

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

Held in: Conference hall of Herampey Consulting Engineers

Date: 11.08.2016

Title: Baharestan square

Speakers and panel members: Mr. M. M. Mahmoudi, Mrs. Q. Karamati and Mr. D. Khatibitabar

The first speaker was Mr. Mahmoudi has begun his speech announcing that Baharestan square last week has been registered as a national monument, so the people can calm down about the worries regarding the devaluation of historical, architectural and social values of Baharestan square. Today we are happy and we celebrate this registration.

Talking about different squares in Tehran Mr. Mahmoudi said that there are squares that have artistic-architectural values, like Hassanabd square, but any important event occurred, like Baharestan or Azadi squares. When we want talk about these squares, usually we ignore how they were formed and which are their characteristics, focusing on the social, political, historical events that have been engraved on our minds.

Mr. Mahmoudi explained that Baharestan square is important as an urban structure, because it is located at the beginning of a main avenue, but the reason for its national registration is based on political and social issues. The result of the registration is that Baharestan square became untouchable and the implementation of new and strange architectural projects will be denied.

The second speaker Mrs. Karamati has begun her speech expressing her satisfaction for the national registration of Baharestan square, offering the opportunity to hold the actual meeting.

Talking about the history of the squares in Iran Mrs. Karamati shown how it had deep roots in the Iranian history and urban culture. She mentioned Shahname and other sources where we can see that this urban structure was well known with its different functions and uses. The reported information regarding Baharestan square was collected from the book “Baharestan Square” edited by Mrs. Ahari and Mr. Habibi.

Mrs. Karamati presented the geographical position of Baharestan square, when it was designed and which was the process of formation and different uses of the square from the beginning to our days. As we know Baharestan square is completed by the presence of the Iranian parliament. The square has witnessed to many political-historical events that deeply influenced the Iranian history and the future developments.

Presenting the history of the square Mrs. Karamati gave many important information about the Qajar and Pahlavi kings that played decisive roles in the creation of the square. She mentioned of the Russian officer Naskof and his Iranian assistants that prepared the first plans that reported in details how Baharestan square was at the time. Through the given information the participants to the meeting had the opportunity to see and imagine how Tehran was developed and transformed in about 150 years from the formation of Baharestan square. After the first plans, many other planners presented the square and its characteristics.

The last speaker was Mr. D. Khatibitabar talking about Baharestan square as a place for political activities said that the first demonstration held in the square was organized and by women. He said that it was a place where important events were reflected and presented to the people.

As a witness that lived near the square Mr. Khatibitabar told about the assassination of Hajir (a political activist). In his opinion the reason that baharestan square was at the center of important social-political events, was the presence of many government offices and ministeries, so it was obvious that the facts could have a large reflection in the society.

Mr. khatibitabar talked about the coup d'etat organized by foreign states in 1953 and how the square was at the center of the events, and how many different political parties participated before and after the coup for political goals and activities.

Through a simple and clear explanation Mr. Khatibitabar presented the various political events that characterized the social-political life of Iran, where Baharestan square was usually a place where people preferred to express ideas, hopes and malcontent. The facts that he reported are not usually reported on the written sources, so for the participants it was not only interesting but also important, because it is unusual to hear directly from a witness that had the chance to live and comprehend the various political events.

The meeting was concluded by the usual question time, when the speakers satisfied the presents that made questions.