

Professional scientific sessions for art, architecture and urban planning Thursday evenings

Held in: Conference hall of Herampey Consulting Engineers

Date: 23.01.2020

Title: The 30th Anniversary of Islamic Azad University Architecture Faculty Foundation.

Roundtable Members: Mrs. Q. Karamati, Mrs. S. Mir Shahzadeh, Mr. D. Diba, Mr. B.R. Oskouie and Mr. M. M. Mahmoudi.

The first speaker was Mr. Mahmoudi that began to speak his personal experience and memories. He explained how he was with the Azad University staff organizing the faculty of architecture and how enthusiast were the first group of students that prepared themselves to access the Islamic Azad University. Mr. Mahmoudi said that at the end of the third term of teaching in the Azad University, he wasn't able anymore to continue his work, because he had to dedicated the remaining time to work in faculty of Fine Arts in University of Tehran. Anyway he still contacts with the ex students, that now are teaching in the same university or others. Talking about material and organization limitations and lacks Mr. Mahmoudi stressed on the fact that both the teaching staff and students were ready to face and overcome the problems. Mr. Mahmoudi expressed his satisfaction that after many years his contacts with the students continue and new perspectives of cooperation exist.

Beginning the session Mr. Mahmoudi asked Mrs. Karamati to talk about her personal experiences and memories. She said that few years ago in Tehran University she and her colleagues noticed that the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the faculty of architecture of Azad University was near and they had to celebrate it through the preparation of a documentary or a program. She explained that the years that she and her colleagues spent in the crossroad of Valiasr where was the first seat of Azad University faculty of architecture. This area was considered as a cultural area where were established different universities and cultural centers.

Mrs. Karamati talked about different phases that they have experienced during the last 30 years and how with the growth of the number of students the faculty has been shifted to larger buildings and spaces in order to satisfy the new exigencies. Talking about a precious experience related to Professor Khalili that created the occasion for a cooperation between the students of architecture of Azad University and faculty of Fine Arts of Tehran University.

The following speaker was Mrs. Mir Shahzadeh. She said that casually found a brochure dated 1974 related to Azad University with the same address. She was very surprised that the university wasn't in a campus, but then she realized that many universities began their activities with similar conditions. Because she had studied both in Polytechnic university and faculty of architecture and art, she realized that the atmosphere and feeling that she had in the second on was more compatible with her spirit of student.

Mr. Rashedi was the next speaker to talk about his memories. He said that before his military

service he had tried to access State University, without having the chance and very casually he has been invited to follow his studies in Azad University. This has been a challenging and very fortunate occasion in his life, changing the direction of his life. He talked also the building where he began his studies in architecture and how this building with its structural limitations helped them to grow and feel the essence of architecture. Showing different pictures Mr. Rashedi talked about his memories and experiences, saying that during those years he had to chance with excellent educational staff and with future colleagues. Expressing his gratitude Mr. Rashedi asserted that most of the people that studied at Azad University are working in their professional field and the reason, in his opinion is that the educational staff had an excellent level of professional and pedagogical preparation. In his opinion, today the students don't have the same chance to be followed and work on large scale projects by prepared people in their university studies and this lack creates many problems both for the students and the society.

The last speaker was Mr. Diba. He said that unfortunately the role of Azad University is still underestimated and the graduates can't occupy government positions in related offices. In his opinion this is a wrong and unfair approach, because today many state universities don't have a higher level than Azad University. Talking about his personal experience, Mr. Diba admitted that in many faculties of Azad University the level of preparation of the staff and teaching is far from being satisfying, but at the same time, talking in a larger context he asserted that the best students, especially woman students, in the world, are the Iranian students.

Mr. Diba said that for 20 years he has been the consultant of Mr. Jasbi (former chair of Azad University) who believed that their mission was the qualitative improvement of Azad University level for the students and for the country in general. Talking about state universities in field of architecture he said that they are in a disastrous situation and with his personal experience he is surprised and satisfied working with graduates of Azad University, that make great works, thank to their preparation.

Comparing local and foreign strategies in universities field, Mr. Diba said that abroad the student elect the chair of the university where they study, but in Iran they are nominated and this creates disastrous consequences, both for the universities and students. He expressed his regret saying that when he was teaching in Tehran University he was not allowed to teach also in Azad University, meanwhile in his opinion all students are the children of the same country and shouldn't be such limitations. He concluded his speech referring to the low level of the universities in Iran, expressing the hope of a change.

Concluding the session Mr. Mahmoudi expressed the idea that most of the offices and activities at the beginning offer excellent services to attract the people, but with the passing of the years the level falls. In this process the students aren't guilty and the responsables should answer for.