TANGIBLE - INTANGIBLE HERITAGE(S): AN INTERPLAY OF DESIGN, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CRITIQUES OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

• Paper / Proposal Title:
The Iranian Post-Revolutionary Public Space: The Transit(ional) Space

• Format(s):
In-person presentation / Written paper

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• Abstract (300 words):
After a period of rapid modernization, from the sixties the question of modern yet regional identity surfaced in Iranian architectural discourses. A de-historicized understanding of architecture and an untimely local spirit were searched as a response to the internationalism.
In fact, for less politically unsettling future, modernity had to be somehow leaving a space for those authentically local. This Other—which was not heritage—was the process of globalization and economic and demographic transformation allegorized as ‘Western culture.’
Then, to how contemporary theories of the political or of democracy, could learn from built environment dealing with tradition, some architects such as Kamran Diba tried to introduce genuinely space, into his exemplary projects of the cultural public parks, by
modernizing the concept of the Persian garden. In a culture with the tradition of the 'secret garden,' the introduction of those few 'cultural' semi-public parks/gardens were crucial.

After the triumph of Islamic Revolution, as a consequence of changing daily life, Tehran turned to the introverted metropolitan. Also, increasing the urban animosity led to the privatization of the public space instead of those earlier semi-public spaces.

Since the urban spaces were not anymore utilized for their defined work, post-revolutionary architects have/had to produce new (semi-) public spaces, while such animosity in the public space causes tendency to certain trace of the anonymity. Then, the new democratic life started to gain its vitality from small-scale participatory moments, contributing to a ‘subjectless and decentred’ public conversation. These transit(ional) spaces resemble Foucault’s spatial zone of the oldest example of the heterotopia, garden.

Transit(ional) spaces, in continuity of the Diba’s apolitical semi-public space, from 2007 have been considered in a number of large-scaled projects in Tehran. This paper tries to focus on these post-revolutionary transit(ional) public spaces, as the revival of the Persian heritage of the garden.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Niloofar Amini (1986) was trained as an architect at Art and Architecture University in Iran. She is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Architecture History and Theory at Gent University in Belgium. Niloofar Amini is currently worked on Iranian Politics and Architecture from pre- to post-revolutionary eras, and investigate this in the light of the concept of public space.

Some of her publications:


Some of her Conference participation:

2. Niloofar Amini participated in “University of Lisbon’s Second International Conference” on “The Street and The City”, April 5th-7th 2017 in Lisbon-Portugal with the