COORDINATED DESIGN IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS

Fereshteh PASHAEI KAMALI1,*, Akramalsadat RAZMGIR2, Babaksimintan KHOBRO3, Alireza Ghandriz BARADARAN4

1Department of Architecture, Maragheh Branch, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh, Iran
2 BSc. in Architecture, Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization
3 MSc in Architecture, Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization
4 MSc in Architecture, Lecturer, Tabriz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran

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Abstract. In a society in which accepting sociability, consensus and collective product are emphasized, new buildings try to coordinate themselves with the existing patterns. Edmund Bacon (1979) has searched the formation of urban landscape coordinated with manner of relation in which architects have worked in one place but in different times and by stating, the second person’s theory, emphasized that the second designer determines that whether the first architectural work is valuable or recognizes it as worthless. In other words, with his attitude towards society and his acceptance or rejection of past culture, he determines whether the first individual’s work or artistic creation should continue doing the project or not (Bacon, 1979:109). This is the approach that the designers of Renaissance adopted with the aim of creating designed urban space and they condoned architectural showing of their work for the benefit of coordination in public places. The major concern of architects and urban planners in urban landscape is the buildings that are neglected to each other and for the streets. The buildings like the members of society, in case of having culture and having social norms and in a sense social decency should respect each other and in return, in the absence of social politeness towards each other, they don’t pay attention to and race against each other, in a negative competition. In western countries, the old buildings have created coordination despite recognizable difference in the overall design and also the new buildings have taken place along the old ones by observing the principles of coordination design with good context. In Iran, in which the extrovert street architectural experience is less, coordination examples are less sighted. In this article, coordinated design and coordinated design in urban planning with presenting performed examples in various cities of Europe and in Iran are compared.

Keywords: Urban planning, contextuality, culture

INTRODUCTION

A city’s visage is a view of its motif, identity, culture, outlook and demands of its people. The city’s countenance includes the space between buildings and their views. Perhaps, one can strongly say that visage of a city will depict its skeletal identity. Urban landscape is not a result of a special time, but an alive and sustaining transition during life of the city. In city’s frame and visage, the collective memories of citizens and historical memory of the city are hidden and with the passage of time, the narrator of the past and city’s identity transfers to the next generations. However, what is evident in many of our cities today, is that the loss of style and a special frame in addressing issues related to urban landscape, a trend which has caused chaos and disorder in visage of city and from this angle, it has had an adverse effect on mental perception of citizens and also psychology of environment.

A good urban design will give people expansion of mind and will make them interested in the environment and city, and as a result, a city’s vision is not enough; it should also be acceptable
and coordinated with people’s wishes. Beauty, like any other phenomenon has three components: form, function and meaning. Form is the face of a phenomenon that includes shape, structure, weight and volume. Performance is the usage which it has for human and mankind and meaning is a component that connects us to other worlds and universes. The role of an urban designer is like of a role of a planner, geologist and physician. The duty of an urban designer as a coordinator is to use three components of form, performance and meaning for the purpose of enhancing quality and becoming ever closer to the ideals. Crystallization of foundations of epistemology and approach to life (outlook) and culture are of effective factors in art and architecture of that period and tendency to create civilization. If we consider civilization the external crystallization of culture and count it as a measure of people’s identity in every land, then it is obvious that for whatever reason architecture and design of every land is the emanatory of that land’s identity. By a quick review of aesthetic standards of cities in past eras and modern time, the effect of approach to nature and environment on aesthetic standards can easily be realized. In pre-modern notion, whether in Europe or Iran, beauty manifested on a primary paternal basis in area of art which can interpret the existence of this pattern via «epistemology. In pre-modern notion, existence was assumed as a transcendent truth which man draw himself near that sublime truth with activating the mind. Man’s perspective of nature in past times (pre-industry), was a unity with coincidental regularity and consequence of mentality with environment, and this has had such effect in arena of aesthetics which polarity, clarity and legibility to become its aesthetic standards.

The visage of city

The shape that city currently has, is by no means, its past nor its future shape. But, it is affected by the past and it is affecting future, and certainly time will change many of its features. Change is unavoidable, but in places which all old buildings perish people feel unsafe and their chain of connection ruptures. Therefore, we must always preserve some buildings that have historical or architectural values and belong to all ages (Tibbalds, 111:2004). Continuation of frame quality leads to coordination of urban landscape has immense impact on creating impression of historical and cultural continuity. This in itself is affected by circumstances and social values that while its interference and construction is noticed by architects and constructors. A “good” city has the ability to adapt with changing needs and altering eco-social conditions. This duty is designing a city in which tangible frame changes of city are coordinated with the process of change in sociocultural expectations of citizens from visage of city and the overall texture of city can accommodate itself to new terms permanently and without creating disturbance for state of city’s general field. Urban design must provide permanent process in adaptation of city’s frame with changing needs and demands of citizens in context of socio-economical change. By studying city’s status in a particular section of time, it gives us demonstrator of local features and designing principles of that city. Examining frame patterns shows that which social and cultural traits affect the frame quality of city. As the most important factor affecting frame quality and solidarity of visual appearance, culture is consequential.

Edmund Bacon (1979) has searched for the way of formation of urban landscape coordinated with the course of relations of architects which have worked in one space but in different times and with mooting (second person’s theory). He found out that it is the second designer with his course of action that determines whether the first architectural work is valuable or that signifies it as worthless. In other words, with his attitude towards society and acceptance or negation of past culture, he determines whether work or creation of art of the first person has survived or it is perished (Bacon, 1979:109). This is the approach that designers of Renaissance adopted with the aim of creating designed urban space and they condoned architectural showing of their work for benefit of coordination in public places. For instance, in architecture of Piazza Annunziata walls in Florence 3 architects were active in three periods of time, while temporary activity of three generations was the creation of a harmonic environment. In three sides of Piazza Annunziata
buildings of Santissima, Saint Mariadeiservi churches and foundling hospital are located. First, in 1427 a porch with an arch view was built for foundling hospital by Brunelleschi. Then, Michel Angelo in 1454 with repeating the arch-shaped entrance, augmented this design in the sequence similar to the view of foundling hospital in front of Santissima. In 1516, senior Sangalo and Agnolo became responsible for designing the building opposite the hospital. They recognized the old and almost 90 year old existing design important and finally the design of square with the same porch in the third side was sustained and completed. In other words, Michel Angelo consolidated Brunelleschi’s design with its repetition. This is completely a special cultural approach in which the designer has preferred the harmony of environment to creation of renewing architecture for himself.

**Solidarity and coordination in the city’s visage**

Brent Brolin (13:1980) in the book (architecture in context) found the cause of incompatibility of today’s buildings with context and creation of disparate and disordered urban landscape in the modern point of view. He addressed that the necessity and the presentation of a design different with environment indicating the creativity of architect, has caused the proposition of this idea in which the work must be extraordinary in terms of form and idea. Therefore, the architect has to have inner ingenuity. While, most architects can design accordingly with this context, but the inner mental barrier, formed based on definition of creativity is obtrusive. The point is that this negligence and denying context basically shows the self-centered and anti-social nature of modern movement (ibid). A movement, which instead of accepting its own values emphasizes on culture and society. Lang addresses that perhaps the most important change depending on culture for urban design is dealing with individualism and creating the spirit of cooperation. The admirable urban places like Piazza San Marco in Venice was gradually built over the centuries and every developer or architect implanted his work consciously in groundwork of what was already built. According to the architecture historian Peter Collins, such developments have a sense of respect (Lang, 30:2007).

Those cities possessing coordinated and integrated frame are result of cohesive society. In other words, culture and custom creates such balance and frame solidarity through social supervision. In these communities, this type of thought that predominates urban design, conforms to culture and social reflections and does not have much distance with cultural framework of society. As a result, product of urban planning will be a frame accepted by public opinion of people and also designers. Such a state was one of prominent features of Islamic traditional communities. Thereby, as Lang stated “a set of unwritten rules taken from Quran predominated the design of each component of environment and ensured an integrated whole” (ibid, 30).

What stands out in the form of image includes mass and space between buildings and their views. Perhaps, it can be strongly said that frame identity of a city will represent its visage. This visage is not a product of special time but an alive and continuous transition during the city’s existence. In city’s frame and visage the collective memories of citizens and historical memory of city are hidden with passage of time, the narrator of past and city’s identity will be transferred to other generations. The process that has caused chaos and disorder in urban landscape and from this angle has left an undesirable impression on mental perception of citizens and also environmental psychology consciously and subconsciously. The growth of city and its components has often caused plurality and spatial disorder in it. Apart from it the beauty grows from four scopes of convergence with natural factors, with mass and space, convergence of wholes in small and enormous scale and convergence with social and cultural norms. In some cities, there was an attempt to maintain solidarity but in many others, neglecting on of these convergences has brought chaos to the city. Evasion of former cities regulations, following foreign rules, profusion of criteria of construction, incorrect perception of city, radical transformation, escalation of
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destruction and construction before reaching construction regulations are factors of plurality in city. In some cases, urban planning engineers add to this chaos with perception of “geometric shape”. He found the solution in rectifying this separation in increasing the ability and skill for solidarity of these novel and occasionally scattered fragments. Solidarity of process is the organizer of regularity in space. In other words, solidarity seeks to unify elements, which are scattered around the cities to reach beauty. In the meantime, science is responsible for discovering relations and art of its presentation. Some thinkers of this domain esteem this way of human thought a source of inspiration for order. They believe that man must see the city as a single whole. Therefore, the first fundamental unit of urbanity becomes “whole” not a part; in other words, the growth of city part is achieved with maintenance of whole city.

Some also believe at time as the source of inspiration, meaning that they believe in step by step expanse of city and the effect of city’s history in future development. This group of people attain aesthetic regulations from cities past shapes. Being restricted in space, continuity and duration, rhythmic components within entire city, balance of mass and space, visual overlap are among essentials which “the inspired of time” will be extracted from the past. Another organizer of the sources is harmonizing with frame historical, social and cultural “context”, which examines the scale and relation of city components during time. Culture has been one of inspirations from the past times.

Presenting examples of coordinated design in urban environments

In a society emphasizing sociability, consensus and collective product, the new buildings attempt to coordinate themselves with the existing context. As we can see the images of Barcelona, Brussels and Venice, old buildings have created concordance in whole design despite recognizable differences and also the new building alongside old buildings were built with observing design principles of concordance with good context.

Figure 1. A view of Barcelona.
In the beautiful boulevard of Passeig de Gràcia, Barcelonatile the other beautiful street rules of height restriction, street width and other patterning (like Champs-Elysées street in France) is observed and yet many strong beautiful designs and extraordinary grace was spared in this boulevard. The most simple example in this case is “Mila’s house” building that by courtesy of embossed plans designed by Antoni Gaudí, it stands as a symbolic cremated building in the corner of streets. This structure is skewed by 45 degrees and this feature surprisingly expands every intersection like a multi-direction square and simplifies breathing in it.

In Iran which extroverted street architectural experience is less, in comparison to other countries, coordination examples were rarely seen. Uncoordinated views in all cities can be seen in sub-samples of uncoordinated views in Tehran. The question is whether we always have to design
compatibly or in most cases we are in search of creating an outstanding and distinctive work and even in contrast with environment, either we notice the overall context of our design effect or no because we build over Jahannama tower regardless of historical matrix surrounding the city, and what is the culture of urban planning today and how and why we have changed this way.

Figure 6. A view of Tehran.

Figure 7. A view of Tehran.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that today’s cities visage of Iran can be named post card, similar to architecture of Naser al-Din Shah Qajarera, and state buildings such as Shams ol Emareh. If in Naser al-Din Shah Qajar era, heads of state made the western architects to build structures in the same form seen in post cards and pediments and capitals of “Corinthian“ shaped the buildings view of Iran. In today’s urbanization and architecture, buildings are created without paying attention to context and with forms that we have been familiarized through books, magazines, internet or other media. Therefore, our cities visage is overcome by very superficial and far-off context standards and mental and cultural roots in frame bed of our city. Because of this, western neo classic roman view is seen in many of Tehran residential houses and in many cities. Currently, the town halls as the main agent of control and surveillance on manner of shaping cities visage are confronted with various issues. A wide spectrum of difficulties of ocular pollution is resulting from common patterns of promotion in city to upgrade plans of urban standpoint in cities scale. Issues that have grown in small areas and enormous scale in city and a large part of management concerns have been appertained to them. It seems that the grounds for disorder in the city’s visage can be found out in the following aspects:

- Related legal requirements and related provisions;
• Methods of surveillance and control by responsible urban institutes;
• Management and executing the upgraded plans for city’s visage;
• Process of procuring plans related to city’s visage from the angle of methodological and theoretical essential;
• Method and insight of general and circumstantial plans of cities in entering on city’s visage
• Construction patterns and performance and type of material;
• Design patterns and buildings architecture;
• Financial and technical limitations in performance;

Today, the managers have all agreed on the subject that the city’s visage requires improvement. But, the main issue is how to confront this subject and efficient and agreed upon tools and methods. The method and insight which with understanding of socio-cultural facts and knowledge of evident and secret mechanisms of city can cause effective measures in the field of enhancing spatial-frame quality of cities visage and provide the groundwork for effective and two-way relationship of people – as occupiers of city – and the city. It seems that in present conditions, if one can ripen a correct understanding of status quo, flaws and weaknesses and opportunities and its threats, a perspective can be created towards supply and formulation of patterns and flexible codes and meanwhile efficient and effective in field of upgrading cities visage. Accomplishing this is only undoubtedly possible with putting all expert force and practical and scientific experiences of city authorities, facility, management and administrative experiences of city hall managers. Also, for enforceability of organizing process of urban landscape, the terms of realization and feasibility should be increased to recognize all administrative, legal, financial and technical barriers. Forming architectural and urban planning working groups, for codification of regulations and administrative principles of desirable urban landscape, formalization of urban planning knowledge in planning system and controlling city’s construction and defining position and importance in the mind of city’s administrators and managers can be effective solutions in achieving a more efficient pattern in dealing with the issues of city’s visage.

REFERENCES