the design process

Nowadays, it has become common for foreign landscape architects to work in Israel, and for Israeli practitioners to work abroad. While in 2003 Israeli landscape architects felt threatened by the foreign participants in the charet, the inclusion of foreign companies in more recent projects has made this practice less intimidating. Furthermore, the involvement of local landscape architects in overseas projects, as well as the fact that any foreign firm works in Israel jointly with a local company, has also helped to naturalise the practice. In a competitive market, Israeli landscape architects learned that it is more useful to seek new markets than to prevent others from becoming involved locally.

Planning framework, client and jury

The Hiriya project demonstrated that to be a player in the global arena, the competition brief and the jury's stand must both be attuned to the global discourse. While the technical aspects of the brief were updated, it failed to address the concept of locality, therefore narrowing the competitors' possibilities and steering

the designers towards simplistic and trivial designs. The desire to make the site a national symbol was originally a poor, conservative idea, a by-product of the old local provincial habit of ascribing national significance to any Zionist act; Hiryia, in its disgrace, was considered a symbol of Zionist environmental neglect, and therefore its reclamation also held a great symbolic meaning. It is not surprising, therefore, that simplistic slogans read from the air were the most common way of addressing this demand. Interestingly, the Fresh Kills Park Project, New York, was never defined as a project of distinctive national symbolic meaning (New York City).

Another pitfall was the emphasis the brief placed on a traditional garden type, such as the Bustan, which is rooted in the old romantic perception of Israeli landscaping and not in the current practice of the local profession. The outcome was a radicalisation of the concept, or its disregard.

More important was the jury's stand in relation to the project's message. Unfortunately, the jury's decision reflected the provincial outlook of the general public, and not the most advanced ideas in the global arena. The jury's preference for a pastoral site that ignores its past and the process of reclamation led them to reject some of the more provocative and innovative proposals.

In summary, the general framework demonstrates that bringing in foreign designers and letting them play according to local rules is insufficient for becoming part of the global arena. This requires awareness of the greater global cultural changes that are beyond solely design.

The detailed design

Does the market economy render design less contextualised, site-specific or culturally sensitive? Not necessarily. Latz's proposal is a noteworthy example of design that grasped Israel's *genius loci* accurately and modestly, proving that the outsider's perspective is sometimes more accurate than that of the insiders. On the other hand, both Israeli and foreign designers radicalised or exaggerated Israel's *genius loci*.

The competition also exemplified the power of the detailed design to express local and global themes. Plant material, planting patterns or garden typologies were the most successful explicit means of addressing locality. As argued by Treib (1995), in the case of other regional gardens, the most interesting solutions were those that did not try to copy the natural landscape, but rather challenged it. TEAM SUDS's lavender carpets and Latz's orchard on the elevated plateau were vivid examples of such an approach.

The park as a symbol of regeneration was the most straightforward declaration made by all competitors. Are explicit symbols viewed from the air necessary to convey this meaning? I wonder.

Finally, a number of the proposals adopted a critical view, challenging both consumer culture and the traditional role of the park as a pastoral landscape. This innovative idea, which may become the competition's unique contribution to the global arena and the contemporary discourse on landscape reclamation and landscape design, was ahead of its time in the local arena.

NOTES

1 Dumps and landfills are both disposal sites. Sanitary landfills became common in the late 1940s, as intermittent layers of soil were added to cover the garbage (Engler, 2004, p 95).

2 'Glocalisation' combines the words 'globalisation' and 'localisation' to emphasise the idea that a global product or service is more likely to succeed if it is adapted to the specific requirements of local practices and cultural expectations. The term started to appear in academic circles in the late 1980s, and it is often credited to the sociologist Roland Robertson, who defined 'glocalization as the simultaneity – the co-presence – of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies' (Robertson, 1997, p 4). Israeli culture as a product of glocal tendencies is discussed extensively by the sociologist U Ram (1999).

3 Dr Martin Weyl, a former director of the Israel Museum and director of the Beracha Foundation, is one of the most influential people in the Hiriya project. Under his direction, the Beracha Foundation has allocated significant sums of money for environmental projects throughout the country, including more than US$10 million for development of the park in its first phase.

4 Local landscape architects felt threatened by the involvement of foreign designers in an already competitive field. Some of them refused to take part in the competition.

5 The Hiriya landfill is situated in the Ayalon Park, the Tel Aviv metropolis' largest land reserve, which remained an area free of construction thanks to the British authorities, who wished to preserve the flooding plains of the Ayalon River. In its geographical location, the area is a potential land development, a goldmine for private groups as well as governmental authorities.

6 The use of acclimatised species was perceived as a metaphor for the creation of the multicultural society. Acclimatisation, which in Hebrew is translated as 'adoption', emphasises fondness and care for the 'new-comers' (Gindel, 1956).

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