

The first International Training Course on Seismology, Strong Ground Motion and Seismic Waveform Modeling, jointly organized by the “Abdus Salam” International Center for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) of Trieste-Miramare and by the International Institute of Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IIEES) of Tehran, has been held in Tehran from 20 to 31 August 2006. The Course represents not only a bridge between Physics and Engineering Seismology but it is a clear example of broad international collaboration on topics that have the common goal of protecting human kind from natural phenomena that cannot be avoided, but whose negative consequences can be drastically reduced by prediction and preventive and actions. Lectures were integrated by practical sections held in a well equipped computer room.

In the stairway of the palace of Apadana in Persepolis (Takt-e Jamshid) there is an inscription telling that the building of the Palace started under Dario (in 522 a.C.) and was terminated under Xerxes (in 485 a.C.). The inscription continues with an imploration to God to protect the people from famine, mendacity and earthquakes. This anthropocentric vision should naturally drive environmental policies to put mankind as its central object. In seismology, a relevant step forward in the anthropocentric vision requires the improvement and supersession of the purely statistical definition of seismic hazard, very much liked by insurance companies. To minimize the surprise connected with future earthquakes, a good example being Bam event (December 26, 2003), it is necessary to combine probabilistic estimates with deterministic scenarios, based on the computation of realistic synthetic seismograms. Ground motion can be modelled, using all the relevant available information on sources and mechanical properties of soils, at any site of interest. The deterministic approach defines seismic hazard as the envelope of peak values of ground motion parameters (like acceleration, velocity or displacement) determined considering scenario earthquakes consistent with the seismic history and the seismotectonic of the study region. The procedure, presently in progress for the seismic microzonation of Teheran in close collaboration between ICTP and IIEES, has been illustrated also at the Italian Ambassador Roberto Toscano, who has offered a party for all participants at the magnificent Italian Embassy.

The Faculty, really international, was composed by excellent scientists from ten different countries, Algeria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Iran, Italy, Japan, Russia, South Africa, Switzerland, representing three Continents, while the students were from Afghanistan, Algeria, Armenia, Bielorussia, Bulgaria, India, Iran, Iraq, Macedonia, Malta, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Turkey.

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