

factors will lead to positive results with collaboration of integrated management in designing sub-brands based on cultural and historical com-

ponents. These factors can be developed by considering internal and external factors and also urban peoples' and managers' tendency for developing the city.

## Conclusion

Contrary to popular myth, the concept of brand is not "buying" or "having" anymore but nowadays it is "being" and in fact having a tendency for being and being seen in cities and tourist destinations and leaving a good mental image in its audiences' minds. A city may design multiple brands for being and being seen, but finally it becomes famous for one or two of them. Let's assume that branding occurs through architecture, in this type of branding, the interactive role of culture, identity and history needs to be taken into consideration.

Lyon urban managers are successful in city brand architecture because of perceiving the important philosophy of cultural elements in city, introducing and coordinating sub-brands of this city which are driven from cultural elements and highlighting the international reputation of city and large number of its tourists. Hence, this study support this hypothesis that cultural elements in

Lyon's tourism contribute to brand architecture; communication among different historical, cultural, architecture and modern elements of a city requires identifying, classifying and organizing all factors that finally creates city brand image in its audiences' mind. This is what happens in Lyon. In fact, the aim of place branding is creating a desired image and actively maintain the image in its audiences' minds. Lyon uses city historical and cultural elements for developing city brand strategy. The strategy includes different managerial techniques which are practiced for attracting financial, human and tourism capitals. Through branding proper architecture and sub-branding urban tourism, city architects can sustain the tourism. Branding in two fields of "events" and "cuisines" in an international level and creating an appealing mental image in audiences' mind by architecting this brand using title of "Light and happiness city", Lyon has benefited from its brand in boosting urban tourism.

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to go through to be recognized as an city brand explains why the city is famous for “cooking” ,“events” and known as a “city of light and happiness”. Lyon’s urban planners promote its local brand through proper architecture and communication by emphasizing both history and culture in the related architecture and sub-branding cuisines (Fig. 4), music and light festival (Fig. 5). Lyon as a historical city and an important economic center has the required tools for brand architecture. Owing to several historical, recreation centers, tourism spaces, public correlation and interest and customs, Lyon is well reputed in Europe for largest urban development project driven from its historical and cultural elements such as historical and ancient spaces, churches, big shopping centers, natural areas, modern landscaping, museums, forest roads, residential blocks, modern spaces and etc. It is also successful in branding and creating a positive mental image since its branding goes much beyond the logos, mottos, adverts on strategies, policies and symbolic events. Lyon is a brand in two main fields driven from cultural and historical places,



Fig.3. The world-renowned cuisine of Lyon.  
Photo : Parvaneh Parchekani, 2015.

local food, urban traditions, specific architecture, religious background and cultural elements. Furthermore, it attracts more than six million tourists annually with about half a million population and makes an effort to improve its image. Lyon’s cultural elements are presented in table1.

Perhaps the success of Lyon branding is associated with the empathy and people’s passions about national symbols and old customs and traditions on one hand, and rich history, architecture and cultural, commercial and traditional backgrounds of the city on the other hand. These



Fig.4. Historic Lyon, one of the most popular tourist sites.  
Photo : Parvaneh Parchekani, 2015.



Fig.5. Lumiere Light Festival, the brand of Lyon.  
Photo : Parvaneh Parchekani, 2015.

ity and quantity of the city brand depends on its aim and motivation. Additionally, city cultural elements used in city brand architecture also have a significant role in forming urban tourism and attracting people and their capitals. As cities are constantly evolving, their situation should be ideal to present - city ideal face. Therefore, what cities need to introduce about themselves is "validity" which is effective in two functionalities of city destinations and origins, and cultural components play a substantial role in this validation. Even in the most improper places, cultural and tourism components can get validation for city and is considered as a city competitive advantage.

Those who are in charge of tourism projects can rely on cultural elements to overcome old and obsolete view of cities and places. In doing so, they can create a positive perception of their place and leave desired mental images in tourists' minds. Such a perception can win the trust, guarantee investment and the number of visitors of the cities and places. Rather than being branded inclusively, cities prefer to be a tourism brand because tourists are the most considerable resource that can improve the reputation of the cities (Baker, 2008:25).

Considering the mentioned items and based on international fame of Lyon and large number of tourists, it can be concluded that fame is passed along by words of mouth.

Lyon is famous for its cuisine, music and architecture -which are all cultural elements- the city first gained its validity and value through the cultural elements, then based on these elements developed some sub-brands and finally the main city brand was made using proper sub-brand architecture and today is one of the most visited cities in the world.

Making a city, place or product to stand out from the rest and through different elements is what branding means.

In city brand architecture, the main tools are cultural elements. City brand can stand for anything that a city is constructed from, anything which is transmitted from one generation to generation, or anything that makes a city unique and differ-

ent (Ekhlasi, 2014:78). After deciding about the city brand, architectures need to be aligned with the city capacities and its brand communications. In doing so, relevant architecture will be determined based on both cultural- historical identity and available elements. Such alignments are needed to make the city well- reputed in specific fields and foster economy through different ways such as investment and tourism and in turn make it renowned in the field of tourism.

Bill Baker in his article titled "tourism destination branding" (2008) classified different types of city or place brand as "local comprehensive brand", "tourism brand", "economic development brand", "society brand" and "root brand". In this classification, the root brand is based on local history, local foods, local sports or cultural groups. Collections of these brands can be found in a specific area. However, this issue somehow depends on the national culture, because each geographical area can be linked to others like different parts of puzzle which are complement to one another (Baker,2008:26). City brand is defined based on the geographical area , root brand or cultural element . Lyon's brand is of the root brand type and is made in reference to its cultural elements. Using tourism and root brand for a city concurrently reveal that there are close relationships between them. That is the only thing needed to make a city or place brand. This is true about Lyon. The city image of Lyon is an integration of some symbols, signs and cultural -historical elements whose concepts, values and meanings are better reflected by yielding the authority of the city brand architecture to its brand architects and planners. Lyon is located in the south of France 43 years BC and was the center of Gual's tribe in the Roman Empire. This city has rich background in history, culture, industry and commerce, (Fig. 3). This city was a powerful industrial source during the Renaissance in 19th century. Lyon has a sufficient capability to establish various sub-brands in different fields and design the architecture of one local comprehensive brand because of its cultural and historical backgrounds. As shown in the city image, the process of city strategy plans which the city needs

with tourism, cultural-commercial exchanges internationally and proper media communications. Culturally, branding is beyond establishing simple business relations and has a significant role in promoting the concept of culture. In this strategic approach, for promoting culture, the cultural elements are referred to before the birth and after the maturity of a brand (Fig.2).

City or place brand architectures, which are somehow more sensitive and complex than products or services brand architecture, should consider different items to be able to use cultural elements effectively in the intended place brand based on the identity and cultural approaches. The items are respect for cultural, linguistic, religious elements and cultural diversity, loyalty

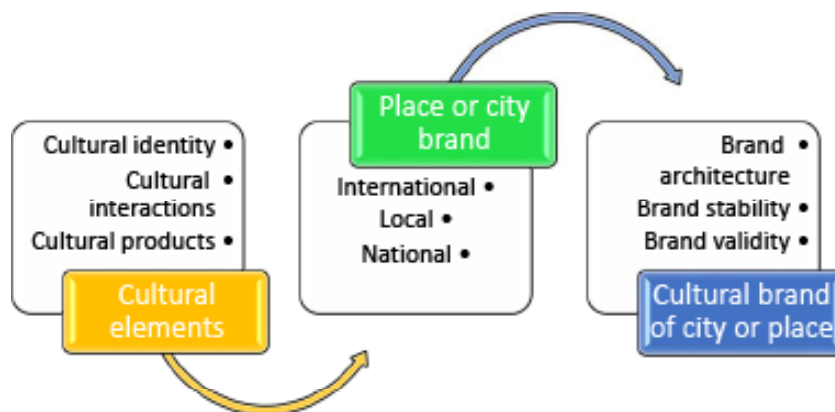


Fig.2. The effects of cultural elements on city brand architecture. Source: Author.

of ethnics to city identity, commitment to customs and traditions, caring symbols, patterns and myths, commitment to efforts and working culture, and attracting public attention. Apart from proper infrastructures of tourism acceptance, a motivation for architecture development and management and urban are much dependent on cultural and historical features, all cultural elements and factors are very effective in creating urban visual attractions, and they also give a specific personality to city which is needed for creating a city brand in the targeted field. City image, is thoughts and associations in tourist's mind which are activated by brand reflectors. Lyon's city brand architecture has been driven from its cultural elements and identity links. That might explain why Lyon's city brand architecture and designers are successful.

### City brand, architecture and tourism

Cities can draw attention of people as a cultural phenomenon. Similarly urban societies can improve the reputation of tourism destinations by promoting culture and civilization capabili-

ty (Rahnamaie, 2011:6). Cities and touristic attractions vie to get tourists' attention. Most of cities in the world with more than one million population tend to be the most attractive and famous one in the world. Cities can create a visual brand or mental image in audiences' mind in different ways for example by using a simple image on the postal card or creating various scenes in different films from the past up to now. City branding became popular with industrial age wane and financial pressures in 1970 when capitalists and industry owners abandoned cities due to financial, economic problems and taxes and flourished in 90s. Due to 70s changes made to branding and advertising via "commerce", "cultural capacities" and "tourism" (Baker, 2008:44) urban managers made efforts to renew their image and replace the negative attitudes.

Utilization of the cultural and historical elements of cities in visual spacing brand design has made architecture as an important tool for urban planners and managers in urban tourism development. Urban tourism is visiting tourist attractions with a clear and specific aim. Qual-



Table1. Lyon's cultural elements. source: Author extracted the following cultural elements based on the criteria driven from cultural indices developed by Cultural Revolution Council.

Strategic criterion	Dimensions	Cultural Elements
Lyon identity and cultural products	Lyon Culture, cultural heritage and tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old historical monuments such as Lyon and its Traboule Passageway</li> <li>• City ancient and historical sites in Fourviere Archeological Park</li> <li>• Historical and religious sites such as Sainte-Jeanne and Saint Paul cathedrals, and Notre dame church</li> <li>• Museums like Gadagne History, African Museum of Lyon, Lumiere Museum</li> <li>• National myths and symbols</li> <li>• People's passion about national myths and symbols</li> <li>• People's passion about urban culture ,different ethnics like Boushouns and music and light festivals</li> <li>• Protection of the city environment using different methods</li> </ul>
Cultural unity	Sub-cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing the mixture of noble French culture (in the north) and Latin culture in other areas by Lyon</li> <li>• Embracing Italian culture in Sainte-Jeanne district for many years</li> <li>• Attendance of many international students in this city from around the world</li> </ul>
Independency	Self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Showing commitment to the traditions and customs ethics</li> <li>• Caring symbols, patterns and myths though branding old cuisine</li> <li>• Having a desire for developing the city by constructing modern buildings and branding the city through research and technology</li> <li>• Attracting public partnership in the cultural fields by developing various art galleries, painting museums and theaters in Lyon</li> </ul>
International cultural interactions	Cultural communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting international tourism or Lumiere festival and holding Fourviere music festival</li> <li>• Developing ethical code of conduct for proper communication with expatriate which is implemented in different local restaurants</li> <li>• Developing ethical code of conduct for proper communication with expatriate or tourists by promoting cultural products and city tourism</li> <li>• Promoting International cultural-commercial interactions in different ways by boasting UNESCO sites and developing silk trade</li> <li>• Using media such as Euro News channel for communications</li> </ul>

In fact, city brand architecture determines and defines the current links and structures in the specified place and aligns them with the cultural components of that area. They also have many advantages that cultural and identical coherence of the proposed place is the most important one. City brand architecture is usually designed for three levels namely global, local and national. It forms international audiences' mental image in different levels using marketing and media communications.

There are at least seven different approaches to branding: economic, identity, cultural, charac

terization, social interactions, relationship and relation management (Heding, & Charlo, 2008). Cultural elements have a direct role in at least four of them: "identity", "cultural", "characterization" and "social interactions" and they play an indirect role in other elements.

In identity view, brand architecture model is formed on this premise that brand would be a part of place or product identity in the future. Some of the main tools used in this type of branding are cultural elements such as promoting international tourism, proper communication with migrants, cultural and religious interactions

the city cultural elements have a twofold role. On one hand, they can contribute to the city construction, events, collective memories, city image and etc. In other words, they can be used for the accreditation of the destinations. On the other hand, city primary infrastructure is based on these elements and is reflected in people's life. Cultural elements are used in the locations, destinations or city brand architecture. In fact, brand architecture defines the current structures and links between the brand internal partners and locations of a city and establishes their meaning proportionally geographically and marketing is influenced by variety of factors such as goals, internal features like sub-brands and international brands (Baker, 2008:53).

In this approach sub-brands are similar to the member of a family. No matter if the members share the same DNA and some similarities, and identity, each member has a different personality. Brands like humans have different personalities and brand personality is one of the significant subjects in the recent studies. Cultural elements can work as the main and primary grounds for sub-brands identity and personality. They are used for personalizing cities brand and locations. Thus, they play an important role in inculcating a collective identity to its citizens and attracting more tourists.

Cultural elements are classified from different perspectives and shape the city cultural and identity strategic indices on which city brand architecture is based. In this research, cultural elements are extracted based on specific strategic criteria and dimensions." Identity", "cultural unity", "independency", "international cultural interactions", and "cultural products" as strategic criteria are specified and targeted in "culture and cultural heritage", "sub-cultures", "self belief", "cultural communication" and "tourism" dimensions, that each one of them has its own sub-components and can play a role in the city brand architecture. These components are presented in table 1. They are extracted by an expert team based on strategic indices then adopted and adapted by the author, Lyon's cultural elements are reviewed and analyzed using these criteria.

In fact, brand architecture is a structure organizing brands portfolio which also determines the communication structure and roles among the brands in a complex (Aaker, 1991). It is different from the brands too. In other words, brand architecture planners can help brand designers to consider these factors to differentiate and promote anything they want such as places, services, products. Cultural elements have significant role in constructing both sub-brands and a city brand. In fact, a place brand is a as an umbrella brand reflecting holistic quality of the city, presenting the sub-brands in a unique general term, and making these general brands need brand architecture (Baker, 2008:24). Cultural and historical elements are drawn upon with regards to the city identity in the sub-brands. The sub-brands architecture can revive the city or place brand image in audiences' mind. Sub-brands are similar to and different from one another. The similarities or differences can be beneficial or harmful to city brand architecture, branding managers and architectures. In other words, if brand architects draw upon the cultural elements and attend to city sustainability dimensions (social, economic, cultural and environmental) and scatter them among the city sub-brands, it would be possible to attract more audiences and establish more effective communication chains. Similarities make city or place brand valuable and cultural elements as the main tools can contribute to the strengths of city brand architecture. However, if the required communication is not well coordinated among their structures, it will not have enough efficiency and cannot leave a desired mental image in its audiences' mind (Fig.1).

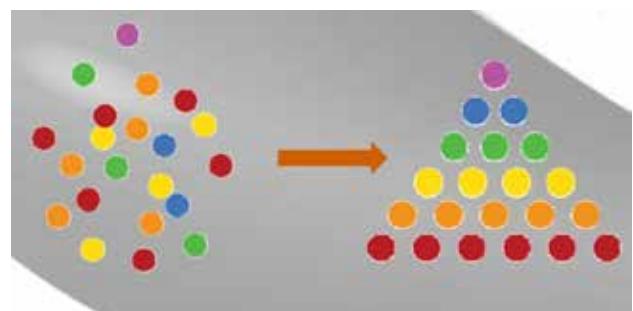


Fig.1. sub-brand and brand architecture. (Azadi,2013)

## Introduction

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Most of great cities' images stick in audiences' minds as they are unique and undying. This is why the cities need to decide what they are branding for. City and tourist destination branding have less been investigated than consumer products branding and these studies are in their infancy. This type of branding first practiced at a domestic level in Australia and Hong Kong and then it started being employed over the world by all major cities in Europe and America (Baker, 2008:12). Urban architecture attempts to build up an enviable reputation while they are vying with other architectures. To achieve this goal, new spaces and buildings need to be made in different famous cities. Over time, this goodwill becomes a "city brand" that usually brings many economic and cultural benefits to citizens and urban officials. Cities with various tourist attractions, architecture, modern and historical spaces gain attention of larger population and boost urban tourism (Papli Yazdi, 2006:188). The concept of the city brand includes local values and symbols, historical identity, social and ethnic features, historical buildings, national and

international relations, local attractions and capabilities and even famous citizen who build a name for the city. The success of a place brand normally requires comprehensive involvement of stake holders and integration of many historical, cultural, economic, and social elements in organizations and relevant institutes for city branding through architecture. City branding is a powerful tool for attracting people from all walks of life (e.g. tourists and investors), and promoting urban culture and wealth. Such a promotion is not an easy job. It seems that historical and cultural elements of the cities along with their visual spacing have great impact on designing city brand architecture and developing urban sustainable tourism. This study is an attempt to understand how cultural elements can contribute to city brand architecture.

Lyon, a city in France, benefiting from historical and cultural elements and 2000- years of historical background is one of UNESCO's world heritage sites. These historical and cultural elements can make Lyon famous for its cultural and ritual fields and consequently turn this city to a brand.

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## Hypothesis

Cultural elements have impact on city brand architecture. These elements along with proper management can earn a reputation for city or place as Lyon in France has experienced.

## Cultural elements and brand architecture

Common values and culture usually as a part of a lifestyle and spatial structures shape our cultural identity over time. Identity has two main and antithetical meanings. The first meaning is the absolute similarity and its second meaning refers to differentiation assuming compatibility and continuity over time. In other words, identity means similarity of people and things in one hand, and differentiation of them on the other hand. The purpose of cultural identity as a complex of cultural elements is to give an identity to a person or a group, and make them different

from other people or groups to facilitate their interactive relations with others (Fokouhi, 2011). Moreover, city identity means a set of features which are available in the city definition and a city has a fixed response to changes and new requirements with respect to its history. This concept of city identity is dynamic and doesn't lead to stabilization and repetition of city special elements necessarily. Additionally, the constructive components of the city identity are not necessarily a special type of urban elements such as city appearance features or its structural attributes. However, all city elements can be used for the purpose of identification if they are permanently fixed. Therefore, city color and material of façade can be used for accreditation of one place, while some other features in activities and special local customs can work for the accreditation in another city (Mansouri, 2012). Hence,

# Through the Eyes of the Beholder: the Role of Culture in City Brand Architecture: A Case Study of Lyon, France

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## Abstract

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City branding through architecture refers to conscious and coherent efforts to fulfill visitors' expectations about a place. The expectations that the visitors bring with themselves to the tourist attractions influence their mental image of the place. In urban tourism, cultural elements and cultural indices are significantly important for attracting more visitors and shaping their mental images. In post-modern age, social, spatial and cultural structures play an undeniable role in tourism development and city popularity. Space creation, city special characteristics and its associated appealing mental images bring people and cities international fame. For branding, architecture, city image-making process, and urban management need to be based on cultural and historical elements to succeed in creating visual attractions and featuring the elements in specific fields for a place or a city. Therefore, city branding is properly aligned with targets, words, design, urban architect and place branding. This research is an attempt to identify the cultural elements and explain how these elements as the main tools of architecture contribute to city branding and sustainable urban tourism. Given that Lyon in France is an internationally recognized destination benefiting from a proper historical and cultural themes and relative success, it has been selected as case.

## Keywords

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Tourism, Brand, Cultural component, Mental image, Lyon.