

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

**Held in: Conference hall of Herampey Consulting Engineers**

**Date: 26.05.2016**

**Title: Hidden spaces and defensive elements in the past architecture**

**Speakers and panel members: Mr. D. Khatibi Tabar and Mrs. Q. Karamati**

Mr. D. khatibitabar began his speech talking about the Haraz road that connects the northern seaside area with Tehran. He focused on the existence of numerous caves, used by the people who transferred rice, because during the 3-4 days of the journey they needed a safe and hidden place to rest and protect the load.

Talking about the historic background he explained that in the beginning the humans used the trees as a protective element, than they preferred the stone, than the caves where they were protected by the wind, hit and cold. When they saw that it was a good solution the caves became overloaded so they decided to divide the spaces making stone walls. This knowledge permitted them to exit from the caves making different type of habitations, that have been transformed during the time.

Making progress in the construction process men realized that they need places to hide, having different functions with different entrances and exits. These places were used as:

-places for praying.

-places for hermits.

-places to avoid the enemy.

-places to shelter from natural conditions.

Mr. Khatibitabr talked about the Iranian caves and underground cities that go back to 2-3 years ago. Some of these structures were used until the Qajar era and there are some cases where the locals used them as their habitation or they transformed them in hotels. These facilities were made during the different dynasties in order to have protection against the various and numerous foreign invasions.

Mrs. Karamati was the second speaker who talked about the ramparts as defensive elements. The oldest images regarding the ramparts have been discovered Mesopotamia, structures that most probably belonged to the local royal dynasties.

Talking about the defensive structures she explained how some of them were built on the ground and some of them underground, each of them having different functions.

Presenting the Iranian defensive structures Mrs. Karamati explained that they included the ramparts, towers, gates and moats.

Talking about the Middle Age in Europe she focused on the principal defensive elements like the walls, towers and gates. She compared the European cities' defensive conditions with the British

conditions. As an island Britain was relatively safer which permitted to use the gates that were defensive elements as point for toll collection for the management of the cities.

In the Roman Empire the military bases were always surrounded by ramparts and the circulation was controlled through the gates. These structures became the nucleus for the formation of the future cities.

In the Renaissance era the design of the cities it is directly influenced by the use of the ramparts and it becomes a fundamental element to be used by the architects. In this period different architects propose various solutions for the ideal city, but when they must find defensive solutions, they use circular, octagonal and other solutions.

Coming to the recent period Mrs. Karamati explained how during the king Reza Pahlavi era the defensive structures were completely destroyed. This is the period of world war I when the armies began to use the aircrafts as an offensive tool that neutralize all the defensive measures used in the past, imposing a concept of modernization in the architectural-defensive elements.

Talking about the Iranian view on the role of the wall Mrs. Karamati presents them as follows:

- defines the hierarchy of spaces.
- defines the bounds.
- defines the distances.
- defines the borders and dimensions.
- distinguishes the internal and external spaces.

Ending her speech she presented the Fin garden in kashan. In this case the garden has ramparts and tower, when is not a city. The reason that this place must be hidden is related to the lack and value of the water sources. The owner has provided the water flow transforming an arid space to a green jewel in the middle of the desert, a space that must be protected as a precious capital.