

Original Research Article

The Concept of “Value” & Its Assessment Principles in Rural Fabrics

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Abstract

Problem statement: Iran has myriad valuable rural fabrics. Today, discussing the “value” of rural fabrics is of great importance. Their diversity and dispersion based on biodiversity, natural location, and cultural characteristics have prompted entities to make efforts to identify their values with the help of environmental teachings. Given the limited funding and necessity to create equal opportunities to improve villages, the custodians are tasked with formulating the appropriate criteria and indicators to determine the values and evaluate the samples based on these to arrive at adequate samples that can be used as universal models for similar locations. The present research asks the question of how to define “value”, find suitable interpretations of it in a range of valuable rural fabrics, and present a mechanism to assess these to pave the way for both conservation and development.

Research objective: The first aim of the research is to classify values for the rural fabric. In the next stage, it will review the criteria and indicators that impact their selection and present a new understanding of the concept of value in conservation, development, and restoration. Finally, it discusses the mechanism for measuring samples based on these.

Research method: The library research method was used for the comparative analysis of various values introduced in the relevant literature on the topic, then values were defined, described, classified, and analyzed by reasoning.

Conclusion: The first step in setting up a mechanism to measure values was to identify the valuable samples by pinpointing the inherent values of every single rural fabric for conservation. The next step was to prioritize the attributed values and restoration goals to define a development plan.

Keywords: *Value, Valuation, Evaluation, Rural fabric, Conservation, Development.*

Introduction

In the past, dealing with the topic of “value” and the particular deductions from it depended mainly on awareness and distinct perceptions of the heritage of a country and the buildings which have been left behind. Values have always been at the forefront, not as an independent issue, but as a proper tool to evaluate the state of the buildings. Today, value is defined in policymaking for cultural heritage both as an “indicator”

in affordability evaluation and also as a prioritizing “criteria” for evaluating the power, competence, and suitability of the buildings for decision-making. It goes beyond the rules which previously applied to all the buildings with the components of value for conservation, to a system of priorities for development.

Hence, a test is needed to establish the correct ratio of value concepts in the challenge between two different approaches to valuable fabrics, namely

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museum “conservation” and hasty “development” (Hanachi, Diba & Mahdavinejad, 2007, 52), and envisage a more active role for value identifiers in the decision-making system to include in the action process. As the two main goals of conservation and development in villages have always existed as part of a living cultural heritage (Hanachi & Kosheshgaran., 2011, 65), the present research explains the effects of such perceptions on the concept of “value” in dealing with the issue and criticizes the existing experiences within the framework of the development-oriented project by the Housing Foundation of Islamic Revolution called “Improving the value of the rural fabric”.

The Concept of “Value” in the Literature of Cultural Heritage

In literature, pointing out the concept of ‘value’ and its various types from times gone has always been evident in the works of Viollet-le-Duc and the recommendations of John Ruskin. Apart from the personal view of some figures who have at times exaggerated the subject, most perceptions pertain to the issue of conservation. The main compilations are also by Bernard Feilden and Jukka Jokilehto who have considered the actions and decisions taken on the value of buildings as “conservation” (Feilden & Jokilehto, 2015, 13-22). Today, the topic of value is not up for discussion in conservation, because almost everyone has accepted that historical buildings have value and that there is no need to evaluate and prove the cultural heritage value. Rather, the aim is how to define and assess the value of these buildings (Nejadabrahimi, Pourjafar, Ansari & Hanachi, 2012, 80). Different opinions on value also depend on different interpretations of cultural heritage, because different criteria exist behind different viewpoints which vary from country to country and change according to the interpretation of cultural heritage in that country (Randall, 2002, 13; Chan, 1988, 84). For instance, according to the Nara Document on Authenticity, all the assessments of the values attributed to cultural heritage and the reliability of

resources may differ from culture to culture and even within the same culture (UNESCO, 1994). As such, considering the consistency of the values and changes based on different cultural settings, it is recommended to refer to the affordability of the buildings.

It is, therefore, not possible to judge values based on fixed criteria. So, it is extremely important to specify these according to the particular nature of the cultural heritage values of that culture (Feilden, 2003, 154). In the meantime, opinion holders in Iran who have been educated in architectural conservation have named the main goal of activities in cultural heritage as identification, conservation, and generalization. Influenced by the original literature, they have recognized Feilden’s work as the first and most complete classification of values and the only list available (Hojjat, 2001, 95). His mention of the “affordability” of historic buildings in developing values and presenting policies compatible with the dominating worldview in Islamic countries is considered an important achievement to this end.

In other literature on measures taken for development, valuable fabrics have been mentioned as zones that possess cultural heritage value while they are still lived in as a cultural place. Despite the need to regenerate their historical value, these places need to be compatible with the modern world as a place of accommodation. In this respect, talking about value is a current issue in a chosen location within the scope of collective behaviors and ideas in a specific time-space range (Falamaki, 2013, 325). As such, values are not simply attributed to past realities which must be conserved after their expiry date. Accordingly, the assessment of value is hidden in a tradition that evolves in time to reach a crisis. Hence, developing a condition, which depends on time and place will end up developing the activities of humankind and may turn into the phenomena of “other values”.

Therefore, two viewpoints can be named for value: one based on pure conservation and the other based on the possibility of development. Although

challenges remain in the two topics of conservation and development, both have adopted a holistic approach to values for conservation and development to evolve their visions (Hanachi, 2006, 91). Aside from these two viewpoints, there also exists a third point of view which considers conservation and development as complementary, with one paving the way for the realization of the other. By rejecting the approaches of development or pure conservation, this viewpoint considers “conservation based on development” as the only pursuable option in valuable historic fabrics (Hanachi et al., 2007, 58-59). This is the approach that has been pursued in developing the theoretical framework of the present research in a rural background.

• The Theoretical Framework for “Conservation & Development”

In line with the literature on this topic, three different approaches to viewing valuable fabrics were introduced, including “pure conservation”, “pure development”, and “conservation based on development”. The latter approach is worth pursuing given the tangible realities in most current development plans. Needless to say, if society develops, its heritage will also be conserved. A society that conserves its heritage will also pave the way for more development (Hashem Nejad, 2003, 66). In the meantime, the activities of the Housing Foundation of Islamic Revolution for rural development is one of the measures taken centered on regulating rural settlements and is considered the realization of development in this sector. The Rural Hadi [Guidance] Plan is the first experience of this valuable foundation which has prioritized rural development as a national effort. Given the different backgrounds in natural, human, and physical values in some villages, the plan changed its structure to “reforming the valuable rural fabric”. Its main activities involve:

- Identifying the main characteristics of “Value” in rural fabrics
- Identifying competence and dispersed knowledge to “Conserve” and regenerate valuable physical fabrics

- Reforming opinions on issues leading to intervention in rural fabric designs

- Paving the way for sustainable “development” in villages with valuable fabrics (Mazaheri, 2000).

The two principles of “conservation” and “development” based on value have been underlined in the indicators of this plan and selecting the right samples is always focused on due to limitations (Hanachi & Kusheshgaran, 2011). Since a wide range of villages in the country has a valuable rural fabric, it is possible to provide the least conservation and development for some of these by defining the reform plan for the valuable rural fabric as a complementary ring to connect the various other measures taken to develop the rural areas (Akrami & Sameh, 2008, 13).

Over the past two decades, a limited but still considerable number of villages were selected for development plans. One of the limitations of this experience was the lack of balance between the selected samples with the necessary development capacities; hence, the selection of samples by stressing the general value criteria seemed correct, but in reality, this has been associated with the values not showing in interventions. In other words, the samples were selected based on value criteria pertaining to conservation while development was less seen in these. In the process of reform, some values were thus neglected and decisions have only led to the possibility of physical development alone. Although restoration includes intervention in line with the general conservation of historic buildings to extend their life (Mahdavinejad, 2007, 96), in certain cases the outcome of sustainable rural development is not included in this and the principle of conserving values is not correctly pursued.

Therefore, it can be concluded that restoration measures in valuable fabrics are defined in the two short-term conservation plans and long-term development plans (Hashem Nejad, 2003, 68). Namely, the revival of past values depends on introducing them to everyone, and this only is possible if the ground is first laid with access to all.

This is only available in buildings that have already proved their value. In fact, reviving old (valuable) fabrics cannot be separated from new developments. The cultural values of architecture and urban planning in old fabrics and their ability to be combined with new developments are a value in themselves. This is not limited to historic fabrics or time. It's a continuous flow that must carry on (Hanachi, 2006, 91). So, the conservation of these buildings is the first condition for conserving the values of every society. But the continuation of such values is also associated with development in that society.

Research Questions

Apart from the usual questions on the how, why, and nature of values and their classification regarding the relevant historic buildings, the main questions of the present research are as follows:

- What is "Value" and a becoming definition of its various types in connection with valuable rural fabrics?
- How can a mechanism be set up to evaluate values in rural fabrics, which can work both towards conservation and towards development?

By underlining the issues the above questions are focused on, and given the research objectives underlining the active role of valuable identifiers of buildings, the present study will endeavor to pursue suitable answers for its audience.

Methodology

Since the theoretical framework of every research

as the system of thought that governs it introduces appropriate theories and approaches, the method of pursuing the subject also depends on these theories and approaches. The approach selected in the present research, based on its literature, is "conservation based on development" in which the role of value as a tool to evaluate the affordability and competency of a building fit for restoration is a major principle. Hence, the main methodology of this research is how to prepare a checklist of values to apply in line with the assessment mechanism which is based on them (Fig. 1).

The research is theoretical and topic-oriented, does not point to any particular field, and uses deductive reasoning. In the first stage, therefore, given the dispersion of the literature, logical methods such as comparative analysis between the types of values introduced in the relevant literature will be used by the library research method. Next, the values will be defined, explained, and classified. The discussion continues by using an inductive process to compile a system of value classification suitable for rural fabrics. This will culminate in new classifications presented in a table.

The Concept of "Value"

The conservation of cultural heritage is a cultural issue that depends on the correct understanding of the values of its sources. Cultural heritage sources may be associated with different values depending on their content (Feilden & Jokilehto, 2013, 17). Among the buildings remaining from the past, attention is usually

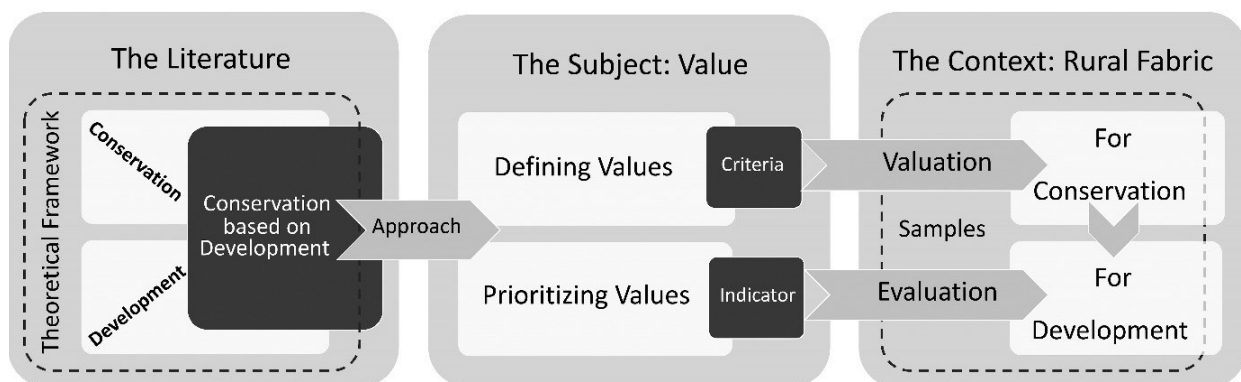


Fig. 1. Research model and structure. Source: Authors.

paid to what is considered important. To define what is important, we must refer to values and analyze and coordinate these to define the value of a historical building (Feilden, 1995, 6). But value is defined as the social assignment of qualities to subjects. Hence, values are dependent on society and change over time. As such, they come with a range of definitions. In fact, values are indicators assigned to cultural heritage by societies over different periods.

In the Dehkhoda dictionary, “value” is said to come from “valuing”, synonymous with price, and is also introduced as the equivalent of merit and deserve (Dehkhoda, 2002). Value is a basic word for the grading, classifying, and ranking of phenomena. Humans use values as a basis to evaluate the phenomena around them and regulate behavior towards them. Thus, the most important sources of value formation include “norms”, “needs”, and “scarcity” (Sartipipour, 2008, 61). Despite the use of the word “value” on a daily basis in Persian, this does not seem to have been defined in writing. Also, its general meaning of valuing and having a price is rather inadequate and superficial. Most of the interpretations consider value as a preferred fact (Falamaki, 2012, 520). Although the value of cultural heritage is universally accepted today, an inclusive definition of this concept has not been presented yet. Finding meaning is important in that it can firstly provide a common understanding of it; and secondly, it can become a basis to conduct discourse on values and their function (Hojjat, 2001, 108).

In defining values that are related to cultural heritage, the most general words and terms are used. Bernard Feilden believes that in cultural heritage, particular attention must be paid to instances that are considered culturally significant, while the financial aspects must also not be neglected (Feilden, 1995, 17). Hence, conservation policies must be based on a sound footing, starting with studying, documenting, and elucidating the cultural-natural sources and values related to them. These values can be classified into two groups: cultural values and contemporary socioeconomic values. In primary literature sources,

this classification by Feilden and Jokilehto has always been the best source of reference and has influenced all the other classifications. This is also why different interpretations of it exist.

In another value-oriented approach, a wide range of values – apart from the physical values – still require re-evaluation. According to Eileen Erbsley, values are quality indicators that are assigned to cultural heritage by users and communities at different times. Cultural significance is created and supported by a wide range of values, some of which may conflict with others. Some buildings have been erected as memorials to values that have continued so far. Others have lost their assumed importance throughout time, and some still have found value for reasons of community attributes. In this approach, conservation plays the role of maintaining and promoting the values of nature (Orbasli, 2008, 38). So, conservation includes recognizing the different types of values, answering management needs, and intervention.

In the meantime, along with the views and ideas of Ruskin and Ziteh in defining indicators, especially for valuable fabrics, Reigl stresses particularly historical components, the arts, and aesthetics (Reigl, 1982, 23). Lipe emphasizes the need to be holistic and includes these indicators in social and economic contexts (Lipe, 1984, 9-11). The Lowenthal Study Group has also conducted vast research on the UK National Heritage value indicators which mainly focus on the performance and usage of the building over time (Throsby, 1997).

In an assessment scheme, Frey has argued that defining value depends on the economy more than anything else, especially tourism (Frey, 1997, 14). But in research conducted by de la Torre, economic indicators are adjusted to a large extent due to their dependence on historical and cultural capacities and are not prioritized (de la Torre, 2002, 9-12). While accepting that the conservation of historic buildings can be based on various values, Tiesdell often concentrates on the particular backdrop of the building and its surroundings (Tiesdell, 1996, 10). The World Heritage Committee in its January 2008

Operational Guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention considers a building to have a prominent global value which has at least one of the following value evaluation criteria (Table 1).

Among Iranian opinion holders, Hojjat believes that our scientific knowledge of our world, which forms the basis of the idea of affordability or value in something, is basically achieved in three ways: exact sciences, humanities, and artistic perceptions. Therefore, values can be classified into three general groups: scientific values, historical values, and artistic or emotional values (Hojjat, 2001, 98-99). There is a direct correlation between these groups of values and the three main criteria when defining cultural heritage: 1) Scientific values with objectivity, 2) Historical values with antiquity, and 3) Emotional values with human messages. In the report on the registration of immobile cultural heritage in Iran and influenced by this viewpoint, Rahimzadeh distinguishes the qualitative and quantitative indicators, from essence to realization, and explains them in detail (Rahimzadeh, 2009).

Safamanesh has also investigated the criteria for valuation in its general sense in the Iranian worldview, from antiquity to contemporary times, and presented the process of its evolution. He considers the values for usage, exchange, and belief to be the three main criteria throughout history that have greatly affected the valuation system for cultural heritage (Safamanesh & Monadzadeh, 2003, 141). When supervising

Mohammad-Javad Mahdavejad’s doctoral dissertation and Sima Jalali and Saeed Soraei’s Master’s theses (2007), Hanachi has also based the view on values on Feilden’s specific views with slight changes in the indicators. This is important because efforts have been made for the first time to prepare a comprehensive list of values and their positive correlation. Finally, Shamaei & Pourahmad have cited the importance of recognizing values and conserving the national heritage, and presented a different classification for the indicators and criteria of values. These can be used mostly for the restoration and regeneration of historic fabrics (Shamaei & Pourahmad, 2012).

As can be seen, many of the components which have been introduced as indicators of value are dispersed with no adequate classification. Most of the indicators are descriptive and efforts have been made to include the different dimensions of valuable buildings in a checklist of values in a hierarchy of criteria assigned to each one (Pourjohari, 2018, 9-31). What stands out in most classification systems is that some of the titles of these components used as criteria or indicators (which are measurement tools rather than descriptive) have been displaced or some groups in some of the classifications have been neglected. But this classification is also important because it has made an effort for the first time to prepare a comprehensive list of values and their correlation.

Some of the values and their frequency and

Table 1. World Heritage Committee Values. Source: The World Heritage Committee Operational Guidelines for January, 2008.

Source	Indicators & Criteria
World Heritage Committee values	A masterpiece of human creative genius
	Exchange of human values over a specific period or cultural region of the world, leading to progress in architecture, technology, artistic masterpieces, urban planning, or landscape design
	Unique or exceptional pieces of evidence of a living or destroyed cultural or civilizational tradition
	An outstanding example of a type of building, technical or architectural complex, or landscape representing an important stage(s) of human history
	An outstanding example of human habitat, is the use of land and sea that represents one or more cultures, or interaction between humans and the environment, especially when the environment has become vulnerable due to irreparable changes
	Directly linked to events, lifestyles, ideas, beliefs, or works of art and literature with global prominence (In the opinion of the committee, this criterion should preferably be used together with other criteria)
	Includes amazing natural phenomena or areas with exceptionally beautiful nature of aesthetic importance
	An outstanding example of the important stages of the earth’s history, including traces of life and significant geological processes
	An outstanding example of ongoing ecological or bio-natural processes that lead to the evolution and formation of terrestrial ecosystems
	Includes the most outstanding natural habitats for biodiversity protection, and endangered and scientifically valuable species

Table 2. Adaptation & Frequency of Value Criteria & Indicators in Heritage Literature. Source: Authors.

Criteria	Value Indicator	Sources													Frequency		
		Jokilehto	Feilden	Ersley	Reigl	Lipe	Lowenthal	Frey	De la Torre	Tiesdell	Hojjat	Rahimzadeh	Safamanesh	Hanachi	Shamaei/Pourahmad	Detail	Total
1	Social Value	Social Customs Value						*					*	*		3	15
		Social Credibility Value					*		*	*			*	*	*	6	
		Social Message Value										*		*		2	
		Value of Belonging to Society					*		*				*	*		4	
2	Historic Value	Archaeological Value		*							*			*	3	19	
		Antiquity Value		*	*	*					*	*		*	6		
		Historical Concept Value												*	1		
		Historical Identity Value	*	*		*	*		*		*	*		*	*		9
3	Emotional & Sentimental Value	Admiration Value		*		*					*				3	16	
		Emotional Value			*										1		
		Commemorative Value			*	*	*			*		*	*		6		
		Symbolic Value		*	*	*			*		*		*		6		
4	Scientific Value	Educational Value	*		*		*	*	*	*			*		7	18	
		Documentary Value		*							*				2		
		Research Value		*	*		*	*							4		
		Technical Value	*		*			*					*	*	5		
5	Cultural Value	Mythological Value											*		1	16	
		Continuity of Culture Value		*						*	*	*			4		
		Religious Value		*	*						*		*	*	6		
		Traditional Value	*					*		*		*		*	5		
6	Functional Value	Economic Value	*	*	*		*	*	*		*		*	*	9	26	
		Political Value	*	*	*					*					4		
		Usage Value	*			*		*		*			*	*	6		
		Functional Value	*	*		*		*		*		*	*		7		
7	Environmental & Landscape Value	Ecological Value		*		*			*	*	*	*			6	17	
		Local Differentiation Value						*					*		2		
		Natural Value		*				*		*		*	*	*	6		
		Urban Value		*							*			*	3		
8	Artistic Value	Aesthetic Value		*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		8	28	
		Architectural Value		*	*			*		*	*	*	*	*	8		
		Rarity Value	*	*	*		*			*	*		*	*	8		
		Representation Value											*	*	1		
		Adaptability Value					*					*	*		3		

adaptation with major classification sources in the relevant literature are shown in [Table 2](#).

As can be seen in [Table 2](#), the frequency of values pertains mainly to “historical” and “functional” values. Amid these, and despite the significant artistic values, these are mainly focused on the “historic and economic identity” values. This indicates the combined values of the supporters of cultural heritage and that of the productivity and functional values of historical buildings. It is, therefore, best to focus on these two aspects equally when selecting approaches to work on historic buildings and historic environments with value.

Values of the Rural Environment

Values hidden in a rural environment can be recognized in their main components. These values are actively present across the board in the surrounding fabric and recognizing them is important in that they can help understand the existing affordability in this environment which shapes human life among other things. Here, some concepts are affected by the environmental characteristics which have an impact on a different perception of values in physical environments such as villages. The most important of these is the concept of “affordability”.

Some physical environments are better suited to certain activities ([Gibson, 1977](#)). The affordability of the building at the level of human abilities, desires, and needs, namely transferring every type of human message, is a principal criterion of the historic building rooted in its reason to exist. Value and affordability are two words that are used together in specialized literature. Affordability means all the capacities of a building that may emerge or remain hidden ([Hanachi et al., 2007](#)). In other words, affordability is defined based on the inherent essence of a building and each of the capacities will be perceived as value if the condition arises. The emergence of a value depends on the environment of the building and the conditions for the emergence of that capacity ([Mahdavinejad, 2008, 82](#)). Value is

only defined by human beings and does not exist until it is defined. The important point is that unless a judgment is made about something, value is not defined, and if that thing is not totally perceived or wrongly defined, correct judgment cannot be passed ([Falamaki, 2013, 521](#)). Also, value is general or inherent. This means that it is either contained in the reality of objects whose essence depends on it or it is transverse and outside their reality and their essence is independent of it ([Khansari, 2021, 107-108](#)). In other words, value is realized either due to the inherent reality of the object, or it depends on cases where value is attributed to the object. Thus, values can initially be classified into “inherent values” and transverse or “attributed values”. Inherent value refers to those hidden within the phenomena themselves, and attributed values refer to those which are expected in relation to a recognized capacity in the environment and the type of encountering it as an opportunity or possibility. Therefore, the inherent values of rural fabrics pertain to the originality of their environmental and physical sources which are the crystallization of many other values.

Overall, every phenomenon has its features, capacities, and affordability which pave the way for the emergence of inherent values in a building. “Conservation” is based on frequency and diversity. If these capacities are recognized, they will act as an opportunity for “development” in terms of attributed values.

Certain assumed values in a rural fabric and the criteria and indicators which have been focused on as selection criteria for villages that are considered to have a valuable fabric in the plans of the Housing Foundation of Islamic Revolution are shown in [Table 3](#).

As can be seen, many of these values are not inherent to the buildings. Rather, they can be attributed to a phenomenon under special circumstances. Values that depend on other values are called “transverse values” ([Hojjat, 2001, 98](#)). As the selection of specific targets and the degree of intervention

Table 3. Values in Valuable Rural Fabrics. Source: Islamic Revolution Housing Foundation, 2014.

Recognizing & Selecting Valuable Rural Fabrics			
Criteria	Indicators	Criteria	Indicators
Physical Values	Climate Adaptation Value	Sociocultural Values	Life Span of Village Value
	Special Construction Technique Value		Specific Production & Lifestyles
	Building Security & Durability Value		Special Customs & Traditional Values
	Using Specific Local Building Materials Value		Birthplace, Place of Residence, or Burial Place of Famous Personalities Value
	Architectural Style Homogenous with the Environment Value		Popular Management & Active Social & Local Institutions
Historic Values	Architectural Elements & Special Details Value	Environmental Values	Special Elements, Locations, or Natural Landscape Values
	Fabric Antiquity Value		Special Exploitation of Natural Elements Value
	Presence of Historical Buildings Value		Breeding Certain Livestock, Plants, & Aquatic Animals Value
	Occurrence of Historic Event Value		Tourism Value
		Economic Values	

depends directly on the values specified by society for cultural buildings (Feilden, 1995, 6), these values may be determined by the type of encounter with the phenomena depending on the circumstances. These are attributed values given to objects by the exploiters. One way of achieving inherent values is to reflect these back on the buildings and make efforts to identify their acceptability levels of that value (Hojjat, 2001, 96). Also, any steps taken towards a specific target can have value, but it may be considered void of value in terms of other targets. This is why the targeted values for rural fabrics must be defined. The hidden values of these fabrics can give rise to characteristics that will differentiate and prioritize certain rural fabrics from others. This raises the question of priority for “conserving” villages with fabric value on the one hand and enumerates the necessity of paying attention to their “development” on the other (Mazaheri, 2001, 36-37).

The Basis for the Valuation & Evaluation of Rural Fabrics

Cultural heritage has myriad sources of value. The most important ones provide a good justification for conservation. An exclusive source may have different values, making managerial decision-making more difficult. Judging values may change over time (Feilden & Jokilehto, 2013, 22). Of course, investigating the values of cultural heritage does not

mean that their value needs to be proved. What must be investigated are the ambiguities in assessing these values (Hojjat, 2001). Hence, everything we do for rural fabrics is not only due to the values they contain, but also to define and use these values and prioritize them.

Doubtless, a systematic assessment of values to identify and delve into all the dimensions of a historic building, and consequently, understand the requirements of managing it to set up special tools for a comparative study of the samples, prepare a list of buildings, etc, is not possible by relying on unlimited values. Just listing a set of values without established principles is not a comprehensive and convincing assessment; it is merely a random expression of some of the values of the buildings. By no means does it guarantee that all the values have been included nor does it pave the way for a common platform to compare these (Rahimzdeh, 2009, 141).

These values are the product of the current times and their requirements. This is why they are always changing and expanding. The speed at which the life of the contemporary human is evolving also accelerates change in these values beyond the shadow of a doubt, adding to their limitlessness and relativity to transform the evaluation system based on these values into an unstable system that cannot be referenced. Given what may arise in the future and the need to include these in a long-term plan,

the mere interpretation of daily values would be a tentative, temporary basis that cannot be depended on and will turn the evaluation system into an incomplete and ineffective solution as time goes by.

In order to establish an efficient system of evaluation, we must not resort to an incomplete collection of understandable examples to define the basis for a holistic evaluation system. Although these will inevitably adopt antitype characteristics with the changing times, they will nevertheless provide a complete and stable basis due to their inherent affordability. The basic values of a historic building are in fact the manifestation of its inherent capacities which reveal themselves to the contemporary human according to the degree of his contemplations, potentials, and aspirations. Therefore, in seeking the inherent values as the main ground for this infinite, unstable collection which is presented as the inherent values of a building due to the wide range of human approaches to historic edifices, it is essential to analyze the capacities and nature of the buildings and ponder on them.

As an initial hypothesis, it seems that conservation principles based on the inherent values and measures taken toward development are founded on transverse values. Because buildings of value (in this case rural fabrics) contain their own inherent values, they must be conserved. Since they require development, other values are also attributed to them. In other words, conservation is essential once fixed inherent values in a building are acquired, and a move towards development also highlights other values which are based on development targets and may change in conjunction with other objectives. The need to tend to rural fabrics due to their inherent values and organize restoration plans must be looked at from a conservation angle based on development. By drawing the objectives, this angle underlines the inherent values which will play a part in selecting samples for conservation and attributes them the values which will prioritize them for restoration and development.

• Inherent values & valuation

Valuating inherent values and defining criteria to pinpoint the samples for conservation is of extreme importance. Criteria as a tool make it possible to distinguish the pure from the impure and provide the chance to arbitrate between right and wrong. Although criteria do not set an exact, definitive boundary, they still elucidate the main features of a phenomenon and provide the means to give a suitable definition for arbitration. In essence, these criteria and indicators are not only tools of selection among a swarm of existing phenomena, they are the only available principles for diagnosis and arbitration to help us interpret a phenomenon as a cultural heritage. Criteria form the essential basis to distinguish some phenomena from others and give them a particular identity (Rahimzadeh, 2009, 133). As criteria are used to compare and select the samples, they are considered to be the best tool for valuation.

The capacities of historic buildings are part of their inherent values which must be understood regardless of the conditions governing exploitation. There are two conditions for these capacities to be recognized as a value in every society: Firstly, the inherent values of historic buildings must be recognized by that society, and secondly, the possibility must exist to employ these to meet the needs of the society. Many issues related to cultural heritage can be resolved by understanding these two elements, namely recognizing the needs and understanding cultural heritage as a means to resolve them (Hojjat, 2001). Instead of trying to focus on identifying the values which are attributed to objects by the exploiters, efforts must be focused on identifying the capacities of objects which show the ability of the object to accept these values. This will reduce the dependence of these values on external conditions and transfer them to the object itself.

• Attributed values & evaluation

Attributed values are considered indicators that prioritize and evaluate the buildings for

development. Indicators are quantitative and qualitative yardsticks that are used to evaluate change and progress during a process. In its most general form, an indicator is a quantitative metric that indicates a quantity and measure of something (Tabibian, 2002, 50). It is the indicators that are the variables, not the “values” – something which is at times attributed to them. A variable is a scientific representation of a qualitative feature of a system. This feature is our perception or imagination of a characteristic that has been measured or observed in a certain procedure (Gallopín, 1996, 102).

In a general sense, every variable indicates a special trait that is not the real target, but the imagination or abstraction of a feature. The significance and meaning of a variable or its value can be obtained from its “interpretation”. Values as indicators help set the general priorities in deciding on the proposed interventions. Wise arbitration depends on a broad cultural readiness and total sensitivity that enable us to evaluate values correctly (Omranipur, 2004, 90). Perhaps the method of setting the priority of existing values is the most important factor in dealing with historic buildings. Initially, priorities are set by “needs”. In the next stage, beliefs are adjusted, and these are finally realized given the “potentials” (Hojjat, 2001).

In practice, priorities are regulated based on the views of those who fund the scheme. The general priorities set by society can be very helpful as an overall policy line. In a society where needs, beliefs, and potentials are aligned, we witness that the buildings are restored by observing all their values. In a society where these factors are not aligned, we witness the demolition of the historic building and the construction of a new one at extortionate costs and lacking all the values of the previous building. It must be noted that prioritizing one class of values does not mean ignoring other values. Instead, the set priorities are regulated based on the existing capacities of a building on the one hand, and the needs, beliefs, and potentials of a society on the other.

Conclusion

Rural fabrics contain a wide range of values that have been mentioned in extensive and diverse lists. Needless

to say, the ultimate aim of managing a historic building is to conserve these values. To achieve this in practice, every measure can only be taken by identifying, registering, introducing, and evaluating the hidden values of historic buildings. As such, these must be adequately classified based on the logical principles of categorization within an organized framework to present a commendable model for recognizing these values and helping the mind in this scattered arbitration.

To achieve this, the research first seeks to answer its questions by finding a worthy definition for the concept of the value and its various types in rural fabrics. It has endeavored to adapt various viewpoints and compile and classify a range of values in Table 4 in conclusion, based on the research background.

Compared to dispersed criteria and indicators on “value” in the literature of cultural heritage (Table 2), Table 4 focuses on rural fabrics with value in particular and evaluates their identifiers in the two general groups of “inherent values” and “attributed values”. The authors believe that focusing on a special perception of the concept of “value” in rural fabrics with value as a priority indicator instead of just determination criteria will be more effective with a better outcome than before in selecting samples for interactive conservation and development plans.

Tending to the disorderly rural fabric must take place not only with a view to conservation and restoration but also to promote the quality of life of its inhabitants. Given the rapid growth of some villages, it is feared that the values hidden in these fabrics, which hold a significant share of cultural values, will be neglected. Therefore, adopting the approach of conservation based on development is crucial in the continued life of these villages. In turn, this seems to depend on the sustainability of the inherent components of value and the focus of the inhabitants on interacting with these in the course of life.

At a glance, the impromptu value of some rural fabrics and the immediate understanding of their myriad capacities will make their evaluation seem easy. But it is crucial to understand that targeted evaluation will reveal an understanding and appraisal of human truth hidden in their depths. This

Table 4. Criteria, Indicators & Valuable Identifiers in Rural Contexts. Source: Authors.

	Values	Criteria	Indicators	Identifiers			
Rural Fabric Values	Natural Environment Values	Environment & Landscape Values	Ecological Value	Adaptable to Climate, Homogenous with Local Environment			
			Local Differentiation Value	Particular Exploitation of Natural Elements			
			Environmental & Natural Landscape Value	Presence of Particular Natural Elements, Places, & Landscapes			
			Environmental & Rural Landscape Value	Degree of Harmony with the Surrounding Natural Environment			
	Inherent Values (Environmental Capacities) - Conserving Values in Rural Fabrics	Human Environment Values	Social Values	Social Customs Value	Special Social Customs		
				Social Credibility Value	Valid Influence		
				Social Messages Value	Transfer of Values to Posterity		
				Belonging to Society Value	Popular Management & Active Local Institutions		
		Cultural Values	Cultural Values	Cultural Myths Value	Stories & Myths about Villages		
				Cultural Continuation Value	Continuation of Cultural Manifestations, Language, Ethnicities, etc		
				Religious Values	Sects & Special Religious Ceremonies		
				Cultural Traditions Value	Special Cultural Customs		
				Physical Environment Values	Historical Values	Archaeological Value	Ancient sites & Historical Cemeteries
						Antiquity Value	Antiquity of Fabric, Historical Buildings
	Historical Concepts Value	Attention to the Life Span of Village Throughout Time					
	Historical Identity Value	Birthplace or Burial Place of Famous Personalities, Historical Events					
	Attributed Values (Opportunities) - Development	Artistic Values	Artistic Values	Aesthetics Value	Particular Ornaments		
				Architectural Value	Particular Architectural Details Value		
				Rarity & Inimitability Value	Outstanding Sample of Rural Architecture		
				Representation Value	Top Sample in Similar Environment		
Sentimental Values		Sentimental Values	Homogeneity Value	Homogeneous Fabric			
			Admiration Value	Awe Inspired During First Encounter			
			Emotional Value	Diversity & Impact on Visitors			
			Commemorative Value	Memorable Elements in the Environment			
			Symbolic Value	Cultural Icon in Public Opinion			
			Educational Value	Fit for Educational Trips			
Functional Values	Functional Values	Documentary Value	Availability of Valid Academic Documents on the Village				
		Research Value	Possibility of Conduction Academic Research				
		Technical Value	Building Security & Durability, Construction Technique				
		Economic Value	Readiness for Investment in Tourism, Handicrafts				
		Political Value	Strategic Position in the Region				
		Usage Value	Known as Regional Hub				
			Functional Value	Dynamic Functions			

must be coupled with management strategies and the allocation of available resources for their proper maintenance. All of this put together will finally unravel the complexity of this evaluation.

Since support for value in rural fabrics is limited in terms of development plans, selecting a limited number of samples and prioritizing these based on their values will thus be inevitable. Another issue that must be faced is that preparing a universal list of all the value components in all these fabrics is not only impossible but also incorrect. Firstly, the context within which values emerge is different for everyone, and secondly, development goals are also different in every village.

Moreover, the level of value of each village depends on the capacities they reveal during development. Hence, in drawing up the mechanism of values, the final proposal is to begin by selecting the samples based on the identified inherent values in every single rural fabric for conservation. In the next step, the attributed values must be prioritized for intervention based on development, and development plans are drawn up.

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