

ON SECURITY AND SAFETY IN ARCHITECTURE

Yonca Hürrol Al

When the terms security and safety are used in relation to architecture, usually the strength of buildings is understood. If it is wished, "*depending on the relative importance given to human needs*", these concepts may also contain the buildings' healthiness, safety and security for children, for the old and disabled.

Beside these, every building must satisfy the required privacy and must form a safe shell against "foreign exterior attacks". In historical settlements, castle walls and towers that protect all citizens were added to the single building's "by itself" security precautions. Today, instead of these castles and towers, there are security precautions at national borders and custom houses. Besides these precautions that draw borders of national states; precautions at embassies and military zones to protect these areas from foreign or local enemies and precautions at prisons and insane-asylums to protect outsiders must be stated. We are all familiar with such walls, balustrades, police boxes and mirrors that surround certain buildings for many years. But for a certain time, security precautions have penetrated to other singular buildings and areas also. They varied a lot and increased so that it became necessary to discuss and evaluate the subject also in the field of architecture.

The heights of these walls and balustrades increase and they become stronger every year. Control boxes are integrated to them. They are designed specially, renewed frequently and later they start to form the "second walls" of these buildings and draw other kinds of borders.

Known examples of these can be found at university campuses, buildings of political parties, schools, factories, construction sites and some mass-housing areas. Also the houses of important persons started to be protected by police boxes that may stand on the sidewalks. Even to let pass these people with the highest security, the main avenues are closed to traffic for ordinary people. These are the prestige avenues of our cities that are cared for with great attention. Security precautions that are taken at the places where reactionary group movements are permitted, also need special attention. The security precautions at Ankara Celal Bayar Boulevard are increasing everyday. Buildings and parks on this boulevard were surrounded by high walls and balustrades; building entrances were decreased to one and cars started pass through the boulevard, every day faster than the day before.

Similar security precautions were discussed after the conspiracy realized at Istanbul Sabancı Center. How could these conspirators enter this castle in spite of all developed precautions ?

Sometimes such precautions are tried to be taken after the completion of the building and they may become very disturbing. Ankara Gaziosmanpaşa MNG Building's problem must be something like this. It is a smart building with a smart entrance hall, open glass elevators, a smart information office facing elevators with its security personnel and near it again a smart open staircase. Since I am afraid to use elevators, I preferred to climb the stairs. But you cannot reach the same places by using the staircase or elevators. After a long trial, I returned to the entrance hall and this time the attention of all security personnel turned to me. "Probably she is lost." I was lucky to have thoughtful friends and some personnel in the building who do not like to mock and ask unnecessary questions. Later I saw that there were locked doors also between the place you reach with elevators and offices.

This situation does not only exist in Turkey of course. At Los Angeles, the security precautions used at public buildings and districts of the rich are accepted so much that they are repeated also by the poor who have nothing to lose. The application that is also accepted by architects is normalized and taken as a model (Davis,1990,1993a,b). We are familiar with such security precautions from Hollywood movies, in which the love between the guard and the mistress of the house forms the main subject.

Again in Los Angeles, there are three squares. The historical square Plaza, which has represented the resistance of Hispanics to the Anglos since 1930, was defined as "multi-ethnic area" by the new commission and the Hispanic dominance on the

because of insufficient toilets of the discos at Farabi Street. Flood water enters the buildings that it cannot destroy. TV buildings, newspapers' printing offices and milk factories were damaged; insurance firms had problems and "kondu"s (squatter housing) collapsed. A weapon factory that is inside Kırıkkale exploded. In one of the flats in Eryaman mass-housing, a man who was having a bath fell down to the flat below together with his bathtub. Also windows flew, rain entered the houses and underground canals. This is such a mass-housing that, while delivering houses to the users, users had to sign illegal documents approving the good condition of their houses.

Through the asylum's balustrades a man asked the mad man:
--How many are you inside?
Mad man answered:
--This is not important. How many are you outside?

It is easy to increase examples.

Do the people who pass through Yüksel avenue not suffer from security precautions? Do "some people" in Van not collect ears in migrants' districts? (2) These are also natural. "What shit they were doing there?"

Beyond the many sided need of state to "civilian components" to provide "security for life", it is clear that what is cared by state or "civilian components" are not human bodies but what the nationalities, beliefs and visual identities represent.

FOOTNOTES

1. Two of the doors of this building are open.
2. The photograph on the back cover of this book -a migrant house with a steel door- requires special consideration.

Translated by Y.Hürol Al.
D.Özkan

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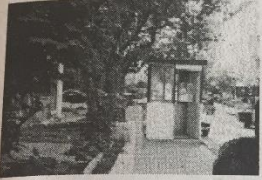
Türk Tabipler Birliği adına İpekyüz Necdet, *Van'da Göçenlerin İnceleme Raporu*, 1995



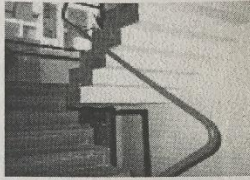
Cinnah caddesinde alt geçit, Ankara
Underpass at Cinnah Street, Ankara



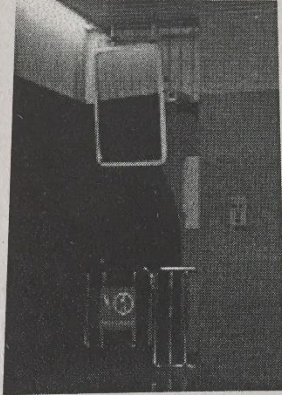
Gazi Üniversitesi MMF girişi, Ankara
University entrance, Ankara



Bir polis kulübesi, Ankara
A police box, Ankara



TMMOB Mimarlar Odası binası, Ankara
*UCEAT Chamber of Architects building,
Ankara*



Ankaray
Metro, Ankara

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