

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

Held in: Conference hall of Herampey Consulting Engineers

Date: 05.12.2013

Title: Naqshe Djahan square from historic, social, architectural and town planning point of view

Speakers and panel members: Mr.A.Taheri, Mr.M.M.Mahmoudi, Mr.H.Soltanzadeh and Mr.A.Moradi

The first speaker was Mr.A.Taheri who began his speech considering the history from two different points of view, as a historic movement and as a report. In this context the humans are a result of a historic process.

The history of Iran has three principal characteristics: the first is the imperial power that for a millennium was the principal power of Asia and one of the two global powers to administrate the world. During this period the Iranians succeed to maintain their civilization and national characteristics. After the Advent of Islam they changed the political empire with the cultural empire. Through this process the Iranian presence is continuous in the different eras of the history. The connection between the ancient Iranian culture and the Islamic culture causes the birth of a particular cultural process that is the most characteristic of this country. The language, the philosophic thought and the political thought are the most important aspects that permit the continuity in the cultural and historical process of the Iranians.

At the end of his speech Mr. Taheri spoke about Isfahan, about its formation, about the role of Alevi thought in the formation of Safavid dynasty as a political power.

The second speaker was Mr.M.M.Mahmoudi spoke about the formation of the Naqshe Djahan square during 1600 and 1650 a.d. In 1935 it was registered as a national monument and in 1980 was the first Iranian monument to be registered in the Unesco's world heritage. Before the Safavid era the actual square's space was occupied by a garden called too Naqshe Djahan ;the Teymourian government buildings were positioned in this garden. During the Selgiuc period the national celebrations were held in this space. During the construction of the square it is opposed to the old one, where the principal mosque is positioned. It seems that the dimensions of the square are unproportional, but the presence of the four principal buildings in the square make it nice as it is at the moment.

During the 17-th century this square is the biggest in the world, where are held different celebrations. In the beginning the buildings are made in one level, and then the second level is made. The four principal buildings are the portal of the Bazar, the mosque of Shah, the mosque of Sheikh Lotfollah and the palace of Aliqapou. All these buildings reflect the Iranian cultural, artistic and historic characteristics, introducing at the same time the innovative technologies in the construction process. Respecting the Iranian architectural characteristics, the designers considered the modern needs, using also different type of trees for the presentation of the square and the buildings in different seasons.

Continuing his speech Mr.Mahmoudi described the different aspects that in the buildings and generally in the Naqshe Djahan square are more or less represented, like the order between the spaces, the

colors used, the religious messages and the different decorative motives. In the end he expressed the idea that it would be nicer if in the square were maintained the original ideas and solutions.

The third speaker was Mr.H.Soltanzadeh who described the evolution of Isfahan. Talking about the religious role of the two mosques in and close to the Naqshe Djahan square he expressed the idea that for the common people the Atigh mosque was always considered as a religious pole of attraction. As it happens in Takhte Djamshid, in the Naqshe Djahan square too it is developed to satisfy the needs of the users. The position of the Sheikh Lotfollah because it is likely in opposition with the Aliqapou building, the first as a religious and the second as a government representative. Mr. Soltanzadeh talked about some similitudes between the Square and ancient monuments; some of them are casual and some of them no, like the position of the Square that is very similar to Takhte Djamshid, or the presence of water containers in the entrance of Sheikh Lotfollah mosque, that we don't see in other Islamic countries. This aspect can be explained considering that in ancient times wherever was a water source the authorities constructed important buildings to stress the role of water as a vital element. Mr. Soltanzadeh spoke also about the positioning of the mosques that were usually constructed near the bazars and the principal connections.

The fourth speaker was Mr.A.Moradi who spoke about the Naqshe Djahan square from historic and philosophic points of view and how the Selgiuki architecture influenced the Safavid architecture. In his opinion most of the people pay more attention to the details, but we should consider different problems from a wider point of view. In the case of Naqshe Djahan square we can see a hidden message from the builders, that create a paradisiac space in the center of the desert, trying to give new solutions and approaches for architectural and town planning problems.