

New Building Design in the Historical Environment Through Competition: The Case of İstiklal Yapi Kredi Culture and Art Centre

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Abstract

Designing a new building in a historical environment, which is a reflection of the social, cultural, economic and technological lifestyles from the past to the present, is a process that requires considering many design inputs together, making decisions as a result of serious analysis and multidisciplinary studies. In this sense, choosing the competition method in obtaining a new building that adds value to the historical environment makes the process open to different analyses, interpretations and criticisms. In the evaluation of new building designs in the historic environment, analysing in the light of international conservation documents rather than subjective judgments gives more realistic results. In addition to this, it paves the way for designs that integrate with and add value to the historical environment without harming it, for new buildings to be built in the future. In this sense, this study aims to evaluate the İstiklal Yapi Kredi Culture and Art Centre building, which was designed by Teğet Architecture in a competition project opened in 2010, and after winning the first prize, was constructed on İstiklal Street, Beyoğlu district of Istanbul, meeting the criteria of new construction in the historical environment created in line with international conservation documents and grouped under the following headings: (i) environment, (ii) design, (iii) new addition/building, and (iv) function. Regarding the environmental criteria, it was observed that the building attaches importance to the value of the district in which it is located and contributes to the cultural activities in the environment with its function. Regarding the design criteria, it was seen that the building is in the same dimensions as the design of architect Paul Schmitthenner, with both its volume and gauge, it respects the spirit of the place where it is located and strives to be a part of this whole, but the interventions are not recyclable since it does not contain any remains of the old building. Regarding the new addition/building criteria, it has been observed that the building reflects the time in which it is located with its contemporary design, as well as referring to the previous building. Regarding the function criteria, it has been observed that while the old building was used for cultural functions in addition to the bank function, the function of the new building is completely based on cultural activities and this function is suitable for contemporary life; it provides protection against the risk of İstiklal Street, whose cultural identity is damaged today, turning into a depressed area. According to the results of the evaluation, the Yapi Kredi Culture and Art Centre, which is characterised as the reconstruction of Paul Schmitthenner's 1958 design, has enriched the historical environment with its design philosophy, function, façade, mass effect and use of materials, as well as exhibiting a respectful approach to the context in which it is located.

Introduction

The idea that monuments should be conserved together with the surrounding fabric was first put forward in the

1880s by Camillo Boito, who played a major role in the formation of the foundations of modern conservation theory; it was developed by Gustavo Giovannoni in the 1930s and started to be based on theoretical foundations

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[1]. After the 20th century's two major world wars, the problem of how to build new buildings next to the old ones emerged with the destruction of urban areas [2], and at first, approaches in which similar buildings were built instead of the destroyed ones were adopted. In the face of this approach, figures of modern architecture such as Le Corbusier took a stance against the imitation of the old by stating that "imitation of the past reduces the value of the original" [1]. Following these discussions, Article 1 of the Venice Charter, published in 1964, which brought together modern ideas on conservation, expanded the concept of "historic environment" and stated that monuments should be conserved together with their environment.

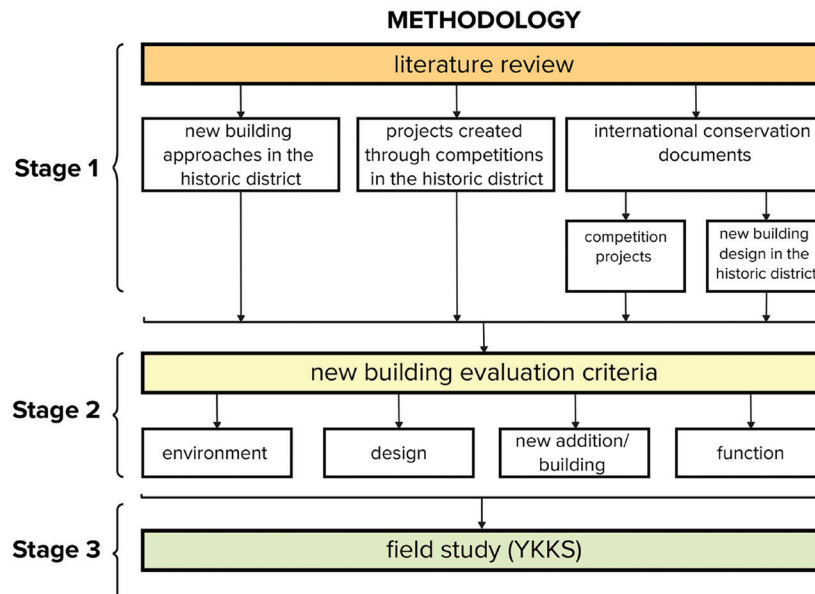
The historical environment is a concrete reflection of the lifestyles, aesthetic understanding and technological possibilities of cultures throughout the historical process [2], as well as the changes it has undergone in the process and the resulting identities [3]. Historical environments should be perceived as a whole and evaluated in a holistic way [4], as they transfer the experiences and messages of past periods to the present with every part they contain [5]. Within these evaluations, social life, culture, natural environment, artificial environment, streets, squares, avenues and all architectural elements should be considered as an input.

What the historical environment contains are also the elements that affect its quality positively or negatively. The relationships between the buildings and the roads, squares, green space arrangements and the utilisation of all these have a significant impact on the quality of the environment. Especially in the process of urban development and transformation, situations such as unconscious constructions, unplanned urbanisation, and slums have negative effects. In such cases, studies aiming to conserve original identities and to keep them alive together with the new are very important. In this context, new building projects in the historical environment have

been discussed and debated for many years. Although no clear boundaries can be drawn about how these new buildings should be, many different ideas have been put forward. Those who are concerned about the deterioration of the historical environment suggest that the environment should be conserved as it is and that the new buildings should be replicas. Opponents, on the other hand, argue that ignoring the "present", which is the past of the future, to protect only the past, is a disrespect to the future. The most important point for both views is that both past and future architectural projects should reflect the characteristics of their era [6].

Architectural project competitions, which enable the emergence of critical and original ideas on such a controversial and sometimes relativised subject, are at a very important point. Examining the buildings obtained through these competitions, which include concepts such as specification, jury, award and competition, enables the development of new perspectives and comparisons with similar ones. For this reason, the YKKS (Yapı Kredi Culture and Arts) building, which was awarded by Teğet Architecture in an architectural project competition held in 2010 in the Beyoğlu district of Istanbul, and which is described as the conversion of Paul Schmitthenner's 1958 design, was selected as a field study. The methodology of the study was handled in three stages. In the first stage, literature research was conducted, and in this context, new building approaches in the historic environment and projects produced through competitions in the historic environment were examined. Then, the data on competition projects and new building design in the historic environment in international conservation documents were researched. In the second stage, new building evaluation criteria were created in the historical environment in line with the data from the literature research. In the third stage, the YKKS building, selected as a field study, was evaluated based on the criteria (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Methodology of the research
[by the authors].



I. New Building Approaches and Combination Typologies in the Historical Environment

Historical environments are one of the most important parts of the cultural accumulation, social memory and urban identity transferred from the past to the present. Managing and directing change in these urban areas, where change and transformation are inevitable, is very important for the conservation of cultural richness. At this stage, designing a new building or a new addition in the historical environment is handled slightly differently than approaching any other design problem, and the design proceeds in line with certain limitations and criteria. In this process, where there is no single truth, many different solutions and approaches to the design problem have been developed.

The approach of new designs in the historical environment can be categorised as (i) adaptation, (ii) commentary, and (iii) differentiation approaches (Fig. 2).

In the adaptation approach, there is a concern that contrary designs will damage the historical environment, and it is considered correct to make similar designs. The most important input of design in this approach is harmony. In order to ensure the harmony of the old and the new in the historical environment, it is envisaged that the new building, especially the facade design, should be similar to the old one.

The commentary approach is divided into two: reconstruction/replica and similarisation/stylisation. The negative aspect of "reconstruction", which refers to the exact reproduction of the same building, is that it makes it difficult to read the authenticity of the fabric. As a result of this method, buildings that neither belong to the past nor reflect the period in which they were built emerge [7]. In the similarization/stylisation approach, the dimensions and proportions of the historical environment are replicated without commentary on the principles of contemporary architecture [8], [9]. Commentary approach is an approach that does not break away from the context in which it is located, and that sets out from the fiction that the new should be made in harmony with the building/environment, with its size, scale, mass, volume, gauge, colour, full-empty relationship and material selection. It includes designs that support the commentary of the context instead of copying it. In this approach, where visual and aesthetic

harmony is sought between the old and the new [10], it is very important to analyse the building and the environment correctly. Designs produced with the commentary method are evaluated as approaches that take clues from their surroundings, determine abstract references, and respect the culture and social life brought by the historical environment.

The differentiation approach refers to the easy identification of the era of the building by using modern materials and forms without establishing a relationship with traditional forms [11]. This approach is divided into two as neutral and contrasting. The neutral approach aims to emphasise the texture and reflect the contemporary era. The choice of transparent or reflective materials, the continuation of a single material along the entire facade, and the repetition of a certain motif can be characterised as the prominent features of this approach. The contrast approach is contrary to the characteristics of the existing texture in terms of features such as volume, composition, form, scale and material, and has an individual attitude. The biggest threat of this approach, which breaks away from the context both abstractly and concretely, ignores the existing texture and strives to come to the fore, is that the existing texture is put into the background [8].

As can be seen in the literature, there is no single correct approach to the design of new buildings in the historical environment. Any one or more of the approaches can be accepted together. What is important is that the final project ensures continuity with the historical environment.

The relationship between the new design and the old in the historical environment has brought about different combination typologies. The design of the new building can be created in many different sizes, locations and forms depending on the type of building, the region where it is applied, various physical, legal, and material possibilities and the designers. In order to examine the interface between the historic building and the new building, combination typologies inspired by the study of Zakar and Zeren [12] were created and supported with examples (Fig. 3). Accordingly, the connection between the old and the new can be formed by being separated, adjacent, from one point, intertwined and integrated. In addition, these connections can be horizontal or vertical [12].

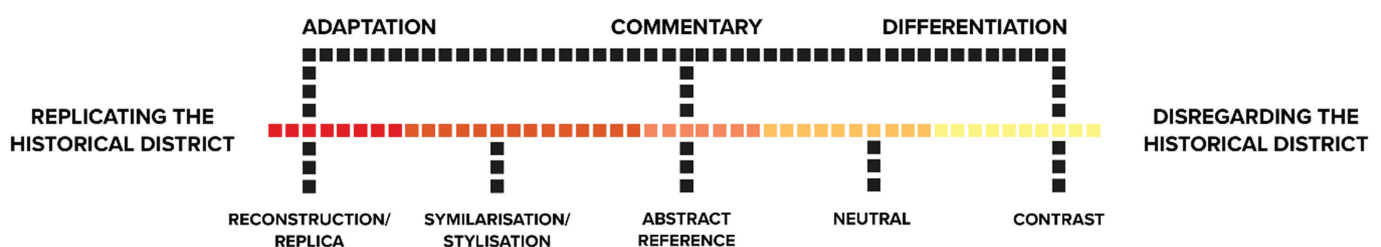


Fig. 2. New building design approaches in the historical environment [created by the authors].

	SEPARATE	ADJACENT	FROM ONE POINT	INTERTWINED	INTEGRATED
HORIZONTAL					
EXAMPLE	 Louvre Pyramid [36]	 Balna Shopping Center [36]	 Istanbul Naval Museum [36]	 Richmond Hotel, Istanbul [36]	 Moritzburg Museum [43]
VERTICAL					 Historical Building New Building
EXAMPLE	 Antwerp Port House [44]	 Elbphilharmonie [36]	 Taksim Sofitel Hotel [36]	 Royal Ontario Museum [45]	

Fig. 3. New building combination typologies in the historical environment (inspired by the study of Zakar and Eren, 2019).

II. Projects Created through Competitions in the Historical Environment

When the early examples of competition culture in architecture are analysed, the first known competition is the Acropolis War Monument, which was selected by the Athenian people in 448 BC. In the 15th century, the door of the Cathedral of Florence (Santa Maria del Fiore), which is accepted as the symbol of the Renaissance in Florence, Italy (built in 1401), and the Dome (built in 1419) were built through a competition [13]. According to Sudjic, architectural competitions in the modern sense date back to the 18th century when Thomas Jefferson proposed a competition for the design of the Washington Capitol [14]. It is also known that in the 18th century, a competition was held in Rome in 1723 for the construction of the “Spanish Steps” [15], [16]. In the 18th and 19th centuries, especially in France, England and America, project creation through competitions was frequently used. The Washington White House (1792–1830), the London Houses of Parliament (1836–1870), the Eiffel Tower (1886–1889), the Paimio Sanatorium (1929–1933), and the Sydney Opera House (1956–1973), which we can count among the most iconic buildings of our day, are some of the buildings designed through competitions [13].

In the 20th century, one of the most iconic examples built in the historical environment through competition is the Pompidou Centre, designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers and implemented in Paris between 1971–1977. Designed in a contrasting approach within the historic urban fabric of Paris, the building revitalised the area, which had turned into a depressed area, with its square design and cultural function. Another iconic example is the Jewish Museum, designed by Daniel Libeskind in 1989.

The new annex, which is connected to the historic building underground, is one of the most frequently cited examples of the contrasting approach with its design philosophy, use of materials, massing and facade.

In Turkey, architectural competition projects began in the 1930s; competitions enabled the Republic's modernisation policies to be implemented in Anatolian cities, and public buildings that gave cities a modern identity were built. The most brilliant period in terms of the number of competitions and the rate of implementation was experienced in the 1960s. At that time, it was the Chamber of Architects which brought competitions to a different dimension. The competitions organised by the Ministry of Public Works, one of the largest employers, for various public buildings, such as government houses and courthouses, led to the construction of buildings that reflect the technical possibilities and aesthetics of the era in a modern approach, especially in accordance with the principles of the international style.

After 1960, with the emergence of conservation consciousness in Turkey, the design of new buildings in the historical environment has become a more prominent issue. In some of the competition projects opened in this context (Fig. 4), sites next to or adjacent to the old building were given, and it was included in the evaluation criteria and jury reports that the design problem should be solved by considering these buildings. One of the earliest examples of these competitions is the Alemdar Brothers Office Building competition in Karaköy in 1947. Looking at the drawings of the competition won by Orhan Sefa and Kemal Ahmet Aru, one can see that the floor alignments of the historical Karaköy Palas on the neighbouring parcel are adapted to the new building and the facade proportions are abstracted and simulated, and a simple facade free of ornamentation

is designed. However, during the application, these floor alignments were not adhered to, and the floors were flattened for economic reasons. The building is still in use today.

In the same year, 1947, a competition project was opened for the new buildings to be built on the Beyazıt Campus of Istanbul University, which was established on the site of the Old Palace, the first palace built by the Ottoman Empire in Istanbul. The Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Economics, which were constructed through the competition, are located on the facade facing the Süleymaniye Mosque, behind the old Harbiye Nezareti building designed by the French architect Bourgeois (1865–1866), which is now used as the rectorate. The blocks, which exhibit an integrated design with the rectorate building, are positioned in a U-shape and form a courtyard. A respectful approach is exhibited by staying behind the rectorate building in terms of gabari. The design, consisting of four different blocks, bears the traces of the Second National Architecture movement.

Opened in 1960, the Istanbul Manifaturacılar Çarşısı (İMÇ) was designed in a composition within the historical urban fabric, between the Bozdoğan Aqueduct and the Şeb Sefa Hatun Mosque. Designed in blocks, the bazaar is one of the most important examples of 20th-century architecture in Turkey, with its respectful attitude towards the historical environment, its design with courtyards and street character, its new interpretations of commercial areas, and its interpretation of the traditional and the modern together.

Opened in 1964, the site of the Edirne Government House was located in the area known colloquially as Paşakapısı, home to the richest monuments of the Ottoman Empire. In the report written for the winning project, it was mentioned that a respectful approach was made to the nearby Deveci Inn and a design was made in accordance with the silhouette and the existing character of the environment [17]. In the project, which is compatible with the historical environment in terms of scale and gauge,

the design was made in the form of divided blocks [18]. The facade character of the design includes simple and clear lines and reflects the modern architecture of the era. However, this building has completely lost its original character with the recent facade renovation.

Opened in 1968, the Istanbul Advertisement Site competition is also noteworthy for its different approach to new buildings in the historical environment. Located in an area full of historical references in Cağaloğlu, the site includes the Mahmut Nedim Tomb, a 19th-century work. The new building has a design approach that respects the historical monument and is integrated with the context, with its form that surrounds the tomb and its setbacks on the ground. In addition, the new building is modern in style with its brutal surfaces and facade character.

The 1985 competition for the Istanbul National Reinsurance General Directorate is one of the most important examples of infill development in the historic neighbourhood. Located next to the historic Maçka Palas building and on a street with multi-storey apartment buildings that appealed to the upper-income group at the beginning of the 20th century, the facade design of the project uses contemporary materials and adopts an approach that respects the neighbouring buildings with the gaps and setbacks it creates. In addition, creating a public space on the ground floor of the mass for pedestrians to cross to the back street and supporting it with spaces that allow cultural activities makes the building privileged. The architects of the building, Sevinç Hadi and Şandor Hadi, won the National Architecture Award in 1992 and 1994 for their design.

Apart from these competitions, the government house competitions in Artvin in 1968, Hatay in 1972, Sinop and Sivas in 1973, Afyon in 1980 and Erzincan in 1985 are also exemplary in this sense, and all of them were built next to a historical building. When the design approaches are analysed, it is seen that there are neutral approaches as well as those that refer to historical buildings, and in general, there is an aim to harmonise with the current texture [11].

Fig. 4. Projects created through competitions in the historical environment in Turkey [by the authors].





Fig. 4. Projects created through competitions in the historical environment in Turkey [by the authors].

III. Competition Projects in International Conservation Documents and New Building Design in the Historical Environment

Preferring the competition method in the production of new buildings in the historical environment is very important in terms of developing new approaches and perspectives, and achieving qualified results. Competitions do not only focus on the area where the building will be built; they focus on the historical environment and realise interventions on a large scale. In this context, there are articles in international conservation documents that support the acquisition of buildings through competitions. It is possible to summarise these articles as follows:

- *Adequate documentation* [19], [20], [21]

In competition projects, documentation is done in all processes: specification, requirement program, announcement of the competition, question-answer, submission of projects, jury report presented after

evaluation, announcement of the results, exhibition and colloquium.

- *Open to the public* [19], [20], [21]

All documentation during the competition process is open for access. Especially, the colloquiums held after the competition are very important in evaluating the criticisms and results of the competition. Even if many years have passed since the competition, a researcher interested in the subject can easily follow these processes.

- *The requirement for multidisciplinary cooperation* [20], [22], [23], [21], [24], [25]

When making any intervention in the historical environment, it is important to get the opinions of experts from many different disciplines and to work with experts to prevent designs that will damage the environment. The participation of experts in the field on competition juries or the collaboration of competitors with individuals from professions other than architecture can be cited as examples of this multidisciplinary cooperation.

In international conservation documents, certain definitions and interpretations have been made regarding new buildings in historical environments. Determining the design criteria in light of these documents is very important in ensuring the harmony between the new and

the old. Within the scope of the study, all international conservation documents were scanned, and criteria were grouped concerning (i) environment, (ii) design, (iii) new building/addition and (iv) function (Table I).

TABLE I

Criteria for the evaluation of new building design in the historical environment in international conservation documents [by the authors]

Title	Criteria	Supporting international protection documents
Environment	- The monument should be conserved together with its environment - It should contribute to the cultural context in which it is located and increase human activity - Open areas should not damage the historic environment - The character of the urban area should be emphasised - Vehicular-pedestrian access to the building should be provided	The Venice Charter [19]; The Declaration of Amsterdam [20]; Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas [26]; Washington Charter [22]; International Cultural Tourism Charter Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance [27]; The Valletta Principles [25]
Design	- Parcel and street character should be conserved - Respect the spirit of the places - Interventions must be recyclable - Use materials suitable for the historical environment - Gauge and size should be suitable for the historic environment	Carta Del Restauro [28]; Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas [26]; Washington Charter [22]; The Nara Document on Authenticity [23]; The Valletta Principles [25]
New addition/ building	- The new addition/building should be readable, recognisable, and distinguishable - The new addition/building should respect the context in which it is located - The new addition/building should be integrated with the current context - The addition/building should enrich the context in which it is located - The new addition/building should reflect the time it was built	The SPAB Manifesto [29]; Carta Del Restauro [28]; The Venice Charter [19]; The Declaration of Amsterdam [20]; Declaration of Dresden [30]; Washington Charter [22]; The Nara Document on Authenticity [23]; Charter on The Built Vernacular Heritage [21]; Riga Charter [31]; Charter of Cracow [32]; The Valletta Principles [25]
Function	- Conservation of the building or the context in which it is located should be ensured by giving it new functions - New activities should be organised in historical environments that are at risk of being transformed into a slum - It should be given a function that is suitable for contemporary life, compatible with the current environment and for social benefit	Recommendations of the Madrid Conference [33]; The Venice Charter [19]; The Declaration of Amsterdam, [20]; Recommendation concerning the Safeguarding and Contemporary Role of Historic Areas [26]; Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe [34]; Washington Charter [22]; Charter on The Built Vernacular Heritage [21]; The Valletta Principles [25]

IV. Teğet Architecture and İstiklal Yapi Kredi Culture and Art Centre (YKKS)

Founded in 1996 in Ankara by architect Mehmet Kütükçüoğlu and architect Ertuğ Uçar, Teğet Architecture moved to İstanbul in 2000 and continued to operate in the fields of architecture and urban design. The office, which now has branches in İzmir and Konya [46], has entered many architectural competitions and received various awards since its establishment. In 2016, the office participated in the 15th Venice Biennale with its project titled “Darzanà: Two Arsenals, One Vessel”.

YKKS, which was built as a result of a competition project by Teğet Architecture, is located on İstiklal Street in the district of Beyoğlu, one of the first landmarks of the city that comes to mind when it comes to İstanbul in the past and today. This region, formerly known as Pera, started to be built up in the 15th century and experienced its greatest period in the 19th century. In the 19th century, when the population of the area was mostly composed of non-Muslims and Levantines, more than 3000 buildings

in the area were destroyed by fire after two major fires in 1830 and 1871. After this period, new buildings were built in the area, the Grande Rue de Pera (İstiklal Street) was widened, and new buildings were built in place of the buildings destroyed in the fire, changing the scale of the street and forming its current facade [35], [37].

İstiklal Street is approximately 2 km long and 15 m wide at its narrowest point. Hundreds of thousands of people pass through this street every day, which takes its biggest cultural image from its dynamism. All this dynamism and the buildings surrounding the street constitute the soul of İstiklal. İstiklal is one of the most folkloric values of İstanbul, with its interconnecting roads to Cihangir, Kabataş and Tophane on one side, and its connecting roads to Tarlabası on the other. While buildings of different eras and styles surround both sides of the street like great city walls, the original soul of the fabric is strong enough to hide the unqualified buildings/additions between these buildings. While each building and each street has a different story in this unique area that can only be felt when experienced, the buildings on

the street actually exhibit an independent and introverted stance from the street [37].

Galatasaray Square, located approximately at the midpoint of İstiklal Street, is a gap created by the demolition of the police station in this area in the first years of the Republic. Although its location in the middle of the street transforms it into a meeting point, it has not become a square [37]. The YKKS building is located on the corner parcel overlooking this unsquared gap. It was determined that there were three different buildings on this corner parcel, which can be accessed through documents (Fig. 4). Before the 1870 fire, there were no visuals of this area, but according to the D'Ostoya map (1858), there are about twenty buildings on the current parcel. The wooden buildings shown in brown (Fig. 4) were probably destroyed by the fire. Among these wooden buildings, there are also open places that are presumed to have served as streets or passages and connected to İstiklal Street.

The first building with an image of this area is the neoclassical building seen on a postcard from the late 19th century (Fig. 4). After the fire, the construction on the parcel, which consisted of small wooden buildings, turned

into a single large building. According to the 1905 Istanbul Insurance Map, there is also a Galata Serai passage next to this building named Galata Serai Apparts, whose ground floor is a commercial place (Fig. 4). This shows that the street or passage function before the fire was resumed. The third building is the one seen in a photograph taken by Ara Güler in the 1950s.

In the 1950s, Yapi Kredi Bank wanted to build a building on this parcel that would combine the functions of a bank and a bookstore. The third building on the parcel was designed by architect Paul Schmitthenner and opened in 1964 (Fig. 5). When Yapi Kredi Kültür acquired the next parcel in the 1980s, architect Bülent Marmara designed a new building by continuing the facade lines of the existing building with rationalist lines, increasing the length of the facade. In the 2000s, due to changes in management, this 1980 addition was separated from Yapi Kredi Kültür and all functions were centralised in the first building designed by Schmitthenner. As a result of increasing needs over time, the Yapi Kredi Kültür management announced a competition for the renovation of the current building in 2010.

Fig. 5. Historical process of the YKKS site (images taken from Kütükçüoğlu and Uçar, 2019).



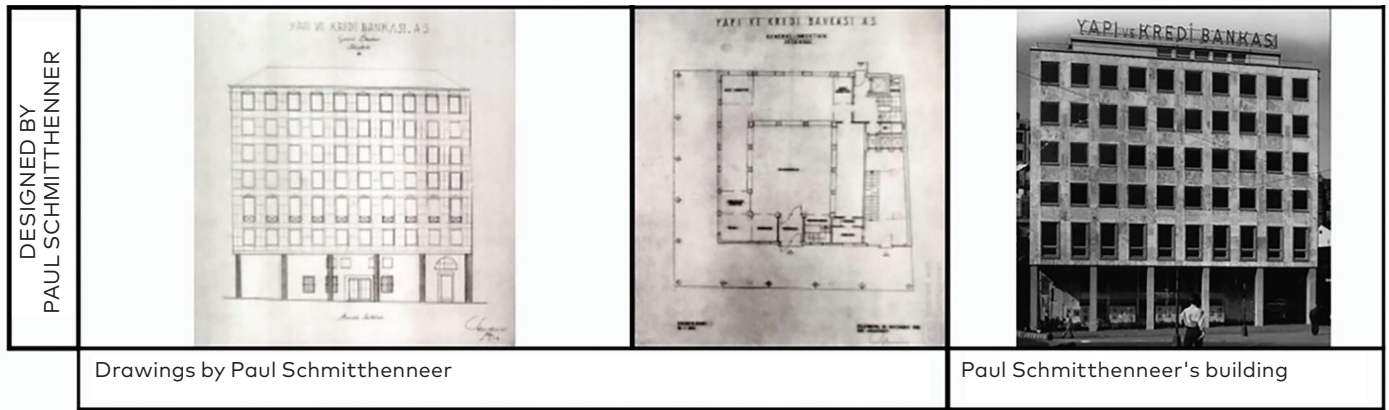
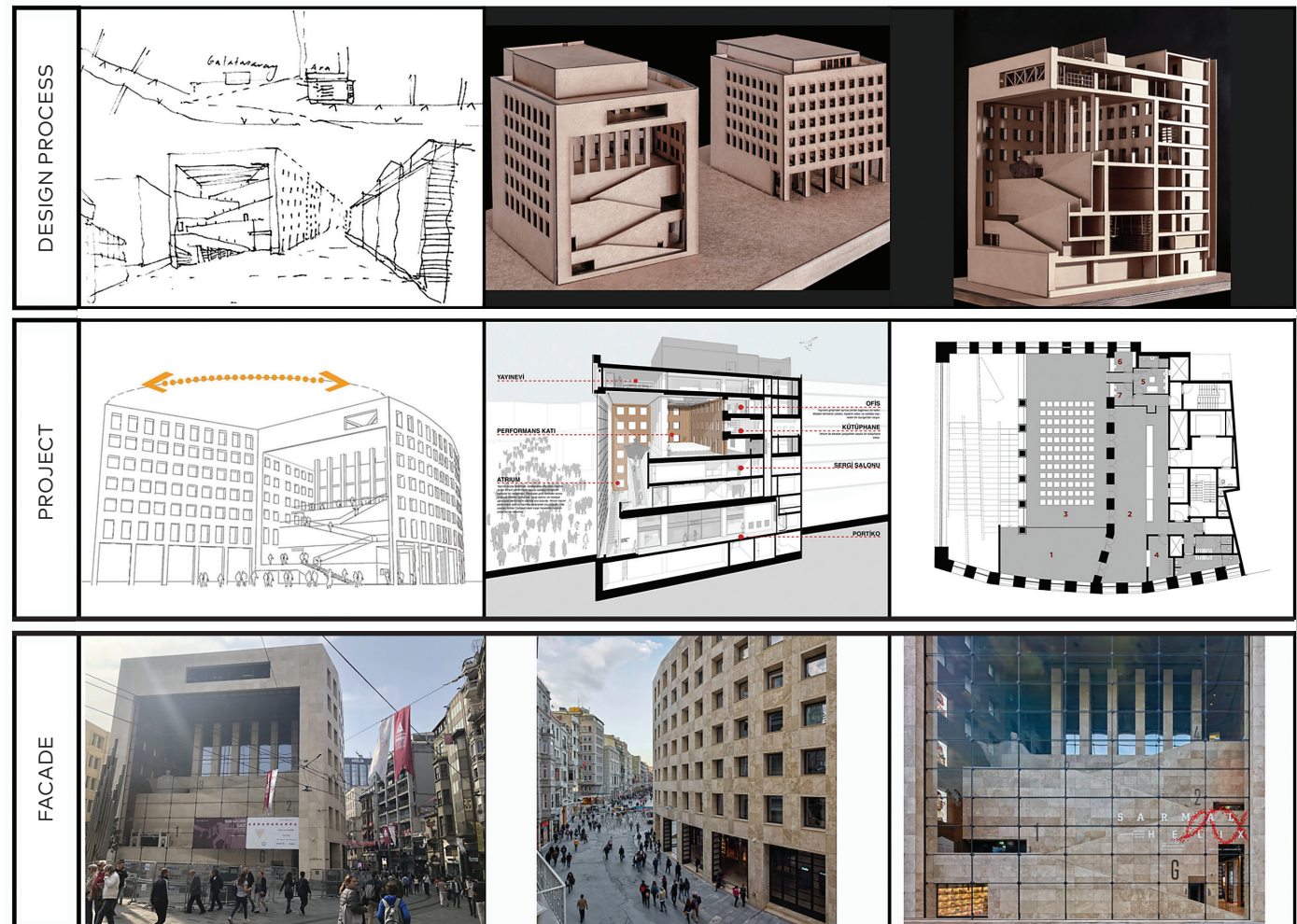


Fig. 5. Historical process of the YKKS site (images taken from Kütükçüoğlu and Uçar, 2019).

With the conclusion of the competition, Teğet Architecture's project was selected as the winner, and the construction process of the current building began (Fig. 6). In the proposed new design, it was decided that the facade facing the square would be the same as the facade of the building designed by Schmitthenner. The main starting point of the design was to combine private and public space

by bringing Galatasaray Square into the design in İstiklal, where people have lost interest compared to the past. With a 400 m² transparent facade opening to Galatasaray Square, the building was opened to the public, and it was aimed to turn Galatasaray Square into a more effective square [35]. The construction began in 2014, and the building was completed and opened for use in 2017.

Fig. 6. YKKS building's design process and current images [36], [46].



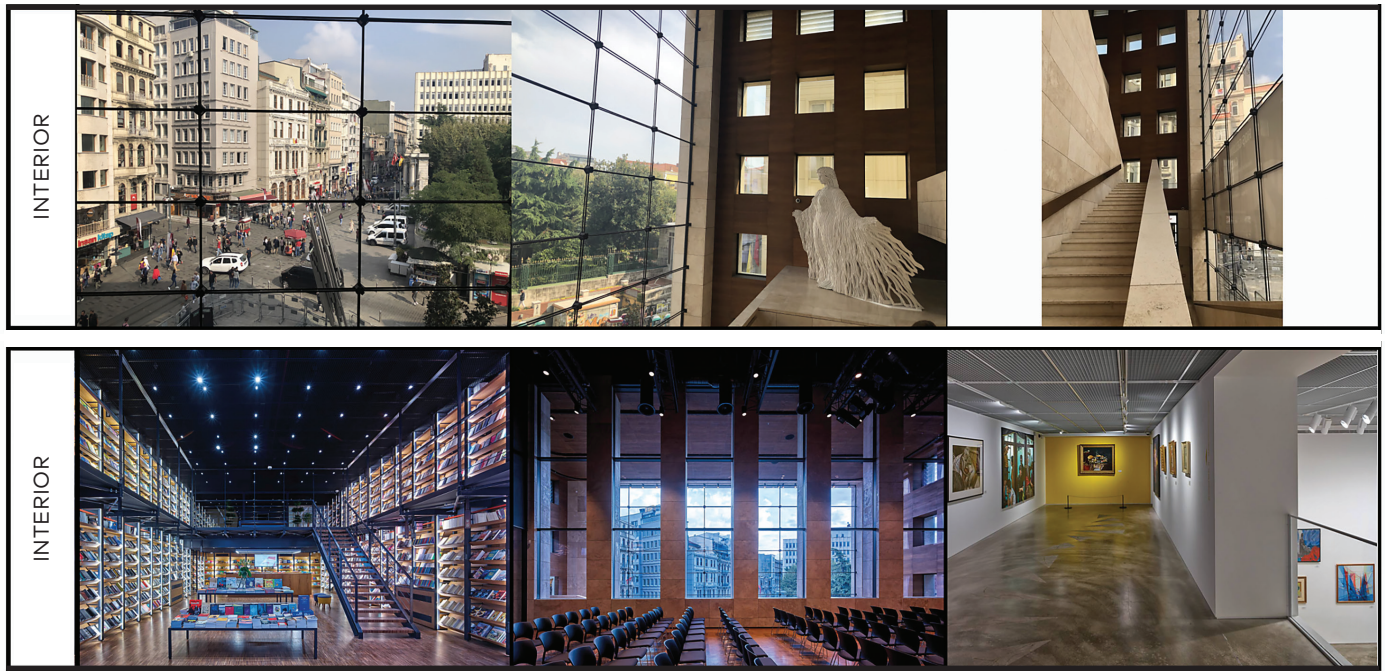


Fig. 6. YKKS building's design process and current images [36], [46].

V. Evaluation and Results

The YKKS building carries both commentary and differentiation approaches from new building approaches in the historical environment. It is in the commentary approach with abstract references to the work of architect Paul Schmitthenner. It is seen that the design is made in accordance with the context in which it is located, the characteristic features of the context are preserved, and

it is functionalised for a public purpose. In addition, the building has contributed to increasing the perceptibility of its surroundings. It also uses materials such as glass and steel in the contemporary style of the era and adopts a neutral approach.

The following results were obtained when the YKKS building was evaluated based on the articles in international conservation documents that support the acquisition of buildings through competition (Table II).

TABLE II

Evaluation of the YKSS building, according to the criteria set in international conservation documents [by the authors]

Adequate documentation	A detailed documentation study on the building and its historical surroundings has been made in the book "YKKS Kente Bir Açılım – An Opening to the City" published by Yapı Kredi Publications, which includes the reconstruction process of the building and the ideas underlying the design concept, as well as the changes and transformations that Yapı Kredi has undergone since the 1950s.
Open to the public	All data regarding the design process and the building are shared openly and transparently with the public on the official website of Teğet Architecture. In addition, the book published about the building also supports this.
There should be multidisciplinary cooperation	The project was created by Mehmet Kütükçüoğlu, Ertuğ Uçar and Özay Özkan, the partners of Yapı Teğet Mimarlık, and a team of 16 people (Onur Akın, Tüker Altuntaş, Ethem Aybar, Hande Çiğerci, Alev Dağlı, Gökçen Erkiç, Avşar Karababa, Müge Kuzubaşoğlu, Serhat Özkan, Pinar Sönmez, Nazlı Tümerdem, Mert Üçer, Mert Velipaşaoğlu, Yiğit Yalçın, Emrah Yergin, Ece Ünübol) in a multidisciplinary collaboration.

The YKKS building was evaluated based on the criteria established through international conservation documents

A. Environment

- The building was designed with İstiklal Street and Galatasaray Square in consideration. The fact that the architects of the building refer to Schmitthenner's design, which has a place in the memory of the city,

shows that they attach importance to the values of the environment in which it is located.

- Although the building belongs to a bank, it has places such as a bookstore, museum, exhibition hall, performance hall, library and publishing house, all of which are used for cultural activities. In this context, it has contributed to the cultural activities in İstiklal and increased the human circulation in the area by attracting visitors.

- While the private areas of the building have been transformed into public areas with a transparent facade, there is no physical contact with the current public area. The architects have designed a vertical public space that will stay within the boundaries of the building. While moving the square to the private areas with the ramps/stairs behind the transparent facade, İstiklal and Galatasaray Square can be perceived from different elevations.
- The perception of İstiklal as a panorama museum from inside the building and the neutralisation of this facade with the transparent surface brings the character of the urban area to the forefront.
- The building, which is located on a street closed to traffic but with intense pedestrian circulation, is easily accessible on pedestrian and public transportation (metro, funicular, bus, minibus, etc.) from many points.

B. Design

- The new building has not been modified, merged or subdivided according to the old parcel boundaries.
- The new building respects the soul of its location and strives to be a part of this harmony.
- The interventions are not recyclable as the entire building has been rebuilt and does not contain any elements from the old building.
- Stone covering, glass and steel materials are used on the facades of the building, which can be characterised as neutral and in harmony with the context.
- The building has the same size as Schmitthenner's design in terms of both volume and scale, and adapts to the context with its scale.

C. New Addition/Building

- The new building is recognisable and distinguishable with its use of contemporary materials.
- The building is respectful of its context with its use of neutral materials, facade design and mass proportions.
- The new building is integrated into the context with its inviting glass facade, its effort to integrate with the square and its references to the old building.
- With its design, the new building has become a landmark for İstiklal Street and has contributed value to its context.
- The contemporary design of the building reflects its time period.

D. Function

- The function of the building is based entirely on cultural activities.

- The design of a building with a purely cultural function on a street whose cultural identity has been damaged has provided protection against the risk of turning into a slum area.
- The function given to the building is both suitable for contemporary life and serves a useful purpose for the public.

In summary, the YKKS building was evaluated using four main criteria: (i) environment, (ii) design, (iii) new addition/building, and (iv) function.

- Regarding the environment criterion, it is seen that the building gives importance to the value of the environment in which it is located and contributes to the cultural activities in its surroundings with its function.
- Regarding the design criterion, the building is in the same dimensions as the design of Architect Paul Schmitthenner, with both its volume and gauge, it respects the spirit of the place and strives to be a part of this whole, but the interventions are not recyclable since it does not contain any remnants of the old building.
- Regarding the new addition/building criterion, the building reflects the time in which it is located with its contemporary design, as well as referring to the previous building.
- Regarding the function criterion, while the old building had a cultural function in addition to the bank function, the function of the new building is completely based on cultural activities, and this function is suitable for contemporary life; it is seen that it provides protection against the risk of İstiklal Street, whose cultural identity is damaged today, turning into a collapse area.

The YKKS building analysed within the scope of the study is a design built through a competition on İstiklal Street in 2010. The building to Schmitthenner's design, which was previously located in the area, is a building that has been in the city's memory for many years in many respects. With the design of YKKS, this building has been abstracted without being "ignored" and reinterpreted in accordance with the 21st century. In this context, it is a pioneer for future designs. In addition to enriching İstiklal Street with its design philosophy, function, facade, mass effect and use of materials, the building has become a landmark building by exhibiting an approach that respects the existing character.

As a result, it is seen that designing new buildings in cultural heritage areas is a process that requires considering many design inputs together, making decisions as a result of serious analysis and multidisciplinary studies. In this context, choosing the competition method in obtaining a new building that adds value to the historical environments makes the process open to different analyses, interpretations and criticisms. It is possible to say that the YKKS building is a positive example in this context.

In the evaluation of new building designs in the historical environment, analysing in line with international

conservation documents rather than subjective judgments yields more realistic results. As a matter of fact, in this study, the YKSS building was evaluated according to international conservation documents, and as a result, it was seen that the building is compatible with the historical environment, adds value to the region with its cultural function, and responds to the technological, aesthetic and functional expectations of the time.

It is expected that these design criteria determined within the scope of the study will help pave the way for designs that integrate with and add value to the historical environment without harming the historical environment for new buildings to be built in the future.

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