

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

Held in: Conference hall of Herampey Consulting Engineers

Date: 19.07.2018

Title: In Arts and Architecture is better knowledge or richness?

Speakers and panel members: Mr. S. Syrous, Mr. A. Mohseni and Mr. F. Sha'afi

The first speaker of the meeting was Mr. Syrous. He began his speech posing a question, if the level of accumulating material richness was equal to the accumulation of knowledge. If so the situation is dramatic and we know that it's not a new question and it has been posed during the last 60-70 years. Mr. Syrous asserted that this kind of question is one of the most important human processes. The distinguished persons in history posed important questions minding not enough for the finding of appropriate answers. He explained that posing questions is a sign of moving toward apprehension, so we can say that the story of a question is the story of the humanity and apprehension. Regarding the bases of the formulation of questions and philosophy, Mr. Syrous believes that in some principal religions, the idea is not welcomed and is attributed to diabolic activities.

Continuing his speech, Mr. Syrous explained that in ancient time the responses to the questions were somehow invented, meanwhile in our days they are based on scientific conclusions and there are many questions, like the essence of beauty, that didn't and won't have final responses, pushing the thinkers of different era to give their own response and interpretation to such question. In order to better present his affirmations, Mr. Syrous reported some ideas of famous philosophers like Socrates, Zenon and Hegel, showing the process of transformation during the centuries.

Coming to the Iranian sphere of philosophy and regarding the question of is better the knowledge or the richness, he explained that in his opinion the teacher that posed this question, didn't really want to do so and his real goal was to remind the pupils that of course it was the knowledge the preferable goal to pursue than the richness, even though the path and the goal to go through and to reach, were harder than pursuing material wellness. Continuing his interpretation he posed his own question, asking himself if what we possess like wellness, joy, art, architecture... in our life are based on knowledge or richness. In his opinion the problem in philosophy is the difficulty or the impossibility to give sharp and final answers to questions. Talking about the Iranian civilization and literature and particularly about Firdowsi, he explained how in his opinion, the poet asserted that to create an artistic work first of all you must have the capability and the courage to realize your idea.

Concluding his speech, Mr. Syrous said that in his opinion posing a question regarding which one is better, the knowledge or richness, was wrong from the beginning, because it contains many dark sides, that don't permit us to reach a logical conclusion.

The second speaker was Mr. A. Mohseni. He began his speech saying that in his opinion richness is the equivalent of assets, so richness and knowledge cover each other in a hidden way and somehow knowledge can substitute the richness. He asserted that in his opinion richness is poetry,

architecture, movie and consequently the poet, architect and movie maker are the richness. He said that these are ideas of richness that surround us, and we can say that richness is the mankind and its activity, able to transform something that becomes richness for himself and his environment (like his country).

Talking about the different eras that characterized the richness, Mr. Mohseni said that in different times and countries, they paid attention to the concept and reality of richness. In Iran for example, we have gas and oil natural resources that are considered source of richness for our present and future. At the same time we have cultural personalities that through their artistic creations, create richness for them self and also for the society that they belong to. In this case we can see how the creator of richness, without consuming material sources and values, creates material richness from spiritual and immaterial sources. He talked about the case of the Emirates, that in less than 60 years, with just 500 initial families, has been able to create a reality of wellness and richness, that many of us envy them and the goals that they have reached. The base of their success is in their activity and the know-how of transforming knowledge in richness (material and spiritual).

Mr. Mohseni compared our country Iran with the Emirates, talking about the costs of construction of subway transport, when in the Emirates using new technologies and solutions, they have been able to save up to 40% of the costs, compared with the Iranian case. Talking about the reality of the Emirates, Mr. Mohseni explained how they invest their money, buying useful and valuable ideas, in order to realize them and offer them on the market, creating added value and in other words richness for their country.

Mr. Mohseni talked about the case of newly built Master City, a center close to Abu Dhabi, built and equipped with the latest technological and scientific achievements, in order to create the conditions for their citizens to have better life and work conditions. He also compared the case of Master City, with the Iranian Kish island. In the first case the Emirates has invested 17 billions, introducing futuristic technologies and architecture, in order to attract new investments and cash flow to their country.

Returning back to the history, Mr. Mohseni talked about Iranian literature. He named Hafez, Molana, Sa'di, Khayyam and Ferdowsi and how each of created sources of material and spiritual richness that still last in our days, because of the freshness and originality of their ideas and works. Talking about spheres like architecture, he asserted that material and spiritual values are being created in this sphere, and of course the material that has been created will enrich the Iranian civilization generally.

Another interesting case is movie making. Mr. Mohseni believes that this is a sphere where is possible to get cultural and spiritual results, making at the same time profits, that are considered sources of richness.

Mr. Mohseni focused the final part of his speech on the fact that how spiritual values like architecture, can be sources of richness for a country like Iran. He talked as an example about the city of Kashan and its architectural rich heritage, that can attract thousands of tourist from other parts of Iran and world. The same thing is happening in many European countries, where thanks

to their cultural and artistic heritage, they have become permanent centers of attraction, ensuring flow of money and a fantastic occasion to interact on different fields of the human civilization.

Concluding his speech Mr. Mohseni expressed his concern about what is happening in our days in Iran, regarding the architecture. He asserted that the problem that today we face in the field of architecture is that the architects lost the poetic aspect of their profession, focusing only on the material and technical priorities, creating architectural products, that are technically and technologically acceptable, but without the spiritual content, that for many centuries characterized the Iranian architecture.

The third speaker was Mr. Sha'afi. He began his speech talking about the Prophet and his son-in-law Imam Ali, and how he interpreted the value regarding the richness and knowledge.

Imam Ali explained that knowledge is continuously increased, meanwhile the material richness is continuously consumed and decreased. You must protect your richness, meanwhile the knowledge protects you. The owner of the material richness is always subject of jealousy, meanwhile who possesses knowledge is subject of respect. The material value is subject to aging and at the risk to be stolen, but you share it with pleasure with others. The material richness is cause of arrogance and rudeness, meanwhile the knowledge brings modesty and humility.

Regarding the comparison, Mr. Sha'afi posed the usual question, which is better the knowledge or richness. We acquire knowledge to reach the material richness, or we spend richness to reach the knowledge. In his opinion regarding the argument, the approach changes while we grow up, because we are not sure that just knowledge is enough to face the entire process. We understand that the knowledge that focuses only on the achievement of material wellness, can only produce or cause Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where hundreds of thousands are killed. This is the reason that Mr. Sha'afi believes that knowledge and richness complete each other, and none of them can be considered complete. Who has the knowledge can be considered a rich man and who has the richness can acquire the knowledge serving the others.

Continuing his speech, Mr. Sha'afi agreed with the other speakers, asserting that both the material artistic production must be considered richness and also the author as a creator is a source of richness. Talking about how the richness must be employed in general, he explained that the desirable goal must be the distribution and accessibility of the richness, especially by the members of the society that are positioned in the lower levels of the social pyramid. This kind of distribution can be extended to other spheres and countries. Mr. sha'afi explained that with the increase of richness and wellness our needs and desires to be satisfied increase constantly, and yesterday what could be considered an unreachable dream, today can be considered a necessity and must. The process is realized step by step, so when a necessity is satisfied, there is no sign of stopping and satisfaction. The problem is this kind of approach and lifestyle, creates everlasting problems and stresses that make the life difficult to live and enjoy it.

Talking about the relationship that exists between the richness and science he explained that there is no evidence that can show that the increase of one of them cause the decrease of the other. Of course the possession of the richness or the science provides some kind of attention or respect in the society and in both case there is an improvement of social conditions and rank. The other side

of the coin is that the wellness and richness can usually cause corruption and social problems, because mankind mentality pushes to a continuous rush of desires that pretend to be satisfied.

Talking about architecture in a general context of art, Mr. Sha'afi expressed the idea that also in this spheres, like other spheres of our social life, there is the argument of knowledge and richness. The architect that designs, can be considered successful and justified, if the production of his design process is transformed in money, in other words in richness. In this case the process can be considered completed, even though this completion doesn't guarantee the necessary quality that is desired. The process can be considered satisfying if there are four principal components that are the knowledge, richness, quality and the desirability.

Concluding his speech, Mr. Sha'afi focused on the role that the producers of richness and knowledge can play in the society that they live and in a larger context at a global level. Of course if the player, in this case who possesses the knowledge, if has a responsible approach regarding the sphere in which he acts, the results can always ensure positive outcomes, and if the use of knowledge is used just to produce material wellness and richness, ignoring the possible negative consequences, it will cause the chaotic situation that the modern society is affected of.