A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Qassim Saad
M.A. Industrial Design

School of Architecture & Design
Design & Social Context Portfolio
RMIT University
February 2013
Declaration
I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research programme; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

Qassim Saad
Acknowledgements
I would like to express my gratitude to Associate Professor Dr. Soumitri Varadarajan, my supervisor, for his support and continuous assistance beginning early in this long journey of study. It was his patience, determination and constructive comments guiding me to keep on track, and to enhance my research practices for this thesis and other research projects. A very special “thank you” to Professor Leoni Schmidt, my local supervisor, for her foresight and limitless encouragement to develop as an emerging researcher and a PhD candidate.

I wish to express my gratitude to Professor Tony Fry and Professor Mike Berry for their great help and insights in the early stages of development of this thesis. Their constructive comments and discussions helped me a lot in developing and structuring my research vision. I am indebted also to Professor Laurene Vaughan and Professor Craig Barrie for their unforgettable contribution at the last stages in the development of the thesis. Their thoughts and comments during the Graduate Research Conference (GRCs) presentations were a great help toward achieving the final look of the thesis.

This research would not have been possible without the generous Australian Postgraduate Award (APA) offered to me by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, RMIT University, School of Architecture and Design – Industrial Design. To Otago Polytechnic, my sincere gratitude for the support and encouragement I received during my employment as a faculty member in the School of Design, at first developing a teaching practice, and then later in research practices.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to Richard Treadgold, Managing Editor of WordShine Ltd, for his professional assistance in proofreading this thesis and other research texts.
Abstract

Design in Iraq is the result of a rich mixture of many cultural, geographical and even climatic elements which have shaped this land from ancient times. Adapting man-made objects to cultural and ecological influences has provided various creative solutions from architecture, the crafts, fashion, calligraphy, furniture, food and many other fields. In the Arabic language, the word for design is *tasmem*. As a noun or a verb it means visualising, arranging or planning, and is traditionally associated with artistic skills that add aesthetic and ornamental compositions to man-made objects to strengthen their commercial, moral or spiritual values.

The richness of Iraq's cultural heritage is the dominant element for contemporary design thinking to follow, and to enrich its design context and practices by utilising those resources. On the other hand, this historical core has been extended to cover the entire design discourse, forcing it into dual dimensions related to:

- Promote past cultural practices which heavily influence design education and practice.
- Attempt to create capable design thinking – effecting and affecting – with the world’s cultures, through unstable and discontinued interaction.

Since the modernisation began in Iraq in the late 1940s, there have been practical moves centred on the importance of its cultural heritage to create a contemporary design industry in Iraq. Many of these attempts occurred in art and architecture, and to a limited extent in wood work and furniture design.

This study attempts an interdisciplinary approach in introducing this field of research. Any description of the dimensions and structure of the framework of
Design in Iraq will never be accurate without engaging with Iraqi designers. This study strove earnestly for an effective engagement with these designers, searching for a rich experience with them, as related in the early chapters, to investigate the practice of design and discover how the Iraqi designer community is beginning to engage its knowledge and expertise with Iraq’s current design infrastructure. The realisation of this vision was disrupted by the lack of publications and material resources, as well as intensive security restrictions which prevented the researcher from being in Iraq for long enough to meet the needs of the study.

The study was designed to achieve its objectives by examination and explication of these main themes:

1. Review the project of modernity in Iraq. Search for insights into the roots and complexities influencing contemporary design thinking as a socio-cultural phenomenon.

2. Survey arguments and issues from the broader social sciences that have shaped the theory and practice of design in the context of development for developing countries. Trace its growth into a political ideology dedicated to developing countries since the post-war period.

3. Incorporate analytical reviews of Iraqi experience with material objects. Tackle the wider dimensions of the relationship between humans, objects and design.

4. Investigate the practice of design in Iraq and seek insights into the designers’ search for a new direction to meet the country’s future demands.

Proposing a framework of design of Iraq is one of the main objectives of this study. Drawing from insights in the early chapters, which broadly review and analyse the framework’s main elements, the study builds an understanding of their inter-relationships. This understanding produces an abstract, representative composition of the shape of ‘design in Iraq.’
Table of contents

FRAMEWORK FOR RE-VISIONING DESIGN IN IRAQ .......................................................... 1

DECLARATION .................................................................................................................. 2

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................................. 3

ABSTRACT ....................................................................................................................... 4

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..................................................................................................... 6

LIST OF FIGURES .......................................................................................................... 10

INTRODUCTION ............................................................................................................ 15

RESEARCH METHODS DESIGN .................................................................................... 27

1. THE PROJECT OF MODERNISATION IN IRAQ ......................................................... 30

1.1 Chapter overview ..................................................................................................... 31

1.2. Formation of the new state of Iraq and its political systems ............................... 32

1.3. Social and cultural aspects of the modernisation of Iraq .................................... 36

1.3.1. Diversity in Iraqi socio-cultural habitats ......................................................... 36

1.3.2. Aspects of the project of modernisation ......................................................... 41

1.4. Design in Iraq and its fundamentals .................................................................... 44

1.4.1. Design fundamentals ....................................................................................... 44

1.4.2. Technology orienting education ..................................................................... 46

1.4.3. Design education curriculum ......................................................................... 48

1.4.4. The Iraqi contemporary art movement ........................................................... 49

1.4.5. Crafts and craftsmen ....................................................................................... 53

1.5. Summary .................................................................................................................. 56
2. DESIGN IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT

2.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

2.1.1. PERSONAL NARRATIVE

2.2. THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT OF MODERNISATION AND DEVELOPMENT SINCE WWII

2.2.1. MAPPING THE HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT OF DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT

2.2.2. THE USA ‘POINT FOUR’ PLAN

2.2.3. ‘ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY’ (AT) AND THE FULFILMENT OF BASIC HUMAN NEEDS

2.3. SOCIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE MODERNISATION PROJECT FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

2.3.1. THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER

2.3.2. DESIGN FOR NEED: SHAPING TECHNOLOGY ACCORDING TO SOCIAL NEEDS

2.4. PRACTISING DESIGN IN THE CONTEXT OF DEVELOPMENT

2.4.1. PRACTICAL ROLES FOR DESIGN IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

2.5. DESIGN POLICIES: COMPETITIVENESS AND PROFITABILITY

2.5.1. WHAT IS DESIGN POLICY?

2.5.2. DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT AS STATE INITIATIVE

2.6. DESIGN AND SOCIAL INNOVATION

2.6.1. THE NATURE OF DESIGN PROBLEMS

2.6.2. THE PARADIGM OF CAPABILITY APPROACHES IN DEVELOPMENT THEORY

2.7. SUMMARY

3. THE IRAQI PRODUCT EXPERIENCE THROUGH OBJECTS AND DESIGNS

3.1. CHAPTER OVERVIEW

3.2. DWELLING DESIGNS IN IRAQ

3.2.1. BACKGROUND

3.2.2. THE BEDOuin TENTS IN THE DESERTS

3.2.3. THE PEASANT HOUSES

3.2.4. THE TRADITIONAL DOMESTIC HOUSE IN TOWNS AND CITIES

3.2.5. THE TRADITIONAL DOMESTIC HOUSES FOR RICH PEOPLE IN CITIES

3.2.6. THE MODERNISATION OF DWELLING DESIGNS IN IRAQ

3.2.7. MODERN HOUSING DESIGNS SINCE THE 1970S

3.2.8. TRANSFORMATION OF CURRENT HOUSING DESIGNS

3.3. MODERNITY THROUGH MATERIALISATION

3.3.1. TRANSFORMING THE MEANING OF MODERNITY IN IRAQ

3.3.2. THE PREPONDERANCE OF INSTABILITY AND TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS

3.3.3. THE PREPONDERANCE OF FUNCTIONAL THINKING
3.3.4. The prevalence of imitating and relying on precedent 128
3.3.5. Socialising the relationship between human and object 130
3.4. Furniture design in Iraq 131
3.4.1. Introduction 131
3.4.2. Furniture in Iraqi houses 133
3.5. Baking bread 138
3.5.1. Background to baking bread as socio-cultural practice 138
3.5.2. The traditional clay oven (Iraqi, Tanoor) 140
3.5.3. The current gas fuelled steel oven 142
3.6. Reflections: Home, traditions and materiality 146
3.7. Discussion 151
3.8. Summary 155

4. The Iraqi Designers’ Vision of Design 156

4.1. Chapter overview 158
4.2. Research method 159
4.2.1. The semi-structured interview 160
4.3. The interview analysis 164
4.3.1. The context of design 165
4.3.2. The role of design and the designer 170
4.3.3. Professional practices 174
4.3.4. Professional practices in working with collaborative networks 178
4.3.5. The role of design in supporting sustainable development 180
4.3.6. Conclusions 182
4.4. Periods of transformation – Craft, Art and Industrial Design 185
4.4.1. Introduction 185
4.4.2. The transformation info-graphic 186
4.4.3. Stage One: The convergence between craftsman and the industrial designer 188
4.4.4. Stage Two: New dimensions in design thinking 195
4.4.5. Stage Three: Advanced industrial design research and practices 197
4.5. Summary 203

5. Design in Iraq – Past, present and future 206

5.1. Chapter overview 209
5.2. Design in Iraq 210
5.2.1. The shaping of Iraqi design thinking 211
5.2.2. Changing design thinking 219

5.3. The design curriculum in Iraq 221
5.3.1. Structure of design education 221
5.3.2. The philosophy of Iraqi design education 222
5.3.3. The design curriculum 224
5.3.4. Education as a powerful element in design thinking 226

5.4. The designer in Iraqi society 227
5.4.1. Being a designer — what does it mean socially? 227
5.4.2. Being a designer in local industry 229
5.4.3. Designer is the change agent 229

5.5. The way forward for design in Iraq 231
5.5.1. Overview of current design in Iraq after the Wars 231
5.5.2. The new openness will affect design 234

CONCLUSION 239

THE REFERENCES 247

Chapter One References 247
Chapter Two References 250
Chapter Three References 253
Chapter Four References 256
Chapter Five References 258

APPENDIXES 259

Appendix 1. Historical background to the formation of the new state of Iraq 262
Appendix 2. Politics and practices of development in Iraq since WWII 273
Appendix 3. Design education in Iraq-Statistical data 274
Appendix 4. The ‘Point Four’ in the Inaugural Address of Harry S. Truman, Thursday, January, 20, 1949. 280
Appendix 7. The research ethics application 2011-2012. 301
Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI) 302
Appendix 8. Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI). 303
The military industry in Iraq 304
Appendix 9. The military industry in Iraq. 304
List of figures

FIGURE 0-1. THE RESEARCH METHODS OVERVIEWS. Saad, Q. (2012) 29

FIGURE 1-1. CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW. Saad, Q. (2012) 31

FIGURE 1-2. KING FAISAL, MONARCH OF IRAQ FROM 1921-1933. (Online image) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/King_Faisal_I_of_Iraq 33


FIGURE 1-5. LIVING CONDITIONS IN THE POOREST SLUMS AROUND BAGHDAD. (Online image) http://highdesertwanderer.com/archives/category/iraq/page/2 40


FIGURE 1-9. EXAMPLE OF THE POPULAR ELEMENTS DOMINATING THE FAÇADE COMPOSITION IN CURRENT DOMESTIC HOUSE CONSTRUCTION IN IRAQ. Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 52

FIGURE 1-10. RAFA AL-NASIRI, LIGHT FROM DARKNESS, 2008, ACRYLIC & MIXED MEDIA ON CANVAS, 120X120CM. Al-Nasiri, R. (2009) (permission by the artist) 53

FIGURE 1-11. MUQARNAS DOME, TOMB OF SITT ZUBAIDA, IN BAGHDAD. (HATTSTEIN, 2004, P117) (The reference list) 54

FIGURE 1-12. PEN BOX FROM 1281, INLAID WITH GOLD AND SILVER, BRITISH MUSEUM (HATTSTEIN, 2004, P204) (The reference list) 55
FIGURE 2- 1. CHAPTER 2 OVERVIEWS. Saad, Q. (2012) 60
FIGURE 2- 2. MAPPING THE HISTORY OF DESIGN FOR DEVELOPMENT. Saad, Q. (2011) 62
FIGURE 2- 3. DARFUR PLOUGH. (Online image) http://practicalaction.org/darfur-3 67
FIGURE 2- 4. SIGNING THE AHMEDABAD DECLARATION IN NID, INDIA. 88

FIGURE 3- 1. CHAPTER 3 OVERVIEW. Saad, Q. (2012) 109
FIGURE 3- 3. THE TRADITIONAL PEASANTS’ HOUSES, A BASIC AND FUNCTIONAL DESIGN APPEARING IN MOST VILLAGES AROUND THE COUNTRY. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 112
FIGURE 3- 4. EXAMPLE OF DWELLING POPULAR IN THE MARSH AREA, SOUTHERN IRAQ. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 112
FIGURE 3- 5. TRADITIONAL DOMESTIC HOUSES IN THE BIG TOWNS AND CITIES. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 113
FIGURE 3- 6. THE OPEN COURTYARD IN THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 114
FIGURE 3- 7. MODEL OF TRADITIONAL DWELLING. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 116
FIGURE 3- 8. A MOSQUE BY WALTER GROPIUS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF BAGHDAD MAIN CAMPUS, 1957. (Online image) www.smartplanet.com 117
FIGURE 3- 9. BAGHDAD CENTRAL STATION IS THE MAIN TRAIN STATION IN BAGHDAD. IT LINKS THE RAIL NETWORK TO THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH OF IRAQ. THE STATION WAS BUILT BY THE BRITISH. THEY STARTED TO BUILD IT IN 1948 AND FINISHED IT IN 1953. (Online image) www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baghdad 117
FIGURE 3-10. BUNIYA MOSQUE 1973, BAGHDAD, ARCHITECTURE – SALEH MAKEYA. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 119
FIGURE 3-11. THE IRAQI ARCHITECT RIFAT CHADIRJI. (Online image) www.Chadirjifoundation.org 120
FIGURE 3-12. DESIGN FROM THE 1970S FOR DOMESTIC HOUSES IN IRAQ. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 121
FIGURE 3-15. HUMAN AND OBJECT, SCENE IN BAGHDAD. JARJEES, AKRAM (2012)
(Permission by the Photographer) 124

FIGURE 3-16. TRANSFORMING THE MEANING OF MODERNITY IN IRAQ. Saad, Q. (2011) 125

FIGURE 3-17. COMMON SCENE SHOWING THE LACK OF BASIC SERVICES IN MOST IRAQI
CITIES AND TOWNS. (Online image)
http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 127

FIGURE 3-18. THE TRADITIONAL SITTING OBJECT ‘TAKHTH’, OVERALL SIZE
W400XL500XH120MM. Render from digital model. Saad, Q. (2012) 134

FIGURE 3-19. THE RICH HERITAGE OF EXTERIOR JOINERY WORK IN A TRADITIONAL
IRAQI HOUSE. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 134

FIGURE 3-20. EXAMPLE OF MODERN IRAQI FURNITURE. Saad, Q. (1990) (Personal
Collection) 135

FIGURE 3-21. EXAMPLE OF THE TASTELESS FURNITURE PRODUCED BY LOCAL
CRAFTSMEN. Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 137

FIGURE 3-22. HOME-BAKED BREAD. Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 140

FIGURE 3-23. BUILDING THE TRADITIONAL MUD TANOOR IS A SPECIALISED JOB FOR
WOMEN. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 141

FIGURE 3-24. HEATING UP THE TRADITIONAL TANOOR FOR BAKING. (Online image)
http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 142

FIGURE 3-25. HOME-BAKED ‘KOBOZ AROK’. Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 143

FIGURE 3-26. THE GAS-FUELLED STEEL OVEN, FABRICATED LOCALLY. Saad, Q. (2011)
(Personal collection) 143

FIGURE 3-27. POOR QUALITY PRODUCT, MATERIAL AND MANUFACTURE. Saad, Q. (2011)
(Personal collection) 144

FIGURE 3-28. COMPARING TWO METHODS OF INTERACTION: THE TRADITIONAL MUD
‘TANOOR’ AND THE CURRENT ‘TANOOR AL-GAS’. Saad, Q. (2011) and
(Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 144

FIGURE 3-29. TRADITIONAL BREAD NAMED ‘SMOON’ BAKING IN A HORIZONTAL BRICK
OVEN. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 145

FIGURE 3-30. THE FAÇADE OF THE FAMILY HOME IN AL-FALLUJAH, 2011. Saad, Q.
(2011) (Personal collection) 146

FIGURE 3-31. THE FURNITURE AND JOINERY WORK IN OUR PREVIOUS FAMILY HOME IN
AL-FALLUJAH, DESTROYED DURING 2004 BATTLE IN AL-FALLUJAH. SAAD,

FIGURE 3-32. EXAMPLE OF THE DOMINANT STYLE OF DOMESTIC HOUSE IN IRAQ. Saad,
Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 148

FIGURE 3-33. THE OPEN KITCHEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE LIVING AREA IN THE
INTERIOR PLANNING OF MANY NEW IRAQI HOUSES. Saad, Q. (2011) 149
FRAMEWORK FOR RE-VISIONING DESIGN IN IRAQ

FIGURE 3-34. EXAMPLE OF REINTRODUCING THE SENSE OF AN OPEN COURTYARD IN A HOUSE. Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 150

FIGURE 4-1. CHAPTER 4 OVERVIEW. Saad, Q. (2012) 158

FIGURE 4-2. STAGES INVOLVED IN MY OWN TRANSFORMATION. SAAD, QASSIM (2011). Saad, Q. (2011) 187

FIGURE 4-3. 'ENARAH' LIGHTING UNIT, DETAILS OF MAKING. SAAD, QASSIM (2009), DUNEDIN. Saad, Q. (2009) (Personal collection) 189


FIGURE 4-5. MY RESEARCH PORTFOLIO FOR THE PERIOD 2006-2011, PRESENTED FOR PORTFOLIO BASED RESEARCH FUNDING (PBRF), NEW ZEALAND. Saad, Q. (2011) 202

FIGURE 5-1. THE FRAMEWORK OF DESIGN IN IRAQ. Saad, Q. (2012) 208

FIGURE 5-2. CHAPTER 5 OVERVIEW. Saad, Q. (2012) 209


FIGURE 5-4. EXAMPLE FROM STUDENT PROJECTS IN INDUSTRIAL DESIGN, WALL LIGHTING UNIT, 2010–2011, BAGHDAD. Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 214

FIGURE 5-5. EXAMPLE OF CURRENT FURNITURE DESIGNS PRODUCED IN IRAQ (MIRROR FRAME, MDF AND POLYURETHANE FOAM 90X110CM). Saad, Q. (2011) (Personal collection) 216


FIGURE 5-9. INITIATIVES IN A NEW WAVE FOR DESIGNING THE URBAN FABRIC OF BAGHDAD, ONE OF THE MAIN BUILDINGS FOR THE CENTRAL BANK OF IRAQ, DESIGNED BY ZAHA HADID. (Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos 233

FIGURE A-1, 1. THE CITY OF BAGHDAD BETWEEN 767 AND 912 AD. (Online image) 260
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baghdad#The_Abbasids_and_the_round_city

FIGURE A-1, 2. THE ROUTE BETWEEN ISTANBUL AND BASRA. (Online map)
http://www.orexca.com/silk_road.html

FIGURE A-2, 1. MIDHAT PASHA (1822-1884), THE GOVERNOR OF BAGHDAD, 1869-1871.
(Online image) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midhat_Pasha

FIGURE A-2, 2. THE AIRBASES OF HABBIYYA IN THE WEST AND SHAIBA IN THE SOUTH
OF IRAQ. (Online map) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Habbaniya

FIGURE A-2, 3. FLAMES ARE SEEN AT BABA GURGUR OIL FIELD IN KIRKUK.
(Online image) http://www.interestingfacts.org/fact/the-eternal-flame-in-iraq

FIGURE A-2, 4. IRAQ'S LARGEST OIL REFINERY IN BAIJI.
(Online image)

FIGURE A-8, 1. THE ‘REEM’ BUS, ONE OF THE EXAMPLES TO THE COLLABORATION
BETWEEN SIEI AND LOCAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY EARLY OF 1970S.
(Online image) http://www.facebook.com/Baghdad1/photos
Introduction

Design in Iraq is the result of a rich mixture of cultural, geographical and even climatic elements which have shaped this land from ancient times. Adapting man-made objects to cultural and ecological influences provides various creative solutions from architecture, the crafts, fashion, calligraphy, furniture, food and many other fields. In the Arabic language, the word for design is tassem. As a noun or verb it means visualising, arranging or planning and is traditionally associated with artistic skills that add aesthetic and ornamental compositions to man-made objects to strengthen their commercial, moral or spiritual values. These traditional meanings still dominate culturally, and in design basics they shape design discourses and guide design education and professional design practices in Iraq.

This study is interested in providing an overview of design in Iraq and examining the structural elements, including:

1. Describing current design thinking in Iraq and how it conceptualises the place of design in society through material objects and socio-cultural norms.
2. Identifying the main avenues through which design thinking in Iraq is known, related to design education and professional design practices.
3. Providing a vision of the future of design thinking in Iraq.

The study identifies and analyses the main elements of design thinking in Iraq and describes the unique nature of the topic in design studies, including:

- How design education carries major responsibility for the concepts and practices of design thinking.
- How pioneering efforts to introduce design practices promoting ambitious development programmes in Iraq arose during the 1970s.
- Consideration of contemporary design practices to revitalise society’s
heritage of traditional designs and uses of material objects.

- How self-sufficiency guided the development of contemporary design thinking in Iraq and provided the main promotional impetus for design practices.

Since the modernisation era began in Iraq in the late 1940s there have been attempts to create a unique path based on the richness of Iraqi culture, attempts which focused on the importance of cultural heritage in creating a contemporary design industry. The field of many of these attempts was in art and architecture and to a limited extent in joinery and furniture design. However, that caused a dilemma for Iraqi design thinking between past and present. The distinctions between these two are significant, and the same with cultural beliefs; people’s practices and interests constantly hark back to the ‘good old days,’ yet they acknowledge a preference for current objects and their obvious roles in improving modern life.

Writing about design in Iraq is extremely limited, with only one peer-reviewed art journal, some PhD and Master’s theses, and a very few textbooks authored by design faculty members. These materials are restricted and available in hard copy only, and outside these fields there is no publication whatever in any medium that offers material about current design thinking in Iraq. This reflects the long-term isolation suffered by the Iraqi design community, which seems to continue, a fact clearly reflected in many conversations the author had with them. Their belief in the need to cross this barrier and open up to the world faces many obstacles, not to mention a deep lack of confidence, first relating to language difficulties, and second to the wider technical gap separating them from the rest of the world.

The current design community in Iraq, as the author observes, wants to move forward. This desire is strengthening based on hopes for the future that inspire the new generation of Iraqi designers, who are buoyed by many good examples, as they see what previous generations of Iraqi designers are achieving, especially outside Iraq, and as channels of communication open between the designers and the outside world. However, there is real concern for how this move will go.
Looking at the process from a design perspective is interesting; it’s full of potential for further research and creative attempts to reposition this community within the global design scene. Certainly, it represents a unique type of problem, and it matches the nature of complex structure of social systems problems, identifying by elements covering wider internal and external connections. Understanding these problems nature and dimensions is the needs to support the efforts to move forward.

The main theme of this study is the role design can play, in the future of Iraq in particular, and outside its traditional contexts applied specifically to developing countries. One major factor affecting the development of contemporary design in Iraq is political instability and its influence on socio-cultural aspects of Iraqi society. Instability has been a major theme in stories about Iraq since ancient times, causing problems with the political, geographic and demographic situation, and it continues to present this land and people with unexpected difficulties.

The political instability which isolated Iraqi designers for many decades had its effects on the design thinking and professional practices of Iraqi designers and forced them to:

- Reinstitute the traditional practices of design as an art and craft discipline.
- Revisit the traditional norms of master-led design practices that prefer visual appeal and giving form. This mode redefines R&D in the design process to mean duplication and imitation.
- Adapt designs to local preferences, creating rather static stereotypes.
- Reproduce local historical metaphors to give an identity to locally manufactured products and other objects.
- In providing an example of Iraqi designer transformation through a narrative of my own transformation, which continues shaping my practices as an Iraqi designer living in exile, I hope to offer an insight into the circumstances of design in Iraq, how it has survived during the last three decades, and a way to express existing viewpoints.
This study aims to identify the structure of design concepts in Iraq, and offers an overview for re-visioning its elements and principles, seeking better understanding of its functioning and investigating directions for the active involvement of design practices in society:

- It offers insights into the nature of design thinking in Iraq.
- It identifies the framework of design in Iraq.
- It initiates a discussion regarding how design might function outside its traditional contexts in developing countries.

The transitional stage Iraq faces is a breakthrough in its contemporary history, as Iraqis now experience a multi-dimensional revolution on a major scale, reflecting deeply on the identity and stability of their own country. These optimistic intentions offer a platform for design thinking within the context of social innovation, with endless possibilities. Strategically, the creation of scenarios based on design and social innovation will engage the designer's expectations for people through participatory actions. These actions are designed to encourage the people's contribution and involvement in facilitating solutions, and the process will present the designers as the learners and facilitators of the group, their ultimate role the designing of tools for people to use and create sustainable changes in their communities. These scenarios are the core structure for applying design thinking in the future of Iraq, and utilise it to facilitate the process of empowering local communities to be involved in making small changes in their micro societies, redirecting creative design approaches to new opportunities, and motivating the new generation of enthusiastic designers of sustainable transitional practices.

This study attempts an interdisciplinary approach in introducing this field of research. Any description of the dimensions and structure of the framework of design in Iraq will never be accurate without engaging with Iraqi designers. This study strove earnestly for an effective engagement with these designers, searching for a rich experience with them, as related in the early chapters, to investigate the
practice of design and discover how the Iraqi designer community is beginning to engage its knowledge and expertise with Iraq’s current design infrastructure.

The purpose of facilitating this engagement was to obtain the richest possible experience and to describe many experiences arising from the designers’ expertise, whether as design educator or professional designer. The realisation of this vision was disrupted by a lack of resources and intensive security restrictions which prevented the researcher from being in Iraq to conduct the engagement. This study faced limited published resources regarding Iraqi design thinking and considerable ambiguity concerning the role of design in local society, which it attempts optimistically to redress. The thesis is made up of five chapters designed around the study’s objectives. Each chapter covers specific topics as follows:

Chapter one: The project of modernisation in Iraq
The state of Iraq was formed by the British in 1917 as a colony. In 1921 Iraq was under the mandate system, which allowed for further development of the state until its independent entry into the League of Nations in 1932. The new state faced a range of economic, political and social obstacles that continue to impact on its situation today. Illustrating this socio-political situation is the main objective of this chapter, as part of a review of the field of study, drawn from contemporary Iraqi history and utilising a wide range of readings to cover the following key points:

- The socio-political basis of the many efforts to present Iraq as a modern state since its establishment.
- The local conflicts opposing the restructuring of traditional Iraqi culture since WWII.
- A review of the socio-cultural achievements, allowing glimpses of the application of principles of modernisation to Iraq.

Reviewing these aspects will offer insights into the roots and complexities of the Iraqi situation throughout a long history dating far beyond the creation of the Iraqi state back to ancient civilisations of Mesopotamian. Iraq is a land with a diversity
of ethnic backgrounds, religious sects, cultural and environmental habitats and a richness of natural resources. Social practices and beliefs regarding identity, family, tribe, religion and political persuasion have been shaped by a history of recurring instabilities such as wars and political crises. Many studies conclude that the current crisis in Iraqi intellectual thought is a product of these critical situations and their historical impacts, which continue to predominate with wider dimensions since 2003. Iraq presents a unique situation under the influence such tragedies have on people’s emotions, thoughts and practices.

Contemporary Iraqi efforts to modernise and develop have moved rapidly in diverse directions during its history, and progress within the majority of these attempts was interrupted. Narratives about Iraq identify the discontinuation as the main cause of the failure of these attempts to achieve their objectives and exploit the extensive richness of this land – human and natural – and the failure to provide prosperity and a good quality of life for its people. The dynamic, ‘revolutionary’ changes in political status associated with violence and totalitarianism produced instability and interrupted any real progress of the Iraqi project of modernisation.

This chapter presents observations of different levels of contradiction regarding the meanings, goals and practices of modernisation in Iraqi society. It also addresses some of the political, social and cultural factors that have impacted on the construction of the society and shaped its development. Some of the most important are:

- The broad variety of socio-cultural norms that exist in Iraq, which reflect the diverse origins of its settlers: the Bedouin nomads, the agriculturalists, and the urban.
- The influence of religion and of religious hegemony on Iraq, and the ways in which they have created conflicts of interest between modernity and tradition and altered the ways in which development is conceived socially.
- The unequal class structure in Iraq, the marginalisation of certain groups and the lack of political representation for numerous Iraqi voices.
- State hegemony in contemporary political discourse, in particular the
construction of a ‘unified historical memory’, which fails to account for the diversity and complexity of Iraqi society.

This review provides information about historical factors that must inform any discussion of development in Iraq. It identifies meta-problems rather than individual problems, which force us to seek alternative solutions to the projects of modernisation and sustainable development. This chapter forms the cornerstone of the study, as it addresses the main strategic goals in presenting an intensive overview of contemporary aspects of cultural development in Iraq. Furthermore, this chapter presents insights into the strictly political orientation with which the project of Iraqi modernisation began, and which remains virtually unchanged. The project is aligned with international attempts at modernisation and development undertaken by developing countries in the last quarter of the 20th century.

**Chapter two: Design in the context of development**

This chapter surveys arguments and issues from the broader social sciences that have shaped the theory and practice of design in the context of development for emerging countries, focusing on the evolution of this discourse within design studies. It aims to review:

- Development and context of practices that shaped design thinking in development strategies for emerging countries.
- Insights into the utilisation of design thinking in development strategies, a move that strengthens the formation of ‘design policy’ some emerging countries are now promoting.
- Insights into alternative models of design thinking and practices to achieve sustainable development and social innovation in emerging countries.

Design in the context of development is concerned with constructing the discourse of design by drawing upon the development context in a specific situation (the ways in which development programmes in ‘developing countries’ are enhanced by the application of design principles and strategies). The practice of design focuses upon the economically weaker sections of society and looks to propose...
product and service solutions with the aim of improving the quality of life. The development model which emerged in the era following WWII has predominated ever since, promoting scientific and technological progress and applying those advances to improving the economic growth of ‘under-developed nations’. This modern Western model has informed development in these nations and has led to their industrialisation, materialisation and de-traditionalisation. Many conservative societies have been forced to implement dramatic structural changes. However, a lack of balance in the ideology underpinning this development has been a primary cause of the crises and deterioration faced by many developing countries during the post-war period.

Innovative social design is presented as a powerful alternative to incorporating design thinking into social development programmes in developing countries. It has the following roles to play in achieving the goal of sustainable social development:

- Helping the ideological and practical transition from industrialisation to sustainable social development.
- Empowering social groups to contribute to the development of more democratic, sustainable societies.
- Creating bottom-up strategies that incorporate end-users of design systems in the design process.

The reviews in this chapter and the previous one offer a clearer vision of a structurally sound framework to launch this study. They also describe a theoretical background to initiate a field investigation into design thinking and practice in Iraq and how to start this project using insights into the scope of artificial objects and their contexts in Iraqi socio-cultural thinking.

**Chapter three: The Iraqi product experience through objects and designs**
This chapter is intended to gain insight into the Iraqi experience with material objects; that experience is the key to mapping the development of design as a professional practice in Iraq, and to discover the wider dimensions of the close
relationship between humans, objects and design. To achieve the wider objectives of this chapter, three major topics were identified and subjected to an in-depth investigation:

- Describe the development of dwelling designs in Iraq, which continue to honestly represent local designs and tastes, and which under many influences has been extensively transformed recently in the search for better adaptation between traditional living customs and modern dwelling designs.
- Map modernity as a context and practice in relation to the use of material objects; identify its development and interactions with socio-cultural aspects of Iraqi society.
- Describe and analyse socio-cultural influences on the design and making of consumer products in Iraq with two examples selected from the local manufacture of furniture and home appliances.

Methodologically, this chapter employs a qualitative research approach through a combination of observational and conversational sessions, which were unstructured at the stage of data gathering, with the purpose of reviewing dominant trends and presenting glimpses of how Iraqis interact with their everyday material objects. Design and society address the relationship of designed objects to society, how these objects are shaped and, later, how they will act in shaping the relationships between human and cultural aspects of society. This chapter began documenting and introducing my experiences as a designer and considering design within its wider context in post-war Iraq. It discusses issues and presents a range of examples collected during my trip to Iraq in late 2010 and early 2011\(^1\), and other documented resources, aiming to articulate this travelling experience from my position of being “out of place,” looking at current designs of material objects and how Iraqis are interacting with them. The vast changes during the last few decades are reflected in the present condition of Iraqi society.

\(^1\) I spent a month in Iraq and visited the city of Fallujah. I made many trips to the capital, Baghdad, and to the city of Hillah in the province of Babylon.
A lack of experience and confusion describe the current relationship between Iraqi customers and contemporary products – as I closely observed during my visit. That situation mirrors the changes that occurred in the Iraqi political order after 2003, when society shifted rapidly from the familiar political system of dictatorship, to a new ‘democratic’ political system. People now are struggling to understand how to function under this new method of governance, and how to familiarise themselves with the new socio-political order. The overview and analysis of the foundations of the relationship between Iraqis and material objects addressed many factors, including the influence of socio-cultural norms in shaping those foundations and perceiving the elements of the relationship between humans and objects in a different light.

Chapter four: The Iraqi designers’ vision of design

No description of the dimensions and structure of the framework of design in Iraq will ever be accurate without engaging with Iraqi designers. The previous chapters provide a base for guiding this research to an effective engagement with Iraqi designers as the study proceeds. Although this chapter aims to investigate the practice of design in Iraq, and look at the ways the designer community is beginning to engage their knowledge and expertise with the design infrastructure, it also offers insights into the designer community’s focus on searching for a new direction to meet the country’s future demands.

The wider vision in facilitating this engagement is to offer the richest possible experience, and to provide many types of experience related to the designers’ expertise, whether it came from being a design educator or professional designer. The realisation of this vision was disrupted by lack of available resources, as well as intensive security restrictions which prevented the researcher from being in Iraq to conduct the engagement. Still, the chapter was designed to present the Iraqi designers’ participation through two forms of research:

1. Semi-structured interviews; the distance interview sessions were conducted with selected members of the Iraqi designer community.
2. Reflection into the Iraqi designer transformation; being a ‘reflective practitioner’ and seeking my own transformation since the 1980s. Analysis of the experiences that continue to shape my practices, and reflection on the practices of design in Iraq, while being an Iraqi designer living in exile.

These two research forms and their outcomes helped to discover a vision, guided by the designers’ narratives, as they discussed how past and present socio-political and cultural issues in Iraq strongly influence the development of design as discourse, represented in its main activities as design education and professional practice. The main theme connecting these discussions was the initiation of design as a modern phenomenon associated with styles and trends, intended to add value to contemporary objects, through aesthetic, ornamenting treatments. This restricted view of design predominates and reflects clearly in the design education curriculum, post-graduate candidates’ thesis titles and the very few Arabic research publications for design educators in Iraqi institutions.

Two research practices were introduced for this chapter to identify attitudes shaping the transitional phase that currently motivates Iraqi designers, which will certainly affect the future of this country's design thinking. These attitudes are basically structured in and rely on the dynamic motivation that design thinking is getting from renewing the traditional and contemporary beliefs and practices in Iraqi society; they are the culmination of many discussions conducted with Iraqi designers during the data collection phase, and the chapter summarises the interviewees’ responses in the form of bullet points. It finds clear trends in the transformation of current design thinking, and introduces discussion points for the re-visioning process to begin in the following chapter. These points can be described as follows:

- The interviewees’ descriptions of the definition of design clearly indicate a departure from the traditional skills of ornamentation and formal, aesthetically appealing objects, as they indicate a ‘new’ configuration as the applied knowledge of science and technology—concepts that shaped design thinking after World War II, as discussed earlier.
• Intellectual stances—even inside academia—associated with design and contemporary objects continue to dominate descriptions of the role of design in society.

• There’s no doubt that political stability is crucial to enable progress and improve the quality of life of any nation. Design thinking is very sensitive to instability; it shaped previous decades of suffering and deprivation for Iraqis. Unfortunately, the nature of the sectarianism the political order is establishing in Iraq will – this is the researcher’s personal view – comprehensively strengthen the existing environment of instability, which already supports extreme levels of political and economic corruption that has dominated Iraq since the 1990s.

The chapter introduces another example of an Iraqi designer’s transformation, one that has been influenced by his country’s situation while living in exile. That transformation relates to my own experience. When the journey of exile started in the 1990s, it brought with it an unending series of fortunate opportunities to develop my design experiences. These experiences opened doors to interact with different models of design thinking from all over the world. During these years, my practices in design continued to improve, from teaching design to being a design researcher and practitioner. The transformation keeps developing and supporting my new role in the faculty of applied sciences and arts at the German University in Cairo.

**Chapter five: Design in Iraq – past, present and future**

This chapter offers an interpretation of the outcomes and resolutions developed so far, for a wider look at the framework of design in Iraq. This is the core of the study, linking the arguments and striving for a clear explanation of how this study aims to achieve its objectives. The main conclusions are identified within an abstract of key points, representing the reviews and qualitative research practices which point to the nature of this study and its articulation of the topic in design studies. Those points are:

1. Describe current design thinking in Iraq and how this thinking
conceptualises the context of design in society through material objects and socio-cultural norms.

2. Identify the main applications by which the design thinking is known, related to design education and professional design practices.

3. Relate conclusions and a vision of the future.

The discussion followed a framework based on these main points, which are meant to be representative elements shaping its structure, focusing the wider reviews and other research practices applied earlier. The discussion elaborates clear explanations of the objectives of the study and paints a vision of the role of design in the future of Iraq. Furthermore, the study proposes wider research for design researchers interested in engaging with the interdisciplinary topics. Previous points help develop the following suggestions for future research:

1. To enlighten, engage and develop an advanced analytical approach relating to the relationships between the current structure of theoretical design elements and the rich socio-cultural heritage of Iraqi society and examine through creative design methods and processes the structure linking the current with the past for blazing new paths to the future of design.

2. To describe how the concept of the “name changer” for design and the designer can apply effectively in different fields and practices of design.

3. To describe how design can offer a platform for creative practices based on smart functioning of applications of technology to improve living conditions through new products, services and systems within the Iraqi context.

**Research methods design**

The process of engaging creative design thinking to achieve the goals of this study is supported by the researcher’s commitment, based on his confidence that these practices can be presented as dynamic, enduring models which are flexible to make effective use of design activities in Iraqi society. The methodology chosen for the study aims to support these principles while achieving the objectives. The main principles guiding the study support the local collective’s perspective, experience and expectations regarding this vision. There is ambiguity and very limited published resources regarding design thinking in Iraq, and the role of design in
local society. This situation argues for designing research methods so the study can be communicated in a wider interdisciplinary approach, and then facilitate linking with the main elements of design thinking in design education and design practices in Iraq. The following research methods have been selected for this study:

1. A literature review covers topics relating to socio-cultural, political and development studies.
2. Participant observation to enhance engagement through collections of data representing the field of the study, a practice that enriched the study with theoretical and visual data.
3. Open-ended interview sessions with selected members of the Iraqi designer community to create shared meanings of narratives reflecting a clear understanding and providing a solid basis for the study.
4. Reflective practice addressing the researcher’s transformation since the 1980s. Analysis of those experiences that continue to shape the researcher’s practices, and reflection on the practices of design in Iraq, as an Iraqi designer living in exile.
5. Analytical discussion of the emerging framework of design in Iraq, to re-vision its context and develop a description of the role design can play in the future of the country.

The following overviews chart (figure 0-1) visualises the relationships between these different forms of research, and their involvement in creating the design framework and supporting the analytical discussion culminating in the study’s conclusion about the role that design can play in the future of Iraq.
Chapter one: The project of modernisation in Iraq

Chapter two: Design in the context of development

Literature reviews

Addressed different levels of contradiction regarding the meanings, goals and practices of modernisation in Iraqi society.

Survey arguments and issues from the broader social sciences that have shaped the theory and practice of design in the context of development for developing countries.

Participant observation

Offer insights about the Iraqi experience with material objects; this experience is the key to mapping the development of design as a professional practice in Iraq, and to cover the wider dimensions of the close relationship between humans, objects and design.

Semi-structured interview

Distance interview sessions were conducted with selected members of the Iraqi designer community.

Reflective practice

Reflection into the Iraqi designer transformation, searching my own transformation since the 1980s. Analysis of the experiences that continue to shape my practices, and reflection on the practices of design in Iraq, while being an Iraqi designer living in exile.

Chapter three: The Iraqi product experience through objects and designs

Chapter four: The Iraqi designers’ vision of design

Chapter five: Design in Iraq—past, present and future

Analytical discussion

This chapter offers an interpretation of the outcomes and resolutions developed through the previous chapters, for a wider look at the framework of design in Iraq.

Introduction & Research methods design

What? Why? How? About the research topic, objectives, and process to achieve through research methods

The framework of design in Iraq

Figure 0-1. The research methods overviews.
1. The project of modernisation in Iraq

Iraq, the field of this study, is well known as the location of some of the earliest human settlements. Mesopotamia nourished very early agricultural communities, supporting human beings as they began cultivating the land and making objects to support their needs and sustain their living conditions. This chapter offers a broad introduction to this field of study, with a guide through the main topics, insights into contemporary Iraqi history and an overview of the cultural transformation toward modernity, reflected in Iraqi society and its socio-cultural practices. The chapter reviews the interdisciplinary nature of the study to offer a wider vision of:

1. The establishment of Iraq as a new state in the early 1900s by exploring specific socio-political norms which helped to construct the framework of the Iraqi state, and how that framework still affects the political order of this country.

2. The many practices that promoted modernity as a means of signifying qualities of people and objects. These practices forced rapid transformations aimed at shifting Iraqi society toward an industrialisation-led economy, which development strategies and programmes aimed for and promoted from the mid 1900s.

The elaboration of ‘design’ as a set of practices reflecting modernity and based on Western methods. This elaboration shifted design practices from their traditional local context toward a new vision based on industrialisation. It was reflected in the design fundamentals, supporting the establishment of new streams in the education system, and introducing new programmes related to technology and arts and crafts.
1.1 Chapter overview

**Figure 1-1. Chapter 1 overview.**
1.2. Formation of the new state of Iraq and its political systems

By the end of WWI, the West was intent on redrawing the map of the Middle East after the Ottoman Empire had collapsed. Allied leaders stated that their intention was to remake the region on the basis of the self-determination of national entities and to create a new Arabic political identity. Mandates were formally granted in 1922, when the League of Nations gave Britain sovereignty over Iraq and Palestine, and France was given sovereignty over Syria and Lebanon. These agreements revived the ‘Sykes-Picot’ agreement signed between Britain and France in 1916, which formalised the way in which they would divide up the Arabic provinces of the Ottoman Empire. Several arguments were presented by the European colonial powers to justify their expansion, but the primary justification was the need to modernise the Arab region and help its people to become a part of the new world.

The British Army occupied Southern Mesopotamia in 1917. Indian soldiers under the command of British officers took the city of Basra, and then continued to Baghdad. Forming the new state of Iraq involved creating borders separating it from other parts of the region, and the arbitrary way in which these borders were created remains a major source of instability and conflict. In the northern region of Iraq, the separation of the Kurdish population between four different countries (Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Iran) is a clear example of this folly, and contesting claims regarding the borders between Iraq, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran and Turkey have led to continuous conflict associated with considerable violence ever since.

In 1920, there was a widespread tribal revolt against British military occupation, supported by religious leaders. This revolt pushed British leaders to initiate the process of building up the state and restoring a form of self-government that was
under their control. Britain effectively mobilised their efforts to establish Faisal\(^2\) as the King of Iraq from 1921 until his death in 1933 (figure 1-2). The Iraqi kingdom was formed under the mandate system via the Anglo-Iraqi treaty (Hourani, 2005). The new kingdoms of Iraq and Jordan were “explicitly conceived on the model of the Indian princely states” (Cannadin, 2002, p71-72). A British high commissioner made policy and strategic decisions, an indirect form of territorial control that represented a new colonial approach. According to Elie Kedourie, however, Iraq was little more than a “hotbed of corrupt and greedy reactionaries” (Cannadin, 2002, p140), where the king lacked the support of the Kurds, the Jews, the Shi’ite tribes and the Baghdad middle class.

![Figure 1-2. King Faisal, monarch of Iraq from 1921-1933.](image)

It can be argued that the development of the Iraqi state has revolved around a gradually broadening level of participation on the part of the nation’s diverse and fragmented constituents, a shift towards integration and the improvement of

\(^2\)“The third son of Sharif Husayn of the Hijaz, Faisal... At the Cairo Conference in March 1921, Churchill and his aides proceeded to redraw the map of the Middle East and to plan the installation of Faisal as king of a newly created Iraq” (Simon, 2004, p799-802).
economic and social systems. British colonial strategies supported the traditional ruling class in Iraq, dividing power between the monarchy and a Sunni elite class of merchants and tribal leaders. The result of this power dynamic was a widening of the gap between the ruling elite and those they ruled, but many attempts were made to bridge this gap and create a democratic national state. There has always been scepticism concerning its authenticity and its representation of certain ethnic and religious groups, however, which laid the foundations for continued crisis. The formation of Iraq in its early stages was associated with the rise of several disparate strands in Iraqi political thought and action. Arabian Peninsula leaders initiated the revolt against the Ottoman Empire during WWI, supported by the British and the French. After the remapping of the Ottoman provinces, the new British colonists sought to enhance the structure and identity of the new state.

Locally, there were two main visions of the kind of social and political systems the new state should follow, both of which continued to have proponents through the independence period and following the re-colonisation in 2003. One of these ideologies is ‘Pan-Arab nationalism’, which holds that the era of the Islamic Caliphate stands as the greatest historical example of Arab unity, and that reviving this unity is the best way for Arabs to become an effective power in the modern era. ‘Iraqi nationalism’ is the main competing ideology, which perceives Iraq’s Arab heritage to be only one part of its identity, and that this identity has been formed by the long history of civilisation in the region: Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, etc. To the Iraqi nationalists, the historical and cultural development of the nation has been based on the participation of many different religious and ethnic groups, working together to create this historical memory (Davis, 2005).

Conflict between these ideologies has not helped progress to be made towards stability in the region, and neither ideology has entailed a stable process for creating political order or developing democratic state institutions, which helps to explain why violent military coups have dominated the contemporary history of Iraq. Iraq is not an isolated case in this regard; other Arabic countries have largely shared a similar fate, but Iraq’s recent history has a number of unique qualities,
owing to the ancient history of the land, the complexity of its social structure and its great richness of natural resources. Iraq is a brutal case of political conflict at the international level. It has been 82 years since its inception, and 71 years of that independence has been a harsh and turbulent experience as a developing country. The efforts of those years ended miserably after the collapse of the national government and the later re-colonisation of the country, which could be described as the first case of re-colonisation in recent world history (figure 1-3) (Al Rekabe, 2008). Just how the new colonial powers, in the twenty-first century, justify the real objectives (control of the natural resources) behind their invasion, national liberation and introduction of democracy, was described by Naomi Klein as the “unholy marriage of free market theology and imperial ambition” (Chaudhry, 2005) and continues under the pretext of reconstruction as an obvious economic colonisation of Iraq. (Appendix 1 offers detailed historical arguments relating to the creation of Iraq)
1.3. Social and cultural aspects of the modernisation of Iraq

1.3.1. Diversity in Iraqi socio-cultural habitats
When the diverse Arab peoples became united by Islam, a new political order was created, which enhanced stability in their relationships and encouraged social development based on the principles of Islam. The advanced culture created by diverse Muslim societies in a range of different geographical settings, and their progress in trade, science, agriculture, architecture and crafts, led to the establishment of an urban civilisation and the creation of uniquely Islamic intellectual thought and cultural styles. The Arabic language was a common thread running through the Islamic world, creating a sense of unity and fostering communication. It was the primary language of Islamic literature, law, theology and spirituality (Hourani, 2005).

Baghdad, Cairo and Cordoba were the main political and cultural centres of the Islamic world throughout the tenth century. People divided by politics in the region were nonetheless united by religion. Baghdad dominated as the largest of these centres. Its Arab population expanded as many groups migrated from the Southern deserts, particularly after the 7th century as nomadic tribes converted to Islam and settled on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, where the newly urban environment encouraged the transition from nomadic to agricultural and urban life.

Tribal systems formed the basis for the customs of both nomadic and agricultural groups at this time, and the tribal leaders enjoyed an active role, with a great degree of control over the community. The tribal structure was modified in the village setting in order to maintain and expand the role of those leaders in

3 “Elite cultural activity continued in the traditional areas of religious knowledge and poetry but the ninth century saw major new developments in medicine, the exact sciences and translation of texts from Greek into Arabic. It is this broad range of secular sciences which gave the intellectual life of the period its characteristic flavour, and it was the Abbasid court’s major contribution to knowledge” (Kennedy, 2006, p249).
controlling social, political and economic matters. Many centuries later, the southern villages in Iraq would initiate the movement towards a semi-feudal agricultural system.

Two factors are particularly important in the story of Iraq’s dynamic progress toward modernisation. Surveying these factors will improve our understanding of the application of strategic planning for development and modernisation. The first factor is the components of the society itself, consisting of two major Islamic groups and a number of other ethnic and religious minority groups, reflecting the “complex mosaic of traditions, religions, cultures, ethnicities and histories that make up the Arab world – especially in Iraq” (Said, 2004, p216). It is a social fabric that was created largely by waves of migration across the centuries, as nomadic peoples turned to an agricultural lifestyle. It is important to remember that this unstructured transition was a material, rather than a mental, change. The move from mobile tent houses to stable mud houses has led to some interesting changes in the material culture; inside the mud house, space would be divided strictly into two areas, the family living area and the guest area, which is a tradition carried on in contemporary cement houses in Iraqi villages as well as in the urban regions. Food and traditions in the preparation of food reflect the nature of the desert environment, particularly with regard to ceremonial reception of guests.

The second factor that must be taken into account is religion. The relationship between modernity and Islam has been in a state of flux since the nineteenth century. Muhammad Abduh\(^4\) (1849-1905) the ‘father of Islamic modernisation’ (figure 1-4), described his project as “conciliating modernity with Islam, claiming

---

\(^4\) “Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), Islamic reformer and author. Born in Egypt, educated at the Ahmadi Mosque in Tanta and at al-Azhar University, Muhammad Abduh became interested in philosophy and Sufism. During the sojourn of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani in Cairo, Abduh came to know him and became his most loyal disciple. He taught for a while, then became editor of al-Waqa’i al-Misriyya, the Egyptian government newspaper, from 1880 to 1882. Although more moderate than his mentor, Abduh nevertheless backed the Urabi revolution. After its collapse he was imprisoned briefly and then was exiled to Beirut. In 1884 Abduh went to Paris, where he collaborated with Afghani in forming a society called al Urwa al-Wuthqa (the indissoluble bond), which published a journal by the same name. Although it lasted only eight months, the journal stimulated the rise of nationalism in many parts of the Muslim world” (Goldschmidt, 2004, p23-24).
that true Islam was the religion of reason, science and civilisation, and that the present decline was a result of a deviation from the right path... the question was how to adapt Islam to the sweeping force of modernity” (Kassab, 2006, p328).
Religion and the diversity of Iraq’s population continue to play an integral role in Iraq’s transition to modernism, and their respective roles will be further analysed in later chapters.

![Image of Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905)](image)

**Figure 1-4 Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905)**

The question of class in Iraq is a complex one, due to the lack of “well established and self-conscious classes that have superordinated within the society in a ‘hegemonic’ way” (Ayubi, 1995, p6). The social structure of Iraq is highly fluid and variegated as a result of long periods of political instability and a lack of effective policies to provide stable structure to social systems. This instability has been a factor during many different periods in the long history of Iraq, and has continued to be an important factor in the twentieth century. State hegemony in contemporary Iraq is partly grounded in its inheritance of colonial policies and capitalist penetration. The colonial government failed to broaden the basis of their power, and “politics remained elite-based and factionalised with deputies dependent on local rather than national power bases” (Kingston, 2002, p95).
Throughout the 1940s some attempts were made towards political liberalisation, but the government crucially failed to facilitate the entry of new social groups into the political process. This marginalisation of key groups set the stage for the political violence that has characterised Iraqi governments.
The revolution of 1958 dramatically formed the first republican state of Iraq and swept away an entrenched aristocracy and existing social order. This revolution had an extensive effect on all sectors of Iraqi society and initiated a new era, along with new and unique forms of instability and violence. Iraqi nationalism was the ideology that informed the new state, in contrast to the Pan-Arab ideology propagated by Egypt. The Iraqi Communist Party and the National Democratic Party supported the new republican government. Opposition to the new government ultimately resulted in the counter-coup of 1963, but by this stage, the military regime had already made progress towards modernisation through its agricultural development policies and its control over the highly lucrative oil industry. The state had promoted Iraqi nationalism via propaganda tools such as the Ministry of Guidance, in order “to promote an Iraqi collective identity” (Davis, 2005, p15). This lofty goal was clearly a failure. Political violence between proponents of Pan-Arab and Iraqi nationalist ideologies created an out-of-control situation. The diversity of cultural backgrounds in Iraq is a major complicating factor when it comes to issues such as equality and social justice, which are perceived quite differently by the nationalists, for whom cultural pluralism was considered very important, and the Pan-Arabists, who largely ignored the issue in favour of Arabic unity (Davis, 2005).

In the period that followed the 1968 revolution, addressing the question of ‘historical memory’ as a collective process with effects on contemporary economic, social and political life was an important endeavour. According to Davis, the historical memory “often contains embedded political meanings, but does not necessarily serve political ends” (Davis, 2005, p4). Historical memory is a sign of cultural inclusion and participatory politics in democratic societies, whereas in the case of authoritarian regimes – as in Iraq – the association between historical memory and state-controlled political discourse led to intense efforts to commemorate and frame the past. Governments aimed to use these commemorations to solidify the structure of a collective Iraqi identity. The crisis of historical memory, and the many versions of it that existed in spite of the
Governments’ attempts to create a single narrative, meant that political regimes and the elite supported by them faced opposition from an array of politically, ethnically and religiously marginalised groups. Many of these marginalised groups saw themselves as embattled protectors of authentic traditions, and thus as non-aligned or opposed to modernity. Mutual suspicion between various groups in Iraq, and especially between ruling and opposition factions, has hindered attempts to develop new or hybrid cultural experiences (Davis, 2005).

Migration from rural areas to cities increased rapidly after the 1958 revolution, resulting in extensive labour shortages in the agricultural sector as well as a major increase in the ranks of unskilled workers looking for job vacancies in the basic service sectors in the big cities. Social and economic factors both played their part in this rapid urbanisation. Larger Iraqi cities had come to be surrounded by randomly structured slums where people lived what was basically an imitation of village life (figure 1-5). Given the choice between preserving the old ways of living and adapting to the customs common in the cities, many chose the latter. These changes in individual and family relations, in living customs and in material culture manifested in diverse realms of work, food and entertainment. Shops, restaurants, schools and cinemas constructed new sites of interaction, and new levels of freedom – particularly for women – emerged, as well as new opportunities for work, education and social interaction (Hourani, 2005).

Figure 1-5. Living conditions in the poorest slums around Baghdad.
The military regimes governed Iraq from 1958 to 2003, strengthened by the ‘emergency’ situation “which has been a license for their rulers to do what they want in the name of security” (Said, 2004, p241). Restrictions shaped the lives of Iraqis and produced after the 1990s a pale version of Iraq; formerly a large, prosperous and diverse Arab country. The collision between Iraq and USA during the Gulf War of the 1990s is described by commentators within the Iraqi Ba’ath Party as “modern Arab history shows the unrealised, unfulfilled promise of Arab independence, a promise traduced both by ‘the West’ and by a whole array of more recent enemies, like Arab reaction and Zionism” (Said, 1994, p3). However, after 2003 Iraq was in the forefront of the world’s attention, as an unusual twenty-first-century example of re-colonisation, ushering in a new era in contemporary political history where “‘the civilised nations’ ought to take it upon themselves to re-colonise Third World countries where the most basic conditions of civilised life had broken down” (Said, 1979, p347-348). Although, conversely, America was not a classical imperial power, “but a righter of wrongs around the world, in pursuit of tyranny, in defence of freedom no matter the place or cost” (Said, 1994, p3). Both the U.S. military, and the sound ‘elected’ national regime’s failure to provide the basics necessary for a good quality of life for Iraqis is clear, given the rationale offered for the invasion. Given the American formula for democracy (“usually a euphemism for a free market, with little attention paid to human entitlement and social services” (Said, 2004, p278), this democracy is still far away from the everyday lives of Iraqis. In fact, even in the ‘reconstruction’ that the US initiated after 2003, the main aim is “transforming Iraq into an outpost of the neoconservative empire, ensuring its continued enslavement to U.S. interests long after the troops have returned home” (Klein, 2005).

1.3.2. Aspects of the project of modernisation
The technical development assistance initiated by post-war British efforts in Iraq, together with the American strategy presented in the Point Four programme promoting science and technology to improve the basic needs of peoples in the ‘under-developed nations,’ supported a new era of economic and socio-cultural development in Iraq, as well as the Middle East (Appendix 2 offers further details relating to these programmes as well as national development strategies applied
previously in Iraq). It is important to notice here that it presented science and technology in two forms. First, it introduced new knowledge and a range of practices regarding planning and creating strategies for development, which continued to recent times through its revolutionary political context, and showed people that the government’s efforts in creating these huge infrastructure projects required Iraqis to fight and toil under unacceptable conditions and produce “blood, sweat and tears” (Sen, 1999, p35) to achieve the development goals. No wonder Iraqis rejected this concept on numerous occasions. The second form was through the physical instruments associated with the old diesel machines of irrigation, locomotives, cars, weapons, hand tools and many others. These objects are still known – by the majority of Iraqis – by special names modified from the English technical terms to be easy to pronounce and write in the Arabic vernacular. This migration of materials culture from West to East is used as a form of interaction between the foreign objects and the local culture; this form was kept under hybrid conditions and established its unique situation through the terminologies.

In the big cities, there were a number of local efforts to organise labour unions, and free elections in 1954 awarded power to Iraqi nationalists, supported in parliament by moderate Pan-Arabists. The cultural environment was also changing, with new intellectual, literary and artistic movements flourishing. Printed media such as newspapers, magazines, books and journals also proliferated widely as a result, and Iraqi television began broadcasting in 1954, the first of its kind in the region. The Music Institute was the first artistic institution to be established, in Baghdad in 1936. It was followed in 1941 by departments for visual arts, drama and design. Modernist approaches such as cubism and expressionism were introduced and became an important part of the teaching curriculum in these newly-founded institutions. The development of free verse forms in Arabic poetry also emerged in Iraq, which was especially significant given the importance of poetry for the Arabs: Poetry is often considered the most original form of expression associated with Arab culture, and names such as Badr Shākir Al-Sayyāb (figure 1-6) and Nazik al-Mala’ika (figure 1-7) continue to be revered across the Arab world. Coffee houses acquired the status of venerable
institutions in Iraqi cities, associated as they came to be with specific artistic, intellectual and political groups (Davis, 2005) (Saad, 2008).

*Figure 1-6. Badr Shakir Al-Sayyab (1926-1964).*

*Figure 1-7. Nazik Al-Malaika (1922-2007).*
1.4. Design in Iraq and its fundamentals

1.4.1. Design fundamentals

This attempt to offer a solid overview of selected research describing the main topic of 'design in Iraq' now presents the main fundamentals of the topic, finalising this part. Design in its wider sense, as a social phenomenon, includes both its context and professional practice in society. This meaning also relies on fundamental design as a discipline of study, as well as a socio-cultural practice. These fundamentals are:

- Design thinking
- Design education
- Professional design practice

The study includes chapters offering pertinent and ample knowledge to describe these fundamentals and their reflection through practices that shape the current and former Iraqi design scene. But it is crucial at this stage to review academic definitions of these fundamentals, as the foundation of the later advanced analysis of selected topics related to design and its practices in Iraqi society.

1.4.1.1. Design thinking

According to Carroll, “Design Thinking is an orientation toward learning that encompasses active problem solving and believing in one's ability to bring about change that has impact” (Carroll, 2012, p. 20). Design thinking is a process addressing interlinking stages of thinking, visualisation, experimentation, building of prototypes and testing to achieve final resolution. To practise, it’s not enough to think about specific phenomena or find a solution to a problem, etc. It involves practices based on research and visualisation to create a form or structure a system. It is a dynamic process centred on people and study to create solutions or find answers, attacking both simple and complex problems. This process of resolution is capable of further development, through utilisation of technology, and these resolutions should be socially acceptable and economically viable. Design thinking is based on practicality, and any conception involves development
through doing, while relying on intellectual and manual skills. The process is often dependent on the interaction between two fundamental kinds of thinking, which coexist and often collide in our world: analytical thinking and creative thinking. Achieving a balance between them is critical. “Design thinking focuses on asking the right questions, challenging assumptions, generating a range of possibilities and learning through targeted stages of iterative prototyping” (Carroll, 2012, p. 21).

1.4.1.2. Design education

Design education is “primarily intended to bring about some change in the learner: that is, in capability, in knowledge, in understanding, or whatever” (Phil, 2013, p. 13). Understanding the design process through research, analysis, visualisation and modelling are fundamental objectives for any design education curriculum. The early modern models of design education applied the traditions of both arts and crafts to impart the knowledge that was essential for the new expert in applied arts. Further science and technology strengthened the transformation of applied arts specialists into designers capable of interacting with and developing techniques of mass production and a wide variety of new products. Furthermore, social science knowledge and advanced technology further supported the great need for a new wave of designers capable of designing more interactive and ‘intelligent’ products. To cope with these rapid transformations, most of the design education curricula rely on advanced interdisciplinary studies, especially at postgraduate levels, to cope with industrial demands.

1.4.1.3. Professional design practices

Professional practice, according to a dictionary definition, is “a vocation requiring knowledge of some department of learning or science.” (www.dictionary.reference.com) Being a professional means aligning with the following characteristics:

- Great responsibility
- Accountability
- Specialised theoretical knowledge
- Institutional preparation
• Autonomy
• Client rather than customer relationships
• Direct working relationships
• Ethical constraints
• Merit-based
• Capitalist morality

(Rutledge, 2011)

In design practices as well as many other professions, it means trust and confidence in what you do. It also means the ability to make the right choices. In practical matters the designer is fully responsible for what they are doing or suggesting others do. Deliberate choice is one of the professional’s main characteristics, which reflects the ability to offer quality work. Training and effective communication are essential characteristics of a professional.

Mastery is a high level of professionalism. According to Schaik “mastery as a form of peer recognition… people whose work had won awards, had been professionally reviewed in journals and had been the subject of monographs and exhibited in curated exhibitions were being acknowledged as having a mastery in a field.” Also Kegan identified mastery as “culminating in that moment when you invent your own way, when you are no longer pursuing external patterns of behaviour and your ‘pattern resides within,’ but paradoxically you are able to view your practice from outside” (Schaik, 2005, pp. 10-14). Both professionalism and mastery are recognised attributes in society, which nurtures such expertise, as seen in socio-cultural norms and professional regulations to govern the practical applications of the profession and its ethical quality in society.

1.4.2. Technology orienting education
One of the main obstacles to development strategies in Iraq from the mid-1970s was a shortage of specialised and skilled workers in certain technical fields to meet the demand of new industrial activities. Science and technology were the core elements to guide the development of Iraq. Education became integral to the
The modern Iraqi educational system, from its establishment by the British around the 1920s to the present, has been described as “basically an adaptation, often very imaginative and effective, which is characterised by a high level of discipline, although a somewhat rigid orientation according to the Soviet methods” (Roy, 1993). However, the lack of applied and technical professional experience is a distinctive feature in the graduates from this educational system, because of its strong focus on academic considerations in the basic sciences and literature. Socio-cultural attitudes and practices regarding education and the working environment mean that such attitudes continue to dominate the educational system, reflecting common practice not only in Iraq, but in other developing countries too. There are other features of the Iraqi education system: it is mainly dependent on state funding and planning after 1958, basic education is compulsory and it is free of charge at all levels.

Technology was considered the foundation of the path toward modernisation and development: ”the principles of modernity generate specific representations of society by means of bureaucratic and technological networks which incorporate institutional practices into an overall scheme” (Richard, 1993, p463). These principles guided development in the period after WWII, the international development aid provided mainly by Western nations aimed at fulfilling basic human needs for the majority of the population in the rest of the world, with aid programmes directed toward transferring technology and providing consultancy and expertise to support poor nations wanting economic growth. Within this context the modern educational system in developing countries was included in development strategies and planning. For the Middle East region the early Western
contribution in that regard came through the United States’ programme Point Four – Economic Aid through Design. Beginning in the late 1940s, the programme sought to aid the development of handicrafts and small local industries by better utilising design principles – with a view to increasing the commercial potential of the final products from these sectors by helping them gain acceptance in international markets. Design education along these principles was implemented in university programmes in many countries in the region. Turkey, for example, established its first industrial design programme in the 1970s. In Lebanon, many design programmes – especially those in graphic design and interior design – were established in the 1960s. In Jordan, the programme focused on financially supporting local craftsmen through grants and services, with a local community development foundation established for this purpose. Jordan’s first design programmes emerged in the 1980s (Saad, 2006). Iraq was different. The US Point Four programme was aimed in a different direction, and was used to assist development of consultancy expertise in agriculture and water management until 1958 (Kingston, 2002).

1.4.3. Design education curriculum
Iraq’s first design degree programme was established in 1972 at the Academy of Fine Arts within the Plastic Arts disciplines, offering a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Design and Decorative Arts. In the mid-1970s, the programme became the first BA in Industrial Design. In 1983, the first Department of Design was formed, with three major disciplines: Industrial Design, Printing Design and Textile Design. Interior Design was added as a discipline at the end of the 1980s, and Calligraphy & Ornament in the mid-1990s. The Industrial Design programme at the University of Baghdad is still the only one of its kind offered anywhere in Iraq.

The strong association between design and fine arts was an overwhelming influence in shaping the Iraqi model of design education, the degree programme imitating pioneer schools of design in Europe, drawing upon the synergies of these disciplines by virtue of the fact that both art and design are interested in multiple resources and “both activities are concerned with ‘making.’ Designers and artists are concerned with ‘making’ new works” (Buchanan, 2004). Another influence on
design education was the strong tradition of crafts. Design, therefore, has emerged as a trade via the arts and crafts tradition. Through this process of education based on apprenticeships, and the contribution of fine arts traditions, design education in Iraq is based on understanding design as a way of adding value to products through making them desirable and ornamented. There is limited recognition of other design requirements such as ‘useful’ and ‘useable’ (Buchanan, 2004), although, through opportunities for postgraduate studies, this attitude is beginning to change. A number of case studies have focused on the functional, technical and production requirements for industrial products, with the aim of assisting local industry to continue working and developing their production lines. These studies have resulted in solutions ranging from finding alternative materials to improved production techniques. Political principles regarding nationalisation and responding to industry needs support this activity, which is made possible by improved cooperation between design departments and colleges of engineering, social science, education and others. Further details about design education philosophy in Iraq come later.

1.4.4. The Iraqi contemporary art movement
The contemporary art movement in Iraq began in the early twentieth century, influenced by and interacting with the European styles emerging at that time, and with European methods of teaching and practising art. Its European roots were complemented by local influences, such as the sculpture, architecture and handcrafts of many ancient Iraqi civilisations and the ‘restoration’ of heritage traditions from Islamic art. A unique interplay was created between the rich history of the region and the radical possibilities offered by Modernist discourses. The result was a flourishing and authentic contemporary art movement in the Arab world that continues today.

Political realities in Iraq have played an important role in shaping the social and cultural world. The media played the largest role in presenting to the Iraqi people

---

5 This subsection contains text borrowed and modified from an earlier article titled ‘Contemporary Iraqi Art: Origins and Development.’ See referencing list.
images of the instabilities that afflicted their nation: images of war, peace, development, war and re-colonisation. These conditions are interwoven into Iraqi’s lives and have been repeated from ancient times to the present day.

Early impulses towards modernity in Iraqi art were associated with the end of World War I, beginning with a group of Iraqi soldier-artists educated in Turkey; their works attracted the patronage of the upper class, who were attracted in part to its status as a new medium for delivering their conservative perspectives in political and religious discourse. Government support for the arts in the post-WWI period initially took the form of a number of sponsored scholarships for Iraqi artists. This had the significant effect of establishing a solid base for a contemporary art movement in Iraq, along with the creation of institutes and educational departments in music, visuals, drama and design. The Academy of Fine Arts (later the College of Fine Arts) began in the 1960s to offer graduate and postgraduate degrees in fine arts, drama, design and audio-visual disciplines. By the 1990s there were more than six fine arts institutions among the many universities around the country.

Iraq, a conservative and religiously oriented society, still harbours nostalgia for the artistic past in which symbols ornamenting artificial objects held deep meaning. In Islamic art both the Arabic letters and the ornamental compositions (geometric and organic) that typically grace artworks contain the power of divine symbolism in addition to their aesthetic values. This is based on the central position of the Arabic language in the life of Muslims, who hold that the Quran miraculously utilises language to present a precise description of religious truth (Hourani, 2005). There is therefore a strong societal inclination to present this discourse as an authentic context for art practice.

This environment encourages what Baudrillard calls the “nostalgia for origins and the obsession with authenticity” (Baudrillard, 2002, p76). In the 1950s, when Iraqi artists engaged with the notion of the discourse of restoration becoming a driving principle in creating an Iraqi artistic identity, these efforts met with a broad
acceptance in society. Jewad Selim (1921-1961) initiated the move in this direction on the basis of his direct interaction with ancient Iraqi artworks (through his early experience of work at the Iraqi museum) (figure 1-8). Other members of the Baghdad Modern Art Society followed suit, alongside a number of newly graduated architects who aimed to create a national Iraqi identity within architecture (Chadirji, 1991). Roots of the Iraqi contemporary art movement were clearly influenced by European practices, and many art groups were established and led by artists who had completed their higher education at European art institutions. The roots of these alliances should also be viewed within the context of modernisation at the time, which promoted collective action towards improving the socio-cultural fabric of Iraqi life. These artists wanted to inform and influence the cultural structure of their society.

Figure 1-8. Jawad Selim pioneering sculptor in the Iraq contemporary arts movement (1919-1961).

In the early 1970s, the Government became increasingly interested in creating and supporting ‘historical memories’ and devised a number of regulations and guidelines for both public and private buildings, directing architects and designers to produce and reproduce elements from historical and Islamic symbolist motifs in their designs (figure 1-9). Aside from a few success stories, the authorities behind the politicised restoration project lacked the expertise and organisational capacity
to make real improvements to Iraqi architecture, a failure that is reflected in the quality of art and design work created in this exercise.

*Figure 1-9. Example of the popular elements dominating the façade composition in current domestic house construction in Iraq.*

However, a number of artists began to present their own theories of how best to engage with ‘restoration’ in modern times. They emphasised the content and aesthetic forms of ancient Iraqi art to complement the rapid development of modern life. This new wave was initiated by young artists who had graduated from the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad and European and Far Eastern schools of art. A concise articulation of this new direction can be found in the manifesto of ‘The New Vision’ group (Ar. Al-Ru’yah al-Jadida), issued in 1968, in which these artists announced their revolutionary vision.

We believe that heritage is not a prison, a static phenomenon or a force capable of repressing creativity so long as we have the freedom to accept or challenge its norms... We are the new generation. We demand change, progression and creativity. Art stands in opposition to stasis. Art is continually creative. It is a mirror to the present moment and the soul of the future (Al-Nasiri, 1995, p68-69).6

---

6 Text from the 1968 group manifesto was translated from Arabic by the author.
The members of this group considered the development of new concepts and techniques in Iraqi art to be a key objective and commitment. That commitment persists (albeit without the group slogan) through the continued output of these members and many of their fellow artists in the current Iraqi art movement (figure 1-10).

![Image](image_url)

*Figure 1-10. Rafa al-Nasiri, Light from darkness, 2008, Acrylic & Mixed media on canvas, 120x120cm.*

### 1.4.5. Crafts and craftsmen

Iraqi craftsmen are among the oldest traditions in the world. From the ancient Mesopotamian civilisations these human activities continue weaving their magic within Iraqi society. Celebrating a craft’s creation of physical outcomes through direct inspiration and intention between one’s body and the environment, craftsmen are represented as weavers of art and social convention in creating distinctive arrangements. The civilised style of living represented by the Abbasid dynasty in the region enhanced efforts to create a unique Islamic style in architecture and crafts (figure 1-11). Skilled craftsmen are respected as a class, for the traditions developed around the craft, and the great expertise developed in the family and passed from father to son. “Ownership or possession of a shop or workshop could be passed on for generations” (Hourani, 2005, p112). Creative techniques were developed in architecture and other applied arts—ceramics,
textiles, woodwork, metalwork, glass, painting, calligraphy, books and music—and showed how craftsmen played leading roles in society.

The Abbasid dynasty presented a unique example of how Islamic thought interacted creatively with other civilisations through activities of trade, migration and knowledge transmission, which “paved the way for the transmission, incorporation and absorption of divergent images and symbols into its own culture” (Cayci, 2007, p152). The Muslim artists and craftsmen soon digested this knowledge and developed it creatively to encompass the core message of Islamic thought, as well as implement it as a sustainable element within Islamic cultural phenomena. Abstraction, along with geometric and non-figurative natural forms, represents the aesthetic principles in Islamic artistic philosophy, since the creative sensibilities of those artists and craftsmen developed according to the Qur’anic themes, including the perfection of the creation (figure 1-12). The development of social practices relied on changing from the fulfilling of basic needs to improving the quality of life through creative utilities and aesthetic designs, designs that arose firstly from ‘need’ then developed to become symbols of personal and family status, denoting a social relationship among groups of people (Baudrillard, 2002).

Figure 1-11. Muqarnas dome, tomb of Sitt Zubaida, in Baghdad.
In the current Iraqi climate there are severe limitations in the way design studies deal with crafts and their development as a social system\(^7\), even with its enormous influence as a major human activity and its potential for income generation for Iraqis. Further details will be explored in a chapter focused on crafted objects from Iraq.

\(^7\) Studies of crafts in Iraq address them as social practices within their historical and cultural contexts.
1.5. Summary
Contemporary Iraqi efforts toward modernisation and development have moved rapidly in diverse directions over many years; progress in the majority of these attempts was interrupted. Narratives about Iraq identify the discontinuation as the main cause of the lack of benefits from these attempts and the better serving of their objectives, so that even the extensive human and natural riches of this land fail to provide prosperity and a good quality of life for its people. The dynamic and ‘revolutionary’ types of changes in political statutes were associated with violence and totalitarianism, enhancing instability and interrupting progress in the Iraqi project of modernisation. However, the wars from the 1980s caused extensive damage, which after 2003 heavily affected Iraq and Iraqis. Studies in social sciences criticise Iraqi intellectual thinking and continual celebration of their nomadic origins, which in turn shaped Iraq’s social behaviour, and characterised past and present phenomena, practices and the charming nostalgia in Iraqi society (Ibn Khaldun, 2004) (Alwardi, undated). "Not every culture can sustain and absorb the shock of modern civilization. There is that paradox: how to become modern and to return to source; how to revive an old, dormant civilization and take part in universal civilization" (Ricoeur, 1965, p276-277). Other factors combine to sustain the sense of experimentation in Iraqi political thought, from Arabism to Iraqi nationalism, Arab nationalism, and currently the US type of democratisation. It’s true that these political philosophies present stark contradictions and intellectually Iraqis must decide their attitude to this ‘Western-colonialism’ form of modernisation and whether to follow it, oppose it or modify it to be better suited to the Arabic-Iraqi outlook.

This chapter presented observations of different levels of contradiction regarding the meanings, goals and practices of modernisation in Iraqi society. Iraq’s social systems have been particularly neglected through recent periods, and there is much work to be done in analysing the way that economic development strategies can become integrated with social and human development strategies in Iraq. It is necessary to create a stable structure in which economic development can flourish and offer its benefits to all. This chapter analysed the background of these ill-
defined, wicked or unstructured problems that face Iraqi society, so as to gain a better understanding of issues such as high levels of violence and widespread rejection of the modernisation project that exists in Iraq (Cross, 2006; Buchanan, 1996; Banathy, 1996). The chapter reviewed some of the political, social and cultural factors that have impacted on the construction of this society and shaped its development. Some of the most important are:

- The wide variety of socio-cultural norms in Iraq that reflect the diverse origins of its settlers; the Bedouin nomads, the agriculturalists, etc., and the hegemony of “one social group over the entire national society” (Hoare, 1971, p56) throughout both the ancient and recent history of this land.
- The influence of religion and of religious hegemony on Iraq, and the ways in which they have created conflicts of interest between modernity and tradition and altered the ways in which development is conceived socially.
- The unequal class structure in Iraq, the marginalisation of certain groups and the lack of political representation for numerous Iraqi voices.
- State hegemony in contemporary political discourse, in particular the construction of a ‘unified historical memory’, which fails to account for the diversity and complexity of Iraqi society.

This review provides information about the historical factors that must inform any discussion of development in Iraq. It has identified “a system of problems rather than a collection of problems” (Banathy, 1996), which force us to seek alternative solutions to the projects of modernisation and sustainable development.

Furthermore, this chapter forms the cornerstone of the following chapters, while it addresses the main strategic goals in presenting a comprehensive overview of contemporary aspects of the cultural development of Iraq, and chronicles the British colonial strategies and development policies which formed the country and how nationalist governments later inherited that situation and altered it further, all setting the stage for instability and the recurrent crises associated with Iraqi attempts at modernisation. These unstable political conditions were the main influences on the social and cultural transformations in Iraqi society.
Considering design thinking as a cultural phenomenon, this study concentrates on mapping contemporary design thinking in Iraq, aiming to re-vision its initiatives and describe the current situation. This chapter presents insights into the strictly political orientation the project of modernisation of Iraq began with, which remains virtually unchanged now. Clearly, the project is aligned with international attempts at modernisation and development undertaken by the developing countries in the last quarter of the 20th century. This chapter reviewed and analysed these issues for clarification and to produce a clear expression of design thinking as a core practice to enhance development strategies in developing countries.
2. Design in the Context of Development

This review chapter will survey arguments and issues from the broader social sciences that have shaped the theory and practice of design in the context of development for emerging countries, focusing on the way that this discourse within design studies has evolved. It also aims to review:

- Development and context of practices that shaped design thinking in development strategies for emerging countries.
- Insights into the utilisation of design thinking in development strategies, a move that strengthens the formation of ‘design policy’ some emerging countries are now promoting.
- Insights into alternative models of design thinking and practices to achieve sustainable development and social innovation in emerging countries.

This chapter will offer a comprehensive review of the following topics:

- The international context of modernisation and development since WWII
- Social dimensions of the modernisation project for developing countries
- Practising design in the context of development
- Design policies and competitiveness and profitability strategies
- Social innovation in the context of design for sustainable development.
2.1. Chapter overview

Figure 2-1. Chapter 2 overview.
2.1.1. Personal narrative
My study of industrial design began in Iraq in the early 1980s. The political atmosphere of the period was marked by a strong desire for independence, exemplified by the Non-Allied movement in politics, revolutionary progress in modernisation and an explosion of development programmes, fuelled financially by oil exports. ‘Development’ was conceptualised by the Iraqi political order as a process that should be led by the state and implemented by the public sector, aimed at fast-tracking the evolution of Iraq’s economy from one that was dominated by agriculture to one that was highly industrialised. Examples of this initiative include the strategic planning of massive infrastructure projects and the launching of new, state-owned industrial corporations in all Iraqi cities.

Two important opportunities arose for Iraqi industrial designers at this time. The first came in the form of an accredited ‘privilege’, supported by law exempting us from the state's stringent system of public job guarantees for university graduates. This meant that we were free to apply for employment as industrial designers in any state manufacturing corporation in addition to the usual mediocre position of secondary school ‘art teacher.’ The second major opportunity arose from the establishment of the ‘Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI),’ which was assisted by development funds from the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) in the late 1970s. SIEI was to be a research and development centre for design-related services and products in the country’s industrial sector. The operational plan for the centre proposed by UNIDO illustrated its intention that industrial design should be a leader in the development of Iraqi manufacturing.

Unfortunately, these opportunities dissipated almost as quickly as they appeared. Because of the assembly-based production employed by these new corporations, licences for product development were heavily controlled. In the majority of cases, the manufacture of these products could only be managed by engineering and scientific specialists. There is little evidence to suggest, therefore, that industrial design graduates were obtaining the promised benefits from these developments.
This was confirmed by my own experience and that of my colleagues during this period. A major concern for us was the Iraqi industrial design curriculum and its emphasis on fine arts rather than engineering. It is clearer to me now, however, that the opportunities presented to designers by the Iraqi government and UNIDO were probably directly inspired by the values and principles of the ‘Ahmedabad Declaration’ signed by Iraq in 1979, and how well this document addressed the role of design in the context of development for developing countries.

2.2. The International Context of Modernisation and Development since WWII

2.2.1. Mapping the history of the movement of design for development

*Figure 2-2. Mapping the history of design for development.*
2.2.2. *The USA ‘Point Four’ Plan*

Technological progress continues to enhance material culture and its production, which, in turn, transforms existing environments and improves people’s quality of life, fulfilling needs, ensuring economic growth and increasing prosperity within the nation. The specific sources of inspiration for the tangible material products of technological progress and what they provide are obvious in any effort to analyse them. The products of material culture have physical, formal, interactive and performative dimensions. They are created either by craftspeople, engineers or designers, all of whom play vital roles in transferring knowledge and skills through the production of these objects. These creators also continue to develop new knowledge and skills through the process of redesigning – further improving existing products to meet the demands of users or to adapt to changes in the technological or economic contexts in which they are produced. This is how technology contributes to the contemporary context of modernisation. According to Norman Long, the ideology underlying this process “visualises development in terms of a progressive movement towards technologically more complex and integrated forms of ‘modern’ society” (Gardner, 1996, p12).

The relationship between modernity and development has profoundly shaped the post-WWII era. The USA and Western Europe (‘first world’ nations) adopted a leadership role in attempting to devise and implement systems that would supposedly fulfil the basic needs of the bulk of the world’s population (the ‘third world’). The factors behind this movement were both political and economic, and had a major effect on the relationships between the ‘first’, ‘second’ (communist countries) and ‘third’ world nations throughout the Cold War era. Modernisation and development programmes in the third world have been dramatically affected by technological transformations during the post-war period. Major programmes, promoted as optimal solutions to the problem of shifting from poverty to prosperity, emphasised technology, infrastructure and economic growth. These solutions were based on the industrialisation experiences of Western nations. The relationship between developed and developing countries became a relationship between ‘developer’ and ‘developing’ nations.
This Western engagement with the developing world has been a powerful force since the end of WWII, when the USA assumed a leadership position in its foreign policy. President Truman’s Inaugural Address on the 20th January 1949 (Appendix-1) argued that “…we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of under-developed areas” (Rist, 1997, p70). This statement of political intent, according to some development studies, signalled the dawn of the era of development, focused on the transfer of scientific and technological resources to ‘under-developed’ countries and the provision of Western expertise in business, industry and agriculture. It aimed to increase industrial activities in these newly independent countries and quicken the process of modernisation, politically and economically, through democratisation and increased transparency. It was hoped that this transfer of knowledge and resources would lead to greater production, prosperity and peace.

Debates over technical assistance and economic development have occurred since WWII. The model of development espoused by the West clearly identified capitalism as the favoured economic system for achieving it, and the transfer of aid and assistance had clear propagandistic underpinnings. USA aid was administered through the International Cooperation Administration (later USAID) from 1955 onwards. Kingston analysed this development aid, administered according to their strategic Point Four policy, and concluded that it was “very centralized, high profile, and based on a lot of publicity and a large number of technicians, most of whom were based in Baghdad” (Kingston, 2002, p114). At the same time, the British were rechanneling their own development assistance from direct financial aid to specifically targeted technical assistance, as the “continued rise in political and social tension in post-war Iraq ultimately forced the elite to take another look at the idea of promoting social and economic development” (Kingston, 2002, p96).

Motives of ‘developer’ nations aside, real efforts were made to modernise and develop Iraqi infrastructure between 1945 and 1958. In particular, large and
expensive infrastructure projects were developed, aimed at managing the water flowing through Iraq’s two major rivers and diverting water for use in irrigation. Much less effort, however, was put into developing or modernising Iraq’s primitive social services, such as health, education and social security. These vital areas were largely neglected by the three major developments that operated in Iraq at that time: the British ‘Technical Assistance’ programme, the American Point Four and the Iraqi Development Board.

The fact that these official strategies so clearly failed to recognise the importance of social services to the Iraqi population was not missed by British administrators, who addressed it critically in a number of reports:

“There was a clash of approaches to the question of economic development in Iraq, a clash which took on a two-fold dimension. The ‘Anglo-American’ clash, so to speak, was an implicit one revolving around the former’s criticism... of the latter’s excessive and ultimately counter-productive emphasis on technically perfect and over-sophisticated projects. The other clash, shall we call it the ‘Anglo-Iraqi’ one, was based on the former’s efforts to get the latter to think about development less from a political and more from a practical point of view” (Kingston, 2002, p121).

The USA’s Point Four programme for design in the Middle East targeted the craft sectors, providing consultation with American designers who had studied these sectors in a few different countries in the region, with the aim of bringing craft products to a standard that would be acceptable in the American and European markets. Many of the recommendations given by these consultants focused on the role potentially played by design in adding value to these products. Design education established in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan would later move in a similar direction (Er, 1993).
2.2.3. ‘Alternative Technology’ (AT) and the fulfilment of basic human needs

In the early 1960s an alternative concept of how assistance aid might be structured and delivered to developing countries was presented in an article published in *The Observer*. In the article, British economist Ernst Friedrich “Fritz” Schumacher (1911–1977) wrote that inactivity and waste were inevitable by-products of the conventional capital-intensive aid administered by the USA and Western Europe in the developing world. Schumacher identified an inherent contradiction between the highly sophisticated technical approaches to development being promoted by the West, which required both major capital and specialised technical knowledge, and the lack of both capital and skilled technicians in the target countries. According to his theory, transferring these high-technology approaches to countries lacking the resources to apply them was the main obstacle facing the development strategies employed since WWII. Instead, he believed that close attention needed to be paid to existing levels of technological capacity in target countries – ‘indigenous technology’ – and creating ‘alternative technology’ (AT) which incorporated the insights of Western designers and engineers and locally available technologies, thus bringing local populations into the development process. He described the types of equipment and instruments this new approach would require:

“It would be fairly simple and therefore understandable, suitable for maintenance and repair on the spot. Simple equipment is normally far less dependent on raw materials of great purity or exact specifications and much more adaptable to market fluctuations than highly sophisticated equipment. Men are more easily trained: supervision, control and organisation are simpler; and there is far less vulnerability to unforeseen difficulties” (Schumacher, 1999, p 151).

This concept of development emphasised the specific needs and realistic available resources of local populations, favouring the use of low-level investments aimed at creating small-scale businesses, which could be operated locally and maintained easily using available skills and resources.
The Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) created by Schumacher as a charity group in the 1960s focused on facilitating the creation of new, innovative strategies for stimulating productivity in target countries in Africa and Asia. In 1988 the group reviewed all its global activities and created a new policy, of ‘countries of concentration’, focused on developing specific technological applications to address the unique needs of specific communities. A good example of the application of this highly localised, specifically targeted ‘alternative technology’ is an agricultural project initiated by ITDG in Darfur, the material outcome of which was a specially designed plough (figure 2-3), suitable for the harsh, dry environment of the region and for local farmers who had no traditional experience with such products.

Methodologically, the design process involved a dialogue between designers and local populations, where designers investigated their needs, what skills and resources were available and whether existing technologies could be adapted or improved. Day has written that: “the design of artefacts is the outcome of a dialogue between a community's needs and its expectations” (Day, 1993, p181). This process-based conceptualisation of development eventually began to be recognised by international development agencies and specialised UN organisations as it presented a feasible alternative to the strategy of simply transferring technology and hardware. The AT movement also succeeded in democratising the development process, an important change that indicated a growing recognition that “development projects are finite interventions which can
only bring lasting improvements if they carry the support of local communities” (Day, 1993, p180).

The AT movement acknowledged the Western phenomenon of materialism as a key ingredient of prosperity, but utilised applications on the basis of their ‘appropriateness’ to local contexts, designing objects that could help to address pressing problems and help ensure that the most basic of human needs were fulfilled. This was seen as an important first step towards eventually bringing increased wealth to targeted developing countries. Engineers, economists and other specialists translated AT concepts into hardware and these new products would then be used by targeted groups of farmers, craftspeople and small corporations in developing countries. The ultimate ‘end’ of technology was represented by an artefact and its applications; “‘technology’ was narrowly conceived as artefact rather than applied skills and ideas” (Day, 1993, p179).

However, the overwhelming emphasis on applied technology and technical skills as the core structure for development and quality of life promoted by AT was a clear weakness. AT offered only one solution to the array of complex situations faced by developing societies, without paying enough attention to improving the education, health and social security services of these communities. AT did offer a solution to some of the problems faced by developing nations, but it did not attempt to identify and address their broader developmental needs.

Schumacher’s vision of alternative technology was aimed at developing harmonious social and environmental relationships. According to Madge, “Schumacher adapted Gandhi’s ideas of industry and technology to modern needs in the post-war period through the concept of intermediate technology” (Madge, 1993, p 156). Both Ghandi and Schumacher were interested in how technology could be utilised in order to foster independence and self-sufficiency. Ghandi utilised technology effectively in his battle against colonialism, by encouraging Indians to make better use of materials and knowledge already available to them. In contrast, however, AT, with its similar emphasis on low-level technologies, has been accused by some of harbouring a colonial-era mentality, for that very reason.
Gui Bonsiepe once stated: “I suppose the reason was that the ‘Appropriate Technology’ ... could never quite get away from the prejudice (and it is a prejudice, really) that it deals only with second-rate and third-rate technology. We are facing these kinds of ethical concerns in the AT movement” (Fathers, 2003, p49).

This historical review surveyed the context in which development has occurred since WWII and the main strategies employed by government development agencies and theorists. These have tended to emphasise industrialisation and materialism as a primary means of achieving development goals and attaining prosperity in poor, developing nations. These strategies relied extensively on the power of technology, specialised knowledge and technical skills and the ability to utilise them in the creation of artefacts, which opened up an integral role in the process for design. Design adds economic value to these artefacts; knowledge-based practice leads to the making of high-quality products, tailored to meet specific needs. Development, technology and design continue to profoundly influence the form taken by development in the ‘developing’ world and to shape relationships between the ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ nations.

2.3. Social Dimensions of the Modernisation Project for Developing Countries
The concept of ‘citizen designers’ refers to Margolin’s vision of the role that can be played by designers in promoting and creating social change. He proposes three ways in which designers might fulfil this role: “The first is by designing, that is, making things. The second is by articulating a critique of cultural conditions that elucidates the effect of design on society; and the third is by direct political engagement” (Margolin, 2007, p122). At the core of Margolin’s challenge to designers is the belief that they should identify and develop a ‘set of core values’ or professional code of ethics which will assist them in making decisions and judgements affecting the future of the living world. Designers need to be able to analyse the social, environmental, political and economic aspects of their work, to identify the immaterial as well as the material artefacts of the social world. These
sections will survey another important wave in the broad movement applying design techniques and insights to development problems, the ‘Design for Need’ movement and, in particular, the work of Victor Papanek.

2.3.1. The Social Responsibility of the Industrial Designer

Papanek’s ideals put him into conflict with the dominant ideals in design education and practice in his time. He especially rejected their emphasis on consumerism. This attitude led him to form the foundations of a movement with a strong environmental and ecological focus. He also proposed an alternative model for the teaching of industrial design, which he practised with his students, to aim at producing objects and systems that were of use to the populations of developing countries. Technological transfer played a role in Papanek’s vision, with low-level technologies to be utilised and maintained with the skills and resources available in developing countries. Papanek identified specific roles that could be played by industrial designers in narrowing the gap between the levels of material prosperity in developed and developing countries, which in turn emphasised the notion of a designer’s responsibility to society at large. Papanek’s book Design for the Real World elucidated what he considered this responsibility to be. Madge writes that “its essential message is to do with the social responsibility of the designer and the role of the industrial design profession in the creation of forced obsolescence and the design of socially irresponsible products” (Madge, 1993, p154). Papanek used an appropriately organic metaphor to describe the kind of work that could be done by industrial designers in the developing world:

“It would become a ‘seed project’ helping to form a corps of able designers out of the indigenous population of the country. Thus within one generation at most, five years at the least, he would be able to create a group of designers firmly committed to their own cultural heritage, their own life-style, and their own needs” (Papanek, 1985, p85).

Papanek argued forcefully that earlier technical development assistance by ‘instant experts’ from UN, USA and West European development agencies was effectively useless, as it failed to account for the socio-cultural realities and other specific conditions of the local communities to which it was delivered. This unfamiliarity
with the cultures and communities in question meant that solutions to problems often ended up causing other problems later, he claimed. Papanek’s extensive expertise in creating development programmes for a range of different societies gave him a keen understanding of the key role played by indigenous technologies and local knowledge in solving design problems. Er described Papanek’s work as the “first popular approach to industrial design in LDCs to come from an ethical and humanistic focus, based on the criticism of the profession and its function in the western capitalist societies” (Er, 1993, p3). Papanek’s emphasis on low-level technology and a ‘basic needs’ approach certainly had its detractors. However, critics from developed and developing countries saw his approach as an attack on ongoing efforts to modernise the developing world.

Design education was a major focus of Papanek’s. Margolin’s survey of the history of design for development credits him with playing a major role in the development of industrial design education in the developing world. This was in keeping with the scope of his vision, which was the emergence of an “international design school for the Southern half of the Globe” (Margolin, 2006, p4). This vision was largely realised as a result of international cooperative efforts, endorsed by the International Council of Societies of Industrial Designers (ICSID).

Papanek’s professional practice as an industrial designer clearly coloured his perception of design’s potential role in humanitarian activities. His enthusiasm was matched by that of many of his students, and he also found enthusiastic partners in a number of international aid agencies who were dedicated to helping poorer communities in developing countries. The increasing popularity of his ideas can be witnessed in the ongoing translation of his book *Design for the Real World* into new languages. Again, however, a number of his contemporaries took issue with his approach, claiming in particular that it lacked sensitivity to the overriding importance of modernisation and economic development. In an interview, Bonsiepe had this to say about Papanek:

“I would say that he had little understanding of the political economy of design ... and did not have a strong interest in industrialization and the
development of economies. He opted for design services outside of the business and industrial enterprise context, which I considered of limited effectiveness” (Fathers, 2003, p49).

This critique raises one of the key issues of contention within the design for development discourse – the best way to make design address the needs of specific communities, while at the same time contributing to broad economic growth and modernisation on a larger scale.

2.3.2. Design for Need: Shaping Technology According to Social Needs
The UN report Only One Earth: the Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet, co-authored by Barbara Ward and Rene Dubos, was presented at the United Nations Conference on Human Environment at Stockholm in 1972. It was an early and important contribution towards a new movement in design thinking, focused on the socio-environmental impacts of design practices and the potential of alternative forms of technology to ameliorate some of the ecological problems caused by more than a century of industrialisation. Design for Need: The Social Contribution of Design was the name of an international conference organised by ICSID and held at the Royal College of Art, London, in 1976. At this conference, a wide range of scholars including designers, social scientists and development assistance providers discussed issues such as resource management, environmental protection and aid delivery, the aim being the “systematic study and development of design applied to projects of social value” (Madge, 1993, p158).

The entire discourse of ‘design for need’ was a new and radical departure from the functionalist attitudes of the modern period. Its emergence supported the theory of socially responsible design espoused by Papanek, and it became popular with marginalised groups other than just the poor, for example, the elderly and the disabled (Margolin, 2002). The publication of the conference demonstrated the number of designers and theorists from the developing world who believed that successful development should have a much more concentrated, hands-on
approach. It was increasingly believed, for instance, that “designers who want to be of benefit to rural economies should become part of the community” (Coward, 2005, p545). Varadarajan describes this period of articulation and sharing as an important new phase in design discourse: "We see that this is about the point at which the phrase ‘design for development’ begins to gain currency" (Varadarajan, 2009, p1). Design practices in developing countries became the focal point of many international collaborative projects, in which local designers were recognised as having a unique capacity to solve local design problems and were included in development projects. The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the ICSID funded training programmes for designers as part of the development aid they delivered (Fathers, 2000). Interweaving design practices with the politics of development introduced new dimensions to a practice traditionally seen as dealing only with the ornamental or artificial. Contemporary design practice and education is highly politicised in many developing countries. Iraq in the 1970s provides one example of this. Varadarajan points to India as another example of this phenomenon, where, he says, the “marginalization of the project of socialism” (Varadarajan, 2009, p2) had major effects on the discourse of design practice and education.

The ‘design for need’ movement faded in the early 1980s, according to Madge, as it was eclipsed by the now-dominant discourse of post-modernism: “The late 1970s and early 1980s were a complex transitional period. In architecture and design, post-modernism, rather than ‘Design for Need’, emerged in the late 1970s as the new phase beyond modernism" (Madge, 1993, p158). For example, Fry’s philosophical work examined the contemporary meaning of ‘need’ itself, identifying what he saw as the ‘clear distances’ between the needs of the developed and developing worlds, and stating that “the human system of needs in every culture is an indissoluble unity of material and symbolic correlate” (Fry, 1992, p48). Accepted definitions of ‘need’ were constructed in various ways by theories within the social sciences, according to Fry, and needed to be

---

8 Further details will be discussed in later sections.
deconstructed, so they would not be “viewed from one perspective as a singular object” (Fry, 1992, p43). Fry’s theory was informed by Baudrillard’s. Baudrillard warned not to conceive of ‘need’ ‘as a consummative force liberated by the affluent society, but as a productive force required by the functioning of the system itself’ (Baudrillard, 1981, p82). In other words, as Fry wrote: “there are only needs because the system needs them” (Fry, 1992, p50). Design’s role, he believed, was in reshaping the official within the context of ‘natural’ and ‘unnatural’ needs.

2.4. Practising Design in the Context of Development
From the 1980s onward the design for development movement shifted toward further practical approaches, with a number of new UN-organised projects encouraging political establishments in the developing world to engage with the principles of design for development. Particular landmarks included the Ahmedabad Declaration and the projects undertaken by Gui Bonsiepe in Latin America.

2.4.1. Practical Roles for Design in Economic Development
Design according to Bonsiepe is a fundamentally humanist endeavour, in which design practices and activities empower and liberate social groups, allowing the material applications of design to reach “the excluded, the discriminated, and economically less favoured groups as they are called in economist jargon, which amounts to the majority of the population of this planet” (Bonsiepe, 2006, p30). The socio-political context of Bonsiepe’s rhetoric was rooted in Neo-Marxist Dependency theory, which he adopted and modified in order to create a new path for design for development in the 1970s and 80s. His work “made his reputation foremost from several projects he believed addressed the problems of the ‘peripheral countries’” (Donaldson, 2004, p13). The era was a fruitful one for international collaboration in this area, with many projects funded by development assistance launched in developing countries. Western designers and design theorists, meanwhile, debated design practices and the role they could most effectively play in supporting the modern industrial firms that were fuelling economic growth in the industrialising developing world. Projects of the type were
mainly sponsored by UNIDO and ISCID, aligning with the industrialisation strategies in place in many developing countries at that time. The differences between the approach favoured by UNIDO and ISCID and the path blazed by Papanek and the AT movement are clear: the industrial approach targeted major industry within developing countries, with the aim of transferring modern technology and expertise of the West to countries that could utilise them in the modernisation projects. However, political support for these large-scale efforts went beyond the support and sponsorship of UNIDO; it was widely viewed as more practical and contemporary than the second-rate technologies promoted by the AT movement through NGOs.

Bonsiepe saw an important role for design in technology transfer strategies. He stated that “technology implies hardware and software—and software implies the notion of design as a facet of technology that cannot be dispensed with” (Bonsiepe, 2006, p32). According to Bonsiepe, hardware and software are the two key components in this process, but developing countries had tended to concentrate exclusively on ‘hardware’ in the form of large and costly infrastructure projects9, a fact that his experiences in Latin America had reinforced. Design-based approaches were inert because of the absence of ‘software’: the instruments and practical expertise required to fully utilise the ‘hardware’ of infrastructure.

Bonsiepe believed that the importance of industrialisation stemmed not only from its capacity to generate economic growth, but also from its socio-political capacity to create a path toward the democratisation of society and to “provide for a broad sector of the population to have access to the world of products and services in the different areas of everyday life: health, housing, education, sports, transport, work, to mention only a few” (Bonsiepe, 2006, p32). In this context, he said, design was intertwined with the politics of development. He pointed out, however, that he did not intend to “propagate a universalistic attitude according to the pattern of design for the world” (Bonsiepe, 2006, p30). He even denied that there was a direct

---

9 In Iraq throughout the 1970s new industrial corporations were established in many cities, and were promoted as tools for improving the lives of Iraqi people.
relationship between his professional work and the socio-political environment associated with it, in spite of the fact that the political context of development mediates all of the practices related to modernisation and industrialisation in developing countries.

In order to secure the benefits of industrialisation for local populations, Bonsiepe conceived of practical design approaches that ‘aligned design clearly with industry’ (Margolin, 2006, p4). His theoretical and practical approaches were informed by his involvement with industrial development strategies at the national level in several Latin American countries.

Engaging design at the level of strategic planning involved reviewing aspects of its traditional context, such as its association with art, and establishing a new emphasis on the importance of “operational tools in order to do product design, from agricultural machinery to wooden toys for children and low cost furniture” (Fathers, 2003, p47). In order to achieve this, Bonsiepe insisted, design education had to be taken back from ‘the periphery’, where it was associated with the ‘know-how’ associated with art and architecture, and brought into the age of industrialisation, where design was much more of an engineering discipline. Bonsiepe wrote: “My approach was to reorientate young people who did not find answers to their questions in their own context; to provide them with design tools and to propagate industrial design as an autonomous activity” (Fathers, 2003, p52). From the 1970s onward, design was increasingly framed in modern terms in the developing world, with the establishment, for instance, of design programmes at the university level, as well as the creation of state-funded centres aimed at “fostering development by designing products that can be locally produced” (Bonsiepe, 1991, p10). This shift was based on recommendations from UNIDO and squared with Bonsiepe’s ideals. In fact, he played an active role in some of these changes to the design education system (Coward, 2005).
2.5. Design Policies: competitiveness and profitability

Design studies investigate implementing design thinking outside its classical fields of making, business, promotion, innovation, etc., to benefit humanity and help to understand and create solutions to societal problems. There is evidence that design functions as a ‘micro’ element within its classical fields, while simultaneously the experimental milieu shows overwhelmingly that design plays a ‘macro’ role for the wider community in achieving human development goals, especially in developing countries.

It’s been only a few decades since the design promotional programmes started by government agencies of the advanced industrial countries first reflected demands to reconstruct those countries after World War II. “The demand for new products, the eagerness to improve quality of life, the restoration of the world economy and international trade – these were all factors that channelled attention towards design. As a result, many countries started national design promotion programmes (e.g. the UK, Germany, Norway and Japan)” (Murphy, 2010, p18). These programmes reflect the value governments place on design by elevating it to a strategic level to benefit from its unique ability to increase competitiveness in global markets – which many of these programmes address – in fact, increased competitiveness will help create new business and jobs, which sequentially means better welfare based on economic growth and its reflection in increased material wealth for individuals and the quality of life in society.

These design capabilities were the reason that governments gave support to policy makers for investigation of design studies, and then promoted strategic policies for their countries. These programmes took the shape of design policy, innovation policy, and other forms of governmental awareness and promotional legislation. Mapping the design promotional programmes around the world gives us insights into how the random mix of developed and developing countries are moving toward these design practices. However, it seems the current intense competition in local and global markets is causing more countries to utilise design practices,
which are shifting from being led directly by industry to more creative practices, and relying more on cultural aspects. The various activities these programmes offer range from raising awareness to supporting professional activities like exhibitions, seminars, awards and so on. Further development in these design strategies appear in the current move in the United States of America to document their first national design policy, aiming to represent an alternative direction in design policies based on the concept of “living institutions” (Tunstall, 2010, p22).

In a historical context, government programmes dedicated to linking design practices with economic growth were introduced after World War II in some developing countries. Plans were to link design practices with aid programmes, whereby Western nations attempted to enhance national economic growth in developing countries and early programmes targeted the craft industries, through design consultation services offered by Western designers to local craftsmen. The aim was to improve the quality of handcrafts, and to meet the specifications and consumer demands of the export markets in the West. However, few of these programmes helped with the establishment of the first university programmes for industrial design, graphic design, and interior design in some Middle East countries, such as Turkey and Lebanon (Er, 1993). This historical context regarding the role of design in making at a ‘micro’ level was to maintain dominance – in the ideal situation – in the Middle East, even though there was an extensive expansion in the number of design education institutions and professional design services since the 1990s. Unfortunately, applying this level of design thinking at the ‘macro’ level is out of the question at the moment, because of difficulties with legislation, the policies of government agencies and attitudes in the design community, both in academia and among professional designers.

The title ‘Design Policy’ provides insights into applying design to strategies for national economic growth. Attempts to achieve this reflect the expansion of modernisation in the West, and clearly represent the application of industrialisation and mass-production techniques to benefit society. However, the nature of industrialisation and welfare keeps changing due to massive changes in
the global economy. This survey will introduce the variety of philosophical approaches and disciplines these policies are operating in. Special attention will be paid to the current move to articulate design policies based on contemporary perspectives which identify the role of design at both ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ levels. Examples will be presented of these two cases:

- Moving toward socially acceptable policies; the initiative of the US National Design Policy.
- Adapting design policy in developing countries; the National Design Policy in India.

2.5.1. *What is design policy?*
Many studies for design policies around the world agree on the similarities between these national frameworks for design and their practices. These policies are issued by government to promote awareness of how design practices can benefit economic growth. The policies in general target both public and private sectors, to support national goals and implement creative methods and practices to strengthen their position and competitiveness locally and internationally in the tough climate of globalisation. Many studies give evidence of how the strategic use of design by corporations can produce great achievements and strengthen their market competitiveness. These signals gave strong motivation to some governments to copy this commercial process, with an overall vision of implementing strategic design applications to increase the advantages to their nation.

Historically, design policies were instigated early in some developed countries; these pioneering policies clearly represented the nature of the multi-disciplinary approaches the design practices require to succeed, to create effective plans to strengthen national economic growth and to support cultural and societal development. Heskett, in his theory about design policies, identified this form of application as “promoting technology and design as a means of gaining economic advantage by enhancing national competitiveness” (Heskett, 1999, p180). The Hytönen study surveyed design policies issued by twelve selected countries; the study identified that “these policies are quite similar in many ways, emphasising
design as a strategic tool for economic progress and improved competitiveness, as well as its national role in creating jobs and business opportunities” (Hytönen, 2003, p2). Interestingly, the study presented evidence of design policies and design promotions governing a variety of administrative structures, the forms and structures guiding the programme activities nationally and internationally. The study discloses “the relative emphasis between the economic, cultural and social benefits accruing from design support” (Hytönen, 2003, p3), this argument stating clearly the interconnections between design and wider disciplines in the social systems, also presenting evidence of the successful functioning of these polices in countries with advanced industrialisation.

The success of design policies and programmes to promote design at the national level in developed countries is encouraging new players to adapt this kind of legislation. There is evidence of an increased desire to track these practices and create new design policies: “many countries have been committed to design for decades and have created effective organisations for design promotion” (Hytönen, 2003, p3). New design policies are issued in countries like Estonia and India, and many others are in progress, such as the US National Design Policy. Furthermore, some international organisations are focused on utilising creative design practices to support societal well-being. These practices are developing currently in developed countries, with the aim of using them later as examples of successful practices\(^\text{10}\). However, early efforts in this direction by international organisations go back to the 1970s. A landmark on that path is the close cooperation presented via the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO). That cooperation aims to promote the use of industrial design for industrial development in developing countries. During the conference titled Design for Development held at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, India, experts from ICSID, UNIDO and NID issued the

\(^{10}\) Examples are documented in the World Economic Forum reports, such as the Global Competitiveness Report 2002.
‘Ahmedabad Declaration’ in 1979, which stated its aims were: “to carry out as extensively as possible the promotional activities necessary to alert developing countries to the advantage of including industrial design in their planning processes” (Ahmedabad Document 1979).

New Zealand issued a design policy in 2003. The document is a strategic framework addressing the need to “find ways to add more value to our products and services and the businesses that provide them... encouraging innovation... adopt appropriate disciplines and a new mindset if we are to realise the commercial benefits from more of our innovation” (Taskforce, 2003, p4-5). The New Zealand design policy aims to promote the use of design and the design process and make more businesses design-capable, which will support the competitiveness of New Zealand products in the marketplace. This vision supports the characteristics of New Zealand – its geographical isolation, the extensive cultural mix, small population and attitudes of self-sufficiency. The document promotes and encourages creative practices in using design and the design process in the development of industrial parks. Results are encouraging and are being developed and echoed through design-led practices around the country.

2.5.1.1. Design Definitions
Different design policies define design as a process based on available knowledge; the process follows activities of thinking and planning to give shape to objects and services, and the final outcomes can be recognised in the form of physical shape or plan: “everything man-made has been given a shape. To many people design means shaping. Design, however, means more than that. Design includes thinking and planning in order to give shape to things in a way that they can be manufactured, used and, finally, destructed” (Mollerup, 2003, p64). Design continues to be an active field of practice in industrial corporations and trade, in both public and private sectors. The service providers in both sectors continue promoting the use of the design process to plan for better services, using a creative ability to understand the users and their cultural demands, an essential factor in the competitiveness of business.
2.5.1.2. **Design context in innovation policy**

Innovative policies are being issued in some countries to improve support for the creation of new ideas, and provide for the management of intellectual property and ethical considerations regarding the influence of new ideas on human behaviour and relations. The relationship between the design process and innovation was introduced in some theories from the viewpoint of acknowledging innovation as a factor in the design and manufacturing process, where design acts as a verb to process the new concept into artefacts. The link between innovation and design process is such that “inextricably... the distinction between them [is] often blurred” (Taskforce, 2003). Innovation is identified as the generation of new concepts, creation of new technologies or identification of new users, though these capabilities are still only ideas, as they do not yet have a shape or form. The design process acts to transform these ideas into tangible outcomes, in the form of a final product; it is the link in the transformation from an innovation to the market: “design thinking becomes an integral part of the entire innovation cycle” (Gero, 2010, p182). Gero stated that the general structure of innovation policies is underlain by three main elements. These are:

- “Creation” of unique, useful and astonishing ideas.
- “Design” to transform these unique ideas into tangible artefacts for production.
- “Innovation delivery” and creation of value from the whole process (Gero, 2010, p176).

2.5.1.3. **Design as strategic factor in system planning**

In system planning, Ken Friedman (2004) addressed two functions relating to design: he identified the classical use of design as a process of creating a plan which is implemented later to make a product or a service, and the process of making a plan or transferring the initial concept into a plan, as ‘designing’. These design roles are dedicated to adding value to the final outcomes and supporting that which “translates utilitarian, symbolic, and psychological needs into functions” (Friedman, 2004, p4). Creating new concepts is challenging and a form of creative process that takes shape through analysis, synthesis and communication of outcomes. Design is the process of development in strategic
system planning. Methodologically, it’s a process of analysis to identify the wider connections between the system elements, then visualise plans or procedures for a better system in health care, education, communication or other social service. Clearly, in this process, utilising design is developing from a detailed level of analysis of the system components into a higher level as a strategy for “shaping and supporting the overall performance” (Friedman, 2004, p9) of the system. This level of engagement strategically will help businesses relying on design to add value to their products and services. This model of strategic thinking and practising of design identifies this discourse as a tool to enhance competitiveness, the involvement of design reflected through the transition of production “from material to immaterial products; a shift from products to services; a shift from services to experiences” (Friedman, 2004, p14). However, this scenario does not contradict the classical role of design in industrialisation and making of products, in fact both roles are interwoven in the current economy.

2.5.1.4. The US National Design Policy
This attempt at writing the ‘US National Design Policy’ presents a revision, describing the widening of the unified path of economic competitiveness the current design policies promote. The initial proposal describes well-being and societal development as the objectives of this policy, and suggests tools based on dynamic design practices, with the aim of creating a form of ‘living institution,’ different from the classic attitudes of current design policies. In her study Dori argues that “the US Design Policy initiative frames an alternative goal for a national design policy—to move beyond the document to design policy as living institutions” (Tunstall, 2010, p22).

Design policy studies excluded the USA from the club of design policy nations. These experts’ comments, according to Dori, were based on the absence of official documents addressing the design role in competitiveness, where, in fact, the US government issued documents previously addressing the value of design in the promotion of democratic governance. The nature of design activities these documents promote can be summarised in four points:

- Promotion of design activities through public exhibitions of design work.
• Issuing quality standards for government communication designs.
• Issuing quality standards for government architectural and landscape designs.
• Enacting legislation to recruit and rate the design and designers’ professional practices (Tunstall, 2010).

The concept of ‘Living Institution’ represents an alternative American context for a design policy. The policy document will not be restricted to its written words; the form of documentation will follow – according to Dori – the American inclination to reject the strict interpretations used by politicians. The concept will rely on understanding how “mutually agreed-upon and recognized codes of conduct are the product of “in vivo negotiations” where the culmination is in new institutional practices” (Tunstall, 2010, p11). This concept again mixes both the design policy in the context of economic competitiveness and the policy of democratic governance which can be new initiatives worth further investigation to update design studies. This initiative clearly addresses the role of design at both ‘micro’ and ‘macro’ levels.

2.5.1.5. Design policy in developing countries
Many efforts are being made among developing countries to undertake design activities at both national and international levels. Some of these attempts reflect the influence of examples from developed countries, while others are being developed to support a country’s image. India issued a ‘National Design Policy’ in 2007, linking its previous attempts to promote early work in ‘design for development’ in developing countries.

India is a pioneer in fostering the role of design in development, and formal recognition by successive Indian governments helped to move this theory into practical applications. Two historical initiatives in this regard still influence studies on how design should be developed.

1. The Indian government invited two American designers — Charles and Ray Eames — in the late 1950s to assist in presenting a vision for the future of design in India. The Eames wrote their legendary “India Report”. This
document discussed social values as a strategic direction for design in India. Outcomes from this report resulted in the establishment of the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad in 1961.

2. The second initiative was hosting an international conference endorsed by ICSID and UNIDO in association with NID in 1979. This conference produced the important official document in the design for development movement, titled “Ahmedabad Declaration on Industrial Design for Development.” This document is still the cornerstone of the movement.

The document ‘National Design Policy' from India addresses wider aspects of design and its implications, and develops two major points:

1. Vision: promote, brand and present design and innovation elements in a strategic framework.

2. Action: identify organisational and professional design practices to support selected manufacturing industries, through the creation of a specialised Design Centre or Innovation Hub for each type of industry; promote the extension of design education and training programmes to more technical institutions in India; set up the India Design Council (IDC) to publicise design awareness nationally and internationally “with eminent personalities drawn from different walks of life, in particular, industry” (Ranjan, 2008).

This design policy matches the comments we made earlier on how design policies around the world are similar regarding objectives and action to improve the competitiveness of industry and provide a place for governmental roles and awareness. In his reading of this document, Ranjan described the “clear indication of issues regarding the model of design-led marketing, without sufficient creative approaches to reconstruction across the massive need of efforts to enhance the social and cultural development programmes in sectors of education, health, agricultural and rural development” (Ranjan, 2008). Obviously, the National Design Policy is shifting away from the previous strategic goals for design in India to be driven by society and to serve social objectives according to the ‘India
Report,’ and adjust its objectives to meet the political and business demands of marketing design policy.

The narrow focus on specific industrial manufacturing activities were the big concern with this document in India, according to Ranjan: “by looking at design as a mere tool for industry rather than as a vehicle for good governance of our society at a democratic level” (Ranjan, 2008). He gave an example of applying design at a ‘macro’ level in education, to create policies and regulations to provide quality education services; design at the ‘micro’ level can offer products, services, spaces and activities to make better experiences and a more innovative sector. In this example Ranjan is reinforcing his call to ‘put design inside’ which will serve a wider, socially-driven agenda. Finally, it’s the huge influence of international investment and competitiveness that drives current design activities, but still there is room for local communities to benefit from these efforts.

Both Dori and Ranjan describe alternative ways of shifting the focus of design policies away from the promotion of industry and a competitive attitude to markets. Dori described the policy as a ‘living institution,’ while Ranjan, using different words, describes the idea of ‘putting design inside.’ These are examples of current design thinking influenced by design and design processes as experience, outside the material or immaterial form of the product, with the focus now on the meaning. This meaning covers both roles of design: the minor role and the major role, the micro and the macro, to better adjust both roles to improve the well-being of humans and society, which are the same objectives the design structures addressed before. However, here we are talking about new concepts and directions.

2.5.2. Design for Development as State Initiative
Iraqi political rhetoric in the 1970s was dominated by the principle of independence, heavily focused on Arabic nationalism and the concept of ‘historic memory’ as a source of guidance for the nation in its move towards a new era of prosperity, and that of the entire ‘Arab nation’ (Davis, 2005). This political ideology strongly emphasised modernisation, not merely as an important path, but
as the only path. This inexorable process involved massive socio-cultural reforms, posited as necessary sacrifices which had to be made by Iraqi society in order to achieve the goal of successful modernisation. It also involved dramatic economic restructuring, in particular the wholesale nationalisation of the oil industry. This assisted the government in its goal of achieving independence, and provided revenue for colossal development projects aimed at shifting Iraq from a predominantly agricultural economy to an industrial economy. It also enabled the government to pursue socialist policies such as the provision of free social services including health, education and social security. The effects of these policies were positive for the Iraqi people, who enjoyed a period of increasing prosperity until the Iraq-Iran war began in late 1980, initiating a long period of armed conflict which continues to this day.

I began studying industrial design in 1979, a time of the greatest revolutionary and socialist zeal in Iraq. The design curriculum at this time was strongly focused on the creation of aesthetic and practically functional objects within the limited range of manufactured products produced by the country’s national industrial companies. Teaching objectives were focused on identifying the values and fulfilling the needs of Iraqi society, as well as drawing aesthetic inspiration from the rich cultural heritage endowed by ancient Iraqi civilisations and the Islamic style. New designs had to meet a number of requirements; they had to align with available local raw resources and with the production techniques current in the local factories. These objectives were presented politically in the context of the principles of independence and self-sufficiency, and the state took an active interest in industrial design and the fates of design graduates. These factors provide an important context to Iraq’s signing of the Ahmedabad Declaration when it was issued in India in January 1979.

The Ahmedabad Declaration (Appendix-2) was drafted by experts from UNIDO, ICSID and the Indian National Institute of Design (NID). The document proposed

11 These issues will be discussed in later chapters.
the engagement of design with development as ‘the right way’ to do design’ (Varadarajan, 2009, p3) in developing countries. The declaration marked the ‘first time that industrial design had been suggested as worthy of inclusion in national development plans’ (Coward, 2005, p454) and its major principles were as follows:

- Design is a powerful force capable of improving the quality of life of developing countries’ populations.
- Designers should understand and recognise the values of their societies and reflect them in their designs.
- Designers should utilise both local, traditional resources and modern science and technology.
- Designers should collaborate with one another to ensure that collective identities are preserved and the priorities of these collective identities are met (Ahmedabad Declaration, 1979).

The document then described how these objectives might be practically achieved by planning at the state level and encouraging technical cooperation on industrial design projects (Bonsiepe, 1991). The creation of design-related institutions was the key goal proposed, along with “dissemination of knowledge and the inculcation of new values throughout the country” (Ghose, 1989, p34).

![Figure 2-4. Signing the Ahmedabad Declaration in NID, India.](image-url)
At the time India was one of the leaders of the non-aligned movement, which had provided a major impetus for the creation of the Ahmedabad Declaration. The principles of the movement were a major influence on the political ideologies of many developing countries in the 1970s. Margolin writes that ‘it was in the spirit of an aggressive call by the developing countries to restructure the world economy that the Ahmedabad conference was held and the declaration was produced’ (Margolin, 2006, p4). Independence was a major goal of the non-aligned movement and of the declaration. It was hoped that by addressing the needs and celebrating the indigent values and skills within developing countries, dependency on foreign powers could be reduced. However, the document stressed the importance of the role of modern science and technology (not alternative technology) in the transition to independence – modernity and industrialisation were also key goals.

The Ahmedabad Declaration was the first official document at an international level to promote design as a key factor in the economic growth of developing countries. Thirty years later, this document can still help us to understand how the development process can be enriched by the many different roles played by design. Neither UNIDO or ICSID followed the declaration with serious efforts to translate its vision into practical reality. Current practices in the design for development movement have their roots more obviously in the work of Papanek and E.F. Schumacher than in the outlines and proposals of the Ahmedabad Declaration, with NGOs around the world applying low-level technology transfers and small-scale development projects to poverty-stricken communities. Margolin raises the call “to revisit the Ahmedabad Declaration along with the more comprehensive multi-stage model of Gui Bonsiepe to address the full range of complex factors that determine the possibilities for development within the evolving global economy” (Margolin, 2006, p8). In the present political climate, this seems like an especially worthy goal.
2.6. Design and Social Innovation

This section investigates the concept of social innovation as it relates to design theory and to the sustainable development of societies. It examines the role of design and the types of problems that designers solve, concluding that the ‘wicked problems’ faced by designers are in a different class to the ‘structured problems’ mostly faced by scientists and engineers.

2.6.1. The Nature of Design Problems

Designers have a common understanding of the process of giving shape to artificial objects, generating design proposals for clients and providing descriptions of what the artefact itself should be like, using various tools and techniques. An important part of this process is conceptualising problems and finding solutions to them. According to Cross, the goal of client and designer alike is the final, physical artefact and “the focus of all design activity is that end-point” (Cross, 2006, p16).

Many studies add to the body of knowledge of how designers think, practice and solve problems. These studies survey the techniques and strategies employed by designers and engineers who are facing design problems. The solving of problems and the generation and testing of potential solutions to problems are important strategies shared by designers, engineers and architects, reflected in educational practices within these disciplines. However, Cross has emphasised that design approaches to problem-solving are fundamentally different from scientific approaches, for instance: “The fundamental aspect is the nature of the approach taken to problems, rather than the nature of the problems themselves” (Cross, 2006, p19). As an engineer, Cross was aware that design does not deal only with ‘ill-defined’ problems. He cites a study by Thomas and Carroll, where they stated that “design is a type of problem-solving in which the problem solver views the problem or acts as though there is some ill-definedness in the goal initial

12 Social innovation refers to changes in the way individuals or communities act to obtain results (i.e., to solve a problem or to generate new opportunities). These innovations are driven by behavioural changes (more than by technology or market changes), which typically emerge from bottom-up processes (more than from top-down ones). If the way to achieve a result is totally new (or if it is the result that is totally new), we may refer to it as a radical social innovation (Manzini and others, 2008, p262).
conditions or allowable transformation” (Cross, 2006, p19). The methods used by designers to communicate and represent creative solutions clearly identify design as a non-verbal discipline. As Daley put it: “These processes lie outside the bounds of verbal discourses” (Cross, 2006, p20). Cross has suggested a number of methods for dealing with the sorts of problems that typically arise in design research:

- Engaging in closer analysis of the structure of these problems.
- Creating inclusive strategies with the clear goal of improving society.
- Utilising the broad spectrum of design techniques, such as analysis, synthesis and problem-solving.
- Visualising results in the form of graphic media and/or modelling (Cross, 2006).

Buchanan’s analytical approach to design theory is focused on identifying the nature of design in terms of its relationship with technology, based on Dewey’s theory of technology, described as “an art of experimental thinking” (Buchanan, 1996, p5). The conceptualisation highlights the relationships between science, art and the practices of making. Obviously this definition of technology differs from the common understanding of the term as related to rigid scientific and engineering types of knowledge, with its emphasis on art and its role in the production process. According to Buchanan, design is a “liberal art… a discipline of thinking that may be shared to some degree by all men and women in their daily lives” (Buchanan, 1996, p6). Buchanan’s arguments expand the meaning of design and design thinking in a way which is empowering, incorporating artefacts, ideas and working hypotheses that aim to enrich human experience in various ways.

The complex meta-problems facing designers are known as ‘wicked problems’, after Horst Rittel, who defined wicked problems as “a class of social system problems which are ill-formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and decision makers with conflicting values, and where the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing” (Buchanan, 1996, p14). The presence of ‘wicked problems’ is a fundamental issue for design, particularly in terms of the relationship between determinacy and indeterminacy.
The linear model of design is appropriate for ‘determinate’ problems; problems with a definite, definable nature. However, most design problems are in fact ‘indeterminate’. Addressing these sorts of problems theoretically remains a major challenge, as Buchanan acknowledges when he states that the “approach has remained only a description of the social reality of designing rather than the beginnings of a well-grounded theory of design” (Buchanan, 1996, p14). Part of the reason for this is the sheer scope of design, which may be applied to almost any matter related to human experience. The complexity of these problems may require that designers transcend their ordinary approaches. Buchanan writes that the methodological process of design occurs at two levels. First there is the ‘general level’, at which the designer must articulate a broad vision of the type and nature of the product proposed. This is the level at which materials, methods and processes are explored. Gradually the designer will move towards “actual practice through creating quasi-subject matter” (Buchanan, 1996, p16), focussing the broad vision in order to account for specific circumstances in a concrete and detailed way.

In professional design practice, a design brief is primarily the statement of a client’s problem, identifying issues to be considered by the designer when attempting to resolve the problem. This process initiates the stage where specific techniques are applied and placements created by the designer: “The placements selected by a designer are what determinate subject matters are for the scientist. They are the quasi-subject matter of design thinking, from which the designer fashions a working hypothesis suited to special circumstances” (Buchanan, 1996, p16). This precedes the process of visualising and planning the making and producing of the object itself. Buchanan describes this process as the ‘creative or inventive activity’ within what Simon calls ‘design as a science of the artificial’. This also recalls Dewey’s description of ‘technology as a systematic discipline of experimental thinking.’ Summarising his theory of design thinking, Buchanan writes that design is a “supple discipline amenable to radically different interpretations in philosophy as well as in practice” (Buchanan, 1996, p17). This dynamism is the source of the confusion over design’s role experienced not only by
the public but also by other professional scientists and engineers, who often perceive design as an ‘applied’ discipline.

2.6.1.1. Design Problems in Social Systems
In his study of social systems, Banathy explored many definitions of design proposed by different design scholars, demonstrating a plethora of perspectives, often related to differing professional practices. He was particularly concerned with three definitions. One of these was Jones’ conception of design as a ‘question of living, not a planning of life not yet lived’, the inclusiveness context of Papanek’s for design as ‘integral to all human life and all human activity’, and another was Churchman’s vision of design as ‘communication among people enabling collective action and the transfer of conception of the selected solution alternative into action” (Banathy, 1996, p13). Banathy’s primary aim was to identify the role of design in social systems, and he saw creative design as the most important factor that guides social systems. He identified that design thinking informs social systems in ways that differ from other intellectual disciplines:

- **Systematic versus Systemic:** Design occurs in iterative cycles, allowing designers to engage with available knowledge and explore a broad range of alternatives with the aim of developing solutions that can be continually re-evaluated. “Design manifests dynamic interaction between feedback and feed forward, reflection and creation, and divergence and convergence” (Banathy, 1996, p17). This dynamic process allows appropriate options to be selected from a range of alternatives.
- **Design versus Science:** Whereas science is concerned with what is, design is concerned with what should be. Design is the method by which existing situations can be transformed into desired ones. This means that the design process is an important tool for scientists who wish to develop their ideas and experiments.
- **Design versus Art:** In contrast to the individualism of art, design is a collective venture between members of a social system.
- **Design versus Planning:** Planning is ‘a set of steps that one takes toward a goal,’ and its products are the result of activities controlled by time and resources. Design, by contrast, is concerned with ‘the model, the description
of the system,’ which creates the very idea of the system that planning will later help to actualise.

- Design versus problem-solving: The key difference here is that problem-solving deals with ‘well-defined and well-structured problems.’ Design, on the other hand, deals mostly with ill-defined, wicked or unstructured problems, particularly within social systems. Design has the creative capacity to derive solutions from outside the system in question.

- Design versus improvement: Improvement deals with the removal of defects or deficiencies, focused largely on existing systems. Design, however, may “push the boundaries of the inquiry as far out as possible”, reaching areas outside the existing system (Banathy, 1996, p20-21).

- Design versus restructuring: Design can add entirely new components to existing systems, rather than simply rearranging existing components.

These characteristics of design systems are based on the nature of design itself. Banathy’s survey illustrates where they diverge from the characteristics of other systems. Banathy pointed out that ‘problems’ could be constructed in a number of different ways, as they consisted of subjective images: “Different people perceive different problems in the same situation.’ Structured problems require ‘hard systems thinking, while unstructured problems require ‘soft systems thinking” (Banathy, 1996, p27). The challenges posed by unstructured problems also present the potential for radical, alternative solutions. In designing social systems, Banathy argues, “we are confronted with problem situations that compose a system of problems rather than a collection of problems” (Banathy, 1996, p29). He classifies social systems as unbounded, with clouded boundaries and clusters of interlocking problems. Any efforts to improve services for society will therefore face almost endless problems. According to Peccie:

“Within the problematique, it is difficult to pinpoint individual problems and propose individual solutions. Each problem is related to every other problem; each apparent solution to a problem may aggravate or interfere with others; and none of these problems or their combinations can be
tackled using the linear and sequential methods of the past” (Banathy, 1996, p29).

However we cannot treat any of these problems independently. The kinds of problems that we face in the contemporary era are more uncertain than ever, but this empowers design, allowing its effects to be felt on many levels. In such a situation, logic alone cannot help us to identify the right level.

Banathy reviewed the literature relating to the ill-defined nature of design problems, and concluded that problems within social science, as opposed to science and engineering, are ‘inherently wicked’, referring to Rittel and Webber’s list of the ten main characteristics of wicked problems to demonstrate his point.

The goal of design, he says, is not to find the ‘truth’, but rather to achieve the aim of improving human quality of life. Methodologically, Banathy described the design process as consisting of a series of phases, where the first phase consists of discovering information about the system, then the collected data is analysed, and finally a ‘synthesis’ occurs, allowing solutions to be created. He writes that “design requires a continual recursive interaction – an interplay – between the initial state that triggers design and the final state, when the design is completed” (Banathy, 1996, p31).

Banathy ends his review optimistically, by insisting that the design of social systems cannot be driven solely by an analysis of existing problems. Rather, in seeking to change the world, designers’ efforts must be “guided by our visions and images of a better future. It is fuelled by our aspirations, desires, beliefs, hopes, dreams, and expectations... We are responsible for the design of the systems we inhabit” (Banathy, 1996, p32). To this end, I believe that Banathy articulated a vision that inspires this research and will certainly help it to achieve its objectives. It is clear that Iraq is not the only society whose problems are driving this research – it is my objective as a designer to seek new, innovative ways of solving problems faced by societies and improving the quality of life of their populations.

2.6.1.2. Design in the context of Social Innovation

Design thinking has been under-utilised in many traditional attempts to achieve economic growth in developing countries. Typically such attempts have involved utilising conventional design capacities, applying them to industrial activities such
as the production of artificial objects, whilst also targeting handcraft sectors and local low-technology and small industrial enterprises. This “dominant logic of economic rationalism that is orienting mainstream design activities” (Jonas, 2009, p104) did not help design practices to become an energetic feature in the development policies of developing countries. Industrialisation was promoted as the only solution to prevailing social problems. A more holistic vision is that which promotes design as a crucial factor in the production of large numbers of high-quality artificial objects, which will push forward the materialisation process in developing countries and create new opportunities for export to Western markets.

We have already reviewed and analysed the history of the various ways in which design theorists and designers have attempted to adapt their theory and practice to meet the needs of the developing world, creating a rich, ongoing discourse.

Arguments about social responsibility and what is required of designers in this area have dominated the design for development movement since it first emerged. Papanek’s theory clearly articulated what he saw as the ethical principles that ought to guide professional designers in the developing world. He did this in the 1970s, when the political climate was one that heavily emphasised industrialisation as a key driver of economic growth. Papanek’s avoidance or rejection of this larger context led to some degree of marginalisation within development circles. Morelli writes: “The polarization proposed by Papanek, between industrial production in developed countries and local production in developing countries, did not help design to become a critical element of development policies” (Morelli, 2007, p3).

Another major attempt to raise social concerns to a position of greater visibility within design for development was the Ahmedabad Declaration in the late 1970s, which argued for the respectful maintenance of traditions13 and the recognition of local knowledge to support the process of implementing design practices within development strategies in developing countries. This was articulated in the form of

13 According to Thompson, ‘tradition is an interpretive scheme, a framework for understanding the world’ (Thompson, 1996, p91).
a number of principles that developing countries were encouraged to engage with as they crafted their development policies. In reality, however, little effort was made to translate the good intentions of the declaration into concrete changes benefiting the population of the countries that signed it.

Increasing awareness of the importance of sustainability in design has posed a challenge to commercial design activities driven by marketing. Proponents of sustainable practice have proposed new approaches that offer an enhanced role for design in social innovation. Varadarajan writes that “in recent years design has raised the significance of innovation as a potential central feature of its discourse and engaged with quite a number of the dimensions of the sustainability discourse” (Varadarajan, 2009, p10). Paradoxically, the contemporary era of globalisation and mass communications has actually fostered a large degree of localisation, reshaping, transforming and strengthening the local practices of many societies in the developing world (Thompson, 1996).

Much contemporary design theory is focused on developing methods that enable creative platforms to arise from which design can target the needs and demands of society, particularly in the form of services and solutions to social problems. This movement in design studies represents an alternative path to the one often taken by designers, driven by market demands and dealing in physical products. Its proponents argue that designers should redirect their efforts towards social innovation, where demand is not created by consumers, “but by an active decision on the part of a ‘social entrepreneur’ to prototype a new way of being and doing” (McEoin, 2009). Social and community groups can in fact play an effective role in the development of innovation, guiding their knowledge of what is required to make new systems work in their local contexts. Designers, in turn, may work with local communities as facilitators, utilising their technical expertise and knowledge of how systems operate to create systems that function well (Jonas, 2009). Achieving the goal of improving quality of life for the coming generations requires that designers turn their attention toward developing social systems such as education, health care and social security, as they will be the main industrial
activities of the future. In order for this to be achieved, specific approaches must be developed for design in the context of social innovation that can facilitate the creation of socially responsible systems and networks. The transition to a sustainable world, however, will be a complex process – precisely the kind of ‘wicked problem’ discussed earlier. As optimistically framed by Manzini: “The transition towards sustainability will be very far from being a linear evolution... but human beings will learn to live in a sustainable way” (Manzini, not dated, p2).

Social innovation is a fairly new concept in design thinking, consisting of the utilisation of multidisciplinary design approaches for finding solutions to social needs. These approaches are informed by an understanding of the many elements of social systems and their interconnections. Manzini described the designer’s role in this new context as “new, different and fascinating... a role that does not substitute the traditional one, but that works alongside it, opening up new fields of activity not previously thought of” (Manzini, 2005, p7). Being able to fill this role requires that designers think in a creative, innovative way, “generating ideas on possible solutions, visualising them, arguing them through, placing them in wide, many-faceted scenarios presented in concise, visual and potentially participatory forms” (Manzini, 2005, p8). However, finding the final solution for the problem is not the sole responsibility of the designer, according to Manzini. Rather, the designer will act as an “operator who acts within a more complex network of actors” (Manzini, 2005, p8).

Manzini identifies the role of the socially innovative designer in detail, identifying four major responsibilities:

- **Create the brief (understand and frame):** Understanding the problem from the perspective of the collective and what their expectations are.
- **Design development (generate solutions):** What Manzini describes as ‘user-generated co-creation’ depends on the designer’s ability to manage the innovation process, working closely with end users in a cycle facilitating the development of the design process.
- **Prototyping (develop and test):** Communicating with end-users using rapid
prototypes, scaled prototypes and other physical representations. This is an important stage for interaction between designers and users, focusing and guiding the final outcome.

- **Mass production (scale up):** Creating structure, facilitating components, disseminating the product and ensuring that the final outcome of the process has achieved the aim of social change (McEoin, 2009).

The ideal structure for the socially innovative process is one in which the designer is able to initiate and facilitate multi-level cycles of interaction, stimulating favourable conditions for the sharing of ideas. The most important interactions in this context are:

- Between the social group members.
- Between the social group and the designer.
- Between the designer and individual members of the social group.

### 2.6.1.3. The Design Oriented Scenario (DOS)

Participants in a ‘design-oriented scenario (DOS)’, according to Manzini, “have to propose a variety of comparable visions that have to be clearly motivated and enriched with some visible and (potentially) feasible proposals” (Manzini, not dated, p2). The ‘DOS’ will play an important role in guiding socially innovative design, he believes, enabling participants to “generate visions of the future that are subsequently orienting operative design decisions” (Morelli, 2007, p14). DOS will be structured around:

- **Vision:** Visualising future-based solutions.
- **Proposal:** Structuring the vision in terms of process-based steps, and identifying services and products that need to be designed or redesigned.
- **Motivation:** Identifying and legitimating the relationship between the DOS and the problems it will attempt to solve (Manzini, not dated).

This design application will effectively act as a collective search for a solution to a problem which is also identified collectively. It is a bottom-up process, in contrast with the ‘policy-oriented scenario’ which delivers policies from above, where they
are formulated by bureaucracies: “DOS are used by single social actors or a small group of actors to orient their own future and build appropriate business solutions” (Morelli, 2007, p14).

2.6.2. The paradigm of capability approaches in development theory
The human development paradigm is shifting the means of development from economic growth as a unified direction and ultimate goal into a human-led process, with the potential to empower people to live according to their needs and interests. The way to realise these goals “is building human capabilities—the range of things that people can do or be in life” (www.hdr.undp.org). These capabilities are wide-ranging, from the enjoyment of long healthy lives, to accessing resources to increase the standard of living and facilitate effective participation in the life of the community. These capabilities enrich our experiences in dealing with choices and opportunities in our lives.

The concept of looking beyond the immediate objectives of wealth in the form of money and belongings is very old. The Greek philosophers discussed it. In the Islamic context, the core of Islam as a religion of equality presents these essential duties for the political order, to create legislation to enhance people’s capabilities. These duties are the spirit of the religion and have the power to support a wider expansion of Islam around the globe. Current Muslim practice is remote from these concepts, as there are various restrictions on building people’s capabilities, rooted in cultural and social practices and legislation.

The aim and the means of well-being seek to broaden people’s activities and effectively connect with their capacity “to do and to be”, and create a healthy relationship with justice and development. A capability approach “is primarily and mainly a framework of thought, a mode of thinking about normative issues... can be used for a wide range of evaluative purposes” (Robeyns, 2005, p96). It describes a position within new-liberal politics and human development studies dedicated to empowering one’s choice of practices ‘to do’ to achieve one’s goals, or supporting the freedom for an individual to choose ‘to be.’ This philosophical
argument links material, mental and social well-being to assist with the availability of economic resources. Aiming to support society acting to achieve well-being, it guarantees individuals freedom to engage with the political and social practices in society. Practically, this framework evaluates the impact of social policies on people’s capabilities, it asks about these policies’ effectiveness to manage resources for society to enjoy good health, sufficient food, access to quality education, real political participation and community integration. In such a context the philosophy of capability approaches differentiates between ‘well-being’ and ‘welfare,’ as welfare is the association between materiality and income, its level based on an evaluation of the utilitarian and excluding the non-utilitarian. For Sen, “the non-utility information that is excluded by utilitarianism could be a person’s additional physical needs due to being physically disabled, but also social or moral issues such as the principle that men and women should be paid the same wage for the same work” (Robeyns, 2005, p97).

Common practices of presenting the means of well-being in society take the form of making commodities available, the structuring of social and cultural institutions, and so forth. No doubt, materiality requires addressing, and it relates to welfare instead of well-being. However, the capability approaches make a firm distinction between goods and services as means on the one side, and the functioning of those items on the other side. The functional properties are described as the main objective to achieve in the process of creating a design, like a communication device: the main function is to maintain communication between people over distances and around obstacles in a convenient and effective way. Robeyns identified the factors influencing the relationship between objects and their functions, and their roles in limiting the functioning of an object under specific circumstances. The factors are:

- The personal conversion factors (e.g., metabolism, physical condition, sex, reading skills and intelligence); these factors influence the ability to utilise the functions of the object, in our example of a communication device, it’s the effective communication channels.
- The social conversion factors (e.g., public policies, social norms,
discriminating practices, gender roles, societal hierarchies or power relations).

- The environmental conversion factors (e.g., climate or geographical location).

What makes this theory of capability approaches interesting within this chapter of design policy relates to the concept of well-being from the perspective of non-material things, which opposes the theory of welfare and materialism. In which case, should design policies keep promoting design practices in the framework of welfare? Or should they follow the current design study focus on humans and promote well-being as their main objective? Answering these question requires multidisciplinary thinking to find the right position between the objectives of economic competitiveness and the extended roles of cultural and social norms in the design process, to produce a new wave of human-centred design policies.

### 2.6.2.1. Capability approaches and policy making

The human development paradigm is presented as an alternative concept to facing the wider disagreement and criticism of the model of development-led economic growth and GDP statistics of the 1980s. The majority of developing countries struggle to reach the higher levels in the statistical models of this human-led development paradigm, with obstacles of a cultural, economic and political nature perhaps responsible. However, since human development “can evolve over time and vary both across and within countries” (www.hdr.undp.org), the story is encouraging. As always, there is potential to increase national support for human development, bearing in mind differences between political and institutional structures in each country. The UNDP report acknowledged the important elements for policy-makers to identify when creating and implementing new policies:

- “Think of principles first” and acknowledge the priority of specific policy for human development within the institutional, structural and political limitations.
- “Take context seriously” and understand the institutional realities to help to design better policy.
“Shift global policies” to stimulate the creation of a national system acknowledging democracy, transparency and a sustainable economic environment (UNDP, 2010, p8-9).

These principles reflect the process of creating policy-led human development to achieve well-being through a range of enjoyable life choices. These principles need a new multidisciplinary team of specialists: policy-makers, economists, sociologists, designers, etc., to put people at the centre of development and evaluate policies “as they advance human development in the short and long term” (UNDP, 2010, p9). The main theme of the capability approaches theory concerns people and their freedom to present their lives or, as Sen articulated, “our evaluations and policies should focus on what people are able to do and be, on the quality of their life, and on removing obstacles in their lives so that they have more freedom to live the kind of life that, upon reflection, they have reason to value” (Robeyns, 2005, p94).

2.6.2.2. Capability approaches as driver for ‘design policy’

The current objectives of design policies are to facilitate efforts to achieve economic competitiveness, which later will enhance national economic growth through expanding business and creating new jobs. This systematic approach allows specific mechanisms to separate welfare and benefits to the nation. The nature of capability approaches is a ‘broad normative framework’ for assessing individual well-being and social arrangements, and this framework is the tool to guide the process of designing policies to produce social change. This approach has characteristics of a “highly interdisciplinary character” to focus on broad and multi-dimensional norms of well-being. “The approach highlights the difference between means and ends, and between substantive freedoms (capabilities) and outcomes (achieved functionings)” (Robeyns, 2005, p93).

Applying the concept of human well-being to the development of society requires practices to enhance these policies and meet the demands of the human development paradigm. This will benefit the call for creative approaches to effective participation in the efforts to improve the statistical scales of developing
countries in human development records. The previous models of association between design and development to achieve economic growth for developing countries have clearly failed to meet their objectives. In the absence of progress since the issue of the Ahmedabad Declaration in 1979, which clearly indicated a need for change, the changes required will now be enormous, for they must cover all the components of design and of development.

2.7. Summary
Design in the context of development is concerned with constructing the discourse of design by drawing upon the development milieu of a specific context (the ways in which development programmes in ‘developing countries’ are enhanced by the application of design principles and strategies). The practice of design focuses upon the economically weaker sections of society and looks to propose product and service solutions with the aim of improving the quality of life. The development model which emerged in the era following WWII has predominated ever since, promoting scientific and technological progress and applying those advances to improve the economic growth of ‘under-developed nations’. This modern Western model has informed development in these nations and has led to their industrialisation, materialisation and de-traditionalisation. Many conservative societies have been forced to implement dramatic structural changes. However, the lack of balance in the ideology underpinning this development has been a primary cause of the crises and deterioration faced by many developing countries during the post-war period.

Innovative social design is presented as a powerful alternative to implementing design thinking into social development programs in developing countries. It has the following roles to play in achieving the goal of sustainable social development:

• Helping the ideological and practical transition from industrialisation to sustainable social development.

• Empowering social groups to contribute to the development of more democratic and sustainable societies.
• Creating bottom-up strategies that incorporate end-users of design systems in the design process.

The reviews in this chapter and the previous one offer a clearer vision of a structurally sound framework supporting this study. Also they offer a theoretical background for an in-depth discussion and analysis to initiate a field investigation into design thinking and practices in Iraq and how to inform this project with insights into the scope of artificial objects and their contexts in Iraqi socio-cultural thinking, which is the objective of the following chapter.
3. The Iraqi product experience through objects and designs

This chapter is intended to offer insights into Iraqi experience with material objects; these experiences are the key to mapping the development of design as a professional practice in Iraq, and to a deeper understanding of the close relationship between humans, objects and design. To achieve the objectives of this chapter, three main topics were identified and subjected to an in-depth investigation:

- The development of dwelling designs in Iraq, which objects continue to honestly represent local designs and tastes, and which under many influences have been transformed recently in the search for better adaptations of traditional living customs to modern dwelling designs.
- Modernity as a context and set of practices concerning the use of material objects and its development and interactions with socio-cultural aspects of Iraqi society.
- The socio-cultural influences on the design and making of consumer products in Iraq along with two examples selected from local manufacture of furniture and home appliances.

Methodologically, this chapter is based on a qualitative research approach through utilising a combination of observational techniques and conversational sessions. The research techniques were kept unstructured at the stage of data gathering and the researcher “does not use predetermined categories and classifications, but makes observations in a more natural open-ended way” (Punch, 2009, p.155). The objects selected are a combination of random, purposeful samples of functional or moral objects related to the designs of houses, domestic furniture and home
appliances, representative of the vast range of these objects, for the purpose of reviewing current trends, and to give a glimpse of Iraqis’ interactions with their everyday material objects.

Much of the literature discusses design and society. It addresses the relationship of designed objects to society, how these objects are shaped and, later, how they act in shaping the relationships between human and cultural aspects of society. At this moment there are many streams of discussion, some relating to professional designers working in society and the values these professionals add to society, while others address the relationship of activities of making and using these designed objects, and the implications in society of these activities — economically, technically and in other ways (Dilnot, 1982). From here on, the dissertation will document my experiences as a designer, considering design within its wider context in post-war Iraq. It discusses issues and presents various samples collected during my trip to Iraq in late 2010 and early 201114, aiming to articulate this expedition from my position of being ‘out of place’ (Said, 1999), looking at current designs of material objects and how Iraqis interact with them.

The vast changes during the last few decades are reflected in the unique position of Iraqi society right now. Iraq has endured a long period of isolation under a self-sufficient survival mode, with extremely limited varieties of material objects fashioned with old-style designs and technologies. This exceptional situation is rapidly moving toward a new era of an open, uncontrolled market, generating a flood of cheap products from all over the world. There is also a bewildering increase in information resources that keep people informed about modern products in international markets. They constantly present up-to-date models and information about the products, through a proliferation of satellite TVs and new functions added to communication channels such as cell phones, PCs and Internet service. Lack of experience and confusion are affecting the relationship between Iraqi customers and artificial products – as I observed during my visit – conditions which hold a mirror to changes in the Iraqi political order after 2003; when Iraqi

14 During my trip I spent a month in Iraq, visited my hometown of Fallujah and made many trips to the capital, Baghdad, and to the city of Hillah in the province of Babylon.
society shifted rapidly from the familiar political system of dictatorship, which was replaced by force with a new ‘democratic’ political system. People now struggle to understand how to function under this new method of governance, and how to familiarise themselves with the new socio-political order.
3.1. Chapter overview

This chapter is intended to offer insights about the Iraqi experience with material objects; this experience is the key to mapping the development of design as a professional practice in Iraq, and to cover the wider dimensions of the close relationship between humans, objects and design.

Figure 3-1. Chapter 3 overview.
3.2. Dwelling designs in Iraq

3.2.1. Background
The dwelling design in any society is a very important element for designers to contextualise the relationship between humans and designed objects. Design thinking considers socio-cultural and environmental aspects to be the main influences on the designs of these objects. In the Iraqi context, to discover how these wider aspects affect the design, it’s important firstly to categorise the different kinds of domestic house, then describe each category, to seek a better understanding of the nature of these objects. These descriptions will be the background to a review of the transformation these objects are currently going through in the urban fabric of Iraq. This review focuses on the role of human experience in the rapid reshaping of dwelling designs. The review begins by dividing the dwellings into four main categories\footnote{Although the categorisation is a general one, it relies on the chronological development of dwellings in the country. Economic development produces a more stable way of living, reflected in the increasing size of cities. However, for many locals, the Bedouin tents and clay huts are nostalgic images from a beloved way of living in the past.} according to their location in desert, village, town or city.

3.2.2. The Bedouin\textsuperscript{16} tents in the deserts
A structure well adapted to harsh desert conditions and to support the nomadic style of living, the tent is constructed on a number of long central wooden poles, whilst shorter poles support the front, back and side edges of the tent (figure 3-2). Socially, a greater number of these poles indicate the social standing of the tent’s owner. The wooden skeleton is covered by cloth made from goat and camel hair, mainly hand-woven by women. The tent has a front section for the men’s living area and reception of guests. This is an important custom in the desert life of the Bedouin, which influences and even dominates life in the cities. The back section is for the women and family, the sections divided by heavy curtains, with thick rugs

\footnote{The term “Bedouin” derives from a plural form of the Arabic word badawi, as it is pronounced in colloquial dialects. The Arabic term badawi derives from the word bādiyah, which means semi-arid desert (as opposed to şahrâ’, which means very arid desert). The term “Bedouin” therefore means “those who live in bādiyah” or “those who live in the desert”. (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bedouin)}
covering the floor and soft furnishings for sitting and sleeping (www.desertdiaries.wordpress.com).

Figure 3-2. The Bedouin tent in the desert, inviting a sustainable association between humans, the culture and the environment.

3.2.3. The peasant houses
The location of these villages reflects the design of the dwellings, for the sun-baked brick of mud and straw is the main construction material for the majority of a village’s huts. Archaeological studies show clear evidence of a strong similarity between these mud hut designs and earlier dwellings from ancient Mesopotamia. These basic dwellings mostly have an open courtyard surrounded by a small number of rooms; the dominant design has a single storey with a flat roof, which in many cases accommodates more than one big family (figure 3-3). In the Southern region of Iraq (the “cradle of civilisation”), where the marshes are created by the flooding of the Tigris and Euphrates, the Marsh Arabs create their own unique style of living. The style effectively sustains the land and its natural resources. “Dwellings and barns straddled the waters on fixed islands laboriously constructed from layer upon layer of hand-woven reed matting and mud” (Rojs-Burke, 2003). Bundles of reeds are joined together to create the skeleton of the dwelling, which supports the hand-woven reed matting acting as walls, the whole construction then covered by a circular arched roof of the same material (figure 3-4).
3.2.4. The traditional domestic house in towns and cities

These constitute the majority of domestic houses in towns and cities around the country, a collective way of living reflecting the socio-cultural norm for Iraqi families. The appearance of these houses is similar, as they share many design elements and a basic plan, although there are slight differences in the kind and quality of construction materials and the size of the houses — which testifies to
little variation between Iraqi social classes. Traditional Iraqi houses of the 19th and early 20th centuries were aligned strictly with the religious and cultural practice of privacy, principles reflected in the design of these objects and which adopted a composition based on the concept of ‘inward,’ where detached houses, facing each other and separated by narrow, winding lanes, were constructed with high walls and few (or no) windows to maintain the families’ privacy (figure 3-5).

However, what seems a rigid, inexpensive composition from the outside is connected via a narrow path to a hidden, open courtyard (in Arabic, houshe) designed to provide the family with a central point for meeting and performing daily household activities; the centre of this courtyard accommodates a simple fountain surrounded by decorative plants and fruit trees (figure 3-6). The spatial plan of traditional domestic houses preserves the family’s privacy within the house. The front part of the house is dedicated to receiving visitors (Arabic, diwaniyah) and also designed to nourish the family’s cultural values, by using larger rooms and good-quality decorative objects, although this section is gender oriented, as it is known as the men’s receiving room. The courtyard is surrounded by basic utility rooms and bedrooms. The majority of houses share the same kind
of one-storey, flat roof construction, with walls mainly of brick and sun-baked mud, although in the North and West of Iraq local stone is the construction material, with the roof supported by timber or steel beams and surrounded by high walls, providing living areas at night, where families can enjoy cooler conditions during the hot summer season. The design of traditional domestic houses sustainably enhanced the human relationship with the environment; these designs represent the best adaptation in a climatically harsh region surrounded by deserts and creatively used natural resources to provide unique dwelling solutions.

![Figure 3-6. The open courtyard in the traditional house.](image)

### 3.2.5. The traditional domestic houses for rich people in cities

There is often a limited number of high-quality houses in cities, houses which are bigger, of advanced design and good quality construction materials, such as backed bricks, marble and quality timber — the kind of material requiring more highly skilled craftsmanship in building and joinery. Being mostly outside the strict socio-cultural and environmental norms, these houses offer richer experiences for the family and its guests. The plan of these houses is similar to the previous category; they maintain the family’s privacy both outside and inside, and between the family living area and the guest area. The houses are constructed mainly with two storeys raised on top of an underground level, with the levels functioning as follows:

- Underground level (Iraqi-سیداب): a daylight living area for the family
during the hot summer season, also to store food in low-temperature conditions. This level is accessed by a wind catcher\textsuperscript{17} (Arabic-\textit{Malqaf}), a kind of vertical brick tunnel catching the air at the top of the building, speeding its flow and offering comfortable air circulation underground.

- **Ground level:** the guests’ reception area and the courtyard, surrounded by \textit{Tarma}\textsuperscript{18}, \textit{Liwan},\textsuperscript{19} and most utility rooms accommodating services and household activities.
- **First storey:** mostly for bedrooms, this level offers comfort and privacy especially through the unique design features of bay windows (Iraqi-\textit{Shenashil}). These protruding wooden windows function as microclimate devices, allowing the flow of fresh air in bedrooms while maintaining the room’s privacy.

These houses are designed to accommodate very large families, with the capacity to accommodate whatever extended numbers of family members after marriage are expected by cultural convention and the Iraqi manner of collective living, where a married male remains in the family home (figure 3-7).

\textsuperscript{17} One of the most common uses of the \textit{badgir} is as an architectural feature to cool the inside of the dwelling, and is often used in combination with courtyards and domes as an overall ventilation and heat management device. The \textit{malqaf} is essentially a tall, capped tower with one face open at the top. This open side faces the prevailing wind, thus ‘catching’ it, and bringing it down the tower into the heart of the building so the air flow cools the interior. This is the most direct way of drawing air into the building. Importantly, it does not necessarily cool the air, but relies on the rate of air flow to provide a cooling effect (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windcatcher).

\textsuperscript{18} Open balcony with pillars (www.brainworker.ch).

\textsuperscript{19} A room, open on one side, behind the \textit{tarma} or adjacent to the inner courtyard (www.brainworker.ch).
3.2.6. The modernisation of dwelling designs in Iraq
As discussed earlier, the 1950s and 1960s exhibited an extraordinary surge of creativity in contemporary Iraq. The era presented unique examples of Iraqi intellectuals: artists, poets, writers, musicians, architects, etc., who studied at European institutions and returned to Iraq after graduation to initiate a rapid cultural modernisation. In architecture, Iraq revitalised its oldest architectural traditions and began applying them in a modern context. This process relied on the influences of many Iraqi architects, although contemporary Iraqi architecture had many examples of interacting with modern Western architectural styles. For example, when the Iraqi government commissioned international architects to design specific projects such as “Frank Lloyd Wright (Opera House), Le Corbusier (Sports Hall), Walter Gropius (University City), Alvar Aalto (Art Museum), Werner March (Museum) and Pier Luigi Nervi” (Kultermann, 1999, p7) (figure 3-8). This upsurge in modern influence through introducing modern Western architecture as a medium for interaction was certainly meant to enhance the ability of Iraqi society to live a contemporary life style in the 20th century. It followed previous efforts by the British during their colonisation of Iraq, manifest in a few public buildings in the main Iraqi cities such as train stations, higher educational institutions, hospitals, etc. (figure 3-9). The national state housing projects, designed by European architects, introduced new designs for houses to promote a
Western style of living for Iraqi working families and introduced modern designs based on new construction materials and building methods for the mass production of low-cost private houses.

Figure 3-8. A mosque by Walter Gropius for the University of Baghdad main campus, 1957.

Figure 3-9. Baghdad central station is the main train station in Baghdad. It links the rail network to the south and the north of Iraq. The station was built by the British. They started to build it in 1948 and finished it in 1953.

However, in the context of designing and building dwellings, the modern principles of architectural design reshaped the traditional Iraqi way of life from the 1950s to the limit of the spatial conventions which met the traditional Iraqi customs. As
Iraqis preferred living in two-storey private houses, they never liked the horizontal design of flats, which shows in the tendency of Iraqi cities everywhere to increase in size. Furthermore, the era of economic sanctions since the 1990s initiated a new wave of unfamiliar, hybrid architectural styles aimed at further sustaining the traditional customs while living inside ‘modern’ houses. The following is further analysis to explain two transformations which shaped recent housing designs in Iraq.

### 3.2.7. Modern housing designs since the 1970s

As discussed earlier, the expansion of the economy after the nationalisation of the oil industry in the early 1970s was clearly evident in architecture, as large architectural projects took place in the big cities, especially Baghdad, and public buildings, state highways and many others transformed Baghdad into a giant building site. This resulted in rapid changes in the urban fabric of Baghdad and other major cities associated with expanding suburbs. The rapid movement neglected the customs and traditions of living in and using buildings, and created a new urban fabric dominated by boxy cement compositions surrounded by traditional brick buildings. However, contemporary architectural design thinking in Iraq introduced a unique solution to the argument between tradition and modernity. The pioneering Iraqi architect Mohammed Saleh Makiya\(^{20}\) said:

> “The architectural forms whether past or present should be sympathetically and deeply rooted to meaningful and significant responses. Symbolism extends the concept of functionalism to the higher level of the intellectual aptitude demanded by the designer and asserted by its social meaning. New, creative vision, unless it possesses this intrinsic quality, would become a sign of this egoistic self-assertion. This applies to the lasting status and survival of the arch, the dome, and the

---

\(^{20}\) Educated in Liverpool, England, Makiya received a degree in architecture in 1941 and a degree in civic design in 1942. He completed his studies at Kings College, Cambridge, where he received his Ph.D. in 1946, and returned to Baghdad in the same year to open an architectural office. His firm continued to have worldwide impact even after he himself left Iraq to work from his London office, which was established in 1975. It is significant that Makiya does not separate theory, professional activities and practice, but combines all these areas, with the result that each is enhanced and enriched by the others. His architectural commissions include religious buildings, office and administration buildings, educational and residential buildings, and urban design in a universal complexity that has few rivals in his country or elsewhere (Kultermann, 1999, p4).
minaret within the physical quality of the new built-up environment. They are so much part of the natural setting that they stand beyond the label of “traditional” or “contemporary” (Makiya, 1986, p12) (Figure 3-10).

Moreover, Rifat Chadirjy, another pioneering Iraqi architect, supported this unique path through his architectural design and his writing. Chadirjy is known by his belief in the need to “integrate his own interpretation of regional traditions into the mainstream of development” (Kultermann, 1999, p8). Arthur Rabeneck wrote that Chadirji (figure 3-11) devoted his “professional and artistic life to a central issue of our times—how to reconcile the cultural and social tradition of his country with the realities of rapid technological change and a growing internationalism in the arts” (Kultermann, 1999, p7).

Figure 3-10. Buniya Mosque 1973, Baghdad, Architecture – Saleh Makeya.

21 Chadirji received his education in England, where he studied at the Hammersmith School of Arts and Crafts. While in England he came under the influence of architects such as Auguste Perret, Le Corbusier, and Mies van der Rohe and the town planner Arthur Korn. After his return to Baghdad in 1952, he founded the firm Iraq Consult. In his capacity as adviser to the mayor of Baghdad, he was instrumental in commissioning leading international architects to build large-scale complexes (Kultermann, 1999, p7).
The principles of Western architectural design introduced a new phenomenon in the design of houses in Iraq: transforming the design of the house from the concept of ‘inward’ into ‘outward’, with more focus on creating design compositions for the frontal façade to cover the strictly geometric composition of the guest reception area, living area, utility rooms and bedrooms. The whole concept of the open courtyard disappeared, replaced by extending the size of the kitchen to be the dining area, and the living area in the centre of the house was now surrounded by other rooms. This new spatial arrangement in the modern house interferes with the customary way of life for Iraqi families. Moreover, state regulations and building codes for these houses were issued and restricted the positioning of houses within the area of available land: “houses cannot be joined together and there is insufficient space left for internal courtyards. The traditional urban form of most of the old cities is thus effectively (if unintentionally) outlawed” (Tillotson, 1998, p164). The domestic houses of that era (figure 3-12) were classified as two-storey, constructed mainly in custom cast concrete, used backed brick or cement brick for walls, lots of ceramic tiles, cement tiles for the floors, large steel-frame windows with glass, and less wooden joinery. Although these are efficient construction materials, unfortunately, it makes the houses inefficient for living in
the region’s desert climate, marked as it is by a long summer season and extremely high temperatures. As for traditional living, the design of those houses fits well with the new generation of working families, through design modifications which maintain the traditions of guest reception and gender separation to an acceptable level.

3.2.8. Transformation of current housing designs
Baghdad’s visual culture has undergone a process of rapid change since the 1970s (figure 3-13), derived politically, and aiming to present the city as the cultural capital of the Arab world. Efforts resulted in “a rich variety of building types developed in terms of regional identity, which were more or less successful in their implementation” (Kultermann, 1999, p9). However, from the mid-1980s, during the war between Iraq and Iran, the political ideology in Iraq had much interest in the political power of architecture, and began to create major urban architectural projects, including public buildings, monuments and parade grounds, describing the relationship between politics and architecture, according to Kanan Makiya, “as a symbol of their longevity and their place in history” (C-LAB, not dated). The effects of the UN economic sanctions against Iraq deprived it of financial resources and forced the political order to focus on creating new palaces which they promoted to the populace as “public” buildings. These palaces introduced a new phenomenon to architectural design in Iraq through its focus “on the façade. The buildings feature enormous porticos, and often false fronts that don’t do anything, but are just there for show. It’s grandiosity and pomp, and often the rooms don’t

Figure 3-12. Design from the 1970s for domestic houses in Iraq.
work, because the whole building has been made subject to the façade. The façade and the columns and porticos are everything, and behind it are these puny, miserable rooms” (C-LAB, not dated). This style representing the kitschy and vernacular attests to the political order ruling at that time, with the desire just to demonstrate their power (figure 3-14).

Figure 3-13. Baghdad modern architecture, late 1970s-1980s.

Figure 3-14. The politically oriented architecture of the 1990s, Al Faw Palace.

Unfortunately, rapid propagation of this style of building is changing the urban fabric of most Iraqi cities, towns and even villages, as houses in Iraq inexpertly borrow, modify and imitate this tasteless style. Changes are on the way for these
dwellings, restoring the previous traditional arrangement of a courtyard in the house, in the form of a closed roof linking both storeys.

3.3. Modernity through materialisation
The modernisation of Iraq presented an interesting argument through the association of development and deprivation. The association developed from the late 1960s, prompted by strict centralised economic planning, which considered personal motivations and demands for new products to be wasteful of resources and opposed to self-sufficiency. It promoted instead a massive expenditure on building the country’s infrastructure. “Personal demands” refers to the everyday products people utilise for their work and personal activities. The failure of local manufacturing operations – mainly state-owned corporations – to meet local market demand was caused directly by state policies to heavily restrict imported consumer materials and keep them under the direct control of state agencies. Such economic “planning” was justified under socialist objectives and strategies for development and modernisation, and served to silence the growing demands from Iraqis to improve their quality of life. Such was the reality of the previous three decades (from the late 1970s), when Iraqis were deprived of new products and technologies, just as their aging production machinery became in urgent need of replacement, along with the houses they owned and their old-fashioned contents. However, the major disintegration occurred in the early 1990s, as a result of the long-term wars and their complete destruction of the country’s infrastructure. Furthermore, the massive, multi-faceted tragedies for socio-cultural systems in Iraq after 2003 worsened the existing deprivations to reach the most crippling levels Iraqis have faced in recent history. Observing the extensive damage to the material infrastructure, social systems services, and the broken human beings during my stay in Iraq was the most disturbing experience of my life. After my exile in 1991, I communicated with my family and friends and had kept up with the news about Iraq, but unfortunately, on the ground, reality presented a different story, involving much emotion and memories of places and people. I kept to the process of observation and data collection for my study by means of unstructured
processes, to cover wider options and to enrich the study objectives. The observation process was targeted at daily activities and changes that occurred, specifically in the making of new products, and also in the human interaction with products, to be explained further later, in the analysis of selected manufactured items.

The harsh difficulties of daily life are manifest in the quality of items made by Iraqis at work and at home. The processes of making are varied and involve presenting new products, maintaining old ones, performing services, dealing with systematic roles, etc. They also cover the traditional activities of domestic work, crafts, maintenance workshops and the new service sector established to provide remote communication services. Here are some preliminary conclusions obtained through direct interaction with people while they were performing mainly traditional activities, conclusions confirmed by previous personal work experience in Iraq. These interpretations summarise some socio-cultural and ethnographical aspects of the Iraqi attitude to working and making things (figure 3-15).

*Figure 3-15. Jarjees, Akram (2012). Human and object, scene in Baghdad.*
3.3.1. Transforming the meaning of modernity in Iraq

The transition of material objects is an interesting topic. Design studies continually present debates concerning these sophisticated philosophical arguments, aiming to achieve better outcomes through the design process to help manufacturers produce quality products, and designers keep relying on classical solutions through modifying the product's physical classifications of form, function, materials and production so the new products produce consumer satisfaction. However, designers are focusing on the phenomenon of user experience.

This phenomenon accommodates specific design methods for designers to enhance the relationship between objects and people. The concept of experience, according to Margolin, is about “the human interaction with products – material or immaterial things that are conceived and planned. This interaction has two dimensions: Operative and Reflective. The operative refers to the way we make use of products for our activities. The reflective addresses the way we think or feel about a product and give it decorative value.”

The diagram below illustrates the transformation of the meaning of modernity in Iraq through various stages of history, including the impact of imperialism, colonialism, and modernization.

**Figure 3-16. Transforming the meaning of modernity in Iraq.**
3.3.2. The preponderance of instability and temporary solutions

Archaeological studies of Mesopotamia show how the emergence of ancient civilisations was associated with instability. Reflected mainly in the large number of city-states and trade centres in ancient Mesopotamia which arose from multiple foreign invasions, those invaders settled and gradually incorporated their culture into their newly-conquered society, forming a new one by force. The chronology of Mesopotamia presented various political events, rulers and dynasties, these demographic variations imprinting themselves on Iraqi society and determining its structure as a multi-ethnic population with a mixture of cultural practices, and stimulating a strong desire in Iraqis to maintain a military force to secure their land. Instability influenced the cultural norms in society and affected styles of living and working. Anthropological studies discuss the collective reasons for geopolitical, demographic, environmental and educational influences which shaped social behaviour. As a result these strong peoples produced unique designs of material objects, discovering minimalism, austerity and functionalism as design principles in response to the harsh nature of their environment, along with the limited kinds and quantities of raw materials.

Unfortunately, the current situation regarding the quality of making of material objects in Iraq is gloomy, the long period of isolation and harsh living conditions resulting in conditions of extreme instability. This can be observed in the quality of making, the production technology and the workers’ skills at production sites, illustrating the dilapidation and poor practices in these vital economic sectors. The constant threat of destruction faces Iraqis in their homes, their communities and their cities, and is evident everywhere in the country’s infrastructure. These

---

22 The geography of Mesopotamia had a profound impact on the political development of the region. Among the rivers and streams, the Sumerian people built the first cities along with irrigation canals which were separated by vast stretches of open desert or swamp where nomadic tribes roamed. Communication among the isolated cities was difficult and at times dangerous. Thus, each Sumerian city became a city-state, independent of the others and protective of its independence (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mesopotamia).
realities dominate, while no effective progress is shown in solving any of these huge problems, such as a continuous electricity supply or reliable communication services. (Figure 3-17).

![Figure 3-17. Common scene showing the lack of basic services in most Iraqi cities and towns.](image)

### 3.3.3. The preponderance of functional thinking
Functionality drives the making and gaining of objects. Indicating both a design principle and the major scope of the design process, in some cases the meaning of functionality is broad; it refers not only to the technical and operational aspects of the objects, but also addresses the framework of the aesthetic and social contexts of specific objects. Warell explained function within three different classes: “operative functions (e.g. transforming, controlling), structural functions (e.g. connecting, supporting) and usability functions (e.g. simplifying, exhorting)” (Crilly, 2010, p214). Although technical considerations drive people to the use of a specific object, the social value also considers the forcing dimension of using many objects, so this value may represent personal or collective agreements regarding the usability of a specific object. These types of functional objects are increasing, as, for each object, there are often different function types, related to usability in achieving technical satisfaction. There are also social and personal values, which relate to different functions expressed socially; for example, with a chair “the techno-function of a chair is to support a seated person, but it may additionally
have the socio-function of expressing social position and the further ideo-function of perpetuating hierarchy within an organisation” (Crilly, 2010, p320). Although aestheticians argue about how an art work function culminates in “non-aesthetic functions, such as representation (of some object), revelation (of some truth) or provocation (of some action), but such non-aesthetic functions are not essential for making an item an art work” (Crilly, 2010, p321), the motivations of people using objects are based on technical or non-technical functions, the “different aspects of ... user experience can be seen as connected to each other whereas they might otherwise only be seen as distinct” (Crilly, 2010, p331). In this context the technical function is rational, while non-technical functions are not measured according to such a system as it interacts with social and personal beliefs. Also “distinguishing between function types rather than artefact types emphasises that there is a continuum running from artefacts that perform their roles physically, to those that perform their roles through social agreement or individual interpretation” (Crilly, 2010, p331).

Observing the exuberant appetite for consumerism Iraqis exhibit these days, one sees a utilitarian duplication which in practice clouds the real motivation for consuming an object. This ambivalence conflates the using of objects strictly for kinds of functionality (operative, structural and usability), and the motivation to meet social and moral functionality. Unfortunately, these ambivalent attitudes are associated with voracious consumerism in this new uncontrolled market that imports cheap and inefficient products.

3.3.4. The prevalence of imitating and relying on precedent

In many Arabic countries the post-colonial era represented the hegemony of the nationalist elite who promoted development and modernisation to defeat the legacy of colonialism. In Iraq and other Arabic countries this elite “eventually embraced forms of Arab Socialism, which was supposed to produce modernism in a fashion consistent with Arab customs and traditions, but the impulses of all these regimes were fundamentally secularizing, bureaucratic, and authoritarian” (Lee, 1997, p7). Gradually the principle of authenticity emerges to face modernisation through its representation as a Western phenomenon consisting exclusively of its
unitary choice between East or West, traditional or modern. In fact, the heavily criticised modernity reveals its opposition to cultural and religious norms standing as the core principles of Arabic societies — the modern principles of “uniformity, impersonality, superficiality, commercialism, self-interested individualism, and infatuation with technology” (Lee, 1997, p13) — were targets of the opposition. However, arguments were presented to accommodate ideologies of both authenticity and modernity, as in the case made by Muhammad Arkoun, who stated:

“Muslims can find themselves by considering the totality of their historical experience, rather than just one strand of it, and by thinking of the ways in which that historical experience links them to Judaism and Christianity and, hence, to the Western world. The search for authentic Islam leads him beyond religion to the context in which religion becomes a defining aspect of the self” (Lee, 1997, pp14-15).

The broader disagreement facing this liberal thinking towards balancing both these phenomena is sustained by various influences and fuelled by extremists of both East and West. In his theoretical frameworks for Islam and modernity Mohammad Adbuh (1849-1905) addressed the distinction between presenting essential Islamic doctrines and Islamic social teaching and law. The distinction is based on the conclusion that: “The doctrines have been transmitted by a central line of thinkers, the ‘pious ancestors’... and they can be articulated and defended by reason” (Hourani, 2005, p308). While social teaching and laws are generalised principles contained in the Qur’an and acceptable to people, these norms are changeable: “in the modern world, it is the task of Muslim thinkers to relate changing laws and customs to unchanging principles, and by so doing to give them limits and direction” (Hourani, 2005, p308). The hegemony of certain Islamic doctrines in Iraq (as well as in the whole Islamic world) in the current era of globalisation requires people to believe in certain practices just because they were original Islamic practices. These practices keep expanding to cover tiny details of human interaction as well as with objects and the surroundings. Iraqi society is being assailed on all sides by new ways of living and new customs justified as
being authentic practices in many circumstances, even though many of them are in contradiction of the basic principles of civil society. However, observing these practices makes me wonder about the power of extreme isolation and chaos that produced this societal transformation in reverse.

### 3.3.5. Socialising the relationship between human and object

These impulses introduced Iraqi society to modernity – presented in the form of improving the quality of life based on materialism and the wider availability of technical instruments which appeared abundantly after nationalisation of the oil industry in Iraq in the early 1970s. The financial resources from exporting oil to international markets were directed to enhance state socialist policies and provide financial assistance in the form of standard programmes for borrowing, whereby the state banks started to help Iraqis build new houses. The designs of those houses were inspired by the early designs of standard modern domestic houses mass-produced by the state housing department in Iraq during the 1950s and 1960s. As discussed earlier, the designs brought big changes from the open-courtyard, mud-and-brick-walled traditional house, producing instead locally modified emulations of European styles. Even with a few local adjustments reflecting local taste and preference, the new designs landed Iraqi families with new modes of living, forcing them to adjust to closed-roof houses, with advanced utility rooms filled with furniture and appliances. Compared with their previous traditional houses, these modern practices illustrated the idea that “design becomes not only a matter of forming objects as such, but increasingly a matter of how ways of use, and even ways of living, can be designed and that there therefore can be such a thing as a social agenda for design” (Redstrom, 2006, pp124-125). However, in a reflection of policies from the 1970s, which promoted self-sufficiency and supported state corporations making new products, especially the major home appliances (fridges, freezers, televisions, air coolers, etc.), there arose growing demand for the importation of electrical appliances from international suppliers. This resulted in the growth of the Iraqi home appliance market by products ‘Made in Iraq’, with many electrical home appliances from the major Japanese brands presented at competitive prices, and affordable to most Iraqi families. Also the state services improved to provide a reliable electric power
supply and clean water, together with updating the telephone network to cover increased demand.

These material achievements meant changing previous styles of living for many Iraqis; a common example is the widespread introduction of a ‘deep freeze’ as a vital home appliance in the late 1970s, which Iraqis still treat as an essential ‘must have’ in their houses today. This appliance functions very well as a new way of preserving food and keeping it fresh at freezing temperatures for long periods of time, and it helps reduce the time and effort it previously took Iraqi women to prepare many food ingredients — by drying and other traditional techniques — whereby they used to save these materials for use out of season. Furthermore, this appliance supports the entirely new practice now added to Iraqi traditional cuisine, whereby it can save individual meals ready to cook, the kinds of meal that are time-consuming and laborious to prepare. This social function helps the increased number of women who are working in permanent jobs outside their homes, and it helps satisfy the widespread preferences in society for home-made food, both for themselves and their guests. The sign of modernity for this appliance ‘as an example to many others’ relates to the process of transforming the functional use of a product within the social context to match the design of a social object.

3.4. Furniture design in Iraq
3.4.1. Introduction
Studies of ‘product experience’ discuss the subjective nature of the human-product relationship, based on the nature of the interaction that occurs between human senses and psychology on the one side encountering the physical form and utilitarian components of the product on the other side. Hekkert and Hendrik defined the product experience “as the research area that develops an understanding of people’s subjective experiences that result from interacting with products” (Hekkert, 2008, p1). The context of this interaction as human-product is varied and can be seen as visual, physical and emotional. In fact, both the
interaction and the experience as resolutions involve wider entangled factors relating to social contexts, human senses and the environment. The associations between these factors are strengthened by the nature of human interest in exploring the surrounding world to satisfy needs and desires. As a process, the human-product interaction normally begins when human senses are triggered by information from the surroundings, a process based on three phases which arise to facilitate this interaction, and then mapping this human-product experience. The three phases are:

- The attraction: a sensory stimulus provokes action; it can be cognitive or related to the human senses: visual, tactile, auditory, etc. It initiates human interest, produced by the product’s physical form and its aesthetic characteristics.
- The engagement: the beginning of the experience, when human interest, curiosity and the body's physical actions combine through actions to experiment, understand how this product functions and to gain some benefit from it.
- The conclusion: reaching the goal, mainly functional through utilising the product to achieve needs and desires, yet also emotional as we enjoy or fail to enjoy the interaction with the product (Schifferstein, 2008).

Realistically, this process of interaction is quite complex and not a linear process, especially if we focus on its emotional nature. To achieve quality experiences from the human-product interaction, there are many factors involved relating to human nature, the product’s aesthetic values and functional qualities, and environmental considerations. These factors can strengthen the experience through time, practices, needs and many more aspects. The framework of product experience is one of the main fields of current practice in the designing of new products; in fact, for many designers, designing the experience is the main goal to be achieved through the design process. However, the wider field of design practice is involved now to sustain this direction through in-depth analysis to the context of experience in previous and new designs of products, services and systems.
3.4.2. Furniture in Iraqi houses

In his unique study, Chadirji argued a lack of use of separate furniture pieces such as chairs, sofas, beds and other utility furniture in the traditional Iraqi house before WWI (Chadirji, 2001). Instead, very limited designs appeared in rich families’ houses, mainly in the form of built-in shelves and cupboards. For the majority of Iraqis, the prevailing custom meant they were familiar with soft furnishings. This custom was comprehensive and included activities of sitting, eating and doing homework on the floor, while supporting their body with soft cushions or a solid object of basic design sited very low (figure 3-18) (Iraqi Takhth). This custom links Iraqis with the Bedouin heritage they are descended from and reflects their past nomadic way of living (Ibn Khaldun, 2004) (Alwardi, undated). The use of wood in the building industry in Iraq is (to date) very limited — mainly because wood is an expensive imported material, but also because the harsh climate is very dry, with a long, hot summer, which encourages the spread of termites. These are practical reasons to avoid wood as a construction material, though the unique locally-designed joinery in traditional houses used teak, a quality hardwood, for pillars, doors and windows (figure 3-19) (Iraqi Shanasheel). When the Ottomans governed the country in the 19th century, a few imported furniture pieces appeared in the houses and offices of the governors and rich families, especially in the big cities. The furniture came from Turkey, India and Germany. After the colonisation of Iraq by the British in 1917, more imported furniture items became available and were used in public buildings, British family homes and in the social clubs established in Baghdad and other big cities at that time. Very early imported furniture such as chairs and sofas gradually showed up in the houses of rich Iraqi families, imported mainly from England and India, furnishing the guest reception rooms, and presented socially and politically as

23 Means in general the wooden solid board for sitting or sleeping (www.iraqmla.org/fp/journal28/34.htm).
24 Mashrabiya or Shanasheel is the Arabic term given to a type of projecting oriel window enclosed with carved wood latticework located on the second storey or higher, often lined with stained glass. It is an element of traditional Arabic architecture used since the Middle Ages up to the mid-twentieth century. It is mostly used on the street side of the building... One of the major features of the Shanasheel is for privacy, an essential aspect of Arabic culture. A good view of the street can be obtained by the occupants without being seen, preserving the private interior without depriving the occupants of a vista of the public spaces outside. Basra (the second city in Iraq) is often called “the city with Shanasheel” (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mashrabiya).
statements of modernity and class by indicating “questions of beauty and taste which appear natural, or universal, they are powerful ways of reinforcing hierarchical distinctions between people” (Tonkinwise, 2011, p4).

Figure 3-18. The traditional sitting object ‘Takhth’, overall size W400xL500xH120mm. (digital model).

Figure 3-19. The rich heritage of exterior joinery work in a traditional Iraqi house.

The creation of the Iraqi kingdom in 1921 prompted the establishment of modern social systems and state services of education, health, social security, defence, etc. As a result, new buildings and administration offices were created to offer these services in cities and towns around the country. Furnishing these offices supported the growth of a new craft sector of furniture makers, beginning in the larger cities. This craft sector was the main provider of affordable, locally-made furniture to the middle-class families, comprising the well-educated people working in the new
civil and military government offices. Though imported furniture items were available in the market, the shortage of European furniture at that time gave plenty of design inspiration to the early furniture makers. While travel, movies and television provoked an intense interest in Western lifestyles and in using their furniture, it encouraged the craftsmen to increase variety, develop new styles and improve quality (Chadirji, 1991). The high cost and traditional customs meant these furnishings remained in the guest reception room, which resulted in a limited experience of these new products, because the custom in the majority of Iraqi houses was to keep the room closed and open it only when the guests arrived for welcoming activities of sitting, chatting and dining. In fact, these furniture items were exhibited as “products that are kept museum-like in display cases, rather than products in everyday use” (Tonkinwise, 2011, p7). The reality was that, for many families, maintaining quality furnishing for these rooms was a sign of social prestige, and to show their previous authentic (Bedouin) heritage, as evidenced by the quality of their hospitality. Slowly, more furniture items were added with new functions, styles and quality, and this process advanced the craft of furniture making, with other traditional craft sectors, as they built social systems for learning skills and developing their workers (figure 3-20).

Figure 3-20. Example of modern Iraqi furniture. Qassim Saad (1985).
Like other craft sectors, furniture makers were greatly influenced by the booming Iraqi economy in the 1970s. The mark of that era was the rapid growth in demand for furniture to fill up the modern houses Iraqis were building, to provide not only the traditional guest room furniture, but also new utility furniture that had been added to the middle class families list, such as the kitchen, dining room, family sitting room and outdoor furniture. These social needs forced the furniture industry to expand rapidly,\textsuperscript{25} to resolve the mismatch between available resources and consumer demand. The following offer glimpses of that era:

- The policies of self-sufficiency promoted at that time severely restricted the importation of accessories to local markets, and furniture was one of those accessories. In trying to fulfil the increasing demand from both public and private customers, local furniture craftsmen found themselves in the front lines without enough support for their production.
- The socialist policies of the time limited the importation of raw materials by government agencies, and kept local businesses dependent on those agencies’ bureaucracy and limited experience to offer a very restricted range and quantity of raw materials.
- Government strategic planning supported the public sector over the private, creating long delays for businesses in updating their production technologies. In the furniture industry this manifested in poor quality production, relying on old-fashioned machinery and hand tools.
- The traditional training system to upgrade workers’ skills and train new workers did not cope with these rapid changes, which also reflected poorly in product quality, craftsmanship and designs.
- The source of inspiration for the craftsmen was limited to what was available from the past as there were no real efforts to upgrade those resources or create new ones.

\textsuperscript{25} No official statistical data are available to support this fact, however, I can attest to it, having personally worked in this industry for more than a decade. At first we were just a handful of furniture makers in Al-Falluja during the mid-1970s, but we expanded from 3-5 to 12-15 workers in the late 1970s, taking on more workers to meet growing customer demand.
These points summarise the nature of the work environment in this vital craft sector since the 1970s. However, current conditions in the furniture industry in Iraq are even more gloomy, as the open market policies together with unhealthy professional practices since the 1990s heavily affect this business along with many other crafts. The poor taste of current designs of furniture, associated with cheaply-processed timber and unskilled craftsmanship, forces Iraqis to purchase imported furniture, which is being distributed to all Iraqi towns and cities. This imported furniture uses sentimental, old-fashioned designs and cheap imitations of multi-ornamented styles, although it is presented with an acceptable quality of finish. However, people are happy to purchase these kitschy products because the objects “act as key metaphors of embodied identities, tools with which to think through and create connections around” (Tilley, 2006, p23). The current trend of consumerism came after decades of isolation and two decades of deprivation, so these objects seem to function as a metaphor for the new strength of social classes in Iraqi society (figure 3-21).

Figure 3-21. Example of the tasteless furniture produced by local craftsmen.
3.5. Baking bread

3.5.1. Background to baking bread as socio-cultural practice

The authenticity of the Iraqi food culture comes through its original recipes from ancient Mesopotamia. “Indeed, the Mesopotamians, according to ancient art and texts, had a large and gastronomically advanced menu. The land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, today part of Iraq, was apparently the birthplace of haute cuisine as well as a cradle of civilization” (Lawton, 1988, p4-5). The geography and richness of Mesopotamia attracted people and traders from surrounding cultures to settle, offering them an environment to sustain their own cultural practices, and making food was one of those practices. However, the current Iraqi cuisine is marked by a wide variety of food cultures from Bedouin, Asian and Middle East regions. Iraqi cuisine is not well known outside the country, which is understandable considering the previously restricted communications channels, and limited Iraqi immigration around the world. Since the 1980s this has changed rapidly, as communication and the number of Iraqi immigrants increase and broaden their destinations. This is reflected in the establishment of new restaurants, published books and television programmes presenting selected items of Iraqi food around the world. My experience with food was limited to what was available in Iraq at that time, until I immigrated in early 1991, when this experience broadened, sparking an interest in researching and teaching topics relating to the culture and context of design in association with food.

The socio-cultural practices of Iraqi culinary customs share regional customs and traditions of making and presenting food to family and guests through gender roles and the making process including recipes, ingredients, the design and use of traditional utensils, final dishes, and even in the collective practice of eating meals as a family. The breads (in Iraqi Koboz) known as flat bread, baked according to

26 Naan (Persian: نان, Urdu: نان, Pashto: نان, Kurdish: nan) is a leavened, oven-baked flat bread. It is typical of and popular in South and Central Asia, in Iran, and in South Asian restaurants abroad. Influenced by the large influx of South Asian labour, naan has also become popular in Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf states (www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naan).
local and traditional recipes, are referred to in many regions of Asia “as a foodstuff of great historical and contemporary importance, in many cultures in the West and Near and Middle East bread has a significance beyond mere nutrition” (www.wikipedia.org). This foodstuff enjoys an exalted position in dietary customs around the world; culture, religion, nutrition and taste all position bread as the central element in many dietary systems. Archaeologists discuss this foodstuff and its significant roles in ancient times:

“Bread is a key food to investigate, since it was a staple of diet and a foodstuff of particular significance to the ancient Egyptians... Consumed by all members of society... bread was invested with significance as a symbol of life and the continuation of life... A food given such importance was likely to be closely bound up with social, economic and political relations” (Samuel, 1999, p125).

Muslims from different societies imbue bread with a spiritual metaphor, and demonstrate the socio-cultural practice of collectively making and sharing it fresh at each meal (figure 3-22). These features enhance the importance of this foodstuff and support the tradition of making it at home, instead of purchasing it from the market. In Iraq, these traditions include the building of an open wood-fired oven for baking the bread in each Iraqi house, especially in the villages and small towns. This custom was kept alive until the arrival of new designs of portable gas-fired steel ovens which replaced the traditional design, as we will explain in detail later.

The custom of baking bread in the traditional Iraqi family is known as an unpleasant daily job (though Iraqis love the fresh bread it offers for the meal), and a female member of the family is dedicated to performing the job each day. In some cases with large families living together—in villages, for example—the bread must be baked for the three meals during the day, to satisfy the need to have it at each meal. It's a fairly common practice to share the fresh bread between neighbours. Changes occurred in this unpopular job when freezers began to join the home appliances in Iraqi houses in the early 1970s, and people discovered their advantages in keeping bread, vegetables and meat fresh for many days, which helped in reducing the daily effort in preparing the food.
3.5.2. The traditional clay oven (Iraqi, Tanoor)

Also known as ‘Tandoor’ in India and many other surrounding countries, historically, ‘the oldest examples of a tandoor were found in the settlements of the ancient Indus Valley civilization’ in Pakistan. Also some historical documents mention that the Epic of Gilgames described it as tanûr27 (www.wikipedia.org).

This vertical, cylindrical oven functions by the heat generated from a charcoal or wood fire burning inside it, the direct contact, radiant heat and circulating hot air the methods for baking and cooking the food. Previous Tanoors in Iraq were made from clay, in a cylinder shape, curved, tapered and open at both top and bottom, traditionally made by women using only their hands for mixing the clay with other materials and constructing the very thin, strong walls of the cylinder whose average size would be 1000mm × 1000mm × 600mm (height, breadth, depth) (figure 3-23). The oven is left to dry in the air, and later shifted in a leather-hard state to a house, placed inside a thick solid shell of mud or brick for support and insulation. The daily heating-up of the Tanoor is a slow process that transforms the brittle clay into solid and porous pottery, the process reflected later in the quality and earthy taste of the bread baked in the Tanoor. Baking the bread at home is

---

27 The Epic of Gilgamesh is, perhaps, the oldest written story on Earth. It comes to us from ancient Sumeria and was originally written on twelve clay tablets in cuneiform script. It is about the adventures of the historical King of Uruk (somewhere between 2750 and 2500 BCE) (www.ancienttexts.org).
preferred by most families, partly because bread is essential at all meals, but also because the food-making process is an effective and continuous social practice that is hard to replace. In fact, it can be seen as a failure that the food industry in Iraq is unable to provide an acceptable alternative to this bread of a quality to match the home-made bread. The bread is made by women at home, and depends on the learning of social skills transmitted from mother to daughter (figure 3-24). The process starts by mixing the ingredients to make the dough, then, once raised, it is divided into portions (balls of 100-150 grams), each ball flattened by hand into thin, 400-500mm broadly circular shapes, then it is stuck carefully and fast on the hot side of the pre-heated Tanoor. The heat transferred from the hot clay touching the wet dough and the radiant heat from the bottom of the Tanoor slowly bakes the circles, then they are removed with some basic tools. The process produces 10-15 pieces of bread per day of this delicious, crispy, thin flatbread for the average family. The baking process requires skill and safety considerations, as the temperature inside a Tanoor rises to 400°C. Baking is not the only function for a Tanoor— it is also used for cooking tender, tasty barbequed meat via the slow, radiant heat.

Figure 3-23. Building the traditional mud Tanoor is a specialised job for women.
3.5.3. The current gas fuelled steel oven

One of many items I noticed were disappearing during my trip home was the Tanoor. I had remembered where it was before, in that corner of a side courtyard facing a small garden in our family home, when my Mother was baking bread early on Friday morning (the weekend), so the whole family could enjoy a special breakfast. I remember her favourite recipe, when she added to the raised dough the mixture of minced lamb, onion, parsley, chopped tomato and lots of spices, to make delicious flat bread pastry (in Iraqi, Koboz arok) (figure 3-25). However, instead of the familiar brick construction of the original Tanoor, I saw an ugly, rusted, sheet metal cylinder, about 1000mm in diameter by 600mm high, sitting on four tiny steel bars on castors, with a circular aluminium gas burner in the centre of the cylinder, a rubber hose leading to an LPG gas bottle sitting beside it (figure 3-26). This product is known as the ‘Tanoor al-gas,’ which from the late 1980s replaced the traditional wood-fired Tanoor. The item is distinguished by its cheap quality, sitting in a corner when not being used at Iraqi houses throughout the villages, towns and cities. Still, the oven is at least locally designed and fabricated,

---

28 An interest example of a new design for a steel Tandoor is available in the USA market, for further information follow the link www.homdoor.com/index.php/grills?limit=25.
still produced to the same low quality in huge quantities, in small metal workshops that rely on semi-skilled workers and very basic machining.

Figure 3-25. Home-baked ‘Koboz arok’.

Figure 3-26. The gas-fuelled steel oven, fabricated locally.

Tanoor al-gas disengages one’s experience from the previous traditional Tanoor, as the design represents a unilateral transformation reflecting absent functional thinking, resulting in a new product torn out of its socio-cultural context. Moreover, Tanoor al-gas provides poor experiences, which can be described by the following points:

- Attraction: it’s an unfamiliar shape for a home appliance, looks aggressive and emphasises a vintage mechanical appearance. The product has low-
quality materials and the finishing adds further unattractive elements (figure 3-27).

Figure 3-27. Poor quality product, material and manufacture.

- Engagement: ergonomically, the relationship between user and product with the previous Tanoor has been replaced with caution and a crucial need to avoid touching the hot metal of the Tanoor al-gas. The lack of technical control to avoid over-heating the different parts of this product adds further concerns regarding user safety (figure 3-28).

Figure 3-28. Comparing two methods of interaction: the traditional mud ‘tanoor’ and the current ‘tanoor al-gas’.
• Conclusion: Tanoor al-gas changed the culture of bread baking at home by making it fast and uncontrolled, converting it into a job disliked so much the women try to avoid it if they can. I noticed during my visit home that my family is relying more on purchasing another kind of bread from local bakeries, a kind of Turkish bread baked in brick ovens; Iraqis love it and consume it with breakfast and dinner in particular (figure 3-29).

Figure 3-29. Traditional bread named ‘Smoon’ baking in a horizontal brick oven.

My argument here is that the design of the Tanoor al-gas rejects all the customs and traditions of baking bread at home in an attempt to provide a contemporary way of living and avoid the smoke associated with charcoal and wood fires, as when the previous Tanoor was used for heating. But another important factor is the poor treatment of the craft women who build the clay Tanoor, connected with the above-mentioned neglect that many craft sectors suffered from at that time. While it was a good move to create and manufacture this kind of permanent product29, although it lacked good design, even so, this product at least keeps local production facilities and skills in use. It’s a great opportunity for Iraqi designers to look to such products—and many others in the same situation—to find good designs that keep the links vital to create good experiences.

29The clay Tanoor requires changing after a few years as, with continuous use, the main problem is the cracking and peeling of the inner surface.
3.6. Reflections: Home, traditions and materiality

My memory of the design of our home was disrupted during my return home in 2010. As a result of the war in Fallujah, where I was born, after my family returned from their local exiles in 2005, their first job was to rebuild the family home and their business. Because of the large size of our family, the original structure of our home was increased to accommodate my younger brothers’ families. A new house was built on a section created by joining a small part of the previous family home with land taken from its front garden. This new house now accommodates the family of my third younger brother, as well as my sisters, and is known now as the 'family home' (figure 3-30). It honours the social arrangements to maintain a collective way of living in Iraqi society. My memories of our previous home keep the strongest emotions of my life anchored there. I created and crafted all of its joinery and the majority of the indoor furniture, which long remained a model of style and quality workmanship (figure 3-31). Unfortunately, none of these objects were left, except a few pieces that were located on the second storey. ‘When our home is destroyed, or irrevocably changed, or is inaccessible to us (after emigration, for example), it can seem as if we ourselves are no longer whole, or are suffering bereavement’ (McLeod, 2008, p32).

Figure 3-30. The façade of the family home in Al-Fallujah, 2011.

---

30 This subtitle was edited from the published article: Saad, Qassim (2011) Travelling to Post War Iraq in 2010-11: Histories and Designs in Context. In Scope, Journal of Contemporary Research Topics. Art and Design Vol:5 School of Art, Otago Polytechnic www.thescopes.org.
The design of houses in Iraq as I saw them during my last trip was totally different from the styles that dominated from the 1950s to the late 1980s. Then, Iraqis lived in an atmosphere of modernisation and energetic state policies for economic development, reflected in their changed lifestyles, especially in urban areas. Visually, new architectural styles were created to fulfil the demand for modern construction in both public buildings and private homes. However, the architectural designs of buildings and their construction materials kept the identical object forms reflecting the influences of modernity during that era, as presented in the modified compositions taken from Western architectural styles. Certainly, the testing and technical skills available locally were affected during this modification process, and resulted in hybrid styles of modern architecture colouring the designs of domestic houses (figure 3-32).

Figure 3-31. The furniture and joinery work in our previous family home in Al-Fallujah, destroyed during 2004 battle in Al-Fallujah. Saad, Qassim (1985).
Iraqi families are used to living collectively — often two or three generations of the same family. The traditional designs of Iraqi houses during the 19th and early 20th centuries provided creative solutions for accommodating these large families. As discussed earlier, an open courtyard was one of those solutions. However, the design of modern houses since the 1950s didn’t cope well with the traditional lifestyle, especially the collective living, even though many studies had been undertaken by respected Iraqi architects to create unique designs for houses in Iraq. Alternatively, the designs of modern houses introduced the ‘living area’ (figure 3-33) by joining the kitchen, dining and family sitting rooms together in lieu of the ‘open courtyard’ of the traditional design. Still, practically speaking, the ‘living area’ in many houses did not satisfy the details of the customs and traditional way of living, a topic addressed by many architectural and anthropological studies of the living practices of Iraqi families. Certainly, the modern houses provided sound, durable structures, better utility rooms and many modern conveniences, but they didn’t meet the needs for proper interaction between family members.
The composition of these modern houses was mainly backed bricks or stone and flat cement walls, with large steel-framed glass windows for the exterior. The average-sized house (3–4 bedrooms) had two storeys; the first floor was dedicated to living and hospitality areas, which covered 30% to 50% of this part of the building. Each family tries to offer the best quality furniture and accessories suitable for the hospitable activities of sitting and dining. Bedrooms were divided between the two storeys.

However, what I saw in regard to the new designs in some cities and towns have totally changed from my memory of previous designs. The exterior facades show a style of heterogeneous architectural composition obtained by borrowing and modifying – with garish, parochial taste and construction techniques – classical elements from ancient Western architectural styles mixed with local traditional ornamental elements. Current architectural compositions show mainly two tall columns dominating the house entrance, associated with flat and curved walls, all together rising to the top of the two storeys with a spontaneous mixing of natural
and synthetic construction materials such as marble, ceramic tiles, cement, wood, large aluminium windows and lots of ready-made accessories. There are signs of restoring the concept of the open courtyard, although the modern version is open between the two wings of the house, and covered by a flat or dome-shaped roof (figure 3-34). At the same time, these new houses maintain the tradition of hospitality by providing an even larger proportion of the site for the hospitality area, which is furnished extensively with material objects of mixed styles.

![Figure 3-34. Example of reintroducing the sense of an open courtyard in a house.](image)

There is no doubt that current house designs in Iraq reflect local experience in the sense that experience “is not something that is exclusively internal to the individual but is affected by the environment” (Margolin, 2002, p40-41). These designs show one way to apply individuality to the living environment, while appreciating a collective way of living. The rebirth of traditions in designing Iraqi houses acknowledges what Dewey described as: “every experience both takes up something from those which have gone before and modifies in some way the quality of those which come after” (Margolin, 2002, p40-41). Still, current designs, from a design perspective, are plagued by fakes, tastelessness and poor imitations, reflecting the long-term deprivation and isolation that weakened continuity and a connection with the past. Essentially, political and administrative corruption
prevents progress in developing policies and building codes based on professional consultation with designers to cope with current needs and lifestyles.

In his article Kultermann (1999) commented on the future of architectural design in Iraq and mentioned that:

“in spite of recent difficulties in Iraqi architecture there are several forces at work that may one day lead to a most fruitful development. These are visible in the works and designs of Basil al-Bayati, Maath al-Alousi, Abbad al-Radi, and Zaha Hadid. Although they are not living in Iraq, each has achieved international recognition that one day could become decisive for Iraq” (Kultermann, 1999, p11).

While it is true, in Iraq particularly, that the majority of creative specialists in all disciplines are living in exile, this is not a new situation, although it has greatly increased since the 1990s. Affected by the instability as well as a political viewpoint which sees designers in general as stylists, not as “politics in its own right with the potential to transform the nature of political action” (Fry, 2011, p101), this usage may appear consciously or unconsciously in the designer’s attitudes and professional works.

3.7. Discussion
The modern artificial objects associated with the arrival of the British when they colonised Iraq after WWI — the early agricultural machines, locomotives, cars, the hand tools gradually distributed around the big cities — all those new mechanical systems were limited, expensive and at that time required new skills to operate and maintain. No doubt the Iraqis’ interaction with those early mechanical systems was based on imitating how the producers of those products – the Europeans – were using them. The English terms for many of those products are still used—with some modifications to make them easy to pronounce in the Arabic language with an Iraqi accent—especially the hand tools and mechanical parts. Also, changes in customs of living and working reflect the gradual effects these artificial objects have on traditional cultural practices, or even in creating new practices, for
example the big changes brought by the early kitchen equipment of kerosene cookers and fridges on the culture of making, saving and presenting food in the Iraqi kitchen.

The strong connection between ‘modernisation’ and artificial objects is seen in the replacement of traditionally crafted objects associated with local customs of living and working by new objects either imported or made in Iraq under licensing agreements – mass-manufactured objects, presented as instruments of a ‘modern’ way of living and working. This expanded the kinds, numbers and quality of imported products in local Iraqi markets after WWII, on which new private businesses relied for importing a variety of goods of international quality brands covering a wide range of consumer products and home appliances, e.g., televisions, radios, refrigerators, cookers, washing machines, sewing machines and heating and cooling devices. Slowly, those products furnished the middle class Iraqi houses, mainly in the big cities. The same phenomenon was at work when the new businesses of maintenance workshops and a few other small manufacturing firms were added to the work scene in many cities beside the traditional craft workshops. This accessory of modernity rapidly created a gap between the new products and people’s experiences. The gap occurred in two main categories:

- Social class; income limited the products to the new middle-class and above.
- Cultural practices; ignorance of how to use or maintain the new products made people frightened of using them.

These socio-cultural aspects shifted the artificial products into higher levels and encouraged an attitude of treating them as precious and ‘museum objects’ outside their use. This phenomenon covered many products, especially furniture and various audio and visual equipment.

However, with further influence from the wealth in society reflecting the new consumerism amongst Iraqis, there was high consumer demand for new consumer products such as cars, home appliances, furniture, etc. associated with upgrading
the work environment with newly manufactured machinery, and greater self-discipline in the practices of manufacturing and maintenance firms. That expansion strengthened the ‘modernisation’ in Iraqi society. It resulted in a massive expansion of state financial support for building new infrastructure all over the country – as discussed earlier. That move was interrupted in the 1980s, when politics and war frustrated their efforts. The decade of isolation during the 1990s exacerbated the deprivation in society, reaching severe levels reflected in an obvious deterioration of previous achievements. They were replaced by contingency plans restricting imports of materials, while food and basic medicines were controlled by the state and the UN sanctions programme. The collapse of the Iraqi economy during that time, together with enormous damage to infrastructure such as electricity supply, forced people to return to traditional ways of living and rely on limited, basic products. The current voracious consumerism, reflecting the effect of previous decades of deprivation and isolation, arose rapidly when insufficient state marketing policies opened local markets without control of the quality of imports, resulting in kitschy, old-fashioned, cheap products filling up Iraqi markets. A lack of experience in the Iraqi consumer after the isolation, together with a dire lack of information about product quality and efficiency, combined to produce unsuitable consumer practices.

This chapter discussed the relationship between human and product, a discussion enhanced by analysis of selected products based on their positioning as social objects, e.g., the designs of dwellings, home furniture and home appliances. Design studies covering these topics in the Iraqi context are not available—in fact, the only available literature in Arabic relates to architecture and art studies by the pioneering Iraqi architect Rifat Chadirji (Chadirji, 1991, 1995, 2002). In these studies Chadirji relies on his rich experience in architecture and furniture design in Iraq since the 1950s. This highlights the crucial need for researchers in design studies to further investigate interdisciplinary topics and collect data in varied directions, then use it as a background for analytical frameworks to support the context of design with these objects. Unfortunately, the current cultural achievements in Iraq are suffering, especially in creative fields like literature, art,
architecture, design, etc., from the steep deterioration in Iraqi intellectual circles, caused mainly by political instability and socio-cultural practices interrupted in recent decades.

The chapter presented an overview of the relationships between Iraqis and artificial objects, relying on theoretical frameworks reflecting the many aspects involved in building this relationship such as customs, traditions, environment, etc. The chapter addressed these relationships through selected examples covering extended design disciplines in architecture, furniture making and home appliances, using examples of objects that are mainly designed and manufactured in Iraq, with data and photos collected to describe those examples and to reflect the researcher’s in-field observation during his visit to Iraq in 2010.

The nostalgic thinking and practices relying on past experiences dominate Iraqi lifestyles, and the ‘good old days’ are the theme of any conversation with the people there. Observation of practices and reading presents further evidence of people living comfortably in the past and not believing in a better future. Reflections from such contexts of living on artificial objects are important for this study. During the data collection, which covered more than face-to-face interviews, such as searching online, reading books, etc., I kept noticing the dominant influence of historical memories, especially in creative cultural practices, on Iraqi thinking. Evidence of this impression is the following:

- The Iraqi pioneering scholars in art, architecture and other creative fields provide the only examples for the new generation of artists, architects, designers, etc., to follow.
- The previous practice of modernity in design studies in Iraq is the only path to synthesise the relationship between humans and objects, which reflects the absence of efforts to discuss these topics currently.
- The absence of reliable resources in the Arabic language dedicated to presenting design studies as current topics through books, design journals or even electronic resources.
Building a better and sustainable living environment is the urgent help Iraqis require. This help must be given within the context of local socio-cultural practices.

3.8. Summary
The analysis of the foundations of the relationship between Iraqis and material objects addressed many factors; the influence of wider socio-cultural norms in shaping those foundations is seen in perceiving the elements of the relationship between humans and objects. To strengthen understanding of the relationship, this chapter offers insights into design thinking and practices for Iraqi designers and, in open-ended interview sessions with them, discusses their interpretation of the foundations of design in Iraq.
4. The Iraqi designers’ vision of design

No description of the dimensions and structure of the framework of design in Iraq would be accurate without engaging with Iraqi designers. The previous chapters provide a base for guiding this research to an effective engagement with Iraqi designers as the study proceeds. Although this chapter aims to investigate the practice of design in Iraq and look at the ways the Iraqi designer community is beginning to engage their knowledge and expertise with the current design infrastructure in Iraq, it also offers insights into the designer community’s focus on searching for a new direction to meet the country’s future demands.

The wider vision in facilitating this engagement is to offer the richest possible experience and to provide many types of experience related to the designers’ expertise, whether it came from being a design educator or professional designer. The realisation of this vision was disrupted by lack of available resources, as well as intensive security restrictions which prevented the researcher from being in Iraq to conduct and document the engagement. Still, the chapter was designed to present the Iraqi designers’ participation through two forms of research:

1. Semi-structured interviews; the distance interview sessions were conducted with selected members of the Iraqi designer community.
2. Reflection on the Iraqi designer transformation; being a ‘reflective practitioner’ and searching my own transformation since the 1970s. Analysis of the experiences that continue to shape my practices, and reflection on the practices of design in Iraq, while being an Iraqi designer living in exile.
These two research forms and their outcomes helped to discover a vision, guided by the designers’ narratives, as they discussed how past and present socio-political and cultural issues in Iraq are strongly influencing the development of design as discourse, represented in its main activities as design education and professional practice. The main theme connecting these discussions was treating design as a modern phenomenon associated with styles and trends, intended to add value to artificial objects, through aesthetic, ornamenting treatments. This restricted view of design predominates and is clearly reflected in the design education curriculum, post-graduate candidates’ thesis titles, and the very few design research publications (in Arabic) for design educators in Iraqi institutions. Design practices outside academia imply the same restricted view. The chapter separately discusses these two forms of research practice under two subtitles; this technique, the researcher believes, enables an advanced analytical discussion. The summary of this chapter addresses both outcomes, as content and context, in identifying the framework of design in Iraq.
4.1. Chapter overview

Figure 4-1. Chapter 4 overview.
4.2. Research method
This chapter relies on qualitative research methods selected and designed to support the interdisciplinary nature of topics discussed in this pilot study. They also strongly link the chapter with previous chapters, emphasising the researcher’s long-term commitment to collecting, reviewing and publishing studies of the practice of design in Iraq. Surveying topics cover the introduction of the modern Western concept of design to developing countries, including Iraq, which has supported the ‘design for development’ movement since the 1970s, which also guides tertiary design education programmes in Iraq. This chapter is meant to offer insights into and describe current design practices, focusing on teaching and research, conducted through courses in different locations and degree levels, which show intense localisation mixing Western theory with traditional and local design elements, such as the craft of adding value to objects by ornamenting them. The qualitative research methods applied to this chapter cover the following:

1. **Participant observers:** they address the researcher’s field activities in the study, with an advanced kind of observation compared with non-participant observations, which occur in cases when “observers found themselves interacting with the people and their roles shifted to participant observers” (Lichtman, 2010, p165). Activities associated with being there focus on collecting documents and photos and taking a couple of open lectures targeted at staff and postgraduate candidates of two main institutions for design education. Those activities occurred during the researcher’s trip to post-war Iraq in 2010.

2. **Open-ended interview sessions with the Iraqi designers:** this qualitative research tool proceeded through a long-term process initiated in early 2011, in the form of interview sessions conducted in Arabic, and via distance communication tools over the Internet using email, Yahoo Messenger\(^{31}\) and Skype. The mode of communication chosen for this project is justified by the safety requirements, since the field of study is still a war zone, and financial and other logistical obstacles precluded doing these

---

\(^{31}\) Very popular chatting software in Iraq.
interview sessions face-to-face at that time. The interviews targeted ten selected Iraqi designers from a group who were interested and agreed to be interviewed. The selected designers are both educators and professional designers, a few of them living and working outside Iraq, with the majority recently in Iraq. Their speciality covers the major design disciplines offered in two of the main tertiary design institutions in Baghdad. They were introduced to the study and its objectives during the early conversations, they signed the consent form sent to them by email in Arabic, and agreed on the arrangement to keep their comments and notes anonymous in the text, while further information about them appears in (Appendix 3). The interview sessions aimed at investigating the design community’s thoughts regarding the direction of Iraqi design concepts and practices, both previous and current, which they identified. They are at a crucial stage of adjusting their teaching and research to meet extensive demands for design services in Iraq, while also aligning with current design concepts and practices around the world. In addition, the interview sessions looked at the ways the Iraqi design community is beginning to engage, with their knowledge and expertise, in the current design infrastructure in Iraq.

3. *Being a ‘reflective practitioner’*: the main theme driving this review is my own transformation, which continues shaping my practices as an Iraqi designer living in exile. I believe this example can offer unique insights, as Schön stated: “when someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context. He is not dependent on the categories of established theory and technique, but constructs a new theory of the unique case” (Schön, 1983, p68-69). This new theory offers a pioneering insight into the circumstances of design in Iraq, and how it has survived during the last three decades, and it’s a way to reproduce existing viewpoints.

4.2.1. *The semi-structured interview*

The qualitative research method of a semi-structured interview chosen for this study aims to provide new knowledge by utilising this mode of distance

---

32 The College of Fine Arts, the University of Baghdad, and the newly established College of Applied Arts, the Foundation of Technical Institutions in Baghdad.
communication to enhance a conversational interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. The semi-structured interview is a research tool that offers great opportunity to provide insights and a greater depth of specific information within the uncontrolled nature of discussion and to enhance the discussion of future opinions. It is a research tool that offers “an important role in the development of exploratory models and the preparation for more systematic forms of investigation” (Schensul, 1999, p149). During these interview sessions the relationship between both ends of the communication channel is based on providing equal opportunity to guide the discussion as the “interviewer did not seek to control the interviews. Rather, interviewees freely expressed their thoughts and took the interviews in the direction that they chose” (Fox, 2010, p190). Also, Wengraf facilitated the format of the semi-structured interview as it “is a deliberate half-scripted or quarter-scripted interview: its questions are only partially prepared in advance (semi-structured) and will therefore be largely improvised by you as interviewer. But only largely: the interview as a whole is a joint production, a co-production, by you and your interviewee,” (Wengraf, 2001, p3). The conversations in the semi-structured interviews addressed the main elements in this study framework, which resulted from previous discussions and reflected design practices, well represented in the literature, and the interaction of observational practices. The interviewees’ expertise and design practices enriched the advanced discussion of selected topics from the list presented to them. All of this validated the decision to select this research tool, as it provides great benefits to the researcher from comprehensive analysis of wider issues within each topic.

Many arguments presented and discussed in previous chapters got further support and credibility from the interviewees during these interview sessions, which also offered profound understanding of the contemporary perception and practice of design in Iraq. These qualitative research tools provided insights into the knowledge, experiences and practices of these selected participants, despite the limitations in available published materials presenting this essential knowledge and rich up-to-date information regarding the contemporary context of design, designers’ roles in society, the practices of professional design, and designers’
thoughts for design in the future of Iraq. The valuable insights into the topics raised during many of the discussions advance the objectives of this study and highlight the importance of continued efforts among the Iraqi designer community to keep developing the usage of design within the very stressful environment inside Iraq, and their active participation outside Iraq, which acknowledges them as the leaders and developers of many art and design education programmes at the tertiary level in many countries teaching in both Arabic and English, as well as active professional designers working in many professional design firms around the world.

4.2.1.1. Interview session
The interview session's procedures were designed to meet the guidelines for research practices involving human participants, which state that the “Application for ethics approval of research involving human participants” was issued and approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the school of Architecture and Design, RMIT University (Appendix 4). Those procedures were designed to follow multiple stages, some stages for investigating interest, others for preparations and documentation. However, the Arabic language is the language for these stages (including the conversation sessions), so the researcher prepared all relevant documents and gathered data, then the data were translated from Arabic into English or vice versa, as required. The stages are designed as follows:

Stage one: Initiate remote communication, inviting the designer’s participation and identifying their interest in collaborating. Participants are asked to respond via email or through phone calls by the researcher. The aims of this stage are to:

- Briefly introduce myself and the project.
- Create a database of interested people only, listing their names and preferred contact details.

Stage two: Secure research ethics approval, then introduce further details of the study and clarify the ethical considerations through the ‘Consent Form’ and

---
33 According to non-official statistical data, there are 50 design educators active in the private universities in Jordan alone.
‘Information Sheet.’ Participants are to receive these documents via email, read and ask questions if required. The instructions for the participants are to sign and return the consent form to the researcher via email. These documents are to provide answers to the following questions:

- What is the study’s title, its objectives, methodology and time-line?
- How will potential participants be identified and accessed?
- What does participation involve?
- How will confidentiality and anonymity be protected?
- What data or information will be collected and how will it be used?
- Can participants change their minds and withdraw from the project (process and rights)?
- What if participants have any questions?

**Stage three:** Confirm participation in the study to the people who signed and returned the consent form. Create a timetable for participants to select a preferred time for the semi-structured online recordable conversation. Researcher will encourage participants to respond to their own stories during the conversation sessions.

**Stage four:** Second conversation with each participant if required, to clarify topics from previous conversation. The same rules will apply as in the first conversation.

**4.2.1.2. Interviewee anonymity**

The digital record file resulting from each session is labelled with the interviewee’s name and saved in a secure place, after producing a transcript in Arabic from the audio files. This process starts by listening to the audio file and handwriting the conversation on sheets of paper. The sheets from each file are identified by two labels: the name of the interviewee and consecutive numbers. The transcript is formatted as a list of points, using the interviewee’s original words to summarise his or her responses to each topic discussed during the interview. This process culminates in typing the handwritten text into tables in separate files for each main topic. A selected comment from each topic is carefully translated into English,
but it will be identified only by the number of each interviewee in the title of the discussion. All the materials resulting from this process will be saved in a secure place and further handling will follow the guidelines from the approved research ethics application.

4.2.1.3. The reflective practitioner
The period of transformation presents analytical narratives to my professional practices as an Iraqi designer living in exile. The periods that began traditionally enough as craftsmanship, and later became the study and professional practice of an industrial designer, were based on both traditional and modern systems of education. When I left Iraq in 1991, new perspectives and opportunities were available in a more stable situation and I worked as a design educator in the only industrial design degree programme in Jordan. In 2001, wider opportunities arose and resulted in my moving to New Zealand as a new immigrant. The move took advantage of my previous experience and developed it by securing a job lecturing at a very new degree programme in product design. Then I became heavily involved in design research through the wonderful opportunity I received in the form of a scholarship to become a PhD candidate in industrial design in Australia. Remembering these narratives raises a number of questions for me, regarding the meaning of material objects, development, technology and related terms. Using these narratives as a starting point, I have found it necessary to consider the main ‘eras’ which have shaped my experience, as these stages constitute the objects of my experience, and also they are the roots supporting my ongoing transformation.

4.3. The interview analysis
The main aims in presenting the following topics for discussion is to obtain further understanding and add to the knowledge of how current design practices in Iraq are contextualised. These topics focus on identification and analytical discussion of specific elements of the current design discourse and its development. Design education firms in Iraq have the main resources to provide insights about design thinking and its professional practice in the country. In fact, academia is the only source of reliable information in the absence so far of any professional
organisation for Iraqi designers. The following analytical process was applied to the outcomes of many distance interview sessions conducted with the selected group from the Iraqi designer community. Each subtitle addresses one main topic identified in the semi-structural interview draft sheet. Although some interviewees engaged in serious discussion of some of these topics, others admitted their ignorance about details addressed within each main topic. However, this varied according to the interviewee’s expertise and experience.

### 4.3.1. The context of design

This main topic was constructed and facilitated through the following points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The discussion topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* What is your preferred definition of design?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Do you consider design to be a minor discipline within art, science, applied arts, social science, technology, engineering, etc.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Does the political milieu in Iraq affect your study of design? If yes, please explain briefly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Is your interest in design based on the nature of its artistic attitude, scientific attitude, applied arts attitude, social science attitudes, technological attitudes, engineering attitudes or any other attitude (please specify)?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 4.3.1.1. What is the preferred definition of design?

Many interviewees preferred to start the conversation with ‘the context of design’. Most of the responses began with single words, developed into sentences following a mood of abstraction, presenting direct and shallow definitions, then got more richly focused during the dialogue to a kind of agreement about design and its nature, repeating words such as design is the concept, plan, making of objects, relationship with humans and influences on society, etc. There were a few interesting views describing design as a process, without clear indication or understanding of this process, methodologically and as practical application, for example identifying specific strategies and describing techniques of visualising the
wider ramifications, and later, the closer paths for the work in progress, not only the final outcome.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant 1</td>
<td>Design is an applied art; it’s the project plan, and the outcome of serving functional and aesthetic needs in society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-7</td>
<td>Design is creativity, development and rearrangement of the object elements. It’s the discipline of study that links wider scientific principles to the making of objects, and aims through the use of these objects to enhance societal behavioural changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-4</td>
<td>Design is the aesthetic form of the material object that links the functional properties of the object with people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-10</td>
<td>Design is the field of study that shows the process of transforming concepts into products; local craftsmen are the sources of knowledge I use to develop new paths of study or introduce new disciplines to the design curriculum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-6</td>
<td>An inclusive context for problem-solving or making alternative choices through a process of concept creation, planning and making, aiming to improve the human quality of living.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td>Design is the human ability to think and plan to solve a problem… In art, design is focused on the development of these solutions based on systematic phases to achieve harmony between aesthetics and function.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.3.1.2. Discussing the definition of design**

While the artistic origin and nature of design were identified clearly and widely, its relationships with science and technology got more attention. They reflected their current situation of being in direct interaction with new products, which are available at reasonable prices in the market, which presents a new phenomenon for many people after decades of isolation and deprivation of new products. In fact, this experience is bringing about another great shift, as Iraqi designers rethink design and its relationships with other disciplines. They also wonder what these
interdisciplinary approaches mean for design and the designer’s knowledge and practice. As a result, Iraqi designers are talking about design in the context of ‘applied arts,’ and justifying that context to acknowledge the many other disciplines whose knowledge the designers bring to the design process, also to promote design away from the previous concept of being a pure ‘arts’ discipline, according to some interviewees. Furthermore, this context of ‘applied arts’ got extra support officially when the College of Applied Arts was established in 2011 in Baghdad, becoming the first such school and which emerged from the upgrading of the previous Institute of Applied Arts in the technical education sector. This new school offers a BA degree in both interior design and communication design, with further disciplines to be offered in the future.

The many definitions of design agree that this word — as both a verb and a noun — is a form of human creative action associated with planning, drawing and making, although these definitions represent the linguistic context of the term. However, these linguistic meanings occur in many contemporary definitions of design, which move further toward articulating ‘design’ as a process to create an object, where in this context design is not the object itself, or the fashion of the final resolution, nor the surface treatments ornamenting the object’s physical shape. Instead, design is the process of achieving outcomes, following a demand to enrich the human experience. This process incorporates creative activities meant to transform concepts based on human needs, desires and experience, by considering them mentally and physically, to represent outcomes in the form of material or immaterial objects or structural resolution — for example, in the designing of services or systems. In this contemporary context, design is the culmination of the creative process, methodologically; this process is a wider mixture of activities from the collection of data through research, analysis, synthesis, visualisation, refining and final resolution. The vital relationship between the design process and the human being empowers the process, and inevitably enhances its interaction as phases within the wider socio-cultural, scientific and materialistic nature of designed objects, services and systems. Addressing design in this context identifies an enormous shift and extends the
philosophical approaches to design. No doubt, the nature of knowledge, practice, and skill associated with the design process consists of the nature of wider thinking and planning to achieve this status for design outside its previous context of making, which previously associated it only with art or artisans as the shape provider for artefacts.

Although this context seems common, at least for the users interacting naturally with material objects in their surroundings, in fact, the previous slow process of product development enhanced this feeling among users, i.e., the current designs of communication devices emerged onto a new path and delinked the product design – as form – from the normal development sequence. Certainly, the current interdisciplinary approaches of design frames design between two main dimensions; as practices of theoretical thinking, or as practice-based applied research. This context is replacing the previous culture of design and is focused on making and reshaping products to meet limited marketing expectations regarding fashion, material and production techniques.

4.3.1.3 Does the political milieu in Iraq affect your study of design? This point was of interest in many conversations. It emerged mainly by comparing Iraq in previous and current situations and how these affect them as people, in their living and working environments. Many of the conversations took the form of personal narratives, presenting these people’s tragedies and emotional feelings about the situation in Iraq during the last four decades. For many of those Iraqi designers the challenging and fruitful experiences were great during the 1980s—they were the ‘good old days’, associated for many of them with being awarded their first degree qualification, even though design was mostly an academic study, with extremely limited possibilities for professional practice as a designer. Those feelings quickly evaporated, when the most miserable living and working conditions arose with the collapse of every system supporting basic living conditions, including food, health, education, etc., which the decade of the 1990s presented. Though many of the pioneering Iraqi designers were awarded their PhD qualification from the University of Baghdad after the 1990s, their
candidatures were associated with a great lack of human and material resources which challenged them to nevertheless achieve a quality education.

The darkness of the 1990s increased and became associated with a dreadful increase in socio-political corruption, insecurity and terrorism which further degraded living conditions after the American invasion of 2003. The only resulting changes have been very slow progress in improving wages for a large sector of Iraqi workers, and policies opening markets and the communication media.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-2</td>
<td>The current cultural confusion in Iraq is the obvious result of our being unprepared to face the open nature of living conditions after 2003. The previous decades of instability, cultural and communication discontinuity are major elements shaping this obvious disaster our society is living in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-5</td>
<td>Iraqis these days are facing the widest gap ever dividing their society, it is the sectarian religious ideology, empowered by corrupted political groups, with the political authority from American-forced legislation, designed for Iraqis without their consultation... The very direct reflection of these divisive policies appear in the fast redesign process for school teaching curricula, which now promote these sectarian religious principles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-6</td>
<td>In Iraqi society, as well as in our design education, we are facing a transition and rapid change between previously closed and self-sufficient markets, to open, uncontrolled markets. Obviously, the wider negative consumer demands related to quality of products, prices, consumer behaviour, counterfeit goods, etc., are becoming reality as new phenomena we didn’t face before, and we lack the knowledge to handle it well... Our previous guidelines for the master degree proposal to meet the demands of supporting local manufacturing corporations are out of date and out of place in the current market... We face the dilemma of creating new directions for the design curriculum to follow in both under-graduate and post-graduate courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td>Of course, as a societal human being, I can’t be isolated from the society</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FRAMEWORK FOR RE-VISIONING DESIGN IN IRAQ | 169
I'm living in and working for.

Participant-10

I do try to keep the development process in my institution moving faster, even with the extreme socio-political corruption and the heavy bureaucracy in our administration system. We must move faster, as we currently lag behind the rest of the design movement, even compared with surrounding countries.

4.3.1.4. Discussing design and politics
There’s no doubt that the political climate has affected the practice of design, especially in a country like Iraq, and this study has presented much discussion already, describing and analysing these influences. An obvious feature of the present climate is the colossal instability, which remains the fundamental factor causing the failure of the Iraqi project of modernisation. That factor gained strength through the rapid, dramatic changes to the nature of the Iraqi political order, transforming it from a strict secularism into the very opposite — the current religious sectarianism. Certainly, these changes will add strength to dividing this nation and its land; there is very clear evidence in the country to support this conclusion.

4.3.2. The role of design and the designer
This main topic was constructed and facilitated through the following points:

The discussion topics

- Do you consider design practices are important to support social development? If yes, please explain briefly.

- Are you aware of a social responsibility of the designer in society? If yes, please explain briefly.

- Do you practice design to develop specific social system services such as: health care, education, craft industry, women’s rights, social wellbeing? If yes, please explain briefly.

- Has your reading articulated the role of design for social development? If
Has your writing articulated the role of design for social development? If yes, please explain briefly.

4.3.2.1. Design in a social context, the designer’s responsibilities and practices

The cultural norms associated with design and making are well known, and these deeply rooted cultural beliefs, through traditional social practices and customs, guided the early attempts of design education in Iraq, as discussed earlier. Also, these norms sustain and still empower current professional design practices. Craftsmanship and making skills are dominant elements of the framework of design education, which colour the designers’ practices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-7</td>
<td><em>Transforming the practices of design outside its traditional fields of making the material object is an extremely risky move, especially in our society. We are not mature enough for this extended role of design practise.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-1</td>
<td><em>The material object resulting from the design practices is evidence for the important role of design in society... Clearly, my graphic design practices present model examples to implement design practices in society.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-3</td>
<td><em>I believe that the society’s cultural practices are the basis and a resource for the designer to develop their own practices. Also, the concept of industrial design supports the designer’s commitment to improve the culture of society through the material outcomes of design practices.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-2</td>
<td><em>I prefer to think about this context from the other end, I mean, society is responsible also to sustain and support good practices of design. To achieve this goal, society must appreciate the good practices designers keep presenting, and showing this appreciation in different forms, such as in social behavioural changes.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td><em>Development as process aims at transforming and investing existing</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participant-2

As a designer I believe that we lack the mechanism to transform the design concept outside its abstracted form. The design education system here can do more toward this, also in thinking about the role of designers in social development, which is presenting the context of development outside its traditional context of materialisation, and the Western technological transformation.

4.3.2.2. Discussing the designer’s social responsibility

The discussions about design roles in society were limited to the traditional design outcome in the form of physical and visual objects. For many of the interviewees, making these outcomes is the aim and the end of design activities; these outcomes are the benefits our society looks to achieve with design practices. Other thoughts addressed the social context in the form of the nature of the interaction between society and the objects – these objects are the design outcomes – to show how and what societies do to support the design practice. This thought accepts material objects as the only active element of design, and what society must follow and change. This idea was modernity’s main objective through the ‘utopian society’ concept. Further discussion covered the designer’s responsibility in shifting his or her concept forward: this responsibility must be shared with society. Also it presents an alternative attitude regarding the context of development, shifting it from its traditional meaning of technology transformation.

4.3.2.3. The context and practices of design that make design visible in society

Comments in this section of the discussions described the lack of design practices and design thinking in the form of design research and publication covering the social context of design practices.
### 4.3.2.4. Discussing the role of design in society

The participant observer\(^{34}\), in visiting the current campus of the College of Fine Arts in Baghdad late in 2010, described crowded, rambling and dilapidated buildings, which are being built on all the previously well-manicured green garden spaces, breaking up the well-structured design of the old campus. I put aside my feelings about this place and its sad condition. An experimental design practice occurred in the late 1980s, and this is the narrative I would like to present as an example for design practices inspired by the dominant context of design as the making of material objects. While it was intended to benefit the micro society inside the school, this attempt proves that these contexts can be treated equally in design education; which is meant here as the field of practising design. The design practice is represented by the graduation project for a group of industrial design students; my role in the project was as supervisor. The course outline given to the group aimed at investigating an alternative direction in the design of objects by (1) making the micro society of our school the client for the project, (2) making the

---

\(^{34}\)This observation will not discuss the many other issues related to the limited security arrangements outside and inside the campus.
final outcome visible and usable by them. The framework for the design process introduced new dimensions aimed at enhancing active participation through the different stages of concept creation, data collection and synthesis, visualisation and concept refining, and final resolution of the project, to meet the demands of our wider school community. The move to teach industrial design in this context, by targeting a realistic social group, enhanced the visibility of the programme on our school campus, presented new methods, introduced further professional practices for those future designers, and encouraged them to think and act to engage the wider society in their work. The final resolution in the form of out-door and in-door furniture items designed and produced by the students as final usable models were a new phenomenon at the school, which shifted the classic design education practices outside their normal conceptual and experimental contexts, and made realistic tangible objects suitable for use in the real world, compared with the traditional method of making only scale models for the final-year graduation exhibition. One obvious observation from my last visit there was how these teaching practices are still followed, especially by the industrial design students, with lots of outdoor and indoor furniture items appearing to furnish the little gardens, classrooms and corridors in the school buildings.

### 4.3.3. Professional practices

This major topic was constructed and facilitated through the following points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The discussion topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Tell us your opinion regarding the main obstacles to the development of design activities in Iraq.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Is there a demand for designers in the current job market in Iraq?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>What are the desired designer skills for the designer job market in Iraq?</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

35 Previous chapters discussed the nature of the relationship between design as a discipline and other forms of fine arts in Iraqi education.

36 The sad fact is that the current objects were not produced by students themselves, as the workshops were looted during the invasion of 2003 and, as yet, there are no workshops in the school where students can train or make their projects.
As discussed previously, working as a professional designer in Iraq was an unknown kind of job. The socialist policies applied since the 1960s neglected and even prevented the private sector from large-scale industrial manufacturing and by law required all university graduates to work in the state sector, which gave only one option to find a job. Such economic policies controlled the local market for decades. Even with that, in most cases university graduates would end up working in a job outside their speciality; such was the case with graduates of industrial design, who found the only jobs were in teaching art and craft subjects in the secondary schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-7</td>
<td>The Iraqi private sector is still too weak yet to create, guide and develop opportunities for professional design practices. This is only one of many results of the previous domination of public sector economic policy and the broad neglect of the private sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-10</td>
<td>The craftsmen are the only source of information for us as design educators—they tell us what to teach regarding technical skills and making.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, the wage policy in the public sector was unified, based on specialities and work experience, and those policies greatly increased the size of the middle class in Iraqi society, which for years enjoyed good living conditions, and enjoyed state financial support to provide most social system services free or at very low cost. Those policies were reflected in the markets as well, through restricting imports, and the products made in Iraq that covered the utility objects with limited kinds, numbers and brands. Looking back, we see Iraqis used the same kind of construction materials to build almost identical houses, furnished with the same products, they even wore almost the same clothes, drove the same brand of cars, and ate mostly similar kinds of food.

In summary, historical narratives describe the lack of shopping experiences most Iraqis grew up with, and since the early 1970s big chains of malls were opened,
especially in the big cities. But those huge retail chains were again state-owned and worked outside the context of marketing competition; all of them offered the same limited amount and kinds of products and sold them at the same prices. The malls offered a range of home appliances, clothes and limited items of personal products. That type of standardisation didn’t provide opportunities or support initiatives for designers to work professionally. This affected all design disciplines, for example, there were a handful of printed journals and newspapers published by the state, and by law, they’re not allowed to present any commercial advertisements, and most local books, packaging and other printed objects were designed by printing craftsmen, not designers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-7</td>
<td>The designer job market (if it exists) is looking to the designer only as the producer of the client concept ... To improve the designer’s healthy environment, the very beginning and most important needs are to create legislation to organise the professional designer’s roles and practices. Yet in the job market we don’t have a job title of designer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-1</td>
<td>We don’t have yet any guidelines to follow, our local market is very new, the expectation that a designer is a maker is the only obvious one at this stage, and the active professional designers (if they exist) are working solo in their private businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td>The biggest challenges in our country, as well as all developing countries, relate to creating and organising legislation to cover intellectual property, design fees and the designer’s wages. These issues are the very basic ones to help the development of professional design practices.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first evidence since 2003 of a move to transform Iraqi designers’ professional practices is now seen, with rapid moves towards open, uncontrolled markets supporting new consumer attitudes in Iraqi society. Gradually, the post-war economy is improving public purchasing power, again broadly reflected in the middle class, state workers mainly, and allowing them to replenish their homes with new home appliances, furniture and other consumer products. This purchasing power is clearly reflected in the market, with new retail complexes and
shops, and new mini-market kinds of shopping venues appearing in small cities, while the big mall complexes are being slowly re-established with private sector investment in the big cities. The only obstacle restricting further development of these open markets is the security situation in Iraq, which still classifies Iraq as an unsafe destination.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-1</td>
<td>The main obstacles relate to political instability, security and social attitudes... New fields of practices keep developing to meet the demands of the new phenomenon of open markets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-3</td>
<td>I believe there are lots of new opportunities. They are in a stage of development now, it's just a matter of time before these opportunities appear — time governed by the progress towards a good level of socio-political stability in Iraq.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td>Definitely, there are lots of opportunities for design work in Iraq. But unfortunately we are missing the right connections between designer, producer and client, mainly because of psychological and technological issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-4</td>
<td>In design education, the increasing ratios of theoretical courses in the degree curriculum reduce the free time for students to engage with experimental design practices, which I believe are more useful for them to develop their skills. This is the reality we are facing with all students during study and it continues with them after graduation... Also these practical skills are important to enhance the designer's professionalism, and it will greatly help the subjective thinking of these designers. We are facing massive problems regarding our students’ ability to visualise their thoughts and produce quality outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3.1. Discussing the professional designer

One factor supporting this move is that Iraqis are starting again after a long isolation to travel on vacation around the world. The new modes of distant communication — cell phones and the Internet — cover wider and wider target groups. These days, Iraqis are beginning to imitate the lifestyles enjoyed by the
Gulf states, which appear to be some of their leading models, especially since many of them are starting to travel and do business via those states. For example, Dubai is one of the urban centre destinations that links air and sea travel outside Iraq. Also, from the other side, big Arabic urban destinations such as Amman, Cairo and Beirut are centres of modern Arab lifestyles, and where a good number of rich Iraqis are permanently living or doing business. These destinations for interaction are associated with the massive media hegemony through hundreds of satellite TV channels presenting extra windows for learning and showing lifestyles of Iraqis who missed out on it for a long time. These factors will definitely further enhance the need for active designers, and this time it is more about making and creating designs to meet these new aspirations.

4.3.4. Professional practices in working with collaborative networks
This topic was constructed and facilitated through the following points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The discussion topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Can you see yourself working to facilitate collective group ideas? Do you believe that you have the skills to do this job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Can you see yourself working to visualise collective group ideas? Do you believe that you have the skills to do this job?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have you experience of working as a member of a team related to design? Business? Management? Project development? Service development? Production development?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does your work environment address design as an artistic discipline? A science? An applied art? Social science? Technology? Engineering? Other?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This topic received very little attention from the group; in fact, during many sessions there was no response to any of its detailed points. During the conversation, I understood that this neglect was based mainly on cultural and educational factors, but anthropological studies argue that, in the nature of Iraqi society, these studies concern the hierarchy in the structure of the family, the core
unit in society; that the father is the leader, to be followed by the other family members. This structure is similar to wider social groups of tribes, etc. In business, in both public and private sectors, this hierarchical structure includes a strong sense of authority. The point here is the lack of experience in culture and education to present Iraqis with this way of working in a group. Also, working solo is a natural mode of work, as the craftsman is a very clear example of a small business based on one or two workers. It’s the same in other fields; politics is a good example, reflecting the dominance of dictatorial authority which governed Iraq for decades until recently. The new hegemony of the religious leaders, with their authority and influence, is very wide, with many in society who believe in these figures as mediators in the relationship between humans and God, according to some distorted religious teachings. There is a cultural gap between the current practices and what people believe, but still these topics come out of the teaching and working environment in Iraq.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-1</td>
<td>Through my professional experience with calligraphy and interior ornament, I work with an architectural engineer, and the way I do the work is my own way. We can’t do the work as a team as both are used to looking to different points. I prefer to do the work alone, and the client has the right only to discuss it with me. These are the market roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-4</td>
<td>There are few opportunities to practice in fields outside the academy. Those fields are selected as part of a plan for continued learning. We don’t have the culture of working in teams, most of the time we end up not agreeing on each other’s points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td>Yes, I did some professional design work as a solo designer during my previous professional experience in Iraq, which covered practices relating to the mass-production industry, and the hand-woven carpet sector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The attitude of the higher education system in Iraq produces a rigid disciplinary framework. This rigidity hinders interdisciplinary approaches, even in research practices. During one of the conversations, the interviewee presented the idea of doing collaborative research, then I responded and suggested a topic relating to
design education. His reply is in the table below (participant 8). This rigidity is one of the obstacles to developing studies to match the needs of interdisciplinary approaches, and especially in changing current design thinking.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-8</td>
<td>This is a great idea, but unfortunately, if we research this topic, the research committee in my institution will not support it because it’s about education. I must focus in design research on topics relating to how to design, make, analyse the form, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-6</td>
<td>I do believe that a very clear complication relates to the practical meaning of industrial designer, as current practice is not working well for many people. Our positioning in between art and engineering is somewhat lost, as neither the artist nor the engineer understands us. Also it’s our responsibility to clarify our position. But unfortunately, there are not enough opportunities to do so, and in general our graduates prefer the title of engineer — it’s more prestigious and a good position socially and in work... also the limited number of graduates (because this industrial design programme here is the only one in Iraq) makes the problem permanent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.5. The role of design in supporting sustainable development
This topic was constructed and facilitated through the following points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The discussion topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What does sustainable development mean to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What are your thoughts relating to the role of design in sustainable development of your society?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Does your study of design introduce you to theory or practice related to the role of design in social development?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The title of the first course relating to environment offered in design studies in Iraq was Environmental Studies; it was a subject in the masters degree curriculum in the late 1980s. The outline for this full semester course discussed selected examples – taken from architectural design – of how the designer must consider the physical environmental in designing the shape of material objects. Although the course outline, at that time, introduced these relationships between the environment and the design of material objects, the course was limited to one dimension of the wide and complex interrelationship, by addressing only the functional aspects between these physical environmental factors and the object form. However, that course was a very early attempt in design education in Iraq to engage with some common understanding of ‘sustainability’ in the limited context of environmental factors. In Iraq, sustainability was introduced as a term associated with development studies, and is still described in the same way, but in fact, the political context of sustainability dominates in the many conferences and academic studies in development, economic and other social affairs, and this interdisciplinary term is not applied to art and design studies as yet, even in local design research. This description reflects the responses of almost all the interviewees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-3</td>
<td><em>My understanding of sustainability is the politics of managing the environmental resources and its economic benefits. And based on that context we teach environmental design in our programme for all design disciplines, focused on materials, recycling and other topics.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-4</td>
<td><em>Sustainability is all about green design; this subject is on the content of design studies curriculum for both undergraduate and post-graduate levels. One of our masters candidates in industrial design did research into this topic about green design</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-7</td>
<td><em>The term sustainable development is all about the hegemony of the politics of globalisation, it's not about development or design.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.5.1. *Discussing design and sustainability*

True, the political context of sustainability is obvious because the politicians are talking loudly about it there. But design is politics too. The difference here can be explained by the fact that the Iraqi designers keep addressing design from a unilateral perspective within its context of making, perfection and ornamentation; the process of adapting the shape aesthetically meets the requirements of performing its function well.

Describing sustainability as associated with the environment is only the dominant context; it’s also the subject of extremely limited research and experimentation in design studies as yet in Iraq. The lack of published studies in Arabic addressing design and sustainability and the closed academic disciplinary focus maintained by regional education in Iraq illustrates one of the attitudes to be adjusted. The future of many academic studies depends on developing and rearranging themselves to meet the expansion of the interdisciplinary approach, which opens new fields of study and practice. Sustainability is a major point in many disciplines of which design is just one.

4.3.6. *Conclusions*

As stated earlier, this part of the chapter was planned to comprise a direct interaction with the Iraqi designers; this interaction was continuous, involved several stages and covered a range of practices. The very early stages were conducted via distant communication with designers living inside and outside Iraq, many of whom were my colleagues. Those early stages focused on obtaining data regarding current design thinking and practice in Iraq, and which enriched the review and analysis of the topics constituting the framework and theoretical

---

37 This conclusion does not include architectural design, as this discipline relates to schools of engineering in the Iraqi universities. In fact, many studies and practices are developing and extending the concept of sustainability in architectural engineering in Iraq and the region.
discussion of the early chapters. That interaction applied in two directions, with my efforts to offer these colleagues new information about the latest design activities in professional, educational and other practices from around the world, and in many cases translating these data into Arabic. In an attempt to further develop this stage, a blog was created, titled Design in Iraq, to provide further interaction on design, but unfortunately, lots of problems arose regarding writing in Arabic and software capability (but mostly there was no free time), and these issues delayed that initiative. However, a plan is in progress, to be launched in the near future, to create an interactive design site for Iraqi designers.

Further development occurred with the opportunity of being a ‘participant observer’ in the field. This was during the visit home to Iraq at the end of 2010; lots of activities occurred during that trip, carefully planned to overcome the numerous obstacles which are present. This level of interaction resulted in more accurate and up-to-date data in the form of observing design teaching practices, and looking around at the flourishing local markets filled with brand-new products, marked by cheap prices, out-dated models and pale imitations of genuine brands. However, during several visits to my relatives’ homes it became obvious that these products — home appliances, furniture and many electronic devices displayed in these houses — are symbols of the new Iraqi culture, illustrating the hegemony of the massive wave of consumerism. Iraq is filled with customers who suffered a long period of deprivation. These observations confirm solutions which previous chapters described, and open a new development path for this study.

This chapter presents the last stage that occurred and was facilitated through interactions culminating in the participation of the selected group from the Iraqi designers community. This stage was structured on specific main topics, generated and empowered from resolutions collected from the wider research activities during this study. These topics were the content of the semi-structured interview sessions scheduled and taken at a distance during 2011, although this part reveals that there are commonalities and differentiations described during the discussions
regarding definitions, context and relationships of these topics to the current design discourse in Iraq. Although there was full support and strong agreement among the interviewees for the objectives of this study, they also expressed a desperate need to research activities that challenge the application of knowledge that this community believes in.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participant-6</td>
<td><em>This is the first time I got the opportunity to discuss these topics specifically within the context of design in Iraq.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-10</td>
<td><em>We’ve been teaching these topics for years now, but it’s the very first time here that I’m talking about it in its Iraqi context.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant-5</td>
<td><em>Our reading keeps introducing the other (Western) contexts, yet we don’t have the resources to help us talk about the Iraqi context.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The great experience of this challenging opportunity, which culminated in the successful involvement of a selected group from the Iraqi designer community, provided important goals for them, even though it was time-consuming and presented technical challenges. For example, some interviewees took part in this form of distant communication for the first time. Although the project finished at the end of 2011, lots of initiatives raise new opportunities for cooperation — projects for design education curriculum development, co-supervision of post-graduate candidates, seminars, peer reviewing of design research, etc. These are the Iraqi designers’ requests for future work, and it’s also a long-term commitment to support this community’s active engagement with the design scene around the world after the long era of isolation. In addition, these discussions strongly supported identifying the main points in an accurate framework for design in Iraq.
4.4. Periods of transformation – craft, art and industrial design

4.4.1. Introduction

I am not by nature a storyteller. Instead, I am a maker of things, and a good listener. This is because my culture and traditions teach that it is good for a man to work hard, rather than talk too much! Nonetheless, I believe, with Mattingly, that “[narratives] help tell us who we are. They are perhaps our most fundamental form for communicating the sense of a life and thus a sense of the person who lived that life” (Mattingly, 1991, p237). We tell our narratives to make sense of experiences and to provide evidence for our practices, as “narrative is part of the phenomena of educational experience” (Clandinin, 1991, p260). It also functions to “render those experiences more sensible” (Mattingly, 1991, p235) to present how some thoughts and ideas look in action. In this context narratives are designing methods, supporting designers to present and visualise the elements experienced when interaction occurs between man and object in a sustained process, and in a three-dimensional setting; before, during and after, the setting refers to an effective experimental technique for designers to practice while the design process is in action. The interdisciplinary approaches of design thinking are influencing many designers to interact and learn from sociologists and anthropologists how to use functioning narratives as action research tools, also to present scholarly advances in techniques and applications to analyse and understand the positioning of the object as a social phenomenon.

My professional journey began in the late 1970s as a furniture-maker. I’m the second generation in this family business specialising in the production of modern home furniture, a business created by my father as part-time self-employment. Although my role in the business ended when I left Iraq in 1991, fortunately the business was able to continue and later expand when my three younger brothers accepted responsibility for management. However, my previous experience in furniture-making still influences my current practice as an industrial designer and connections are maintained between both professional experiences, affecting the way I link the process of thinking and doing, and apparent in the quest to achieve
perfection. The traditional craftsman values the professional relationship with his clients; through my early time as a furniture maker, my father advised me to look after our customers well, and provide them with what they wanted. He did not talk about the design of objects, but instead insisted at all times on quality products with durability. Even the customers themselves seemed to be only concerned with durability, noting how our 'heavyweight products' continued to 'look like new, even after years of harsh use.' When I did ask about the style they were looking for, they were happy to cede control: “do it to your own taste’, ‘you are better than us in such matters, and you know what we like.’ This was true of both older and younger people, and it “can be described as a contract, a set of shared norms governing the behaviour of each party to the interaction” (Schön, 1983, P292).

4.4.2. The transformation info-graphic
The visualisation of my personal transformation as an Iraq designer living in exile, this info-graph (Figure4-2) chronologically maps the many stages involved.
Figure 4. Stages involved in my own transformation. (Qassim, 2011)
4.4.3. Stage One: The convergence between craftsman and the industrial designer

4.4.3.1. The craftsmanship experience
Throughout the making process, the craftsman is involved intellectually, through his senses and even his emotions to maintain a close interaction between his body, hand-tools and material, and this close interaction is the key to transforming the material into the final object through the correct processes (Chadirji, 1995). This is how my practices and skills as a furniture-maker developed, mainly through observation, imitation and certain advanced skills. My father is still my master, I got the knowledge of this craft from him, he got his skills of joinery from training and later working as a civil trainer in the military air force base of Habbaniya38 from the 1940s to the 1970s. The craftsmanship of furniture-maker constituted the early years of my professional experience from the early 1970s to 1991. The way I learned this craftsmanship was traditional in our culture; custom strongly recommends that young people learn a craft. This is usually selected by one’s family or father and often relates to a family business. In our family-owned modern furniture factory I worked variously as worker, designer and then manager until I left Iraq in 1991, when my brothers took over my duties.

These experiences had a formative and long-reaching effect on my subsequent work as a lecturer and professional industrial designer, in terms of the many skills I learned, which continue to enhance my professionalism and practicality. These skills allow the transformation of a vision or a design concept to the stage of making the final object, and this is a life-developing capability, enhanced through

38 “Royal Air Force Station Habbaniya, more commonly known as RAF Habbaniya, (originally RAF Dhibban) was a Royal Air Force station at Habbaniyah, about 55 miles (89 km) west of Baghdad in modern-day Iraq, on the banks of the Euphrates near Lake Habbaniyah. It was operational from October 1936 until 31 May 1959, when the British were finally forced to withdraw following the July 1958 Revolution… In present times, the former British base is used by both the United States Armed Forces and the New Iraqi Army as a forward operating base, and is now known as Camp Habbaniyah. From this outpost, combat operations are run from the outskirts of Fallujah to the outskirts of Ramadi. Since 2006 Camp Habbaniyah has grown into a Regional Training and Regional Support Centre as well as the headquarters for the Iraqi Army 1st Division. Ongoing Coalition and Iraqi construction projects have revitalised much of the base.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Habbaniya
advanced knowledge and practice. I believe it’s the kind of skill that is hard to achieve and hard to teach in industrial design specifically. In association with these skills in making, I developed a good sense of recognition of cultural values, reflected through the designs I make for home furniture and other items. Recently my understanding of that period of my life has deepened, as I have come to appreciate more how it taught me at a very young age the huge benefits of technology and construction skills (figure 4-3). Relying on that experience, I continue developing my senses and shifting my practices to look at these products as social objects, their status much wider than form and function. In fact, in broadening the design process and enhancing the designer’s search for developing advanced knowledge and experiences, ‘the style of furniture changes as the individual’s relationships to family and society change’ (Baudrillard, 2002).

![Figure 4-3. 'Enarah' lighting unit. Saad, Qassim (2009), Dunedin.](image)

4.4.3.2. Being an industrial designer

It was unusual that, as a high school graduate on a scientific path, I should choose to study fine arts. Relatives and friends expected me to study petrochemical engineering and were somewhat scandalised when I preferred the Academy of Fine Arts, specialising in either design or sculpture. It was an uncommon decision in the conservative society where I lived at that time to study fine arts. This was
based on people’s direct association of fine arts with only figurative art works, which are prohibited, according to Islamic teachings.39

Industrial Design was a degree programme at the Plastic Arts Department at that time. In Iraq, as in many developing countries, design programmes at the university level are considered disciplines in fine arts. This has an effect on both the curriculum and teaching methods, and inevitably on the professional practice of the graduates. The holistic context of modernisation during the 1970s influenced the teaching philosophy and curriculum frameworks of the Iraqi design degree programme, so the principles and teaching traditions followed the Bauhaus style in mixing craft and fine arts with a clear focus on speciality and practicality, emphasising cultivation of style, imitation of masters, and preservation of academic traditions (Buchanan, 2004). Moreover, the theoretical context of the Contemporary Iraqi Arts Movement (CIAM) was the inspired and only available references for teaching and research, which is one of the main obstacles still facing new degree programmes, where the language barrier prevents students from using non-Arabic language references. The philosophical principles of the CIAM were based on “‘retrospection’, placing the ancient Iraqi cultures at the centre of its interest” (Saad, 2006-B). These traditions continue guiding previous and new generations of Iraqi designers, observing local design works in architecture, communication, etc., presenting clear and direct reflections on the wider implications of the theoretical concepts. I still remember during my study in the early 1980s how the arts community in the school looked at us (the industrial design students) strangely, and kept arguing and saying: “you guys are not artists, you are engineers, and you should study in engineering, not in art school!” Although later, when we studied a few subjects like materials and production techniques in the school of engineering, we faced the same argument, with the engineering community telling us that ‘you are artists... etc.’ These arguments

39 “The Qur’an, it can be argued, does not explicitly prohibit Muslims from using visual representation of humans and animals in an artistic form. We find that prohibition of figurative art known as aniconism, is found within many authentic hadith, these are sayings and traditions of the prophet Muhammad (saw). The following tradition shows an important link between figurative art and the danger of shirk, associating partners or equals to the Creator” www.muslimart.net/figurative-art-in-islam.shtml.
were also repeated endlessly after graduation when qualified industrial designers were looking for jobs in industrial manufacturing corporations; there will be further discussion about this argument in a later chapter.

Constructive advantages came from applying the knowledge from studying industrial design to my professional work as a furniture-maker; in fact, selecting design as my future profession was the perfect choice which paid dividends immediately through the effective interaction between the new knowledge about the design process and my professional craft work. This interaction grew naturally, gradually embedding itself and developing new practices which supported the creation of new designs for furniture. Fortunately that was associated with technical assistance in the form of new joinery machines\textsuperscript{40} for our factory, which enhanced our production capability in quantity and quality, and helped us to meet our customers’ increased demand for new products. In the early 1980s my craftsmanship increased to the level of master, when I gained acknowledgement from my peers for my achievement. The progression from my previous practices and the operation of the new design knowledge continued to develop during my study, and enhanced the development of my own way of working as a craftsman, or as Kegan stated “we have become ‘masters’ when the pattern we are seeking to follow resides inside not outside” (Kegan, 1994, p182). The consolidation of this position was an extension of my responsibilities into more creative processes, directing the business and building leadership skills. Graduating from a skilled worker to a master is a slow process, directed by the craftsman community and society, aimed at reviving the craft with new blood, knowing that the desires to “achieve mastery are about an expertise that is more than simply replicating what already exists” (Schaik, 2005, p17). In Iraq, this social system of a craftsman’s grading is rooted far back in history and survives, even though craft sectors

\textsuperscript{40} During the era of socialist economic planning, government agencies were the only importers for materials and machinery. To get these products, each business was required to be registered as a member in the Industrial Development Office at the Iraqi Ministry of Industry, which office specialised in providing technical support to the small and medium-sized national enterprises. That support was based on entering the business in a very long waiting list for the products.
received little attention and were in fact thoroughly neglected during the 1970s and 1980s because of the absence of any official system to manage the rating of craft skills. The current situation is that the craft sectors are in chaos, reflecting the long period of neglect and ineffective social system services.

In parallel, the professional craftsmanship development influenced my study of industrial design, and helps contextualise and direct my study of design projects to solve problems technically and reflect within varied fields of practice from universal design, re-design based on availability of local materials and production technologies, etc. These study projects were promoted by the school to meet the self-efficiency policies applied in Iraq at that time. However, using my previous skills and a practical attitude greatly strengthened my study, and a clear progress with high achievement resulted, specially during the last two years of my degree study in Iraq.

4.4.3.3. **Being a design educator**

After graduation with a Bachelor’s degree in industrial design, my family sought to have me continue working in our furniture factory, instead of getting a public job with my new qualification. Officially, from the 1970s to the end of the 1980s, the Iraqi government controlled the national labour market through a central government agency which selected occupations and workplaces for the newly graduated. Under this policy, all graduates from the Academy of Fine Arts were to work for the Ministry of Education as teachers of the arts in secondary and high schools. There were exceptions for industrial design graduates, who were allowed to apply for industrial design positions in state industrial corporations, but unfortunately none of these corporations had any jobs with the classification of industrial designer. I applied to find a job in industry, and after a long bureaucratic process, I received confirmation that the Ministry of Industry (as it was) did not have a job for an industrial designer, and in 1983 I secured the position of full-time lecturer in the Department of Design at the Institute of Applied Arts41.

---

41 In 2007 the Institute of Applied Arts became the first College of Applied Arts in Iraq, with many degree programmes in spatial design and communication media (www.fte.edu.iq).
My teaching began with foundation courses in basic design theory and studio practices. Three factors influenced my approach to teaching at that time, which were reflected in methods of teaching in both academia and the crafts:

1. Follow the master; I sought to imitate my previous lecturers, especially the professor of industrial design, who was my supervisor for the graduation project, also he was the founder and at that time the head of the Department of Design at the Academy of Fine Arts.

2. Authenticity; I used resources from the Bauhaus methods of teaching the ‘design foundation’ to underpin my lectures on theory and studio works.

3. Imitation; I followed the traditional craft's methods to develop student skills in experimentation and standard workshop exercises.

My journey as a lecturer in design almost gets the description of ‘lifetime’ career, starting in 1983 and continuing to the present. The early years of this journey were marked by a mixture of practical and creative knowledge that was based on my craftsman background, which later improved through my study of industrial design. However, a transformation occurred in the early 2000s concerning my gradual involvement in design research; this transformation continues through my candidature for the PhD degree in industrial design. Reflections of this transformation can be seen in my current research activities, which address wider practices in understanding the context of design in developing countries. My current research activities were built on various design concepts, while the peer-reviewed outcomes from this research continue to support my academic scholarship in design thinking and have been formed into published articles for peer review, presented in national and international conferences, in editorial and key speaker roles — all these activities associated with continued work as a professional industrial designer. The inter-disciplinary aspect of my research topics strengthens and develops my teaching practice, and new dimensions are appearing in my recent role of ‘Academic Leader’ of product design in the School of Design at Otago Polytechnic.
4.4.3.4. Applied technology in design practices

During this period, which began in 1987, I experienced a change of direction towards technical research and scientific approaches to industrial design. Having received a scholarship, I embarked on a two-year Master of Arts, which encompassed a first year of theory and studio courses, followed by a second year designing a project-based thesis. The lack of industrial design lecturers and supervisors in Iraq at that time forced the Design Department to rely on lecturers from the Schools of Engineering, Social Science and Education to be our lecturers and supervisors in the MA classes, with my supervisor a Professor in Mechanical Engineering. My project looked at using plastics as an alternative material for designing and building air duct systems in Iraqi houses and buildings (figure 4-4). The MA project was aligned with the political attitudes at that time, which promoted self-sufficiency and use of alternative local materials and manufacturing techniques to redesign everyday objects. The final design I produced successfully meets the functional classifications, with the advantage of being able to be installed on uncovered parts of buildings and houses. The resulting design was officially registered as a patent in 1992.

![Figure 4- 4. Air-duct system produced from extrusion moulded plastics, Baghdad. Designed by Saad, Qassim, (1989).](image)

The shift in direction I experienced through my Master’s study towards applied scientific and engineering approaches added a further dimension to my development as a designer and design lecturer. I identify it as aiding me in developing the theoretical content of my later teaching experiences in courses relating to technology of materials, production and further technical
experimentation in design prototyping workshops. These fields of practice continue to suffer from a lack of specialists and, during my trip to Iraq in 2010, I faced a lack of teaching staff in design schools specialising in applied science and technology.

4.4.4. Stage Two: New dimensions in design thinking

4.4.4.1. Advanced communication and international interaction

This stage began the long period of exile and covers the first decade of it. It was a big shift in 1991 when I accepted the offer from Yarmouk University in Jordan to be a full-time lecturer in their industrial design programme, which remains the only programme of this sort offered by Jordanian universities. The first few years involved settling in and coming to understand the Jordanian higher education system. It is relatively new and small, based on credit hours and offers limited flexibility in selecting courses and subjects relating to student abilities and interest, also it reflects what the job market demands. By comparison, the Iraqi higher education system is older, much bigger and much more rigid in following the student’s abilities and interest, and it follows state central planning regarding needs and job demands. The design programme at Yarmouk University was restructured in 1992 to offer five majors: disciplines in Graphic, Industrial, Interior, Photographic and Textile design. After three foundation semesters students follow the study plan to select their major, with options for elective courses from the second major. My teaching hours covered the design functional and technical courses, and the full industrial design major, repeated from my previous teaching in Iraq. The main driving force was again the shortage of expert staff to teach these courses.

I was proud, however, to initiate contact with The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) around 1993 and achieve Educational Membership for the Jordanian industrial design programme. Jordan was the first, and as far as I am aware, the only Arabic country to be granted membership in
ICSID\textsuperscript{42}. This membership presented opportunities to establish contact with industrial design firms around the world, and to interact with the international design communities through participation in the Interdesign workshops\textsuperscript{43} and other activities promoted by ICSID. I first participated in Interdesign ‘Design for Body and Mind’ in 1999 in Seoul, South Korea, and then the symposium and workshop called Design without Borders in Germany in 2000. These international opportunities afforded me contact with educators, professional designers, and design schools from all over the world. Such experiences had a positive influence on my teaching and professional work, as did participation in international design competitions, collaborative research projects, specialised conferences and the direct interaction with local industry through the industrial design programme.

\textbf{4.4.4.2. Interaction with local industry}

The bureaucracy within the academic system in Jordan did not promote cooperation with local industry, a pattern repeated in many design programmes in developing countries. However, substantial advantages came from our membership in ICSID and through our participation in Seoul 1999, when, in 2000-2001, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) selected industrial design at Yarmouk University to be the design team in their aid project ‘Enhancing Management Capability in Jordan.’ The project aimed at promoting industrial design as a key factor in improving creativity and production quality in the manufacturing sector in Jordan. JICA’s team had carried out a similar project in Indonesia in the mid-1990s, which had resulted in the establishment of the Indonesian Design Centre in 1996 (Amir, 2002).

JICA’s project constituted the first opportunity for my students in industrial design and me to be in direct contact with industry and this had the effect of enhancing

\textsuperscript{42} Unfortunately, the members’ list in ICSID reveals that Jordan is no longer a member (www.icsid.org).

\textsuperscript{43} Since 1971 ICSID’s Interdesign Workshops have been devoted to analysing, developing and solving issues of international significance. Generally hosted by an ICSID member society, Interdesign Workshops are forums in which designers from different countries and cultures work together with local experts for an intensive two-week period, exploring design issues of regional, national and global importance. These workshops seek to provide innovative and appropriate solutions (www.icsid.org).
communication between the industrial design programme and a number of Jordanian home appliance corporations, as well as leading to a better mutual understanding of each other’s cultures. The successful outcomes of JICA’s project also allowed for repetition of the same type of workshop with the furniture industry, and the promotion of design to this large industrial sector in Jordan. Further development followed through another international collaboration opportunity in 2000, when the industrial design programme lodged an application for expert assistance with the “Euro-Jordanian Action for the Development of Enterprise (EJADA),” focused on technical assistance and consultancy to help establish a design centre in Jordan. The application was successful, and a number of design firms in Germany presented technical assistance to establish the Jordanian Design Centre (JDC) in 2002 (www.yu.edu.jo).

Ten years' working in Jordan added another dimension to my experience as lecturer and practitioner. In promoting industrial design in Jordan, I had occasion for interactions with both local and international industry and industrial groups, which, on reflection, was a critical part of my learning. A paper focusing on the role of design in local Jordanian manufacturing firms was presented to the Design Research Society conference Wunderground DRS 2006 (Saad, 2006-A). However, searching for an opportunity to continue my higher qualification in design was the driving force during these first ten years of my exile in Jordan, and I received lots of offers from universities in UK, Netherlands, Germany, USA, Canada and Australia. Unfortunately none of these offers succeeded. The reason for that was my nationality as an Iraqi citizen, as during the 1990s Iraq was under heavy international economic sanctions. I was forced to start the process of immigration, which was successfully secured through the opportunity to emigrate to New Zealand in 2001.

4.4.5. Stage Three: Advanced industrial design research and practices

4.4.5.1. Lecturer of industrial design in New Zealand
This stage began the second decade of my exile; I arrived in New Zealand in July 2001, to start the same journey which I believe each new immigrant faces through
all the issues of settling in, starting a new life, adjusting to the local culture and searching for a job. Because a large part of my experience was in teaching, I found it difficult to find a position outside the education sector. My experience for a long time had been in teaching and away from professional design practices, however, about four months after my arrival I was offered two significant opportunities: (1) A scholarship for a PhD course in industrial design at a local university, with part-time teaching hours. (2) A full-time lectureship in another institution. For various reasons I accepted the second offer and secured a full-time lectureship in the School of Engineering at Otago Polytechnic. The course which I was contracted to teach was the Diploma in Industrial Design, which in 2003 was converted into a three-year degree programme, the Bachelor in Design (Product). Also in 2003, the Polytechnic underwent restructuring and the School of Design was established, with four major degree disciplines. In 2005 a new postgraduate programme was introduced: the Master in Product Design Enterprise.

Many issues arose from this big shift and the cultural diversity facing new immigrants, and my cultural background and experience, meant that New Zealand was quite different from what I was used to: I came from developing countries, in Iraq and Jordan, to a well-developed country; from very strict education systems to a very flexible one; from design as a discipline in the fine arts and a focus on styling, and imitation of a master, to design as a discipline in between engineering and art with a focus on making; from arts and concept-oriented students to engineering-oriented students skilled in making; from very basic design education infrastructure of studio and workshop, to well-equipped ones with full access to computers and design software. This experience directly reflects the state of design education in both previous countries – Iraq and Jordan – which are still digesting and following the principles of modernity, with an emphasis on its theories through constant re-writing of them, and trying to understand the reasons for keeping graduate designers in an outsider position, rather than being active participants in developing their societies. Furthermore, this experience introduced me to the wider theoretical component relating to design methods and the process of developing the concept into a final product, a process which continues to be part
of our teaching methods here, aiming to enhance the close interaction between design, industry and society. This period continues, and has provided me with many advantages in my professional life. I was proud to be acknowledged by my institution for advanced research and publication activities from 2006 and to be awarded a title and recognition for these scholastic activities, also being appointed as the ‘Academic Leader’ for the bachelor of design (product).

4.4.5.2. PhD candidate and research scholar in design studies, Australia
Completing a PhD in industrial design has been my desire since finishing my Bachelor of Arts–Industrial Design in 1983. Many obstacles have stood in the way of that goal, until in 2005 the invited programme at RMIT offered me a scholarship to do a PhD in industrial design, in the School of Architecture and Design. My vision for my PhD has developed from where it was started in 2005. Although a PhD gains more acceptance within the higher education sector, it is not solely about achieving a higher qualification. A PhD gives me the opportunity to engage in research that will contribute directly to my own practice, both as an industrial designer and educator. As work progresses topics of interest change, ideas are refined, one moves from wide to focused perspectives and considers scenarios from different points of view, associated with a dynamic process of reflection and revisiting previous stages through a “process of knowledge-capture that ensures that cultural capital is not lost” (Schaik, 2005, p235). At the same time, there is the richness of exploring implications of my topic in design within wide-ranging fields, including social science, history, socio-cultural anthropology, psychology and others. Luckily, the invited programme at RMIT offers extensive opportunities to present these experimentations, based on their belief that the “domains are seen as composed of fields engaged in vigorous and competitive debate; new disciplines seem to present themselves in the workings of new technologies; there are category shifts as practices formerly seen as distinct begin to partake of the same base technologies” (Schaik, 2005, p235). These are the main aspects of the doctorate to have exercised me so far, and no doubt more await me in the future.
4.4.5.3. Overview and reflections on my current research portfolio

The first proposal for the PhD candidature was aimed at studying design for development in developing countries. Historically this is concerned with constructing the discourse of design by drawing upon the development of a specific situation. The development model that has predominated ever since has involved promoting scientific and technological progress and applying these advances to improving the economic growth of ‘under-developed nations’. This modern Western model has informed the process of development in these nations and has led to their industrialisation, materialisation and de-traditionalisation. This is the context of design from a “market model” perspective, targeting sale requirements as the main approach in design. Many researchers, and aid development agencies, with the support of numerous studies, have used this approach to apply strategies and recommendations aimed at helping developing countries improve the quality of life of their populations. Products and services arising from these efforts focused on marketing attitudes, especially in the case of products and the manufacturing process. However, little attention has been directed towards the ‘social model’ which targets human and societal well-being. Nonetheless,

“Many products designed for the market also meet a social need but we argue that the market does not, and probably cannot, take care of all social needs.” [Historically] “Since Design for the Real World appeared, others have responded to Papanek’s call and sought to develop programs of design for social need ranging from the needs of developing countries to the special needs of the aged, the poor and the disabled” (Margolin, 2002, p24-25).

A transformation occurred before and during my PhD candidature; it keeps surfacing in an active scholarly involvement in writing, publishing and lecturing about design thinking with a focus on human and societal well-being. These practices reflect a lengthy experience of taking command of this journey of long exile beginning with Jordan in 1991 and culminating in my recent research into design in New Zealand and Australia. My current research practices are located
within design studies that argue that ‘design and social innovation’ is a powerful alternative to implementing design thinking and its distinguishing features into social development programmes in developing countries. My design research is based on interdisciplinary knowledge that seeks to achieve sustainable social development by focusing on experimental methods and intervention in the following dimensions:

- Mapping the ideological and practical transformations from industrialisation to sustainable social development in developing countries.
- Applying design thinking to empower social groups to contribute to the development of more democratic and sustainable societies.
- Creating bottom-up scenarios of strategies through the design process to involve end-users in the designing of new systems.

These principles are the cornerstone of my research activities (figure 4-5), which address wider practices in promoting sustainable development for developing countries. Since 2006 these research activities have built on the theoretical basis of many design concepts, while the peer-reviewed outcomes from this research continue to support my academic scholarship in design thinking and have been formed into scholarly and professional design works.
Figure 4-5. My research portfolio for the period 2006-2011, presented for Portfolio Based Research Funding (PBRF), New Zealand. Saad, Qassim (2011).
4.5. Summary
This chapter presents unique research practices, as contexts and methods, that were applied to and interacted directly with the field of study from a distance. The researcher was in the field, opening and maintaining communication channels with the Iraq design community. Two research practices were introduced for this chapter that aimed to identify attitudes shaping the transitional phase that currently motivates Iraqi designers, which will certainly affect the future of this country’s design thinking. These attitudes are basically structured and rely on the dynamic motivation that design thinking is getting from renewing the traditional and contemporary beliefs and practices in Iraqi society.

This conclusion is the culmination of many discussions with Iraqi designers during the data collection phase, and the chapter summarises the interviewees’ responses in the form of bullet points. The summary is meant to find clear trends in the transformation of current design thinking, and to describe clear discussion points for the re-­visioning process to begin in the following chapter. The summary points can be described as follows:

- The interviewees’ descriptions of the definition of design clearly mark a departure from its traditional role of embodying the skills of ornamentation and formal, aesthetically appealing objects and a move toward a ‘new’ configuration as the applied knowledge of science and technology, concepts that shaped design thinking after World War II, as discussed earlier. In reality, these responses address a theoretical transformation; it does not yet apply to design education or professional design practices. It can be understood as the effects of the first shockwave from the dramatic changes in Iraq since 2003, reflected in newly opened communication channels and new products flooding domestic markets.

- The continuing domination of intellectual stances—even inside academia—associated with design and artificial objects as the only way to describe the role of design in society. Interviewees identified the difficulties in finding alternative meanings in the Arabic literature for the role of design in society. It’s my belief that it is the Arabic design theorists’ responsibility to
initiate such a debate and to capture this great moment in history, when leaders of the ‘Arab Spring’ are searching for alternative strategies to build better living conditions.

- There’s no doubt that political stability is crucial to enable progress and improve the quality of life of any nation. Design thinking is very sensitive to these conditions, which clearly shaped previous decades of Iraqi suffering and deprivation. Unfortunately, the nature of the sectarianism the political order is establishing in Iraq will – this is the researcher’s personal view – comprehensively strengthen the existing environment of instability, which already supports extreme levels of political and economic corruption that have dominated the Iraqi scene since the 1990s.

The chapter introduces another example of an Iraqi designer’s transformation, who has been influenced by his country's situation while living in exile. That transformation is related to my own experience. When the journey of exile started in the 1990s, it brought with it an unending series of fortunate opportunities to develop my design experience, which opened doors to interact with different models of design thinking from all over the world. During these years, my practices in design continued to improve, from teaching design to being a design researcher and practitioner. Early in 2012, a great opportunity arose for me in the form of an appointment to develop and lead a Masters degree programme in design studies and to teach product design at the Faculty of Applied Sciences and Arts (FASA), at the German University in Cairo (GUC), Egypt. I saw this interesting opportunity as a challenge to examine previous experiences, and develop new ones, with the aim of creating a sustainable model capable of linking the Egyptian higher education regulations – consisting of a very traditional, conservative and discipline-oriented education system – with the uniquely German practise of applied knowledge, and its focus on interdisciplinary professional practices in design education. In the short time since starting this job, I have engaged in planning activities to facilitate a new vision aimed at enhancing the development of teaching practices and widening the role of research in design to benefit teaching practices, as well as
interacting with local industries, with the main objective of enhancing the faculty’s profile as the leading design institution in the region.
5. Design in Iraq – past, present and future

Identifying the framework of design in Iraq is one of the main objectives of this study, drawing from the insights of the previous chapters to help state the framework’s main elements, then understanding the relationships between the elements. This process visualises the framework and describes the main roles the elements of the framework have in the design discourse in Iraq. The core framework is based on three main elements:

1. Design thinking; signified through cultural norms. These norms are related to socio-cultural practices that are exhibited and developed through people’s interactions with objects, whether these objects are material or intangible, physical or mental.

2. Design education; introduces design principles as modern standards. This is common in Iraq and in many other developing countries, mainly through higher education, and degree programmes in design since the early 1970s. Design education is active and leading the design field in Iraq.

3. Design practices; includes the development of professional design practices for the Iraqi designers, culminating in a wider application of design covering concept development and manufacturing. This usage supports active roles for designers in fulfilling socio-cultural needs and desires.

These elements are the core of the structure representing the concept of ‘design in Iraq’, narrowing the wider views and earlier discussions in this study. The framework of design in Iraq (figure 5-1) presents an abstract composition, showing only the elements’ positioning and frequency in the framework. The chapter elaborates on this knowledge to facilitate further discussion and analysis of these elements’ relationships and roles applying to a future vision for
development of design practices in Iraq. Also, this chapter offers an indication of a wider compositional image for the framework of design in Iraq, through interpretation of the outcomes and resolutions developed through the previous chapters. The following overview (figure 5-2) visualises an info-graphic chart displaying the position of this chapter as the core of this study, linking the many arguments, and striving for clarity in explanation of those outcomes with the main aim of moving the study forward to its objectives. The fundamental conclusions at this stage are identified within abstract key points, representing the reviews and the qualitative research practices, which point to the nature of this study and its positioning as a pioneering articulation of this topic in design studies. The conclusions are:

1. The design thinking in Iraq, and how this thinking conceptualises the design context in society through material objects and other socio-cultural norms.
2. Identification of the main applications design thinking is known by, which relates to design education and professional design practices.
3. Conclusion and vision of the future role for design in Iraq.
Design Thinking

Design In Iraq

The development of professional design practices for the Iraq designers

Signified through cultural norms

Introduces design principles and modern standards

Figure 5-1. The framework of design in Iraq
5.1. Chapter overview

**FRAMEWORK FOR RE-VISIONING DESIGN IN IRAQ**

**CHAPTER ONE: The project of modernization in Iraq**

- The political and social implications of modernity
- The impact of modernity on traditional and modern practices

**CHAPTER TWO: Design in the Context of Development**

- Design as strategic factor in system planning
- The role of design in promoting sustainable development

**CHAPTER THREE: The Iraqis product experiences through objects and designs**

- Modesty in Iraq: socio-cultural and material aspects
- The contemporary Iraq: household objects

**CHAPTER FOUR: The Iraq designers vision about ‘design in Iraq’**

- The designer is the changer
- The international context of modernization and development since WWII

**Figure 5- 2. Chapter 5 overview.**
5.2. Design in Iraq

Iraqi design is the result of a rich mixture of many cultural, geographic and even climatic elements which have shaped this land from ancient times. Adapting man-made objects to cultural and ecological influences provides various creative solutions from architecture, the crafts, fashion, calligraphy, furniture, food and many other fields. In the Arabic language, the word for design is *tasmem*. As a noun or a verb it means visualising, arranging or planning, and is traditionally associated with artistic skills that aim to add aesthetic and ornamental compositions to man-made objects to strengthen their commercial, moral or spiritual values. These traditional meanings still dominate culturally, and in design basics they shape design discourses and guide current design education and professional design practices in Iraq. These traditional meanings are actually supported by the modern concept of design introduced mainly through design education in the fine arts institutions in the early 1970s. The association between art and design maintains the position of design within its traditional and local context, and at the same time celebrates and addresses in a nostalgic way the artistic foundations and skills which are the heritage of the early civilisations in Mesopotamia and the golden age of the Arabic Islamic Caliphate in Iraq.

The contemporary context of design was introduced in association with fine arts and architecture in the late 1940s. Since the 1970s design has become an independent study programme of university education within the school of fine arts. Furthermore, a very important turning-point emphasising the importance of design as a practice occurred when it was linked with politics, through an exceptional circumstance in the late 1970s in the form of policies issued to the emerging design professionals with the state industrial corporations rapidly being established in Iraq. The policies mainly targeted industrial design graduates and were guided by the core spirit of the Ahmedabad Declaration on Design for Development, whose principles offered a solid theoretical framework dedicated to introducing design into developing countries’ strategic planning for economic growth, for rapid progress towards industrialisation and the production of
competitive products for local and international markets. Iraq was one of the countries which signed the document in 1979. The main advantages of that document were in reinforcing the position of design education and professional design practices for graduate industrial designers in Iraq, and supporting the move towards a strong design education, as well as enhancing the role of design in state industrial corporations.

The glory of the 1970s gradually decreased and declined sharply from the mid-1980s, destroyed by the cost of the long-term war between Iraq and Iran, the heavy pressure of UN sanctions on the Iraqi people, and then later the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The extensive deterioration through this period affected every aspect of Iraqi life, and design is one of many creative fields which weakened and lost the initiative as a significant cultural phenomenon. That situation damaged the role of design and its unique potential to strengthen social cohesion, and to effectively utilise knowledge and practices to improve the quality of life in society. However, those harsh conditions opened new paths of design education through the establishment of post-graduate degree programmes for Master’s and later PhDs in design studies.

5.2.1. The shaping of Iraqi design thinking

5.2.1.1. Criteria and dimensions
Using design to create compositions that adapt form and shape to give the production process a physical entity for man-made objects is direct and immediate, and has broad design implications. In this process the designer is the form creator; his or her skills create new experiences or modify previous ones, through a process of analysis and synthesis in the interaction between the object elements of form, function and production technique. The design process in this context is mostly a non-linear and complex practice that intervenes directly and indirectly in the wider physical, social and psychological realms that govern the relationship between humans and objects, a process based on interdisciplinary knowledge and skill to provide positive insights for human benefit.
Design thinking is learned — we learn how to design, and how design functions to produce a tangible outcome. Culture is where this learning process occurs; it appears through practices and preferences, and many other aspects in the practice of design. In Iraq, where cultural practices are rooted in the rise of human civilisation, at the same time it is continuous – effecting and affecting – through interacting with the world’s cultures. Iraqi design thinking faces a dilemma between two dimensions: its past and its present. The distinctions between these two dimensions are significant, the same as cultural beliefs; people’s practices and interests constantly hark back to the ‘good old days,’ yet they acknowledge a preference for current objects and their definite roles in providing a better life. Contemporary design thinking in Iraq shows many examples of theory and practice springing from both of these preferences. However, since modernisation began in Iraq in the late 1940s there have been attempts to create a unique path based on the richness of Iraqi culture, attempts which focused on the importance of cultural heritage in creating a contemporary design industry in Iraq. The field of many of these attempts is art and architecture (figure 5-3), and to a limited extent joinery and furniture design.

*Figure 5-3. The Martyrs’ Monument in Baghdad, designed by the artist Ismail Al-Turk in the 1980s.*
One major factor affecting the development of contemporary design in Iraq is political instability and its influence on socio-cultural aspects of society. Instability continues to be a major theme in any story about Iraq from ancient times, causing problems with the political, geographic and demographic situation and constantly presenting this land and people with unexpected difficulties and circumstances.

The period from the 1970s to date was an extreme example from political ideology and government, which appeared to have a stable political order, but under the surface it was a pattern of solidarity and dictatorship, proceeding from loyalty to family, tribe and a single leadership. Culture records how instability affects human activities, reflected clearly through literature, customs, design of material objects, relationships between people and many other phenomena. Since the 1990s Iraqis have struggled to survive in a country under deeply chaotic conditions, where they face tension and obstacles to the provision of the most basic of human needs in security, health, education and other social services.

Another influence of this political instability was isolating Iraqi designers for many decades. The effect on the development of contemporary design in Iraq was enormous and it continues. In the wider context it separates designers from the rapid movement to new territories in design around the world. It was manifest in the design thinking and professional practice of Iraqi designers in the form of:

- Reinstating the traditional practice of design as an art and craft discipline. The move was supported politically and socially in Iraq—in fact, it could be described as a practical expression of the political ideology and its influence on design thinking.
- Revisiting the traditional norms of master-led design practices that preferred visual appeal and giving form. This mode redefines R&D in the design process to mean duplication and imitation.
- Adapting designs to local preferences, which have become rather static stereotypes in current design practice, many examples of which can be found among shoddy, non-professional, locally-manufactured products.
- Reproduction of local historical metaphors to express identity for locally manufactured products and other objects. Such an important process
requires much more research to creatively extract motifs from the rich Iraqi cultural heritage and to promote a new image for the country; certainly, such a massive task will rely on Iraqi theorists and professional designers (figure 5-4).

Figure 5-4. Example from student projects in industrial design, wall lighting unit, 2010–2011, Baghdad.

5.2.1.2. The domination of craft over design
Craft and craftsmanship form important relationships with design; craft was an available and easy access gate for many developing countries to interact with contemporary design practices. Historically, the traditions of craftsmanship are rooted centuries ago in Iraqi society, and skilled craftsmen continue as an honoured urban class. The sharing of knowledge, skills and traditions of craftsmanship between Iraq and surrounding countries began many centuries ago, when Baghdad was the centre of power and wealth in the region during the Arabic Islamic Caliphate (the Abbasid Dynasty). This shows the slow pace of change in craft traditions—the traditions of craft as a societal system are still active there. Crafts maintain an important socio-economic sector in Iraq and, although changes occur, even leading to extinction for some crafts, as manufacturing sectors grow and modern living changes, the crafts of furniture makers, metal workers, builders,
jewellers, calligraphers, along with a few others, still provide an important field of
work for many craftsmen.

The development of contemporary craft sectors in Iraq was interrupted, just as in
other sectors, following the damage to the country's infrastructure and its
capabilities. In 2010-2011, during the researcher's visit to his home town of
Fallujah, he started field observations and data collection on craftsmen's work in
furniture making, in an attempt to identify how the system of crafts now functions
in Iraq. The observations addressed the traditions of the craft system and
professional practices and development. The furniture craft was selected because
it is a well-known occupation in Iraq, the furniture maker working variously as
designer and artisan, as customers ask him to fulfil their needs and desires, and
because the researcher's previous professional work as a furniture maker in the
1970s gave him knowledge about the sector. An analysis of the collected data
indicates that the workshops are operated as family businesses — small firms
worked by two or three workers, producing a variety of home furniture and
joinery products, with the production process relying on manual skills, since only
very basic machinery is available.

Clearly the furniture and other joinery products present a colourful mixture of
design elements borrowed from a wide range of mainly Western styles, also a
vernacular treatment of specific elements from Islamic styles (such as the arch).
These designs are modified to meet local taste, the availability of craftsman's skills,
materials and production techniques and with a constant eye to costs. I observed
the current open nature of the market, evident in the availability of a wider range
of raw materials, from quality timber to cheap processed wood, and the variety of
items available as accessories. An interestingly garish style of furniture dominates
the market these days, relying on heavy use of cheap copies of ready-made
ornamental objects mass-produced from polyurethane foam, which completely
cover the plain surfaces of furniture pieces (figure 5-5). The dominance of this
style arises from fierce competition between the local furniture producers and a
new wave of cheap imported furniture now available in the market — products
which come mainly from China, Indonesia and Malaysia and offer cheap, low-quality processed wood furniture appealing to vulgar tastes.

The observation was intended to provide insights into this vital sector, how it is surviving and how it operates within the current socio-economic conditions in Iraq. Data collected was further analysed and can be summarised as follows:

- The long years of state-led economic policies, followed by the UN economic sanctions and then the military chaos from the 1990s, all played a part in breaking up these traditional manufacturing sectors and causing problems with their administration. Craftsmanship, quality assurance and skill development were heavily neglected during those periods and are still absent from the working environment of the furniture industry. The same applies to other craft sectors because of the neglect of authority and the social disruption of countless government job vacancies that forced people to work in the public service instead of in craft or private sector businesses, especially during the 1970s.
- One of the difficulties facing many craft sectors is the availability of raw
materials and new production technologies. Furniture making is a traditional craft sector in Iraq, but it relies totally on imported raw materials: timber, processed wood, fittings and accessories, as well as new technology in the form of production machinery. For decades during the state-led economy and the import restrictions from the 1980s, very limited resources were available to meet the demands of both the customers and the industry. The austere nature of designs from associated low quality production and the absence of competition reflected what was available in the local market for those consumer products.

- The inability to develop an efficient system for quality assurance meant the traditional system fails to cope with the ever-increasing demands from customers for product. Further hindrances are a lack of professional, skilled workers, an absence of legislation for improving skill training and development, and the establishment of new workshops.

The Iraqi craft sectors develop only slowly, and existing traditions tend to bolster its survival from ancient times, positioning it as an important socio-economic sector of society. However, sustaining these traditions is a big challenge; it means supporting craft sector development and providing the essential knowledge and expertise to organise professional development of these businesses. This call is based on the absence of any initiatives to link craft with design in Iraq. Such programmes are available in many developing countries; in fact, they are the earliest initiatives the design practices introduced (as discussed earlier). Also, the traditional practices that persist in these sectors are insufficient for current challenges. The craft sector is a strategic element in creating a new vision for design in the future of Iraq, and requires support to improve its craft skills through professional development policies and programmes and through design education to establish a teaching framework that will sustain a better connection between craft and design.

**5.2.1.3. Theories in current Iraqi design**

In any conversation I had with Iraqi design school faculty members or graduates, one topic dominated: the availability of theoretical design resources and how I
could help them in this matter, especially with the fact that the references are in English, which is a major barrier for all of them. Writing on design in Iraq is extremely limited. During my search for references in the Arabic language, the only option I found was one peer-reviewed journal called “Al-Academy”. The journal is available in a restricted number of copies, and covers fine arts in general. Another option were the PhD and Master’s theses, which are available in the library as hard copies only. The third resource is a very few textbooks authored by design faculty members, which are dedicated to teaching specific subjects in the design curriculum. Outside these fields there is no publication whatever in any medium to offer material about current design thinking in Iraq.

Searching for knowledge about design thinking in Iraq will locate alternative resources of reading that are not about design studies; these resources might present an artistic composition about the designing of material objects. Fortunately, the Iraqi Contemporary Art Movement is recognised as one of the pioneering modern arts movements in the Arabic and Islamic world since the 1930s. The artwork and writing are developing, and provide an alternative resource for designers to read about the art of design in historical, critical and analytical contexts. Reading the bibliography of any PhD or Master’s thesis in design shows the authority of these references, and the artistic dimension and context of design studies in Iraq. Also, another important source for reading about design thinking in Iraq is the very limited number of books authored by architects. We must agree that architectural studies in Iraq benefit from their location in engineering, and this position for architectural studies in Iraq enhances the knowledge of design thinking through providing reading in the wider context and richer content of architectural design. Although some Iraqi architects got wide recognition for their achievements at international level, for example, the theoretical and practical works of Rif’at Al-Chadirchy, and the world-class Iraqi, Zaha Haded. The urgent need to offer reading materials in design thinking can be achieved by encouraging Iraqi designers to write and publish, and by translation of books on design discourse from other languages.
5.2.2. Changing design thinking

The ruling political ideology in Iraq from the 1960s to 2003 aimed to achieve self-sufficiency, and the policies and practices of centralised planning associated with the revolutionary changes were designed to transform the Iraqi economy from an agricultural to an industrial one. All the resources were employed in building infrastructure and achieving that ideological goal—there was limited space for competitiveness in its industrial sense. In this environment design was directed toward functional, practical adaptations and solutions to real problems based on the resources available. These aims were directly reflected in design education. In our study of industrial design in the early 1980s the focus was strong:

- The strictly enforced teaching objective to strengthen the political ideology of the time.
- Localisation in selection and practices to design new concepts.
- High priority for design outcomes to appeal to local industrial corporations.
- Restricted objectives to utilise local materials and production techniques to produce our design outcomes.

Design practices at that time benefited from many institutions and legislation combined to provide full support for industrialisation, which was the objective and the means of development. In fact, we recall many initiatives that supported the creation of infrastructure to develop contemporary design activities within the state organisation, such as:

- Highlighting the importance of design in development, Iraq was a pioneer in the region in signing the Ahmedabad Declaration for Design for Development, issued in 1979.
- An early programme for design education at university level and the first industrial design degree programme in the mid-1970s.
- A post-graduate programme for Master’s degree and PhD in design studies in the late 1980s.
- Creation of state institutions to govern standardisation and quality control for industrial production.
- A pioneer R&D centre for product development, the Specialised Institute of
Engineering Industries (SIEI) (Appendix 5).

- Ambitious programmes to develop, improve and install advanced manufacturing technologies, such as for the Military Industrialisation Authority (Appendix 6).

However, the previous traditional theory of industrialisation is changing, politics and economics are closer than before, and both support the high-speed development of technology and communications, which make the previous development goals based on industrialisation impossible to achieve. This situation calls for nations around the world to think creatively and find opportunities for creative industrial activities to sustainably empower the national economies. The application of design principles functions through many policies and arrangements to enhance competitiveness and enables new directions to support the well-being of societies. This is urging design theorists in Iraq to initiate sustainable development, relying on efforts from the Iraqi designers themselves with assistance from abroad. This process must end with the establishment of a Design Council as the professional institution of design to provide a structure and plan for a new era of design in the future of Iraq.
5.3. The design curriculum in Iraq

5.3.1. Structure of design education

The dynamic arts environment in Iraq enabled the establishment of a design programme to become reality in 1972, through the creation of the programme of Design and Decorative Arts as a discipline in the Plastic Arts Department. The programme duplicated the pioneering schools of design in Europe, drawing upon the synergies of these disciplines — both art and design are interested in multiple resources and studies are concerned with making.

Iraq’s first design degree programme was a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Design and Decorative Arts. In the mid-1970s, the programme grew to become the first BA in Industrial Design in Iraq, chaired by Professor Musaad Al-Qadi with teaching staff from the Plastic Arts department and other disciplines. In 1983, the first Department of Design was formed, with three major disciplines: Industrial Design, Print Design, and Textile Design & Printing. Interior Design was added as a discipline at the end of the 1980s. The Department of Design launched the Master’s degree programme in Industrial Design in 1984, with Masters’ programmes in the other design disciplines coming on stream in the following years. The PhD in design began in 1993 in many design disciplines. The Industrial Design programme at the University of Baghdad is still the only one of its kind and level offered anywhere in Iraq. While a few design programmes became available in universities around the country, the technical institution sector offers technically oriented programmes in different disciplines, and the new College of Applied Arts has been established in Baghdad to offer a technical degree in design studies (figure 5-6).

44 The early modern institution of fine arts education was founded in Iraq in 1936, to supply schools with the crafts and fine arts teachers they needed. Later the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad was established in 1941, offering an undergraduate diploma in fine arts in the disciplines of Painting, Sculpture and Music. The institute expanded with other branches in major Iraqi cities, and added further disciplines. Then, in the early 1960s, the Academy of Fine Arts was established at the University of Baghdad, offering degree programmes in the departments of Plastic Arts, Drama and Art Education. During the mid-1980s, the academy bowed to university regulations and changed its name to the College of Fine Arts, adding three new departments in Design, Visual & Audio Arts, and Music. Since the 1980s many other colleges of fine arts have been established in cities and universities throughout Iraq (Al-Saed, 1995) (UNESCO, 2004).
5.3.2. The philosophy of Iraqi design education

In Iraq, the continued connection between fine arts and design resulted in the tradition of arts education essentially being transferred into teaching practices in design. Art education traditionally emphasised the imitation of masters, cultivation of style and preservation of academic tradition. Consequently, these features came to dominate the teaching methods in design education, inevitably shaping the professional practices of Iraqi designers.

Another influence on design education were the craft traditions. Anthropological studies describe how Iraqi people were the majority of Arabs, Bedouin tribes who came from the desert, with limited skills or interest in making things. These tribes settled in Mesopotamia, where their interaction with the new environment and connection with different groups in surrounding communities created conditions of stability that would transform their interest from the nomadic life into a city state life – ultimately leading to the creation of the early civilisations. The requirements for a stable, settled life necessitated an emphasis on new activities, and it was from this period that the traditions of crafts began to be established.
These traditions began with needs then developed to become symbols of personal and family status and denoted levels of social relationship among groups of people.

In the development of crafts, apprenticeships became the means to educate young people in a range of skills. Young people were apprenticed to masters, who oversaw their development, encouraged the most talented, and were eventually replaced by their students. This system of craft education has continued to the present day, becoming a main resource for producing skilled workers in society. There are many examples of skilled architects, calligraphers, decorative artists, weavers, furniture makers and many other skilled workers continuing their creative work while training younger generations to be the future masters. The researcher personally received his early training from his father, in order to continue the family business in making furniture, and worked as a professional furniture maker for two decades. His younger brothers continue to work in the business, while training their sons at the same time.

Design, therefore, has emerged as a trade via the arts and craft tradition. Through this process of education by apprenticeship, and the contribution of fine arts traditions, design education in Iraq, in essence, strives to understand the system of design as a way of adding commercial and spiritual values to products by making them desirable in form and style (figure 5-7). However, there is limited recognition of other design requirements such as making the objects ‘useful’ and ‘usable.’

It is through opportunities for postgraduate studies in design that this mindset is beginning to change. A number of case study projects, especially in industrial design, have focused on the functional, technical and production requirements for industrial products, with the aim of assisting local industry to continue working and developing their production lines. Some of these studies have found solutions ranging from locating alternative materials to improving production techniques. Nationalisation and industry needs encourage these solutions, which are made possible by improved cooperation between design departments and colleges of engineering, social science, education and others.
5.3.3. The design curriculum

The researcher had the opportunity to be a member of the first group of designers to graduate from the first department of design in Iraqi universities in 1983. This opportunity came when he passed the aptitude test for the Academy of Fine Arts in the academic year of 1978-1979. The aim of that test was to evaluate the student’s visualisation skills, and it took the form of drawing still-life objects. His knowledge of design prior to study at the university was based on previous experience as a furniture maker, since the Iraqi school curriculum does not yet offer any subject related to design. An industrial design degree was offered by the Department of Plastic Arts at the time of his enrolment. The structure of the Bachelor of Arts had two main stages, each stage based on four semesters – equivalent to two academic years. The first stage was dedicated to building the core artistic skills, techniques and knowledge in the disciplines of drawing, painting, sculpture, ceramics, basic design and art history. At the end of the first four semesters, students presented a portfolio of their achievements during the two years, which had to demonstrate the student’s skill development, and were used as a guide for the assessment committee to direct students to continue studying in a specific discipline in art or design for the second two years.
Under that system the researcher was nominated to continue his study in either industrial design or sculpture, whichever he preferred. Accordingly, this was the education received by many industrial designers, printing designers and textile designers who graduated between the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1983, the Department of Design was created and offered a new degree framework designed to reduce the emphasis on plastic art subjects in its curriculum, with further design-related subjects introduced to explore wider issues in design studies. The new curriculum focuses on functional, management, technical and production techniques in different design disciplines. New faculty members with qualifications in engineering, architecture, management and production techniques were added to strengthen the new curriculum. The number of students increased from eight students in industrial design in 1983 to many times that figure in the years after.

Design education took much of its structure from the early English and other European schools of design, while more recently it was further shaped and driven by the practicalities of Iraqi demand for modern styles and development of modern industrial processes. This Iraqi model of design education has continued without major change since the 1980s, despite the expansion in the size and number of programmes offered in the newly-established institutions, and the increase in the number of students. However, during the researcher’s visits to the Department of Design at the College of Fine Arts at the University of Baghdad in 2010–2011, there was very little data to collect regarding the changes in the teaching curriculum since the 1990s. Early results from analysing these data show minor changes in the framework of the design curriculum now compared with earlier. In fact, the culture of experimentation and fabrication has almost disappeared from the teaching practices. This is because previous specialised workshops and printing studios have collapsed, and the very poor facilities available now mean that teaching has to depend on lectures on theory, with students relying on private trade workshops to produce their final designs and
articles. One change he noticed was a very basic computer lab dedicated to teaching\textsuperscript{45} the basics of design software.

5.3.4. Education as a powerful element in design thinking
The practical reality is that design education institutions are the sole incubator for developing design activities. Such activities are generally very restricted, without a rich variety of publications, conferences, competitions and exhibitions to link design practices with the wider societal activities. The design scene in general is dominated by a pervasive austerity that removes design events, if any, from the cultural life, which contradicts the practice in other creative fields such as the fine arts, architecture and calligraphy. However, there is a lack of evidence of any strategic orienting structure for design education in Iraq. This is educed from previous reviews and field research practices which culminated in this study and are presented through the following:

\begin{itemize}
\item The theoretical review chapters, which offered wider perspectives and discussed in-depth arguments, presented the context and practices representing developing countries’ moves toward modernisation and development since World War II.
\item The qualitative field research practices, which offered insights into design thinking and practices, addressed through the analytical study about designed material objects.
\item The direct interaction with Iraqi designers through open-ended interviews, which offered the opportunity for this community to present their views of the current situation and their vision of design in the future of Iraq.
\item The reflective practices in the transformation of an Iraqi designer, which extensively articulated specific dimensions in design thinking, and how the Iraqi designers interacted with and participated in it.
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{45}This is the only computer lab available for students. It was created in 2009 through the personal efforts of a colleague who is teaching there — the only lecturer with the skills to use 2D and 3D design software. The lab is not yet online as the Internet is not available on the campus.
5.4. The designer in Iraqi society
Adaptations to strengthen continuity and creatively dealing with extreme variability and the unstable nature of their living conditions are unique identifying features among the traditions by which Iraqi society has been known throughout the nation’s long history. The sustainable association linking designed material objects and the living customs of society are the practical evidence that the adaptations have achieved their objectives. Moreover, these associations map a slow progress of refinement and development these objects move through, aiming to sustainably match their formal designs with normal human behavioural changes, as well as timely progress in technology and style. The successes of these designs are evidence confirming a sustainable dimension and the forging of the designed objects into socio-cultural norms in society, transforming the objects from mere utilitarian tools into a higher level of social object. This argument was reviewed and analysed through selected examples of designed objects in the previous chapter. Clearly the close relationships connecting Iraqis with these example objects are evidence of the depth of the roots and the wider dimensions that link those designs with the socio-cultural norms in Iraqi society, explain their strong influence and justify redesigning traditional concepts to meet current needs.

What do these arguments mean for the Iraqi professional designer? What does it mean to be a designer in Iraqi society? What is the role of designer there? The next section presents and discusses these and other topics, guided by the discussion and data presented in earlier chapters.

5.4.1. Being a designer — what does it mean socially?
In Iraqi society, design and craftsmanship are associated with the search for perfection, and the designer is seen as an educated artisan, capable of better interaction with technology. This view seems less interesting to many designers
who prefer to present themselves as engineers. Revisiting the earlier structure of design education provides us with a clear insight into the influence of plastic arts skills and methodology on design education, which continues to influence Iraqi designers’ professional practices. In fact, this interaction with fine arts has shaped the attitude and future of Iraqi design education and professional practice, as is the case in many other developing countries (addressed in earlier chapters).

Moreover, whether a designer is more artistic or engineering-minded is one of the contradictions in design thinking and the structure of design studies around the world. The group of Iraqi industrial designers who graduated early in the 1980s initiated a collective negotiation to be accepted as members of the Iraqi Engineering Association, which is the official association of Iraqi engineers from different disciplines. Membership of the association would mean the enjoyment of a socially prestigious class, along with better income and work environment. This move by the industrial designers group failed, because they had graduated from a school of fine arts with a low number of scientific subjects in the curriculum compared with engineering — that was the association’s decision at the time.

The episode presents an interesting paradox regarding the dual visions the designers have of themselves, and their preference to select one related to their personal, social or working environment. Similarly, the history of the contemporary Iraqi art movement reveals architects were interested in joining the many art groups created from the 1940s to the 1960s. Architectural studies began as disciplines in engineering schools in the Iraqi universities in the early 1960s, and continue to be treated there as one of the most prestigious of studies, while socially and professionally architects enjoy similar prestige. This ranking of architects is based on the prominent ‘engineering’ nature of their work, but it’s different for the designers, who have a similar association socially and yet their work is associated with craftsmen and artistic skills.

46 The interior designers prefer adding engineering to their job name and title (e.g., Decor Engineer). The researcher encountered this attitude through working in different societies in the region. In fact, the title ‘engineer’ is a very successful marketing tool to promote the study of interior design, while graphic designers like to be known as artists and even present artistic experimentation as part of their professional work.
5.4.2. Being a designer in local industry
The previous political order in Iraq fostered industrialisation and developing a modern society, and to achieve those goals a social transformation process was forced on society. (Appendices 5&6) presented good examples demonstrating the relationship between industry and design in Iraq, which show that there was infrastructure to support the traditional role of design within the R&D institutions in industry. By analysing both examples, we can address the wider implications for the effective use of design, which were unfortunately missed in the political instability and inefficiency caused by lack of available experience and what centralised plans were aiming at. These were the results of a rigid bureaucracy in the public system and make these two examples inadequate to be good models for the role of design in industry.

5.4.3. Designer is the change agent
Designers are the creators of the human condition; their designs of material objects and systems are the core to improving living standards and enhancing human and societal well-being. Practising design within its traditional context by focusing on aesthetic styling and reshaping designed objects are practices with limited scope for design education programmes in Iraq, which this study addressed in analysis and discussion of previous chapters. We might reflect that Iraqi designers are prevented from having a substantial influence on societal changes to move Iraqi society forward to a better future. The reality is that design education is the only source of teaching and training of designers in Iraq, and is capable of further expansion to meet the new challenges and develop design for the future of the country. Although design education in Iraq is knowledgeable and mature enough to initiate an urgent transformation, this transformation must aim to readjust the teaching objectives to endorse design according to its socially oriented context, also to present advanced applications throughout the design process to teach new designers the scope of design strategies to achieve the goal of designing the experience through focusing the design process on societal and user demands and well-being. This transformation describes the core strategic application, to initiate the process, and meet the demands of graduating a new wave of designers capable of interacting socially, and effectively matching the local
socio-cultural norms with creative design applications. The difficulties of this process of engagement are understandable, although the combination of the experience of the Iraqi designers’ community and our current technological development would create a powerful resource and open possibilities for designers, users and society to communicate effectively and maintain active participation in sustainable social innovation.

The design scene in Iraq still reflects its embryonic stage and the early reforms, though they were many decades ago. The natural development of design practices over time would reflect its development and its beginnings, and enhance the role of design in the life of society. There are many reasons for this and the improvements in professional practices for Iraqi designers. To summarise:

- The framework of design education in Iraq (discussed earlier) stresses academic and disciplinary rigidity, outside the context of translating design knowledge into the working environment and practical applications. This prevents designers from being active players in spreading their knowledge to help develop new practices and traditions relating to design in society.
- The unstable contemporary political history of Iraq since the 1950s, which contributed heavily to discontinuity in developing many initiatives, and design thinking is a good example of an aspect of social development that failed.
- The long period of isolation after the 1980s separated Iraqis from the rest of the world. That time deeply influenced Iraqi designers and isolated them from effective communication and interaction with the notable developments occurring in design thinking around the world. This affects the current restoration of previous concepts and traditions for teaching and practising design, as evidenced in numerous responses in the interviews of Iraqi designers.

To help this community get through this stage in time, work must be done to help:

- Sustainable moves to re-engage the Iraqi designer community with other design movements internationally.
• Enhance the professional practices capability for Iraqi designers through long-term programmes for professional development.

• Create policies to promote the active use of design in developing new practices to benefit society.

• Create a professional association for Iraqi designers to support cooperation internally and internationally.

5.5. The way forward for design in Iraq

5.5.1. Overview of current design in Iraq after the Wars
Extensive damage to the country’s infrastructure and social systems occurred during decades of war from the 1980s, and the first wave of rebuilding was after the Gulf War in the 1990s. The rebuilding process under the Iraqi government at the time was based largely on a strategy of political face-off against UN economic sanctions and the Western powers. Rebuilding projects targeted the big cities and especially the capital, Baghdad, where new design styles invaded the city, and gradually changed the contemporary urban fabric of the capital, which had been developing from the 1950s (figure 5-8). Lots of new public and state palaces were designed and built, in pretentious architectural styles which relied heavily on borrowing and modifying a mixture of historical styles. In industry, as a result of the regulations limiting imports of products based on the UN economic sanctions, alternatives were sought that suited the local manufacturing capacity. However, from the 1990s the main focus for manufacturers in Iraq was in recycling, modifying and creating alternative solutions to fulfil the massive rebuilding of the country’s war-damaged infrastructure. The range of needs during that time included the extreme shortage of electric power, maintaining the oil refinery plants, purification and supply of clean water and rebuilding strategic communication and transportation systems.
The second wave of rebuilding started after the invasion in 2003. This last wave aimed first to improve the economic situation, by rapidly reviving the badly collapsed economy. The reviving process relied on income from exporting oil to finance the rebuilding process, also on private corporations to lead this process after rejecting the policies of a state-led economy. However, a decade after 2003, this wave is still struggling to achieve tangible progress on the ground and in all sectors. There are a few signals about a massive project to transform the urban fabric of the major cities, with a utopian vision to imitate the looks of new cities of the Gulf States: Dubai, Doha, etc. (figure 5-9).

Yet, the optimistic vision to rehabilitate basic infrastructure failed to address the “unstructured problems” facing Iraq, the legacy of decades of wars, the long era of control by strongly autocratic government, and huge pressure and influence from regional and international powers on the land and natural resources which have resulted in a deeply divided nation. The lack of understanding of the Iraqi culture and society was clearly evident following the invasion, when, associated with a high level of political depravity, it resulted in Iraqis developing a kind of
ambivalence towards, and confusion about, their national identity. In that situation, only one thing united these people—looking back to the past, to the good old days, in a strong reactive orientation on where to go.

In considering these sentiments, the researcher’s personal responses are divided. His initial reaction is one of sympathy for the plight of Iraqis, making him accepting of some of these current attitudes. Then, his deep conviction is that the best path to securing a better future for Iraq is through addressing these “unstructured problems” and by Iraqis creating solutions as part of the rebuilding process. From 2003 onwards, hundreds of websites, blogs, satellite TV channels and newspapers, established by Iraqis and others, have created new and “democratic” ways for Iraqis to interact, discuss and critique their current issues, as well as reflecting their daily lives and suffering both inside and outside Iraq. He periodically visits these sites, reads the articles and views the images. Unfortunately, they show a high level of ambivalence towards nationhood, in favour of sectarian attitudes and pride in one’s personal ancestry, without thinking of making tangible efforts to get through this mess.
5.5.2. The new openness will affect design
The current design thinking in Iraq, as discussed, wants to move forward. This desire continues expanding, based on hopes for a future that the new generation of Iraqi designers want and are willing to achieve, whose hopes are buoyed by many good examples, as the designers see what previous generations of Iraqi designers are achieving, especially outside Iraq, and the opening of channels of communication between the Iraqi designers’ community and the outside world. There is real concern about how this move will go, but looking at the process from a design perspective is interesting; it’s full of potential for further research and creative attempts to reposition this community within the global design scene. Certainly, it represents a unique type of problem, with a complex structure and wider internal and external interconnections of its elements. Rearranging these problem components to achieve better functioning will be a continuous process, based on careful review practices, supported methodologically through analysis, synthesis and creation of new relationships between the internal and external components of the problem, making suggestions to move forward, guided by the tools of design to offer a better situation. Designers are practising these methods and processes of transition used in creating material artefacts, for example in creating new products, or redesigning existing ones, that can equally be applied to match this type of mega problem. The power of design as a creative discipline is focused on human beings, while implying the ability of design to work in tangible ways and through different media, and in cooperation with other disciplines, aiming for development that benefits society.

Recently, we have experienced rapid changes in human life associated with ‘globalisation’, a process which has been defined numerous times and covers the non-border changes in cultural and scientific activities and their reflection all over the world. Globalisation affects us at a personal level in our daily lives, and also influences our families, communities and nations. These changes in the way we live have not been matched by the ways in which our social systems develop; even with efforts focused on restructuring and improvement, there continues to be a need for more far-reaching development. The majority of our societies are still
functioning using models primarily developed during the last century or earlier with aims, processes and behaviours reflecting earlier times and needs. Real-life examples illustrate this conclusion: even with the efforts made towards radical social redesign, coming mostly from developed nations, still the majority of the population on earth faces a struggle to survive while contending with new conditions. The complexity inherent in the development of this kind of problem is a strong argument for many disciplines to share the planning and create ideas for better problem handling. These disciplines must be willing to integrate more fully if they are to support a future vision of sustainable development. The fundamental element of design as innovation makes it a perfect partner for these processes; design thus has a role to play, both in the creation of new systems and in bringing together a variety of disciplines in a collaborative manner to deal with the problems. This conclusion identifies the following points to strengthen the sustainable functioning of design and its role in the future of Iraq.

5.5.2.1. Contextually awareness and strategic design theory
The core of the design action is politics, for the nature of design is the changer, its outcomes and resolutions are identified in the form of artefacts, services or other forms, which aim to change the user’s ability to perform specific functions, and to create advanced applications to satisfy human desires. To achieve these transformations:

- Move decisively toward dynamic transformation, directing the design to the benefit of society, at first on a personal level, and then to society, aiming to empower interactions and increase the opportunities for well-being in society through smart changes.
- Facilitate changes in the role of designer; from the shape-giver, to the change agent, with the ability to plan and conduct the design process to a capable resolution for the benefit of social transformation.
- Apply advanced applications to design the experiences not the product; through stimulating further elements relating to designing the experience, which can provide sustainable achievement for the design and the designer’s efforts.
These insights are meant to be the core structure for the look and function of design thinking in the future of Iraq, where the design process empowers local community involvement in making small changes in their micro societies, then gradually transform it to a wider process to redirect the creative design approaches to new opportunities and motivate the new generation of enthusiastic designers of sustainable transitional practices to support a democratic society. This design thinking platform can offer great opportunities for the local community’s active involvement in treating dominant and major problems relating to health, education and civil society. These fields provide the interdisciplinary approaches to make strong contributions to design practices.

5.5.2.2. Research-led focus in design practice
Design education in Iraq is the only national incubator for practising design research, which was introduced in the form of post-graduate programmes in design studies in Iraq in the mid-1980s. Two main directions mark the nature of design research in Iraqi design institutions:

- Design research promoted industrialisation, nationalisation and self-sufficiency; those topics dominated the titles of many master’s and later PhD studies in Iraqi institutions, reflecting a direct contribution from the previous socio-political milieu and political principles which assigned design research to support local manufacturing corporations. Those corporations served for topic creation for the early design researchers, influenced the scope of design research and limited its focus to the redesign of existing products and solving production problems for those national manufacturers. It was seen as the best possible practice for implementing design research to the direct benefit of industry.

- Research into aesthetic approaches to design reflect the second direction, aiming to strengthen theoretical topics relating to pure aesthetic arguments in designing material objects, and link design research practices with history and fine arts discourses and philosophically articulated resolutions intended to enrich the legitimacy of the form and context of designed objects. Wider circumstances endorsed these types of design research, such as the isolation of the design community, lecturers and researchers from
centres of design thinking around the world, also the desperate lack of research resources to conduct alternative practical and applied design research.

Certainly, providing answers to the many questions concerning the role of design research and its strategic framework and direction in the future of Iraq is the kind of immense task which justifies extensive collaboration between the Iraqi designer community and international design experts for the mind-mapping of a strategic vision and framework for the future of design research in Iraq, and to facilitate supportive resources.

5.5.2.3. The importance of technology

Design and the designer's roles are defined as drivers for change in society, through applications to provide innovative ideas, then to present them in the form of artefacts and services. These are meant to empower action for change in society for innovation and well-being. Moving toward the future is a process structured from elements collected from the remains of the past, and the conflict of the current – in the context of the field of this study, this context is meant to frame our actions. Technology is the vital link joining these core elements of design, designer and society, the power of technology vital as dynamic and improvable applications introduced firstly in a narrow context to fulfil basic needs and then participating indirectly to improve living conditions for developing countries' populations. Those technological applications were provided under restrictive political and economic regulations, from the providers and the local authority. It was very expensive and required a certain level of knowledge and experience to operate, which was unavailable in most of those countries at the time. However, the circumstances and applications of current technology are completely different, as the availability, accessibility and applicability are not limited by the expertise available for operating it. Iraqis rely on technology to make many aspects of their lives easier and better, and technology continues to support human capabilities to achieve better living conditions.
Any scenario of the role of design in the future of Iraq must rely on the effective application of technology. In other words, to make it a priority for applications to be available and operating effectively to enhance human interaction with and use of these applications for their benefit, and to improve the quality of services provided to the wider society. The researcher noticed during his visit in 2011 how Iraqis’ lives became easier through the availability of communication, with a huge number of them enjoying the use of cell phones and the internet. This technology was just starting to be available in Iraq in 2004, and it was proof that the new sophisticated technology can be learned and effectively used by people, as they learn from each other how it works, if they have access to it. Also, for this to be possible, extensive work must be done in planning and creating training programmes to make applications of technology accessible, through introductory programmes and assistance in the form of finance, training and maintenance.
Conclusion

The study consisted of five chapters, designed to give an account of design in Iraq leading up to the proposition of a framework for apprehending “Design in Iraq”. The first chapter reviewed the project of modernity in Iraq, with the objective of illustrating the socio-political situation of contemporary Iraqi history to the present day and utilising a wide range of interdisciplinary readings to cover the following key points:

- The socio-political basis of the many efforts to present Iraq as a modern state since its establishment.
- The local conflicts which oppose the restructuring of traditional cultural norms in Iraqi society since WWII.
- A review of socio-cultural achievements, allowing glimpses of the application of principles of modernisation to Iraq.

The main aims in reviewing these aspects were to offer insights into the roots and complexities of the Iraqi situation through a long history dating far beyond the creation of the Iraqi state back to ancient Mesopotamian civilisations.

The second chapter surveyed arguments and issues from the broader social sciences that have shaped the theory and practice of design in the context of development for emerging countries. Traditionally, those practices of design focus upon economically weaker sections of society and propose product and service solutions with the aim of improving the quality of life. Many conservative societies have been forced to implement dramatic structural changes. However, the lack of balance in the ideology underpinning this development has been a primary cause of the crises and deterioration faced by many developing countries during the post-war period.
In chapter three, this study presented pioneering insights and offered intensive analytical reviews about Iraqi experience with material objects. The chapter is dedicated to presenting this experience as the key element in mapping the development of design as a professional practice in Iraq, and to cover the broader dimensions of the close relationship between humans, objects and design.

Two different research practices were initiated in chapter four: to investigate the practice of design in Iraq, and look at the ways the Iraqi designer community is beginning to engage their knowledge and expertise with the current design infrastructure in Iraq. It also offers insights into the designer community’s search for a new direction to meet the country’s future demands. The second part is a reflection on the Iraqi designer transformation: being a ‘reflective practitioner’, searching my own transformation since the 1980s, analysing the experiences that continue to shape my practices, and reflecting on the practices of design in Iraq, as an Iraqi designer living in exile.

Finally, the fifth chapter offers an interpretation of the outcomes and resolutions developed through the previous chapters, and illustrates the framework of design in Iraq. The chapter is the core of the study, linking the many arguments and striving for a clear explanation of how this study achieves its objectives.

The study interacted with many key topics, reflecting the wider scope and interdisciplinary associations to achieve its objectives. Certainly, the core of the design action is politics, from the nature of design being the changer, its outcomes and resolutions are identified in the form of artefacts, services or other forms, which aim to change the user’s ability to perform specific functions and to create advanced applications to satisfy human desires. The nature of transformation requires:

- Move decisively toward dynamic transformation, directing the design to the benefit of society, at first on a personal level, and then to society, aiming to empower interactions and increase the opportunities for well-being in
society through smart changes.

- Facilitate changes in the role of designer; from the shape-giver, to the changer, with the ability to plan and conduct the design process to a capable resolution for the benefit of social transformation.
- Apply advanced applications to design the experiences not the product; through stimulating further elements relating to designing the experience, which can provide sustainable achievement for the design and the designer’s efforts.

These insights are meant to be the core structure for the look and function of design thinking in the future of Iraq, where the design process empowers local community involvement in making small changes to their micro societies, then gradually transforming it to redirect the creative design approaches to new opportunities and motivate the new generation of enthusiastic designers of sustainable transitional practices to support a democratic society. This design thinking platform has great opportunities for the local community’s involvement in treating dominant and major problems in health, education and civil society. These fields provide the interdisciplinary approaches to making strong contributions to design practices. Also the study addresses the role of design research in leading design practices, within a strategic framework for the future of Iraq. This challenging task justifies robust efforts to collaborate between the Iraqi designer community and international design experts to facilitate supportive resources.

Furthermore, the study promotes technology to foster transformation. The design and the designer’s roles are defined as the drivers for change in society, first through applications to provide shape for innovative ideas, then to present them in the form of artefacts, services and other formats. These are meant to empower action for change in society toward innovation and well-being. Moving toward the future is a process structured from elements collected from the remains of the past, and the conflict of the current – in the context of the field of this study, this context is meant to frame our actions. Technology is the vital link joining these
core elements of design, designer and society, the power of technology vital as dynamic and improvable applications.

The study was designed to support the local collective’s perspective, experiences and expectations regarding this study. There is ambiguity and very limited published resources concerning design thinking in Iraq, and the role of design in local society. This situation argues for designing research methods so the study can be communicated with a wider interdisciplinary approach, and then facilitates linking with the main elements of design thinking in design education and design practices in Iraq. The following research methods were selected for this study:

1. A literature review covers more interdisciplinary topics relating to socio-cultural, political and development studies.
2. Participant observation to enhance extensive and direct engagement through collections of data representing the field of the study, a practice that enriched the study with theoretical and visual data.
3. Open-ended interview sessions with selected members of the Iraqi designer community to create shared meanings of narratives reflecting a clear understanding and providing a solid basis for the study.
4. Reflective practice addressing the researcher’s transformation since the 1980s. Analysis of those experiences that continue to shape the researcher’s practices, and reflection on the practices of design in Iraq, as an Iraqi designer living in exile.
5. Analytical discussion of the emerging framework of design in Iraq, to re- vision its context and develop a description of the role design can play in the future of the country.

The info-graphic chart above (figure 1) visualises the relationships between these different forms of research, and their involvement in creating the design framework and supporting the analytical discussion culminating in the study’s conclusion about the role that design can play in the future of Iraq.
Post-war Iraq is clearly experiencing very dark and gloomy times, even ten years after the American invasion in early 2003 (an invasion the Americans called ‘liberation’) ended decades of war, and culminating in extensive damage to the country’s infrastructure and the collapse of its economy in the early 1990s. The conditions caused suffering just in obtaining a basic daily living. Unfortunately, these living conditions still hold sway today, even with gradual improvement in the people’s economic capabilities. Iraqis face new challenges to the unity of their country and the stability of the new political order which the Americans created after 2003. The American forces have ended their withdrawal from Iraq. The withdrawal, leaving Iraq a divided nation, resulted from the American design for post-war Iraq, as a nation with an ethno-sectarian form, based on Bush administration thinking prior to the invasion of 2003. The design caused further disintegration of the socio-political system, and consolidated the structure of three sub-groups based on their ethno-religious background. This design was facilitated further by the Obama administration in the form of measures to reinforce sectarian tensions between the groups. The current post-sectarian political reform is kept weak and unstable, unable to develop coherent policies or make any improvement to the constant instability in Iraq, which is expanding across the entire region. The growth of instability has caused an increase in political and socio-economic corruption, which weighs heavily on the community spirit. There is little light right now inside that dark Iraqi tunnel. Statistics show unprecedented numbers of Iraqi refugees in their own country, and the largest wave of legal and illegal Iraqi migrants in the history of Iraq. Iraqis are dispersing all over the world, forming one of the largest emigrant groups in the world since the 1980s. This enforced movement of human resources within and outside the country is draining Iraq of valuable expertise and bringing massive skill shortages at the very moment they need to be rebuilding the country.

47 While the first draft of this chapter was being written, the final withdrawal of American soldiers in Iraq was announced in mid-December, 2011.
Lots of initiatives raise new opportunities for cooperation with the Iraqi designers — projects for design education curriculum development, co-supervision of post-graduate candidates, seminars, peer reviewing of design research, etc. These are the Iraqi designers’ requests for future work, and they seek a long-term commitment to support their engagement with the design scene around the world after the long era of isolation. In addition, these discussions are strongly concerned with identifying the main points in the structure of design in Iraq, with a vision to culminate in the establishment of an Iraqi Design Council as the principal institution of design to provide a plan for a new era of professional design in the future of Iraq.

Although design education in Iraq is knowledgeable and mature enough to initiate an urgent need for transformation, this transformation must aim to readjust the teaching objectives to endorse design according to its socially orienting context, also to present advanced applications through the design process to teach new designers the scope of design strategies to design the experience by focussing the design process on societal and user demands and well-being. The difficulties of this process of engagement are understandable, although the combination of the experience of the Iraqi designers’ community and our current technological development would create a powerful resource and open new possibilities for designers, users and society to communicate effectively and maintain active participation in sustainable social innovation.

My current research practices are located within design studies that argue that ‘design and social innovation’ is a powerful means of implementing design thinking and its distinguishing features in social development programmes in developing countries. This design research is based on interdisciplinary knowledge that seeks to achieve sustainable social development by focusing on experimental methods and intervening in the following ways:

- Mapping the ideological and practical transformations from industrialisation to sustainable social development in developing countries.
- Applying design thinking to empower social groups to contribute to the
development of more democratic and sustainable societies.

- Creating bottom-up scenarios of strategies through the design process to involve end-users in the designing of new systems.

When the journey of exile started in the 1990s, it brought with it an unending series of fortunate opportunities to develop my design experience. These experiences opened doors to interact with different models of design thinking from all over the world. During these years, my practices in design continued to improve, from teaching design to being a design researcher and practitioner. Early in 2012, a great opportunity arose for me in the form of an appointment to develop and lead a Masters degree programme in design studies and to teach product design at the Faculty of Applied Sciences and Arts (FASA), at the German University in Cairo (GUC), Egypt. I saw this interesting opportunity as a challenge to examine previous experiences and develop new ones, with the aim of creating a sustainable model capable of linking the Egyptian higher education regulations – consisting of a very traditional, conservative and discipline-oriented education system – with the uniquely German practice of applied knowledge, and its focus on interdisciplinary professional practices in design education. In the short time since starting this job, I have engaged in planning activities to facilitate a new vision aimed at enhancing the development of teaching practices and widening the role of research in design to benefit teaching practices, as well as interacting with local industries, with the objective of enhancing the faculty's profile as the leading design institution in the region.

The current design community in Iraq wants to move forward, as mentioned earlier. This desire is growing, based on hopes that inspire the new generation of Iraqi designers, who are buoyed by many good examples as they see what previous generations of Iraqi designers are achieving, especially outside Iraq, and as channels of communication open between designers and the outside world. However, there is real concern for how this move will go. Looking at the process from a design perspective is interesting; it's full of potential for further research and creative attempts to reposition this community within the global design scene.
Certainly, it represents a unique type of problem, with a complex structure and wider internal and external interconnections of its elements.

The study proposes wider research, specifically for design researchers interested in engaging with the interdisciplinary research topics. Some previous points help us develop the following suggestions for future research. (1) To enlighten, engage and develop an advanced analytical approach relating to the relationships between the current structure of theoretical design elements and the rich socio-cultural heritage of Iraqi society, and examine through creative design methods and processes the structure linking the current with the past for blazing new paths to the future of design. (2) Describe how the concept of “changer” for design and the designer can apply in different fields and practices of design. (3) Describe how design can offer a platform for creative practices based on smart functioning of applications of technology to improve living conditions through new products, services and systems in the Iraqi context.
The References

Chapter one references


Cayci, Ahmet (2007). Title of review [Review of the book The Arab Contribution to Islamic Art from the Seventh to the Fifteenth Centuries, by author. The Muslim world, 97, pp152-155


Chaudhry, L. (2005). What Are We Fighting For?


http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/profession (retrieved 21/August/2013)


http://www.cofarts.uobaghdad.edu.iq/ (Retrieved 8/2013, in Arabic only)


Cairo, Dar Al-Fajer. (Arabic)


Klein, N. (2009). *Big Oil’s Iraq deals are the greatest stick-up in history.*

www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/jul/04/oil.oilandgascompanies (Retrieved 6/August/2009)


**Chapter two references**


**Chapter three references**


www.brainworker.ch (Retrieved, 24/November/2011)

www.desertdiaries.wordpress.com (Retrieved, 24/November/2011)


www.thescopes.org/ (Retrieved, Dec./2011)


**Chapter four references**


www.fte.edu.iq (Retrieved 28/August/2011)
www.icsid.org (Retrieved 28/August/2011)
www.muslimart.net/figurative-art-in-islam.shtml
www.yu.edu.jo (Retrieved 28/August/2011)

FRAMEWORK FOR RE-VISIONING DESIGN IN IRAQ | 257
Chapter five references
Abdel hammed Shoman Foundation.
Division of Educational Policies and Strategies.
Konemann.
Appendixes

Historical background to the formation of the new state of Iraq

The creation of Iraq was claimed at the time to be an attempt to find a solution to socio-political instability and ethno-religious conflict in the region, but it is best seen as a reflection of the colonialists’ interest in remapping the Arab region after the destruction of the Ottoman Empire at the end of WWI. By creating a series of sovereign nation states, the Europeans hoped to re-establish an international political order in a way that better served and enhanced the geo-political power structure and enabled greater potential for economic profit.

In historical background, when Baghdad was surrounded and attacked by three Mongol armies under Hulagu in 1258, the peak cultural era of the Arabic Islamic Caliphate in the region was tragically ended. Baghdad, the ‘City of Peace’ (Arabic Madinatu ‘L-Salam) was built by al Mansur (754-774) (figure A-1, 1), the second Abbasid caliphate, to be the capital of the Abbasid dynasty. It lay on the two banks of the Tigris River, marking the closest distance between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, and the city was surrounded by a network of canals (Hourani, 2005). Baghdad flourished as a world-class centre of production, manufacturing and commerce, which developed its wealth and upper class culture during the European dark ages. The Mongol invasion put the stable, urbanised and civilised society of Baghdad on a collision course with the nomadic, tribal-led, martial

48 “The term ‘caliph’ (Ar. Khalifah) is short for the Caliph or Deputy of God (Ar. Khalifat Allāh), which became the normal designation of the ruler of the Muslim community in the generation that followed the Prophet’s death in 632. The ruler was more formally known as Commander of the Faithful (Ar. Amir al-Mu’minin)” (Kennedy, 2006, p xiv).
society of the Mongols. This collision, with its massive attack on the structure of society and on its economic and cultural wealth, resulted in a sharp decline in Baghdad’s stability and prosperity.

Figure A-1, 1. The city of Baghdad between 767 and 912 AD.

Mesopotamia (Ar. bilād al-rāfidayn) was the battleground for many wars between its two large neighbours, Turkey (Ottoman) from the North, and Iran (Safavids) from the East. Geopolitically, Baghdad played an important role as a front line for defence arrangements between these two large, old empires. Another driving force of continued conflict was religious leadership. For the Ottomans, Baghdad is the city where Sunni Islamic thought and its school (Ar. Hanafi) was created and developed. This school is the seminary of the Ottomans. The Ottoman Empire considered itself the legal authority that enforced the hegemony of the Islamic Caliphate periods and the protector of Sunnis (the majority group of Muslims). From the other side, this land includes the pilgrimage sites of the two holy cities of Najaf and Karbala (in the mid-south of Iraq), considered most holy by the Shi’ite Muslims, and the other main school of Islamic religious thought, followed by the majority of Iranians and other minority Muslim groups in Asia and the Middle East.

For these reasons, Baghdad was kept under tight control by the Ottomans after the
battle of Chaldiran in 1514, and Ottoman emperors later extended their authority to the whole route between Istanbul and the Gulf south of Mesopotamia (figure A-1, 2), where the Euphrates and the Tigris joined to create a single river (Ar. Shatt-al-Arab). The southern city of Basra became the principal base for the Ottoman navy in the Gulf (Hourani, 2005). Mosul, Baghdad and Basra (north to south) were governed as three independent states (Turkish Vilayets) with borders that were loosely defined by lines of distinction between geographic, ethnic and religious features. The rest of the surrounding open agricultural land and desert oases were controlled by various tribal chieftains.

![Figure A-1, 2. The route between Istanbul and Basra.](image)

At the end of the nineteenth century, a reformation movement in the Ottoman Empire led to policies that were designed to centralise Ottoman political authority over their territories. Modernisation was a key focus of this movement. Centralisation policies led to a highly integrated subsistence agriculture economy and an extension of world markets for the products of this economy. As the demand for agricultural workers increased, opportunities arose for nomadic populations to settle in villages and agricultural areas. This settlement affected the structure of tribal customs, traditions and roles in profound ways (Kingston, 2002).
Two important factors help to explain the instability that characterised Ottoman control of these territories. First was the Ottoman governors, who were typically unprofessional, intolerant and rigid. For most of them, being governor of these territories was probably seen as a punishment or an exile. The second factor was the authority of the tribal chieftain, whose role as political and social leader of the village and tribal community continued undiminished, leading to the semi-feudal system that dominated the agricultural sector until 1958.

Appendix 1. Historical background to the formation of the new state of Iraq
Politics and practices of development in Iraq since WWII

Historical background
Iraqi economic activity traditionally was based on agriculture and trade, starting with the ancient Mesopotamian kingdoms, which sought to improve river and canal-based irrigation systems to increase trade activity and the wealth of their people. The region's proximity to the two great sea-basins of the world, the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean, and to trade routes linking Europe and Asia, gave it significant strategic and geopolitical importance. The decline of the irrigation system after the Mongol invasion was a significant cause of the area's subsequent economic decline. The golden age of agriculture that preceded the Mongol invasion never recovered. When the Ottoman Empire controlled Mesopotamia, little effort was made to improve the quality of life for those living in the cities and what efforts were made never reached smaller cities or rural areas, which were controlled by local tribal chieftains (Ar. Sheikhs) within the strictures of the semi-feudal agricultural system. Although Ottomans governors conducted during the mid-nineteenth century, efforts centred on organising land registration for the purpose of taxation, in return for some very basic health and education services. Big cities were the target of modernisation efforts. The negligent delivery or non-existence of these purported government services were a reflection of the Ottoman Empire's strategic vision for Iraq: they saw it as an important front line of defence against Iran, and “spent as little money and effort as would maintain a minimum sense of order” (Polk, 2005, p61). A good example of the Ottoman effort towards modernisation can be seen in the work of Midhat Pasha (1822-1884), the governor of Baghdad from 1864 to 1869 (figure A-2, 1).
At the turn of the twentieth century there was a sense of hope in the Arab world, where many were looking forward to the possibility of liberation from the long period of Ottoman hegemony in the region. Many sought to be a part of the new world that Europe and America were seen to be creating. Interaction, both direct and indirect, between Arabs and the West seemed to support these hopes, beginning with the introduction of Western books, periodicals and newspapers. These were followed by the introduction of educational opportunities, with Arabic students studying at European institutions and groups of Syrian and Lebanese emigrants leaving for the ‘New World’. These cultural channels and media were sources of information about the Western countries and the development of modern customs. This relationship developed further once Arabic writers began to “express in Arabic their consciousness of themselves and their place in the modern world” (Hourani, 2005, p305). As an influx of Western literature demonstrated to Arabs the state of Western modernisation and its progress in science, technology,
art, philosophy and social systems, the problem arose of how Arab and Muslim states could “acquire the strength to confront Europe and become part of the modern world” (Hourani, 2005, p305). Islamic thinkers debated these questions passionately, and many concluded that in reorganising Muslim societies, care had to be taken to make modernisation compatible with Islam and to utilise it to strengthen Islam’s place in the world. Politically, nationalism became a pervasive thought, with Arabs hoping for European support in their attempts to detach themselves from the hegemony of the Ottoman Empire.

The formation of the Iraqi state in 1921 represented a new and non-traditional setting in which the British carried out the colonial project. The mandate system allowed them to maintain an indirect form of control over their colonised territories. It was at this time that development in its European meaning began to be applied seriously in Iraq. The British colonists introduced the capitalist mode of industrial production, which went on to dominate the Iraqi economic sector for several decades, and with it they introduced national boundaries, a constitution, a monarchy, a bicameral legislature, an administration staffed with British advisers, a security apparatus and some improvements in social services in basic education and health. “What it was not given, however, was a strong social base” (Kingston, 2002, p94) (Yousif, 2001).

Modern capitalism can be seen as having formed the contemporary Middle East and its borders. Following the industrial revolution, the European colonial powers applied their new techniques of industrial manufacture to the creation of abundant technology and fast transportation, which allowed them to move with ease to surrounding territories and reform geopolitical maps to serve their purposes. For this reason, colonialism must be understood within its economic as well as its political contexts (Hourani, 2005; Tyyebi, 2005; Kingston, 2002).

In geopolitical terms, Iraq was a strategically important site in Britain’s air force strategy for the Gulf, enhancing their ability to defend the Iranian oil fields and creating a stable route to their Indian colony from the Middle East. These
strategies were supported by the creation of air bases at Habniiyya in the west and Shaiba in the south of Iraq (figure A-2, 2). The geopolitical importance of Iraq increased dramatically when oil reserves were discovered, and the first oilfield was drilled in Baba Gurgur, north of Kirkuk, in 1927 (figure A-2, 3). The rapid economic growth associated with oil profits suggested a possible common interest between the British and the Iraqis. However, in spite of the fact that “between 1927 and 1939, Iraq had no less than eight different development plans” (Kingston, 2002, p100), a broad-based, successful development programme failed to occur.

Figure A-2, 2. The airbases of Habniiyya in the west and Shaiba in the south of Iraq.
In the post-WWII period, Britain was forced to re-evaluate its political role in the Middle East, in reaction to the expanding power of the USA and the Soviet Union, and partly because of the political blowback of the widening gap between the rich and the poor in the Middle East under British rule. A conference held in London in 1945 surveyed British foreign policy in the Middle East and sought to find ways for British policy-makers to cope with the transformed post-war environment. The conference concluded that the promotion of social and economic development was the only realistic way to achieve British imperial interests in the area. The idea was that development should be directed at “peasants, not pashas49”, in the words of foreign secretary Ernest Bevin, so as to create broad-based support for, or at least stem opposition to, British imperialism in the region. Britain, however, found itself in a very different position to the one it had enjoyed before the war, once the USA and the Soviet Union began to flex their muscles in the region:

49 “Pasha or pascha, formerly bashaw, was a high rank in the Ottoman Empire political system, typically granted to governors, generals and dignitaries. As an honorary title, Pasha, in one of its various ranks, is equivalent to the British title of Lord, and was also one of the highest titles in pre-republican Egypt.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pashas)
“Its [Britain’s] resources were limited, its economy was in decline, and its past record of imperialism laid bare any attempt to elevate British policy onto a higher moral plane. Thus, instead of embarking on a post-war Middle East policy buoyed by the limitless sense of possibilities, British policy-makers worked in an atmosphere coloured more by a sense of vulnerability and this would have interesting effects on how the ‘peasants, not pashas’ policy would come to evolve. Born out of the unique circumstances of a dying imperial power, what was interesting about Britain’s Middle East development policy was its recognition and early appreciation of the ‘limits to promoting growth’ in the region” (Kingston, 2002, p10-12).

In Iraq, the conclusions of the London conference added some urgency to fulfilling the basic needs of workers, the majority of whom were earning less than half of what they earned before the war (Batatu, 1978). After 1945, the new policy of British technical assistance for development programmes was established. Britain’s hope of appeasing the local Iraqi population was still hindered, however, by its failure to reform the structure of its political system (Kingston, 2002).

**The Iraqi Development Board**

Several new factors affected development strategies in Iraq in the post-war era:

- Britain strategically changed its role in Iraq to one of technical assistance and planning, rather than financial support, as a product of its declining economic fortunes after the war.

- The US became an interested player in offering development assistance to the Middle East in the form of science and technology. American assistance was offered under the umbrella of the *Point Four* programme, which targeted irrigation and water management systems, aligning with British strategic plans of strengthening the Iraqi agricultural sector. However, in other Middle Eastern countries such as Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon, improving craft industries were the main sectors targeted by USA
development assistance, as well as craft and design tertiary education.

- The dramatic rise of oil revenues provided the financial resources necessary to expand development strategies and cover the costs of massive strategic projects, such as flood controls in agriculture.
- Governmental administration systems were developed for the specific purpose of planning, construction and management of such projects.

In 1949, the Development Board was established, with the stated aim of utilising the growing profits from Iraq’s oil exports to initiate a strategic development programme in the country. This state board was chaired by the Iraqi Prime Minister and consisted of members of different ministries as well as British and American foreign advisors. Britain had high expectations for this pioneering institution as a potential ‘model’ that could be followed in the Middle East and the developing world at large. A critical examination of the board and its role, however, brings to the fore the problematic question of what ‘development’ means, and particularly what it means for different people. Kingston writes:

“Nuri Elsaeed, Iraqi Prime Minister, attended every weekly meeting of the board during his time, and received for his efforts the nickname of Iraq’s ‘father of development’ in some circles. The problem, however, lay with his conception of what ‘development’ meant … To Nuri, the development programme was simply part of a wider policy to preserve the immediate stability of the Iraqi state. This strategy depended on physical results which meant completed projects of all kinds, especially the spectacular ones which could be officially opened during the annual ‘Development Week’ (Kingston, 2002, P109).

However, that concept of ‘development’ showed through in the way the Americans developed the concept, for the Point Four programme was carried out in a highly centralised fashion, with heavy use of technical expertise, but without any connection to the real world outside the offices of the foreign planners. The American ambassador to Iraq even wrote to Washington warning the administration there that the Point Four programme “must be a low pressure
program here with our works speaking rather than our words... it must not (repeat not) be a big splash” (Kingston, 2002, p114). While the political situation underlying the process of development actually changed little during the republican era after 1958, there were changes that reflected revolutionary strategies aimed at shifting the economy rapidly towards industrialisation, but government policy continued to neglect the idea of the human being as the core target of development. The dilemma of how to define ‘development’ continued to be a major challenge throughout Iraq’s contemporary history.

Iraqi oil revenues
Many economic studies recommend that countries rich in natural resources harness their wealth in order to promote growth. The common practice of relying on these resources and living as retirees leads to patterns of stagnation or of boom and bust cycles50. However, the fact is that the majority of oil exporters in the Arabic region rely on oil revenues as their main source of foreign currency, which is vital for the import of products and services.

Early in the 1970s, Iraq nationalised its oil industry after decades of control by multinational oil companies. This strategic decision resulted in a massive growth in revenues from exporting oil to international markets. These revenues were pumped directly into the economy and expanded its ability to initiate ‘exploded development’ strategies; designed to reposition Iraq as an industrially led economy, rather than being agriculturally led. Efforts were focused on transportation, utilising high technology in irrigation, and developing social

50Paul Collier explains this dilemma: “I’ve looked to see what is the relationship between higher commodity prices of exports, and the growth of commodity-exporting countries. And I’ve looked globally, I’ve taken all the countries in the world for the last 40 years, and looked to see what the relationship is. And the short run – say, the first five to seven years – is just great. In fact, it’s hunky dory: everything goes up. You get more money because your terms of trade have improved, but also that drives up output across the board. So GDP goes up a lot – fantastic! That’s the short run. And how about the long run? Come back 15 years later. Well, the short run, it’s hunky dory, but the long run, it’s humpty dumpty. You go up in the short run, but then most societies historically have ended up worse than if they’d had no booms at all. That is not a forecast about how commodity prices go; it’s a forecast of the consequences, the long-term consequences, for growth of an increase in prices” (Collier, 2009).
services such as free and universal health care and education.

The governing Ba’ath party’s philosophy\(^{51}\) permitted high levels of expenditure on development. The Non-aligned Movement of the Third World was an important player at that time, its influence on these development strategies reflecting a general desire in the post-colonial or developing world to strengthen their economies to the point where they could enjoy independence from the political hegemony of the West and move on from the colonial era. In spite of the material benefits conferred by Ba’athist policies, however, there were several critical failings:

- The focus on reinventing Iraq as an industrial powerhouse neglected to take into account the nation’s long history as an agricultural society. This marginalisation of agriculture led to a widening of the gap between urban and village life and was reflected in enormous migration from rural areas to cities.
- Human development was not seen as a primary goal in these development strategies, with materialism dominating the development discourse.
- Rapid progress in the evolution of high technology was not matched by the social application of these technologies or the social experience of them.
- The state lacked the organisational capacity to control the catastrophic mess associated with huge and rapid expenditure on wasteful projects, as occurred in a number of state-owned industries.
- State hegemony made grass roots or localised political organisation impossible and ossified the structures protecting the dictatorship from public accountability.

---

\(^{51}\) According to the theory of the Ba’aths, “there was a single Arab nation, with the right to live in a single united state. It had been formed by a great historical experience, the creation by the Prophet Muhammad of the religion of Islam and the society which embodied it. This experience belonged not only to Arab Muslims, but to all Arabs who appropriated it as their own, and regarded it as the basis of their claim to have a special mission in the world and a right to independence and unity. They could achieve these aims only by means of a double transformation: first of the intellect and soul – an appropriation of the idea of the Arab nation through understanding and love – and then of the political and social system” (Hourani, 2005, p404-405).
The era of booming oil profits ended suddenly when the war between Iraq and Iran began in the early 1980s. All sectors but the military faced cutbacks at this time, particularly in the latter years of the war, and the country’s foreign debt expanded rapidly. There were also major labour shortages as a large percentage of the workforce joined the armed forces. Development projects suffered accordingly.

The oil industry is acknowledged as the most important source of Iraq’s wealth, but from the time of its discovery in the 1920s, Iraqis saw little of this wealth, as multinational oil companies controlled the vital resource. After 1972, the nationalisation of the oil industry opened the door for Iraqi workers to develop expertise and experience in the industry. The state’s control over economic development restricted any opportunity for local investors wishing to participate in development efforts. In the 1960s, state policy was to nationalise all local semi-industrial companies, including small-scale corporations dealing in textiles, food processing, leather and other mechanical and electrical firms. This model of state control continued and expanded to cover new industrial activities: construction companies and, after the 1980s, armaments and military-industrial plants. Policies to advance national production were heavily backed by state expenditure from the oil revenues.

The long period of wars and, after the 1990s, the UN sanctions, produced colossal failures associated with state economic planning, even in a country so rich in natural resources. The oil industry suffered heavily from a lack of maintenance and new technology to extend production capacity. The American invasion was motivated by oil52 and demonstrated the new phenomenon of invading countries to seize their natural resources. Of late we witnessed the return of major multinational oil corporations to again control Iraqi resources, with the

52 Several of the architects of the Iraq war no longer even bother to deny that oil was a major motivator for the invasion. On US National Public Radio’s To the Point, Fadhil Chalabi, one of the primary Iraqi advisers to the Bush administration in the lead-up to the invasion, recently described the war as “a strategic move on the part of the United States of America and the UK to have a military presence in the Gulf in order to secure [oil] supplies in the future” (Klein, 2009).
accompanying publicity describing them as saving the country, providing investments, expertise and the high technology the Iraqi oil fields desperately need to extend their production and provide the financial resources for the reconstruction of Iraq. (Figure A-2, 4).

**Figure A-2, 4. Iraq’s largest oil refinery in Baiji.**

**Appendix 2. Politics and practices of development in Iraq since WWII**
Graduated BA in Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The academic year</th>
<th>Industrial</th>
<th>Interior</th>
<th>Printing</th>
<th>Textile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1982-1983</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Academic staff members
The academic 2010-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academics</th>
<th>Industrial</th>
<th>Interior</th>
<th>Printing</th>
<th>Textile</th>
<th>Interdisciplinary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ass. Prof.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ass. Lecturer</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post graduated candidates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master in Design (2 years-full-time)</th>
<th>The years from-to</th>
<th>Industrial</th>
<th>Interior</th>
<th>Printing</th>
<th>Textile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1986-2009</td>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PhD in Design (3 years-full-time)</th>
<th>The years from-to</th>
<th>Industrial</th>
<th>Interior</th>
<th>Printing</th>
<th>Textile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996-2005</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above data references are:
- The college of fine arts website: http://www.cofarts.uobaghdad.edu.iq/ (in Arabic)
- Respond from one of my colleagues working in design department.

Appendix 3. Design education in Iraq-Statistical data
Inaugural Address of Harry S. Truman
THURSDAY, JANUARY 20, 1949

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Chief Justice, and fellow citizens, I accept with humility the honor which the American people have conferred upon me. I accept it with a deep resolve to do all that I can for the welfare of this Nation and for the peace of the world.

In performing the duties of my office, I need the help and prayers of every one of you. I ask for your encouragement and your support. The tasks we face are difficult, and we can accomplish them only if we work together.

Each period of our national history has had its special challenges. Those that confront us now are as momentous as any in the past. Today marks the beginning not only of a new administration, but of a period that will be eventful, perhaps decisive, for us and for the world.

It may be our lot to experience, and in large measure to bring about, a major turning point in the long history of the human race. The first half of this century has been marked by unprecedented and brutal attacks on the rights of man, and by the two most frightful wars in history. The supreme need of our time is for men to learn to live together in peace and harmony.

The peoples of the earth face the future with grave uncertainty, composed almost equally of great hopes and great fears. In this time of doubt, they look to the United States as never before for good will, strength, and wise leadership. It is fitting, therefore, that we take this occasion to proclaim to the world the essential principles of the faith by which we live, and to declare our aims to all peoples.

The American people stand firm in the faith which has inspired this Nation from the beginning. We believe that all men have a right to equal justice under law and equal opportunity to share in the common good. We believe that all men have the right to freedom of thought and expression. We believe that all men are created equal because they are created in the image of God. From this faith we will not be moved.

The American people desire, and are determined to work for, a world in which all nations and all peoples are free to govern themselves as they see fit, and to achieve a decent and satisfying life. Above all else, our people desire, and are determined to work for, peace on earth—a just and lasting peace—based on genuine agreement freely arrived at by equals. In the pursuit of these aims, the United States and other like-minded nations find themselves directly opposed by a regime with contrary aims and a totally different concept of life.
That regime adheres to a false philosophy which purports to offer freedom, security, and greater opportunity to mankind. Misled by this philosophy, many peoples have sacrificed their liberties only to learn to their sorrow that deceit and mockery, poverty and tyranny, are their reward. That false philosophy is communism.

Communism is based on the belief that man is so weak and inadequate that he is unable to govern himself, and therefore requires the rule of strong masters. Democracy is based on the conviction that man has the moral and intellectual capacity, as well as the inalienable right, to govern himself with reason and justice. Communism subjects the individual to arrest without lawful cause, punishment without trial, and forced labor as the chattel of the state. It decrees what information he shall receive, what art he shall produce, what leaders he shall follow, and what thoughts he shall think.

Democracy maintains that government is established for the benefit of the individual, and is charged with the responsibility of protecting the rights of the individual and his freedom in the exercise of his abilities. Communism maintains that social wrongs can be corrected only by violence. Democracy has proved that social justice can be achieved through peaceful change. Communism holds that the world is so deeply divided into opposing classes that war is inevitable.

Democracy holds that free nations can settle differences justly and maintain lasting peace.

These differences between communism and democracy do not concern the United States alone. People everywhere are coming to realize that what is involved is material well-being, human dignity, and the right to believe in and worship God. I state these differences, not to draw issues of belief as such, but because the actions resulting from the Communist philosophy are a threat to the efforts of free nations to bring about world recovery and lasting peace. Since the end of hostilities, the United States has invested its substance and its energy in a great constructive effort to restore peace, stability, and freedom to the world.

We have sought no territory and we have imposed our will on none. We have asked for no privileges we would not extend to others. We have constantly and vigorously supported the United Nations and related agencies as a means of applying democratic principles to international relations. We have consistently advocated and relied upon peaceful settlement of disputes among nations. We have made every effort to secure agreement on effective international control of our most powerful weapon, and we have worked steadily for the limitation and control of all armaments.
We have encouraged, by precept and example, the expansion of world trade on a sound and fair basis.

Almost a year ago, in company with 16 free nations of Europe, we launched the greatest cooperative economic program in history. The purpose of that unprecedented effort is to invigorate and strengthen democracy in Europe, so that the free people of that continent can resume their rightful place in the forefront of civilization and can contribute once more to the security and welfare of the world. Our efforts have brought new hope to all mankind. We have beaten back despair and defeatism. We have saved a number of countries from losing their liberty. Hundreds of millions of people all over the world now agree with us, that we need not have war—that we can have peace. The initiative is ours.

We are moving on with other nations to build an even stronger structure of international order and justice. We shall have as our partners countries which, no longer solely concerned with the problem of national survival, are now working to improve the standards of living of all their people. We are ready to undertake new projects to strengthen the free world.

In the coming years, our program for peace and freedom will emphasize four major courses of action.

First, we will continue to give unfaltering support to the United Nations and related agencies, and we will continue to search for ways to strengthen their authority and increase their effectiveness. We believe that the United Nations will be strengthened by the new nations which are being formed in lands now advancing toward self-government under democratic principles.

Second, we will continue our programs for world economic recovery. This means, first of all, that we must keep our full weight behind the European recovery program. We are confident of the success of this major venture in world recovery. We believe that our partners in this effort will achieve the status of self-supporting nations once again. In addition, we must carry out our plans for reducing the barriers to world trade and increasing its volume. Economic recovery and peace itself depend on increased world trade.

Third, we will strengthen freedom-loving nations against the dangers of aggression. We are now working out with a number of countries a joint agreement designed to strengthen the security of the North Atlantic area. Such an agreement would take the form of a collective defense arrangement within the terms of the United Nations Charter. We have already established such a defense pact for the Western Hemisphere by the treaty of Rio de Janeiro.
The primary purpose of these agreements is to provide unmistakable proof of the joint determination of the free countries to resist armed attack from any quarter. Each country participating in these arrangements must contribute all it can to the common defense.

If we can make it sufficiently clear, in advance, that any armed attack affecting our national security would be met with overwhelming force, the armed attack might never occur.

I hope soon to send to the Senate a treaty respecting the North Atlantic security plan.

In addition, we will provide military advice and equipment to free nations which will cooperate with us in the maintenance of peace and security.

Fourth, we must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of underdeveloped areas.

More than half the people of the world are living in conditions approaching misery. Their food is inadequate. They are victims of disease. Their economic life is primitive and stagnant. Their poverty is a handicap and a threat both to them and to more prosperous areas.

For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people.

The United States is pre-eminent among nations in the development of industrial and scientific techniques. The material resources which we can afford to use for the assistance of other peoples are limited. But our imponderable resources in technical knowledge are constantly growing and are inexhaustible.

I believe that we should make available to peace-loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realize their aspirations for a better life. And, in cooperation with other nations, we should foster capital investment in areas needing development.

Our aim should be to help the free peoples of the world, through their own efforts, to produce more food, more clothing, more materials for housing, and more mechanical power to lighten their burdens.

We invite other countries to pool their technological resources in this undertaking. Their contributions will be warmly welcomed. This should be a cooperative enterprise in which all nations work together through the United Nations and its specialized agencies wherever practicable. It must be a worldwide effort for the achievement of peace, plenty, and freedom.
With the cooperation of business, private capital, agriculture, and labor in this country, this program can greatly increase the industrial activity in other nations and can raise substantially their standards of living.

Such new economic developments must be devised and controlled to benefit the peoples of the areas in which they are established. Guarantees to the investor must be balanced by guarantees in the interest of the people whose resources and whose labor go into these developments.

The old imperialism—exploitation for foreign profit—has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair-dealing.

All countries, including our own, will greatly benefit from a constructive program for the better use of the world's human and natural resources. Experience shows that our commerce with other countries expands as they progress industrially and economically.

Greater production is the key to prosperity and peace. And the key to greater production is a wider and more vigorous application of modern scientific and technical knowledge.

Only by helping the least fortunate of its members to help themselves can the human family achieve the decent, satisfying life that is the right of all people. Democracy alone can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies—hunger, misery, and despair.

On the basis of these four major courses of action we hope to help create the conditions that will lead eventually to personal freedom and happiness for all mankind.

If we are to be successful in carrying out these policies, it is clear that we must have continued prosperity in this country and we must keep ourselves strong. Slowly but surely we are weaving a world fabric of international security and growing prosperity.

We are aided by all who wish to live in freedom from fear—even by those who live today in fear under their own governments.

We are aided by all who want relief from the lies of propaganda— who desire truth and sincerity.

We are aided by all who desire self-government and a voice in deciding their own affairs.

We are aided by all who long for economic security—for the security and
abundance that men in free societies can enjoy.

We are aided by all who desire freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom to live their own lives for useful ends.

Our allies are the millions who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In due time, as our stability becomes manifest, as more and more nations come to know the benefits of democracy and to participate in growing abundance, I believe that those countries which now oppose us will abandon their delusions and join with the free nations of the world in a just settlement of international differences. Events have brought our American democracy to new influence and new responsibilities. They will test our courage, our devotion to duty, and our concept of liberty.

But I say to all men, what we have achieved in liberty, we will surpass in greater liberty.

Steadfast in our faith in the Almighty, we will advance toward a world where man’s freedom is secure.

To that end we will devote our strength, our resources, and our firmness of resolve. With God’s help, the future of mankind will be assured in a world of justice, harmony, and peace.

Ahmedabad Declaration
on Industrial Design for Development

A. Ahmedabad Declaration

1 The Meeting for the Promotion of Industrial Design in Developing Countries convened by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in close cooperation with the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID) and the Indian National Institute of Design in January 1979, in line with the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action and in pursuance of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNIDO and ICSID on April 26, 1977 to accelerate jointly industrial design activities in developing countries in order to satisfy the urgent needs in this field, and to carry out as extensively as possible the promotional activities necessary to alert developing countries to the advantage of including industrial design in their planning processes,

Adopts

The Ahmedabad Declaration on Industrial Design for Development.

2 Having reviewed the situation with respect to industrial design in a number of developing countries,

3 Bearing in mind that design improves function, enhances communication, simplifies manufacture, use and maintenance,

4 Recognising that the problem faced in most developing countries is that although design is a real need, it is not yet a sufficiently felt need,

5 Noting that design methodology is inadequately known and insufficiently used as an economic resource,

6 Aware that few countries have the organisational, financial and personnel resources which can enable industrial design to assume its proper role,

7 Convinced that design can help raise the quality of life within economic planning and that the designer can become an agent of progress,

8 Recognising that through design, relevant cultural traditions can be preserved and utilised to current advantage,

9 Recognising that cooperation between UNIDO and ICSID should not only further the transfer of technology, know-how and information in the field of industrial design, but should help to stimulate self-reliance,

10 Noting that UNIDO and ICSID have agreed to carry out as extensively as possible the promotional activities necessary to alert developing countries to the advantages of including industrial design in their planning processes,

11 Bearing in mind that as a first step towards achieving these objectives, this Meeting was convened to help initiate meaningful cooperation and exchange between institutions and designers concerned with problems of the developing world,

12 Having decided to adopt a common position and a line of action, the Meeting

Solemnly declares

13 Its firm conviction that design can be a powerful force for the improvement of the quality of life in the developing world;

14 Its firm belief that designers must have a clear understanding of the values of their own societies and of what constitutes a standard of life for their own people;

15 That design in the developing world must be committed to a search for local answers to local needs, utilising indigenous skills, materials and traditions while absorbing the extraordinary power that science and technology can make available to it;

16 That designers in every part of the world must work to evolve a new value system which dissolves the disastrous divisions between the worlds of waste and want, preserves the identity of peoples and attends the priority areas of need for the vast majority of mankind;

17 That in view of the foregoing, the Meeting adopts the various measures set forth in the following Plan of Action.
B. Plan of Action

Measures

1. Developing countries are encouraged to consider the establishment of design institutions, design centres and/or other design-practising and promotional institutions to spread design methodology, awareness and consciousness.

2. These institutions should develop close and sustained links with industrial activity in government and in the private sector, at every level including heavy industries, medium-scale industries, small-scale, rural and craft industries, as well as with educational and research institutions, and with people who are the ultimate users of design.

3. In developing countries, the establishment of professional design associations which can function parallel to the design promotional institutions should be seriously considered, and such efforts assisted.

4. Design institutions are worthy of financial and other support by their governments, which must be their prime source of succour at this early stage of development.

5. These institutions must work to establish a priority for industrial design through the creation of a national design consciousness. They must hasten the awareness that in all areas of public expenditure, the integration of design in the planning process can ensure optimum quality and utilisation of resources. They must communicate that industrial design is concerned with the improvement of our environment through the appropriate use of raw materials, increased productivity, with the protection of health, human safety, natural and cultural resources, with the enhancement of working environments, and with expanding work opportunities and earnings at all levels, including exports. Therefore design considerations should be incorporated in plans for national development.

6. To achieve these purposes, such institutions in developing countries may consider the importance of articulating a statement on the importance of design which can serve as a national consensus on the need for creating design awareness and for utilising design as a discipline for better planning.

7. Such institutions must stress the importance of establishing and improving facilities for design education and training, upgrading design experience, as well as assisting designers to act as trainers and as catalysts for design awareness wherever they work, so that design skills can be disseminated at several levels simultaneously, and thus influence industrial activity on a broad scale in the developing world.

8. The establishment of national design awards, exhibitions, documentation and publication programmes should be encouraged as aids to a wider understanding of industrial design and of design traditions and resources.

9. Systems of active cooperation should be established and promoted between design institutions in the developed and less developed countries, and between these institutions in the less developed world.

10. These cooperative arrangements could be bilateral as well as multilateral. International organisations including ICSID, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNCTAD, WHO, UNEP, IBRD, the Asian Development Bank and the African Development Bank, IADB and others should be encouraged to provide active support to such cooperative arrangements.

Appendix 5. Ahmedabad Declaration 1979

Pdf document sent by Prof. Ranjan M. P.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Qualification and academic title</th>
<th>Place of work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Abdul Munim Kairy</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Art Education, Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Ebrahim Himdan</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>College of Applied Arts-Graphic Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Kahlel Alwasity</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Graphic Design, Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Lubna Assad</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Industrial Design, Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Nawal Muhsen</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Industrial Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Nsayef Jassem</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Graphic Design, Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Saad Jarjees</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Dean, College of Applied Arts, Baghdad-Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Shaymai</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Industrial Design, Baghdad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sitar Al-Jabory</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td>Amman al-Ahliya University-Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Kareem Alqaysi</td>
<td>Lecturer</td>
<td>College of Fine Arts-Industrial Design, Baghdad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix 6. The Iraqi designers participated in the unstructured interview sessions.
Application for ethics approval of research involving human participants

1. This form is to be used by students and academic staff undertaking research in the ‘Negligible risk’ and ‘Low risk categories as described in section 2 of the ‘National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research’. All applications must be emailed to: DSCethics@rmit.edu.au. They are then registered by the DSC office, and considered at the next available meeting. A signed hardcopy of the form is also required by the secretary before the meeting date. Enquiries should be directed to the secretary, Cheryl de Leon, on 9925 2974.

2. Applications that are more than low risk must be completed on the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee HREC Form 1.

3. Please insert the version number and date in the footer of the document.

Section A: Approvals and declarations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Degree</th>
<th>Staff Research Project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complete this column if you are undertaking research for a degree at RMIT or another university.</td>
<td>Complete this column if your research is not for any degree.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigator</th>
<th>Principal investigator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Qassim Saad</td>
<td>Qualifications:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student No: S3114745</td>
<td>School:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications: MA Industrial Design</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: School of Architecture and Design</td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address: 6 Ayr Street, Kaikorai, Dunedin, 9010, New Zealand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: +64 21 165 2478</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:qassim.saad@op.ac.nz">qassim.saad@op.ac.nz</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Degree for which research is being undertaken: PhD in Industrial Design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Senior Supervisor</th>
<th>Other investigator/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name: Soumitri Varadarajan</td>
<td>Name/s:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications: PhD Industrial Design</td>
<td>Qualifications:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School: School of Architecture and Design</td>
<td>School:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: 061422979284</td>
<td>Phone:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:soumitri.varadarajan@rmit.edu.au">soumitri.varadarajan@rmit.edu.au</a></td>
<td>Email:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Declaration by the investigator(s)

I/We have read the ‘National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research’, and accept responsibility for the conduct of the research detailed in this application in accordance with the principles contained in the National Statement and any other conditions laid down by the RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee.

Signed: ______________________ Date: ______________
(Signature of investigator)

Signed: ______________________ Date: ______________
(Signature of senior supervisor if applicable)

3. Declaration by the Head of School/Centre

The research project set out in the attached application, including the adequacy of its research design and compliance with recognised ethical standards, has the approval of the School/College. I certify that I am prepared to have this project undertaken in my School/Centre/Unit.

Signed: ______________________ Date: ______________
(Signature of Head of School or approved delegate)

Comments:

School/Centre: ______________________ Extn: ______________________
Section B: Project particulars

NB: The bolded headings and numbering in this form must remain in your completed application for ethics approval. Please leave these headings and delete the detailed guidelines as you go through and complete the form. If a heading is not relevant write ‘Not applicable’ underneath it.

1. Title of Project

Transform the traditional Iraqi concept of design

2. Project description: for HREC assessment of ethical issues

Introduction

Iraqi design is the result of a rich mixture of many cultural, geographical, and even climatic elements which have interacted on this land from ancient times. The adaptation of the man-made objects to fit with cultural and ecological systems are shaping the variety and creative solutions these designs of architecture, crafts, fashion, calligraphy, furniture, food, and many others addressing. In the Arabic language, the word for design is ‘Tasmem’. It is generally used both as a noun and a verb for visualising, arranging or planning, and is traditionally associated with artistic skills that aim to add aesthetic and ornamental compositions to man-made objects to strengthen their commercial, moral or spiritual values. This traditional position still dominates culturally and in design basics, and also shapes design discourses and guides current activities relating to design education and professional design practices in Iraq. However, this position is supported by the fact that the modern concept of design was introduced mainly through design education, put together in the fine arts institutions in the early 1970s. The association between art and design maintains the position of design within its traditional and local context, and at the same time celebrates and addresses in a nostalgic way the artistic foundations and skills which are the heritage of the early civilisations in Mesopotamia and the golden age of the Arabic Islamic Caliphate in Iraq.

Exceptional circumstances occurred in the late 1970s in the form of policies issued to the emerging design professionals with the state industrial corporations rapidly being established in Iraq. These initiatives mainly targeted industrial design graduates and were guided by the core spirit of the Ahmedabad Declaration on ‘Design for Development,’ whose principles offered a solid theoretical framework dedicated to introducing design into developing countries’ strategic planning for economic growth, based on rapid progress towards industrialisation and the production of competitive products for local and international markets. Iraq was one of the countries which signed the document in 1979. The direct advantages of that document are directed specifically on the framework of design education and professional design practices for graduate industrial designers in Iraq and reflected through:

Strengthened design education

Created the school of design at the University of Baghdad in 1978\(^1\) with the aim of promoting and separating design awareness as a new practice in society by introducing the new specialist job of ‘designer’ to deal with the shapes of the objects produced by the

---

\(^1\) The school was structured around three major disciplines, starting with Industrial Design (this was established early as a four-year BA in Design and Decorative Arts). In the late 1970s, the school grew to offer three degree programmes the BA in Industrial Design, Printing Design and Textile Design. Interior Design was added as a discipline in the late 1980s, and Calligraphy & Ornament in the mid-1990s. The School of Design launched a Master of Industrial Design at the end of the 1970s, and a PhD in Design began in 1993 across many design disciplines. The Industrial Design programme at the University of Baghdad is still the only one of its kind offered anywhere in Iraq.
state industrial manufacturing corporations mainly, which had been widely established during the 1970s and 1980s.

Enhanced the role of design in industry

Initiatives issued by the Iraqi government aimed at strengthening the role that industrial design could play in developing domestic medium and small size industries of home appliances, electronic and TVs, bus's assembly, and light agricultural machinery, all of which were being produced by state corporations at that time. There are no documents available to present the context and content of these policies; instead, the following narratives are based on personal memories and information gathered from colleagues who were affected by those policies.

1. Establish the ‘Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI),’ to be the first R&D centre for Iraqi industry. The establishment of this centre resulted from technical aids presented by the ‘United Nations Industrial Development Organisation-UNIDO’ to Iraq, aimed at facilitating the development of state manufacturing corporations by utilising the process of design and innovation.
2. Promote work in industry for the newly-graduated industrial designers. State policy excluded this group from being an art teacher in schools, based on the job classification at the state strict system of compulsory employment after graduation.
3. Another interesting policy was aimed at supporting industry’s needs for designers; it offered Iraqi citizen students (only) the opportunity to study industrial design at the only programme available in Iraqi universities. This policy reflected strategic planning acknowledging the importance of this discipline for the future of Iraqi industry, and aimed to create a base of national expertise, as well as enhancing the programme’s further development.

The glory of the 1970s gradually decreased and went down sharply from the mid 1980s, destroyed by the cost of the long-term war between Iraq and Iran, the heavy pressure of UN sanctions on the Iraqi people, and then later the US invasion of Iraq in 2003. The massive deterioration through this era in the contemporary history of Iraq reflected on every aspect of life for Iraqis, and design is one of many creative fields which have weakened and lost the initiative as a significant cultural phenomenon to strengthen social cohesion, to empower an economic contribution through creative capabilities dedicated to transforming ideas into tangible outcomes, and to effectively utilise knowledge and practices to improve the quality of life in society.

Objectives

This is a pilot study investigating the transformation in the practice of design in Iraq, that is currently focussed upon searching for a new direction with the overriding aim of meeting the country’s future demands. The study looks at the ways the Iraqi designer community is beginning to engage, with their knowledge and expertise, in the current design infrastructure in Iraq. The study will provide insights into the following topics:

- The initiatives of ‘design for development’ and how it survives in the current design infrastructure in Iraq.
- The current state of design education and professional practices from the Iraqi designer’s point of view.
- The Iraqi designers’ thoughts for the future of design in Iraq.
- The effects of design research in Iraq on developing the local context of design.
- The objectives of new design education programmes/institutions currently established in the Iraqi universities and technical institutions.
- Progress (if any) towards establishing an organisation for Iraqi designers.
The study is also meant to empower Iraqi designers to apply design practices to achieve a better quality future for Iraqi society.

**Methodology**

The process of engaging creative design thinking to achieve the goal of this study is supported by the researcher’s commitment to nourish this process, based on his confidence that these practices can be presented as enduring models which are dynamic and flexible to make effective use of design activities in Iraqi society. The methodology chosen for this study aims to support these principles while achieving the objectives. The previous theoretical review chapters presented a wide knowledge base of the following topics:

- Iraq’s modernisation project.
- The progress of the design for development movement for developing countries since WWII.
- Review practices which apply ‘design strategies’ from selected developed and developing countries.
- The context of design in the Iraqi culture; design review and analysis for selected material objects.

The main principles guiding this study support the local collective’s perspective, experiences and expectations regarding this vision. There is an ambiguity and very limited published data regarding design practices, research and development in Iraq. Such conditions argue for qualitative research methods and practices in the form of conversations and in-depth discussions to create shared meanings of stories reflecting clear understanding and a solid basis to support the progress of this study. These arguments sustain the intention to initiate and maintain close relationships with the isolated Iraqi designers’ community, and the plan is based on the researcher making initial contacts with his colleagues, and then through them extending the network to cover the wider members of this community, who are divided between those inside and outside Iraq. Although the realities of limited resources force the researcher to rely on distant communication with the selected research community, in fact, early communications initiated by the researcher are conveying strong insights and an acceptance of this method of communication.

**Selected participants will:**

- Conduct a recordable online conversation in the form of a semi-structured interview to be held via Skype and/or phone calls.
- Be asked to respond in writing, in cases of technical difficulties with online conversation, to a copy of the interview topics (Appendix 3 - English & Arabic) sent via email.
- Be asked to give permission for the recorded conversation and writing text, as a whole or partly, to be translated into English and become part of the thesis text.

3. **Research timetable**

The scale of the project and the lag time in collating information means that this part of the data collection, translation and analysis is spread over the calendar year of 2011.

4. **Research funding**

Researcher self-funding
The study is also meant to empower Iraqi designers to apply design practices to achieve a better quality future for Iraqi society.

**Methodology**

The process of engaging creative design thinking to achieve the goal of this study is supported by the researcher's commitment to nourish this process, based on his confidence that these practices can be presented as enduring models which are dynamic and flexible to make effective use of design activities in Iraqi society. The methodology chosen for this study aims to support these principles while achieving the objectives. The previous theoretical review chapters presented a wide knowledge base of the following topics:

- Iraq's modernisation project.
- The progress of the design for development movement for developing countries since WWII.
- Review practices which apply 'design strategies' from selected developed and developing countries.
- The context of design in the Iraqi culture; design review and analysis for selected material objects.

The main principles guiding this study support the local collective's perspective, experiences and expectations regarding this vision. There is an ambiguity and very limited published data regarding design practices, research and development in Iraq. Such conditions argue for qualitative research methods and practices in the form of conversations and in-depth discussions to create shared meanings of stories reflecting clear understanding and a solid basis to support the progress of this study. These arguments sustain the intention to initiate and maintain close relationships with the isolated Iraqi designers' community, and the plan is based on the researcher making initial contacts with his colleagues, and then through them extending the network to cover the wider members of this community, who are divided between those inside and outside Iraq. Although the realities of limited resources force the researcher to rely on distant communication with the selected research community, in fact, early communications initiated by the researcher are conveying strong insights and an acceptance of this method of communication.

**Selected participants will:**

- Conduct a recordable online conversation in the form of a semi-structured interview to be held via Skype and/or phone calls.
- Be asked to respond in writing, in cases of technical difficulties with online conversation, to a copy of the interview topics (*Appendix 3 - English & Arabic*) sent via email.
- Be asked to give permission for the recorded conversation and writing text, as a whole or partly, to be translated into English and become part of the thesis text.

3. **Research timetable**

The scale of the project and the lag time in collating information means that this part of the data collection, translation and analysis is spread over the calendar year of 2011.

4. **Research funding**

Researcher self-funding
Section C: Details of participants

1. Number, type, age range, and any special characteristics of participants
   
   Ten Iraqi design educators and/or practitioners from different design disciplines, age range 25-65 years.

2. Source of participants (attach written permission where appropriate)
   
   ‘Not applicable’

3. Means by which participants are to be recruited
   
   Recruitment has multiple stages according to the researcher’s plan: some of these stages are for investigating interest, preparations and documentation. However, the Arabic language is the language for these stages (including the conversation sessions), so the researcher will have all relevant documents and data gathering translated from Arabic into English or vice versa, as required. These stages are designed as follows:

   Stage one: Initiate remote communication, inviting the designer’s participation and identifying their interest in collaboration. Participants are asked to respond via email or through phone calls by the researcher. The aims of this stage are to:
   - Briefly introduce myself and the project.
   - Create a database of interested people only, listing their names and preferred contact details.

   Stage two: Secure the research ethical approval, then introduce further details of the study and clarify the ethical considerations through the ‘Consent Form’ (Appendix-1 English & Arabic) and ‘Information Sheet’ (Appendix-2 English & Arabic). Participants are to receive these documents via email then read and ask questions if required. The instructions for the participants are to sign and return the consent form to researcher via email. These documents are to provide answers to the following questions:
   - What is the study’s title, its objectives, methodology and time-line?
   - What does participation involve?
   - How will confidentiality and/or anonymity be protected?
   - What data or information will be collected and how will it be used?
   - Can participants change their minds and withdraw from the project (process and rights)?
   - What if participants have any questions?

   Stage three: Confirm participation in the study to the people who signed and returned the consent form. Create timetable (work in progress) for participants to select a preferred time for the semi-structured online recordable conversation. Researcher will encourage participants to respond to their own stories during the conversation sessions.

   Stage four: Second conversation with each participant if required, to clarify topics from previous conversation. The same rules will apply as in the first conversation.

4. Are any of the participants ‘vulnerable’ or in a dependent relationship with any of the investigators, particularly those involved in recruiting for or conducting the project?

   ‘No’
Section D: Estimation of potential risk to participants & project classification

1. Please identify the project classification by assessing the level of risk to participants

   Negligible risk

2. If you believe the project should be classified category 'Negligible risk' or 'Low Risk' please explain why you believe there are no risks or minimal to the participants.

   - There is no physical or psychological harm for the participants.
   - There are no foreseeable risks of harm or discomfort.
   - There are no foreseeable risks of more than inconvenience.
   - The type of data participants are required to provide for the semi-structured conversation will focus on their opinions regarding design frameworks applying currently in Iraq and stories from their own practices as an Iraqi designer.
   - Participants in this study and analysis will only ever be identified as participant 'A', participant 'B', and so on. Participant's name and job only may appear in a table of participants in the Appendices section of the thesis.
   - The participants in this case study are Iraqis for whom the Arabic language is their first, and the researcher will use the Arabic language for all verbal and writing communications. Copies of the consent form, information sheet, and conversation topics in English & Arabic language are attached (Appendices 1, 2, 3 English & Arabic).
3. Please detail any other ethical issues which may be particularly associated with this project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j)</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section E: Informed consent

1. Attach to your application

   a) a copy of the letter to participants providing plain language information about the research. This will often be the letter inviting people’s participation. This should
normally be on RMIT letterhead. (see attached guideline for the Plain Language Statement (PLS) at Appendix 2)

(b) a copy of the Consent form (see Appendix 1) for research participants. If you are not obtaining consent in writing please explain why.

2. Dissemination of results

Details in the information sheet

**Section F: Research Involving Collection, Use Or Disclosure Of Information**

1 Does this Section have to be completed?

Does the project involve the collection, use or disclosure of personal information (includes names & contact details), health information including genetic information, or sensitive information?

☐ No – you do not have to answer any questions in this section. Go to Section G.
☐ Yes – you must answer questions in this section. Go to Question F2.

2 Type of activity proposed

Are you seeking approval from this HREC for:
(a) collection of information?

☐ Yes – go to Question F3
☐ No – go to Question F4

(b) use of information?

☐ Yes ☐ No

(c) disclosure of information?

☐ Yes ☐ No

3 Collection of Information

(a) Does the project involve collection of information directly from individuals about themselves?

☐ No – (ie -collected from a third party/existing records). You must fill out the Special Privacy Form as well as this form.

☐ Yes – answer the following questions:

(b) What type of information will be collected? (Tick as many as apply)

☐ personal information (eg name, contact details etc)
☐ sensitive information (eg affiliations, income values, attitudes etc)
☐ health information

(c) Does the plain language statement explain the following:

The identity of the organisation collecting the information and how to contact it?

Yes ☐ No ☐

The purposes for which the information is being collected?

Yes ☐ No ☐

The period for which the records relating to the participant will be kept?
4 Use or Disclosure of Information About Individuals
(a) Does the project involve the use or disclosure of identified or potentially identifiable information?
   Yes ☐ No ☐
   No – go to Question F5.
   Yes, answer the following questions.
(b) Does the project involve use or disclosure of information without the consent of the individual whose information it is?
   Yes ☐ No ☐
   No - go to Question F5.
   Yes, you must fill out the Special Privacy Form, as well as this form.

5 General Issues
(a) How many records will be collected, used or disclosed? Specify the information that will be collected, used or disclosed (e.g. date of birth, medical history, number of convictions, etc).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of records: 30 interview sessions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of information: individual practices and interest in exploring the role of design for sustainable social development in Iraq.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) For what period of time will the information be retained? How will the information be disposed of at the end of this period?

- All collected data will be saved digitally in a password-protected folder for a period of five years, then after five years all files will be deleted.
(c) Describe the security arrangements for storage of the information. Where will the information be stored? Who will have access to the information?

- Only the researcher and his supervisors have access to the password-protected folder on the researcher’s laptop.
(d) How will the privacy of individuals be respected in any publication arising from this project?

- No identified names will appear in any publication. A table of names and jobs of participants will appear only as an appendix in the thesis.
(e) Will the project data be transferred to a person/organisation either interstate or overseas?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, give details of how this will be carried out in accordance with relevant Privacy Principles (e.g. HPP 9, VIPP 9 or NPP 9).
(f) Does the project involve the adoption of unique identifiers assigned to individuals by other agencies or organisations?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

If yes, give details of how this will be carried out in accordance with relevant Privacy Principles (e.g. HPP 7, VIPP 7 or NPP 7).

6 Adverse Events

Are procedures in place to manage, monitor and report adverse and/or unforeseen events relating to the collection, use or disclosure of information?

☐ Yes  ☐ No

Give details.

7 Other Ethical Issues

Discuss any other ethical issues relevant to the collection, use or disclosure of information proposed in this project. Explain how these issues have been addressed.

The participants in this case study are Iraqi’s whom Arabic language is their first, researcher will use the Arabic language for all verbal and writing communications. Copies of information sheet and consent form in Arabic language are attached with this application.

Section G: Other issues

NB: If a question is not relevant write ‘Not applicable’ underneath it.

1. Do you propose to pay participants? If so, how much and for what purpose?
   ‘Not applicable’

2. Where will the project be conducted?
   Online communication via Email, phone calls, and Skype.

3. Is this project being submitted to another human research ethics committee, or has it been previously submitted to a human research ethics committee?
   ‘No’
Appendix 1, Consent Form, English version

RMIT HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Prescribed Consent Form For Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires, Focus Groups or Disclosure of Personal Information

COLLEGE OF Architecture and Design, Industrial Design
SCHOOL/CENTRE OF

Name of participant: ____________________________

Project Title: Transform the traditional Iraqi concept of design

Name(s) of investigators: (1) Qassim Saad
(2) ____________________________ Phone: +64 21 165 2478

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorise the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped [ ] Yes [ ] No (delete if inapplicable)
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used [ ] Yes [ ] No
6. I acknowledge that:
   a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me. The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. The privacy of the personal information I provide will be safeguarded and only disclosed where I have consented to the disclosure or as required by law. If I participate in a focus group I understand that whilst all participants will be asked to keep the conversation confidential, the researcher cannot guarantee that other participants will do this.
   d) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to ____________________________ (researcher to specify). Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5).

Participant's Consent

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

[ ] (Participant)

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

[ ] (Witness to signature)

Where participant is under 18 years of age:

I consent to the participation of ____________________________ in the above project.

Signature: (1) ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

[ ] (Signatures of parents or guardians)

Name: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

[ ] (Witness to signature)

Participants should be given a photocopy of this consent form after it has been signed.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure are available at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research

- 12 -

Version 1 : 27/02/2011
Appendix-1 Consent form in (Arabic language)

transform the traditional Iraqi concept of design

Amaroush: تحليل المفهوم التقليدي للتصميم في العراق

Transform the traditional Iraqi concept of design

Amar...
Appendix 2, Information Sheet, English Version

Dear

I am Qassim Saad.

My research topic is about the concept of design and design’s precise role in supporting sustainable social development; Iraq is my field of practice for this research. The driving hypothesis is that design methods and processes can provide an effective strategy for social development, and increase people’s opportunities to achieve a better living environment and prosperity. This concept is the aim of many design studies and practices, which reflect shared interests in contemporary development strategies for developing countries.

This contemporary concept of design and its role in social development does not disregard its traditional role and vital practices in creating material objects. However, redirecting the designer’s skills to deal with the very complex nature of social system problems is the major challenge facing such design studies. Efforts persist towards applying new methods and creating scenarios to elevate the role of design within a multi-disciplinary milieu. I hope this introduction helps to make a basic statement regarding the topic of this study, and a lot of details will be introduced for discussion later.

The main objective of this form is to inquire into your personal interest in participating in this study of (ten participants), which will be dedicated to implementing a detailed hypothesis and strategic vision to transform the traditional concept of design in Iraq through motivating and supporting Iraqi designers into active participation in planning for the future of design. In early chapters the study reviewed wider theoretical arguments and addressed design roles in supporting economic growth for both developed and developing countries, resulting in new policies to transform ‘design thinking’ toward social development and improving the quality of life. This study’s aims are to investigate these directions within the design context in Iraq.

This information sheet is designed to provide the ethical research guidelines required to govern and organise the relationship between the researcher and the prospective participants. Please read carefully and feel free to ask questions to clarify these guidelines:

- Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary; you can decline to participate without any disadvantage to yourself. If you choose to participate, you may withdraw from the project at any time, without giving reasons for your withdrawal. You can also withdraw any information that has already been supplied until the data analysis stage. You can also refuse to answer any particular question, and ask for the audio to be turned off at any stage.
- Anonymity will be preserved at all times. Participants in this study and analysis will only ever be identified as participant ‘A’, participant ‘B’ and so on. Participant’s name and job only may appear in a table of names and jobs of participants as an appendix in the thesis.
- All responses will be treated with respect and confidentiality.
- Results of this study may be published but no data included will in any way be linked to any specific participant.
- All collected data will be saved digitally in a password-protected folder for a period of five years, then after five years all files will be deleted.
- Only the researcher and his supervisors have access to the password-protected folder on the researcher’s laptop.

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. Details of the complaints procedure: http://www.rmit.edu.au/governance/complaints/research
تحية طيبة وانتهاء بالصحة والعافية

نيكتة هيئة والإعلام العربية

لا معلومات عن النص العربي في الصورة.

FRAMEWORK FOR RE-VISIONING DESIGN IN IRAQ | 299

Version 1 : 27/02/2011
Appendix-3, the conversation topics, English version

Suggested questions:
The word 'design' in these topics relates to any of these disciplines: industrial design, spatial/interior design, graphic design, textile design, printing design, web design, animation design or interaction design.

1. The context of design
   - What is your preferred definition of design?
   - Do you consider design to be a minor discipline within art, science, applied arts, social science, technology, engineering, etc.?
   - Does the political milieu in Iraq affect your study of design? If yes, please explain briefly.
   - Is your interest in design based on the nature of its artistic attitude, scientific attitude, applied arts attitude, social science attitudes, technological attitudes, engineering attitudes or any other attitude (please specify)?

2. The role of design and the designer in society
   - Do you consider design practices are important to support social development? If yes, please explain briefly.
   - Are you aware of a social responsibility of the designer in society? If yes, please explain briefly.
   - Do you practice design to develop specific social system services such as: health care, education, craft industry, women's rights, social wellbeing? If yes, please explain briefly.
   - Has your reading articulated the role of design for social development? If yes, please explain briefly.
   - Has your writing articulated the role of design for social development? If yes, please explain briefly.

3. Professional practices as designer — identify fields
   - Tell us your opinion regarding the main obstacles to the development of design activities in Iraq.
   - Is there demand for the job ‘designer’ in the current job market in Iraq?
   - What are the desired designer skills for the designer job market in Iraq?

4. Professional practices in working with collaborative networks — identify fields and required skills
   - Can you see yourself working to facilitate collective group ideas? Do you believe that you have the skills to do this job?
   - Can you see yourself working to visualise collective group ideas? Do you believe that you have the skills to do this job?
   - Does your work environment address design as an artistic discipline? A science? An applied art? Social science? Technology? Engineering? Other?

5. Thoughts about the role of design in supporting sustainable development
   - What dose sustainable development mean to you?
   - What are your thoughts relating to the role of design in sustainable development of your society?
   - Does your study of design introduce you to theory or practices related to the role of design in social development?
Appendix 3: the conversation topics, Arabic version

كلمة التصميم هنا تحكي جميع التصاميم الصناعية الظاهرة، والأطر، وهي نصوص التصميم:

ما هو التصميم الذي تتعلق به للتصميم؟
هل التصميم في هذا الزعتر هو تصميم يلقو على متاح مع الأفكار، أو الأفكار، أو الوقت، أو الحقوق، أو التكنولوجيا، أو العالم الاجتماعي؟
أي مجال تخصصي آخر؟
هل تذكر دراسات التصميم التي تتعلق بالأحوال الاجتماعية للبيئة في العراق؟ يرجى توضيح هذه النقطة من حيث الأطارات المتاحة لل CGAffineTransform
هل اهتمامات التصميم تنشأ من خلال كون هذا التصميم مرئي بالفعل، أو التعليم، أو التكنولوجيا، أو الهندسة، أو أي مجال تخصصي آخر؟

 Mormon تصميم وتصميم إنجابية
هل تتعلق أن ممارسات التصميم هي مهمة لدعم التنمية الاجتماعية؟ إذا كانت احتمالة، يرجى توضيحها بعض التفصيل.
أين تراجع الشعرة الإدارية في المنشآت التصميمية التي تعلق على مناطق التصميم في أي مكان؟ إذا كانت احتمالات بناء، يرجى توضيحها بعض التفصيل.
نحصل على دراسات التحقق ذات دور التصميم في التنمية الاجتماعية؟ إذا كانت احتمالات بناء، يرجى توضيحها بعض التفصيل.
هل أنت أي كتاب شهيرة أو غير موثوقة تحقق دور التصميم في التنمية الاجتماعية؟ إذا كانت احتمالات بناء، يرجى توضيحها بعض التفصيل.

Appendix 7. The research ethics application 2011-2012.

Version 1 : 27/02/2011
Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI)
The researcher was a third-year student when their lecturer presented to the class two graduate industrial designers from their school, both of them working as real industrial designers in industry.\textsuperscript{53} The class was interested to hear those colleagues talking about their job at the Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI). A brand-new institution established in the late 1970s, it was the fruit of development assistance from the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) presented to assist Iraqi industrial corporations technically through the creation, operation and training of local staff by engineers and industrial designers on how to support these new industrial parks solving production problems, as well as presenting R&D services to develop new and existing products. The class was surprised to learn that their model colleagues were unhappy in their work. They talked about the level of cooperation between them and the rest of the ‘engineering’ staff working in the institution. Because the “majority were engineers... we end up spending our time explaining how design fits within the engineering process,” because the engineers considered themselves to be professional specialists qualified to solve any problem through design. Their colleagues felt that the engineers had a view of their skills where they could do multiple tasks, from solving engineering problems, to dealing with design-related issues, to developing products, all at the same time. Their colleagues left the institute a short time later because they couldn’t adapt themselves to such an engineering-focused environment, with an emphasis on solving production problems the local industrial corporations were striving to achieve, rather than developing products. No documentation is available to provide detailed information concerning the SIEI’s continuing role in industrial development, especially after the 1990s.

This example illustrates a classical case of conflict about the knowledge and skills

\textsuperscript{53} This case illustrates the effect of applying the objectives of the Ahmedabad Declaration, which was signed by Iraq in 1979.
the industrial designer achieves while studying for a degree, and surely in Iraq there is a wide gap between study and real work experience, needs and desires:

- The artistic milieu of design education continues to reflect the way of thinking and learning skills essential to practices of design.
- The real needs for design skills and services the local industry are looking for are not matched by the industrial designer’s knowledge and skills.
- Local manufacturing corporations look to product design as a process relying on manufacturing and cost only. This situation definitely requires engineering knowledge and skills, not the ‘artistic’ vision of a designer (figure A-8,1).

Figure A-8, 1. *The ‘Reem’ bus, one of the examples to the collaboration between SIEI and local manufacturing industry early of 1970s.*

**Appendix 8. Specialised Institute for Engineering Industries (SIEI).**
The military industry in Iraq

From the mid-1980s, during the war between Iraq and Iran, Iraq got good support from the majority of regional and Western nations. That support came in different forms, but this study is interested in the transfer of high technology to which the Western world gave Iraqis access. That move encouraged the Iraqi government to implement a new strategic plan to restructure the state industrial sector away from its civil character and move from an assembly-type industry to military production. The Military Industrialisation Authority was established, which created a number of corporations operating under very strict security arrangements; those corporations received special state economic support, more than their civil colleagues received. Little data is available regarding these corporations and the types of activities they were involved in, as it was kept very secret. Though lots of stories appeared in the news regarding the development of weapons of mass destruction some of these corporations were involved in, we know now that those stories were used by Western propaganda to justify the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

The main purpose in presenting this case is to show the context of modernisation and development reapplied and promoted by political order. Iraq moved toward this type of industrial production to meet the war demands of rapid and continuous supply of weapons and other infrastructure services, also it met the old slogan of self-sufficiency and technology adoption, and all these goals were part of the development situation of the 1970s reapplied in Iraq in the late 1980s while the rest of the world rapidly moved into information technology and other streams of development. These military-industrial corporations were managed and operated mainly by Iraqis, based on the sensitivity of national security during the war and after. The very few stories we have heard (which cannot be verified by colleagues from that time) say that these corporations were focused on functional and rapid production to fulfil military demands during the war. Engineering focused on solving problems with no interest in applying design thinking to stylise the product’s physical character, or other capabilities.