

## Designing Principles in Historical Buildings of Iran

Ghazaleh Kari<sup>1</sup>, Amir Reza Karimi Azeri<sup>2</sup>, Sheida Ettehad<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Architecture Department, Islamic Azad University, Ajabshir branch, Ajabshir, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Architecture and art faculty, University of Guilan, Rasht, Iran

\*E-mail: Sh.ettehad@yahoo.com

### Abstract

Uneven and unbalanced development is one of the problems of Iranian cities. Ignoring the past including the historic environment, buildings and structures in terms of various issues, in addition to the heterogeneity and creating chaos in the urban landscape and the gradual loss of identity of the cities and cultural mismatch can create other problems. Urban designing and modern urbanism in historical cities should coordinate with urbanism regulations governing these buildings and designing before considering regulations of urbanism designing is completely unacceptable in these context buildings. This study tries to consider the charters, declarations and universal principles proposed in the context of designing historical buildings as well as investigating how to design the architecture in this area and how to maintain these buildings buildings in the heart of the new urban developments. Principles and regulations extracted in this study are an effort to systematize the new designs and interventions in the historical building buildings. Providing such regulations and scrutinizing the details of architectural design principles derived from indigenous identity and urbanism architecture of the area is the most important step that should now be included in the management and conservation programs of these buildings.

**Keywords:** architectural designing regulations, historical building, renewal, and modernization.

### Introduction

Along with population growth, residential habitats' development is inevitable, but if this development is done unevenly and hastily, it will lead to inconsistency and distortions of the old buildings. The lack of paying attention to the past of cities and their formation trend caused their modern development to be done in inconsistent with the shape and norms of the historical city. What is certain is that change is an integral part of the material world, and this is a direct result of the passage of the world. Therefore, the elapsed and unattainable time is the key issue in dealing with the historical buildings that have given the historical events and valuable buildings at a memorial set. The issue of changes and their management should be considered in dealing with these spaces which is occurred organically and over time in urban spaces sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly and sometimes like nowadays happens with undeniable speed (J.Ro, P.,2005).

Designing the historical buildings of cities with long history and worthy tissue is very different and more difficult than designing in pristine and new building because in this type of designs, the designer considers himself as protector and guardian of the legacy remained from the past and at the same time provides new projects in accordance with modern technology for the welfare of the residents (Esmaili Sangari and Umrani, 2006). Over the past few decades, architecture and urbanism of country have experienced different crisis. Uncontrolled urban development has surpassed on the capacity of state and municipal in development of infrastructures and services, urban population of the country is rapidly growing, and informal settlement is irregularly expanded. This rapid growth of urbanization, sudden increase in population and the rapid expansion of citizens on the one hand and dealing with the increasing modern needs of urban life on

the other hand, has reduced the citizen's understanding and his belonging sense to the city and its historical heritage; Therefore, the uncontrolled and uncoordinated growth of urban manufactured environment not only changes the physical value of city in unintended and devastating manner but also directly or indirectly influences the environment and valuable landscapes and human's spatial perception (Hanachi, 2006).

### **An overview of designing in the historical buildings of the city**

As urbanization process in many parts of the world goes towards increasing levels of urbanization and more attention is paid to the areas and historical core of the cities; areas in their central cities have raised in other forms. This attention is paid regardless of this point that the creation and continued development in urbanization is one of the results of different modernization process. Additionally, this result is consistent with unprecedented growth, by the year, which considers most densely populated areas of the world as the city. Revealing such results takes almost two hundred years or more. This process returns to the late eighteenth century, and early nineteenth century in England then was followed in Europe and the United States and now occurs in most parts of the world. During this period, modernization and urbanization have had at least two vast spatial effects. The first, a great expansion of cities and urban areas that in the modern world is sharply rising. The second, the increased sensitivity to something that existed in the past and partly on relatively old world. In other words, paying attention to the significant historical and architectural areas in the past. In addition, it seems that the more we move towards the development of modern urban areas, the more sensitivity we have found towards the past.

The next step in this way began since 1960 and basically since 1970 including conservation in area-oriented manner and trying to coordinate the past with the present or "old" with "new". However, this process was along with an emphasis on the "old" and according to the scale of buildings, materials and architectural styles. Generally, in places like the United States, this superficial criterion as a reaction to unlimited modernization was distorted in many cases, but often converted to the contentless building from the past that has become perfect, and sometimes imitation was superficial and sometimes gaudy. Finally, this process was converted to more free interpretation from historical buildings and areas. Continuing debates was shaped about what should be built after the appearance of the location to take a step towards spatial organization with deep cultural characteristics. This orientation before being official is an allegorical situation which is formed based on organizing the environment. For example, in East Asia in places like Hatong in Beijing and Rogge in Tokyo, stronger cultural structure of individual and society, continuity and discontinuity, etc. can be emphasized and considered without resort to the old way of building and settlement. The "tradition" and "originality" are two main points in this discussion:

#### ***Tradition***

Tradition is often associated with mental habits and habitual ways of doing things. When we say something is traditional, usually it belongs to the traditional way of doing things in the past which is in contrast with the new and innovative ways that come from the modern and contemporary. Therefore, from theoretical aspects, the double difference is taking shape between these two general approaches. Tradition can include criteria for the use of what is "right" and "good" in the context. In many situations and in most cases, but not always the tradition plays a role with this concept of borrowing from the past.

#### ***Originality***

Originality is undoubtedly a desirable value and goal for urban design in the traditional context at any time. According to the leading philosopher Lionel Trilling, there are many ways to provide more extensive concept of tradition and its importance in our discussion. First, originality

can be interpreted as belonging to the specific person, community, location and time. Generally, with contemplation and understanding of originality, it is possible to judge what should be taken from the tradition. Clearly, this application is different from one place to another and there are no specific guidelines to follow in all areas, and internal values should be considered in the every area (J.Ro, P., 2005).

### **A glimpse of the history of architectural design principles and charters presented in historical context**

By looking back to the heritage conservation movement that has taken place over the last 50 years, the first conclusion that can be made is that generally over a decade, the International Committee of Protection has focused on finding the solution for one or two major challenges which has no interference with other important issues that determine a persistent period. For example, 1960 was called the decade of building theories' consensus. 1970s as the decade of heritage listing, 1980 as the decade of areas' management and 1990 as the acceptance and definition of the new heritage issue such as cultural landscapes, sacred sites, native habitats which raised the passion of global circles and debates about the definition of meaning and the concept of originality. Results obtained during the 1990s opened the way to achieve the physical characteristics of the material and immaterial cultural values in an area and during this decade led to the wide excavations in the intangible heritage conservation area (artificial). Movements made during 1960 and 1970 mainly included the conservation in area-oriented manner and trying to coordinate the past with the present, or "old" with "new". However, this process was along with an emphasis on the "old" and given the scale of buildings, materials, and architectural styles. In the short term, with the development of this approach in time period about 100 years a range of ideas and programs were obtained to retrospect: supporting, maintenance, repair, restoration, protection, area-oriented, re-interpretation and critical re-interpretation. Accordingly, other general approaches including the appreciation sense to the past such as creating coordination, connection and ratings can be added. Care, protection, and other processes can be applied simultaneously, even for an area. In any case, this means that when we encounter to the reconstruct opportunities in the urban poor conditions, the selection of appropriate program which consists of a combination of the above activities should be noted (Tourk Zaban, and Mohammad Moradi, 2011).

### **General statement of the problem**

In 1931, in the historical city of Athens, an association of archeologists, architects and individuals having information about buildings were gathered and developed some regulations to preserve ancient monuments. Article 65 of this charter states that architectural values should be protected, whether since the individual buildings or the complete urban cores is regarded. Article 67 says: "provided that the protection of whatever said does not require the sacrifice of human groups that are involved with unsanitary conditions. According to Article 70 of this charter, the application of past style in the new buildings located in the historical area by relying on the claims of aesthetic, can lead to unfortunate consequences. In any case, it should not be allowed to continue this habit and conduct such demands and actions in any form and based on the article 95 private interests will be provided under the banner of the public interest (Habibi and Maghsoudi, 2005).

It is important to note that before the Second World War, the renewal and restoration of urban buildings were not considered independently and separately by the Congress as a dynamic urban set. Gobiyo Congress in 1960 was the first international seminar which clearly paid attention to the conservation and restoration of the urban context. The importance of social status of cities is mentioned in this Congress and reconstruction issues in one part of cities is considered as the social

practice and government officials have been asked to protect the artistic aspects of living space (Pourjafar, 2004).

Letter of recommendation of UNESCO was developed in 1962 to protect the beauty and characters of the landscapes of urban and rural environment. Two years later, the restoration and improvement of the urban buildings were emphasized at the International Congress (1964). According to the first article of this resolution, "The concept of the monument, includes not only single architectural constructions but also the urban space and landscapes." In 1972, it was again emphasized in Rome Congress: "... the originality and overall character of the urban organism should be protected..." In the same year, in addition to the third meeting of the Committee of ICOMOS in Budapest, a statement was issued which emphasized the importance of the historical and old sets as a part of the human environment. The main purpose of this statement was to emphasize the contemporary architecture using in building and Anabasis of building or tissue with the appropriate function (Habibi, and Maghsoudi, 2005).

In July of 1973 in ICOMOS Congress in the historic city of Zurich of Switzerland, the year 1975 was declared as European year of architectural reserves and it was decided to conduct a comprehensive study entitled "The future for our past," (Pourjafar, 2004). Amsterdam Congress in 1975 put on the agenda the development of European Charter of architectural wealth. This Congress emphasized on some considerations as follow:

A) The wealth of European architectures including buildings with single exceptional value and its surrounding areas, architectural complexes, urban and rural neighborhoods

B) Giving back the quality to the old the ancient neighborhood without fundamental variations in the social composition of residents

In 1976, the nineteenth session of UNESCO in Nairobi led to the statement that the following issues were proposed in:

This statement, in addition to criticizing the practices of modern urbanism and the negative effect on buildings and urban and rural centers, put the protective program providing on its agenda and focused on comprehensive intervention of urban restoration in this area and participation of the owners and residents and preventing the displacement of indigenous peoples from their place of residence. This statement also suggests that the minimal changes should take place in the residential pattern of residents of the area and conventional and desirable patterns should be observed in the modernization of historical contexts.

In 1982, Trinida statement was set by Mexican Committee of ICOMOS in Trinida in the third summit of the American countries. This statement considers the protection, development and rehabilitation of small settlements with participation of people as a moral duty of the government officials and people. This statement put on the agenda conducting all measures of welfare in accordance with the traditions and ways of life of the inhabitants and emphasized on the rehabilitation of small settlements, vernacular architecture sustainability and using the ecological materials (Habibi and Maghsoudi, 2005).

Charter for the Protection of Historic Towns and Urban Areas (October 1987 -ICOMOS) has emphasized on the necessity of preserving and protecting the large and small historical urban areas including towns, cities and historic centers and neighborhoods as well as the natural or man-made environment and stated the following principles in this regard:

A) Urban patterns that are characterized by pathways and streets

B) Relationships between buildings and green and open spaces

C) Internal and external appearance of buildings that are specified with the scale, size, styles, materials, colors and decorations

D) The relationship between the town or urban area and its surroundings, both natural and man-made environment

H) Specific and diverse tasks that city or urban area has acquired over time

In addition, this charter emphasizes the importance of the participation of residents in the protection of cities (Ghanmi, Samadi, and Chraghchi, 2007).

Statement of Mexico City was presented in 1999 at the Twelfth General Assembly of ICOMOS in Mexico City. This statement emphasizes the comprehensive and global concept of heritage and its interaction with the tourism and considers it as a means for cultural exchange. According to this statement, tourism and conservation activities in buildings and historical collections should be consistent with the interests, age and the demands of local and regional people to improve their living level and these actions can be done in the form of training, exponential and interpretative programs. The same statement in 2000 adopted by the Twelfth General Assembly of ICOMOS in Mexico considers indigenous constructions as the representative of contemporary life, historical document of society and a part of the cultural landscape to protect the heritage and believes that they are at risk (Habibi, and Maghsoudi, 2005).

### **Regulations and principles of designing in historical contexts**

#### ***The concept of context***

Tissue is a collection of the fabric which composes a single cloth that by decreasing and increasing one of the warp and woof systems lost the integrity and unity of its shape and comes in uneven shape and can even lead to the total collapse of the collection. It is absolutely true about the old tissue of a neighborhood or city which includes a set of elements of its context. For example, if we consider a modern glass tower built in the old tissue of Yazd city, we can completely reach the desired response. Namely, the harmony and coordination among the integrated and pre-designed components of context can give a harmonious and beautiful shape to the set, otherwise, we have an abnormal tissue with no harmonious among the components (Esmaeili Sangari, and Umrani, 2006).

#### ***General regulations of designing***

Old buildings needs to sustain life, and the promotion of social quality should be considered with regard to them, and it depends on updating them with the vision of cultural identity. In fact, the inclusion of all decisions with respect to the centrality of old tissue and social life and everyday life are intended in the revitalization of the city. Currently, old or abandoned or destroyed textures are renovated without any difference like the rest areas of the city namely without rebuilding the urban structure, their components are rebuilt, while revival of old buildings cannot be separated from urban development. Cultural values in architecture and urbanism in old buildings and its composition and continuity in the new development is a value and this issue is not limited to the historical context and time that is an ongoing movement that should continue. Western European and North American countries in dealing with urban issues during the second half of the twentieth century and recent years intervene in their urban contexts based on different approaches. Based on the obtained experiences in each action, the planning process, management and implementation of actions were review and a more complete approach which is appropriate to the circumstances and characteristics of each context is used instead of the past methods. However, a challenge has always been and is still in dealing with two issues of conservation and development.

However, both main approaches to complete their perspectives have taken holistic trend to maintain and develop the following values: aesthetic, historical and heritage, architectural, environmental, functional, economic and resources, social and cultural values. The study of charters and declarations indicates that among all various issues raised in the context of restoration and architectural interventions in historic buildings, some parts are common among all these buildings

and areas, regardless of their climate, culture and historical background. These issues are considered as the general designing regulations in the field of architecture and tissue repair which are examined from the perspective of theorists.

### ***Change Management***

When we think about urban old buildings, the issue of time and its passage comes to mind as its inseparable part. Time passage in its own turn is associated with change. The change in one factor is causing changes in other dependent factors. Therefore, the need to manage this change should not be ignored. Another issue of old buildings refers to the architectural development and designing next to these buildings. To adapt to the growing change, increasing willing is felt to adapt to our surrounding environment,

A desire to preserve the objects and places that have grown with them, and we have excitement and love feeling towards them. Working with the historic environment requires sensitivity to roots. The goal is to preserve the past values, while some components' readiness to change in order to insert a new element for adapting to new patterns of activity, developing technologies will provide the possibility of living for building and texture (Worthington, 1998).

### ***Receiving latent themes in historical contexts***

The hidden concepts and connotations of historical context should be considered carefully, not just imitating the historical style which leads to the distortion in the construction time. Although, this effect and achieving to balance with the old buildings prevent the architectural innovation (Warren, 1998).

Considering the characteristics of historical context including the scale, mass, texture, volumetric form and style are important since designing. The style of building reflects the familiarity, and the quality of style depends on good designing of architecture, integration, texture and infrastructure, volume and mass, visual combination and rhythm. In evaluating the designing of a building, quality, not special style should be considered.

### ***Continuity***

All policy-makers focus on the needs for cohesion sense from different perspectives regardless of any style, the environment, customers, and designers. The prominent points that are considerable about the new projects conducted in important historical areas is that, in addition to considering the history, architectural vocabulary of the twentieth century, all factors have been regarded because the current modern architecture is not related to the past and traditions (Worthington, 1998).

### ***Integration***

Maintaining the integrity while creating any change is a principle that deeply influences all other aspects of the designing. Without integrity, qualities of scale, texture, color, proportions and details have limited application. It is clear that a building having all these criteria is more popular in historical context. Historical context becomes more popular, but the lack of integration leads to misunderstandings. Therefore, any construction that allows for innovation and creativity and at the same time cause the least damage to the visual, is closer to the ideal (Tourk Zaban, and Mohammad Moradi, 2011).

### ***Beauty***

According to the Kentucky Zino, beauty is the most basic rule that is the beginning and end of any relationship. Other requirements include the correct expression of the performance of building, integrity or honesty in construction, simplicity of designing that while being responsive to the needs, does not display the waste part and finally coordination is required both within the building and in relation to the wider urban environment around it. But, despite other popular opinions, returning to the original native style and the use of traditional materials are not considered

effective solution and emphasizes on the protection of the scale, texture and harmony (Cantacuzino, 1998).

### ***Tradition and Identity***

Consistent approach to modernism emerges from social needs and sectional and hasty action and encounters the scope and limits of the traditional structure with the major changes. Paying attention to the traditions is very important in modern designing in historic sites, because it acts as the driving force of the city. Ancient architecture emphasized more on their relation to the history and tried to recreate pictorial history and at the same time had a look to the modern past (Adam, 1998).

### **Codified principles and regulations of designing in historical contexts**

The necessity to pay attention and apply the charters and regulations in implementation area and especially in dealing with the historical context is obvious, but to what extent these guidelines are applied and municipal officials and administrators are committed to them is another matter. Generally, what is challenged as the forgotten principle is the application of these guidelines in planning the urban historical context. Loyalty to the mentioned guidelines and making indigenous them based on the needs existed in a historical context should be regarded as a goal on the agenda of each restoration and conservation program. Mainly, urban historical contexts of the country are currently involved in the major problems in the field of the body of architecture, landscape, network of accesses, internal integration of buildings and ownership of building. However, there are also more abundant smaller issues that sometimes arise in different regions with different shapes. Of course, many of them emerge from a few major proposed issues.

### **Certain aspects of designing**

Certain aspects of architectural designing in dealing with the historical contexts can be expressed in accordance with the following table:

**Table 1. The specific aspects of designing (Tourk Zaban, and Mohammad Moradi, 2011)**

| Raw | Certain aspects of designing   | Codified standards and regulations   |
|-----|--|--|
| 1   | Network Access   | Preserving the historic cities' patterns including a network of pathways and streets. Preserving the communication system between the neighborhoods and motion axes of the historic town (such as market and public buildings)<br>Strengthening the converters and catalysts. Traffic management instead of mere traffic engineering. Providing temporary and permanent parkings |
| 2   | Perspective of historical context<br>A) Density<br>B) Distribution<br>C) line of sky | The necessity of preserving the continuity in the final line of sky<br>The necessity of cohesion sense towards various perspectives<br>Establishing a relationship between buildings and open and green spaces.<br>Paying attention to traditions as the driving force of cities   |
| 3   | Ownership  | Developing and setting the appropriate rules in line with the conservation goals and restoration of tissue. Anxiety and creating motivation in local residents of the historical buildings to preserve the native value of tissue and preventing their departure from the historical context   |

| Raw | Certain aspects of designing   | Codified regulations and standards  |
|-----|--|---|
| 1   | Architectural Framework<br>A) typology<br>B) pattern<br>C) material<br>D) Grading<br>E) Arena and Lord<br>F) architectural details<br>G) coordinate with the surrounding natural environment | The necessity of preserving traditional architecture patterns in the historical context designing. Coordinating with the natural environment and environmental and geographical issues<br>Coordination with the historic environment<br>Sensitivity to the roots. The necessity of change management over time. Considering the beauty of tissue, simplicity of designing along with considering the order, unity, relationships and dependence, balance and coordination, and avoiding high contrast. Considering the shape and compounds used in the buildings and their surrounding tissue   |
| 2   | Continuity and integrity of the historical context and incorporated surrounding tissue   | Protection in the form of area-oriented (coordinating new with old). Originality and overall character of the urban organism should be protected. Comprehensive protection includes: physical-spatial analysis and recognition of its foundation<br>Giving back the quality to the old the ancient neighborhood without fundamental changes in the social composition of residents<br>Considering the content lies in the historical context carefully<br>The necessity of creating integration in historical context   |
| 3   | User<br>A) Livelihoods<br>B) Accommodation with the environment  | Paying attention to the architectural social values and recognition of truth caused by public awareness to this topic<br>Considering various special work that urban area has acquired over time. Paying attention to the users coordinated with the historical body. Considering the principle of change in the livelihoods type of the residents of tissue. Implementation of tourism and conservation activities in buildings and historical collections with respect to the interests and traditions of the people. Local to improve their lives' level. A user who can provide a part of the intended service needs. Harmony with the environment and climate. Preserving the original biological relations and avoiding grammatical changes |

### Problems existed in designing historical contexts

Undoubtedly, the most important and biggest problem facing planners in historical contexts is occurred when they are forced to design and construct a wide street inside the old texture and this matter gets worse when one or more significant monuments are located exactly on the path of streets and we do not know what to do. Obviously, a lot of solutions can be found for the prevention or treatment of such problems. In the following, some of them are expressed with respect to designing experiences in the historical contexts.

- A) Constant consultation between relevant organs
- B) Preservation of monuments in priority
- C) Establishing the safety and comfort in the old buildings
- D) Holding specialized seminars and conferences )Esmaeili Sangari, and Umrani, 2006)



### Global survey in the field of organizing historical context

In this section, the results of complementary categories of urban restoration projects in three areas of developed countries, developing countries, and Iran, with the initial results of the study were collected in Table 2. In this table, the symbol ●, indicates the desired element in the primary and supplementary studies, mark ⊖, indicates the element in the primary and general studies and symbols ○, shows the lack of investigating the issue in these countries.

**Table 2. Cultural and religious purposes in urban restoration projects (Doerran, 2010)**

| Social objectives   | Developing countries | Developed countries | Cultural-religious purposes  | Iran | Developing countries | Developed countries | Iran |
|---|----------------------|---------------------|--|------|----------------------|---------------------|------|
| Restoration with public participation                               | ○                    | ○                   | Preserving the link with the past  | ●    | ●                    | ●                   | ●    |
| Excluding the classes that causes abnormality in the tissue         | ○                    | ○                   | Restoration of the historic role of the tissue in the city                     | ●    | ○                    | ○                   | ●    |
| Continuation of life in tissue                                      | ○                    | ⊖                   | Dynamics of the old town   | ○    | ○                    | ⊖                   | ○    |
| Balance between the old and new section                             | ●                    | ⊖                   | Emphasis on the memorial set   | ○    | ○                    | ⊖                   | ○    |
| Restoring the social identity of neighborhood                       | ●                    | ○                   | Enhancing the cultural quality of city   | ⊖    | ○                    | ○                   | ○    |
| Preserving the intellectual ties with the historical context        | ⊖                    | ○                   | Protecting the identity and urban heritage                                     | ●    | ○                    | ○                   | ○    |
| Creating interest in people to go along with the changes            | ●                    | ○                   | Creating pride of citizenship and cultural identities                          | ●    | ○                    | ○                   | ○    |
| Strengthening social life of the old city                           | ○                    | ●                   | culture as recovery mechanism of city  | ⊖    | ⊖                    | ●                   | ○    |
| Preserving the identity of historical context                       | ⊖                    | ●                   | Attracting and developing tourism  | ●    | ○                    | ○                   | ○    |
| Developing life in the tissue                                       | ○                    | ○                   | Expressing the historical background of the city                               | ●    | ○                    | ○                   | ●    |
| Maintaining and preserving the indigenous inhabitants in the tissue | ○                    | ○                   | Changing and improving the cultural behavior of people of neighborhood         | ●    | ○                    | ⊖                   | ●    |
| Paying attention to the architectural values and historic features  | ○                    | ●                   | Creating a sense of cohesion to the traditions and history of the neighborhood | ○    | ○                    | ⊖                   | ○    |

## Conclusion

Considering the historical context as the original structure of the historical cities is an important point that sometimes is forgotten in planning the comprehensive designs and modern urban development. Since, the historical, cultural, architectural and in a word, ecological nature of a land because of being old and lack of conformity with the daily progress are sentenced to decay and destruction, it is an event that is occurred abundantly in the historical cities of country. The continuity of this process leads to amnesia, loss of identity and all indigenous and cultural affiliations. Nowadays, urban restoration is converted to a public and strategic need of society. Today's education is not only responsive to the real need of country in specialized area based on global and practical experiences of mentioned issue. If urban development projects and its integration with revival of old buildings would previously observe with a neutral view, today it is a necessity, and knowledge is a need for our future life. Architectural quality improvement and relations governing it and implementation of urban development projects and urban management require the multiplied development of architectural training and urbanism and its matching with issues has a wide and various utilization. Influencing the historic buildings of the cities and its preservation and revival require consultants equipped with a sufficient number of specialists that its realization is not be possible only by creating a fundamental change in the education and organizing the consultation systems and employing new forces and rehabilitation of the passive forces and the establishment of specialized training courses and utilizing new technologies and in another step, entrusting the urban responsibility to local organizations such as the municipality and city council in order to make comprehensive the participation of different groups of society and acquiring force from intellectual resources and votes of society. In this case, the central institutions will solely take the strategic responsibility and policy making and organizing the planning process. In considering the international communities' perspectives towards the problem of historical value in the historical context of cities, it is tried to found appropriate strategy in its facing and protecting by reviewing the values. Therefore, the architectural design principles and regulations in historical contexts are proposed as a principle and in this way, the issue of a purposeful protection can be considered.

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