

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

Held in: Conference hall of Herampey Consulting Engineers

Date: 26.12.2019

Title: Urban Design and Presence in City

Speakers and Panel Members: Mrs. G. Karamati, Mrs.S. D. Ghadimi, Mrs. G. Narimani and Mrs. S. Motavalli

The first speaker Mrs. Karamati thanked the organizers for the offered opportunity, introduced the argument regarding the presence in the city and the necessary conditions in favor of the organization and improvement of urban spaces.

Mrs. Karamati presented the speakers explaining that everyone had worked on a research project for their master's thesis regarding urban life and presence. She mentioned that all the works were very interesting and valorous for present and future urban projects and activities.

Mrs. Karamati talked about Tehran city council president's approach regarding nightlife in Tehran that was somehow contradictory. Mrs. Karamati concluded her introduction talking about a related project realized in district 12 of Tehran.

After the introduction, Mrs. Ghadimi was the first of the speakers that presented the project she had worked on. In her work she had considered the nightlife and modern activities in Tehran Megacity. The reason why they had focused on nightlife activities was that it contained key solutions for urban issues, creating lively spaces for a modern and dynamic economy. The reason that she had decided to work on Tehran was clear. Tehran has been and is the center of Country's political, social and administrative activities and how the urban planners are trying through the edition and correction of Tehran General Plan, to achieve pursued goals. She also stressed on the fact that Tehran is one of the three Asian capitals in the southwest region.

Talking about the history of the last hundred years of Tehran, Mrs Ghadimi talked about different social and economic activities that are related to attracting interested population during daytime and nighttime. Some of these activities are banking, universities, cinemas... The most renomated street-area in Tehran has been for a long time Lalezar avenue in the historical center. The main problem, in her opinion, is that the central areas are visited by thousands of visitors and when the activities are closed, the areas are abandoned and change their spirit and aspect. This can be in many occasions a negative aspect for a city that aims to become a leader in attraction.

Continuing her speech Mrs. Gadimi talked about the path they followed in the project and which were the main items they focused on. First was the concept of nighttime life, that somehow is to compensate time that we didn't have to spend or dedicate to an activity during daytime. The main necessity is to provide a stressless environment, having access to transport, medical services, supermarkets... In this context the principal problem to be considered is the life rhythm that everybody has to follow and how the planners must consider the needs of different social groups. In order to give practical examples, Mrs Ghadimi talked and presented experiences related to nighttime life, like New York, London, Beijing, Shanghai, Copenhagen, Bologna and Dubai. She explained the problems that the managements had to face, which were the limitations that they had

to overcome and finally which were the solutions that they adopted. After presenting foreign cases, Mrs. Ghadimi talked about local cases, like Shiraz and Holy Mashhad and the solutions that they respectively adopted to ensure the nighttime life and which were the solutions urban management had introduced.

At the end of her speech she talked about how she analyzed solutions and problems, dividing them in different layers. Some of them are lighting, safety, identity and how ordinary people gave preference to main problems and solutions that they aimed to.

The second speaker was Mrs. Narimani. She presented the problem that captured her attention and she worked on during her project. She posed the question why in our cities we don't have spaces where we can pause and have a break. Usually we leave a certain to reach another, "escaping" from intermediate outdoor space, because we don't feel well in the urban environment. What she wanted is to create urban spaces and areas where spending time can be a pleasure.

Mrs. Narimani talked about the 15th Khordad area in Tehran, where efforts have been made to encourage the people to remain and enjoy outdoor urban spaces. She also talked about cases in Greek and Belgium, where they faced similar problems and solutions. Mrs. Narimani believes that we should consider the human presence and participation as a decisive and changing factor, paying attention to social problems.

Mrs. Narimani explained how she worked on her project, putting and analyzing two opposite concepts in order to achieve the desired conclusion and solution. For example in order to describe pause as a goal she studied the concept of movement. Another concept was the trend of renovating the urban spaces, when new and higher standards through the improvement of urban spaces assure higher level and quality of life for the cityzens. She believes that focusing on social problems and aspects of life can be used as keys to find solutions, where social behaviours can affect positively on the urban environment and vice versa.

Mrs. Narimani asserted that to improve the social relations we need informed citizens and a city capable of satisfying social and cultural necessities. In the case of Tehran when the population is continuously increasing, we need to create a balance between population growth and social activities, in order to have a balanced urban life. Regarding this case she presented the study case of Boston, when positive results have been achieved through urban spaces improvement. In this case Mrs. Narimani explained how important it was to give a sense of security to the cityzens, in order to feel free and ready to create a two way relationship with the city and urban space where they live.

Arriving to the practical aspect of her project, Mrs. Narimani explained how she had identified eight areas in Tehran where they could put in practice their ideas of renovation. The main area that she had worked on was the 15th Khordad where she had imagined a path where the visiting people could find reasons and opportunities to pause and spend pleasant time in the mentioned area. The area of the 15th Khordad is important also because it has a long history of presence and memory for the cityzens, where everybody can find and enjoy a piece of his personal history related to the social life and urban environment.

Concluding her speech Mrs. Narimani presented her proposals for the project, where she had projected spaces for pause, focusing on buildings that had architectural and cultural values for the citizens and also for the city as outstanding architectural elements.

During the presentation of the speakers, Mr. Mahmoudi intervened, talking about the problems that have been ignored in the Iranian cities, ignoring the rich experiences and backups that we had during our rich history. Talking about the Japanese case Mr. Mahmoudi explained that there the urban and social planners have considered all the components of the society, especially the sector that in different ways have to face problems to move in the cities. In this case the planners have done the maximum to provide and assure the desired solutions for a pleasant movement in urban spaces.

The last speaker was Mrs. Motavalli. She thanked the organizers for the offered opportunity. The argument related to architecture and urban planning was going round as pleasure. In her opinion the best place as a university for an architect is the city where he walks. This is the reason that she has decided to observe and register interesting aspects of urban life and environment.

Mrs. Motavalli explained that going round in the city as a concept was considered for the first time in Europe in 1840, as persons that go round just to spend time without having a goal or purpose. The first theorist was W. Benjamin that studied the argument, giving scientific based explanations and considerations. He believed that cities are a complex of cultures, events and happenings of human life. This is the reason that people can find invisible connections that are part of his present and past life.

Talking about the history of going round in Tehran, She explained that it goes back to a century, concentrated in the historical center of Tehran. This is the area that has been considered as an important area, where there were concentrated social, financial and educational activities, like cinemas, banks and universities.

She explained also how she had classified and organized her study research, considering different aspects of urban life in Tehran and how it would be possible to create the necessary conditions because people can have a sustainable life in Tehran. She said that actually 300 tours are being organized for the citizens, so they can create a physical-sentimental relationship with the city where they live in.

Mrs. Motavalli concluded her speech mentioning the problems that should be faced if we want to have a better and sustainable urban environment in the city where we live. Some of the problems are the insecurity, disorganized development, pollution... that cause the deformation of cities aspect and character.