

# **CULTURAL VARIABLES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THE FURNITURE DESIGN PROCESS IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION**

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## Certificate of Originality

This is to certify that I am responsible for the work submitted in the thesis entitled ***“Cultural Variables and Their Impact on the Furniture Design Process in the Era of Globalization”***, which is being submitted for award of the Doctoral Degree of Philosophy in Design-Science *“Designwissenschaft”* of Braunschweig University of Art *“HBK Braunschweig”*.

This thesis is the original work of my own except as specified in acknowledgements or footnotes. This work has not been submitted before for award of any degree or comparable certificate or similar title.

Braunschweig, Germany

April 2015

**Ahmed Abdelrazik**

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## Dedication

To the greatest pure heart ...

To the boundless wisdom mind ...

To the endless source of inspiration ...

To my wonderful wife *Amany* ...

My words are limited to describe your absolute infinite patience, friendship and love. I dedicate this work to you in honor of our 12<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

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## Abstract ...

It is known that humans are to very large degree products of their environment; their thoughts, desires and needs are shaped by many cultural trends related to their societies, creeds and traditions, which are different according to changes in natural and environmental factors.

These cultural variables depend on many issues, which differ from one place to another and from one country to another depending on environmental systems, history, language, religion, beliefs and so on. Accordingly, we can find huge differences in the cultures of people and their needs.

Although designers are always keen on maintaining a certain aloofness, a certain freedom of mind, they too are subject to the cultural trends affecting their respective societies, the impacts of which will appear in their work. Designers' thoughts and works will need to be analyzed in order to appreciate positive or negative effects, with special consideration given to current developments, especially the ongoing shrinking of the world into one "global village" under the globalization era.

In many developing countries there is confusion among designers, in addition to the clear gap and the conflict between the meaning of globalization and the concept of "cultural identity" and its applications in the field of creativity. All this needs to be clarified and investigated.

Therefore, the main objective of this thesis is to study and analyze this tangled relationship, and to make an attempt to apply an integrated vision to connect cultural concepts as variables and investigate their influence on design under the conditions of a comprehensive and widespread globalization.

## Keywords ...

Culture, identity, cultural identity, designers' cultural identity, design process, furniture design, localization, globalization, glocalization.



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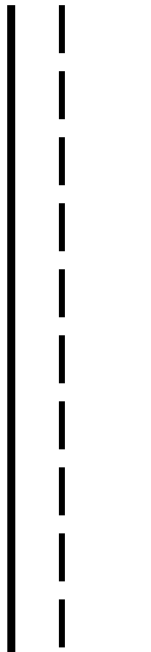
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*Introduction ...*





## Preface...

Design and culture have always been closely interrelated. Designers create things; the study of these things is also a study of culture (Boradkar, 2010, p. 1). On the one hand, this opinion is a simple description of the correlation between design and culture, if we accept and believe it, it means that culture is influenced by design. On the other hand, it is logic to consider that design is influenced also by culture. The question here is: *which culture are we talking about?*

There are many types and forms of culture, its variables depend on a multitude of factors, which differ significantly from one society to another and from one country to another depending on environment, history, language, religion, beliefs ... and so on. Accordingly, there are huge differences in peoples' cultures and their needs. In this context, there are many books and studies which have already discussed the relationship between culture and design, but most of these studies described the essence of the relationship or focused on designs' "products" and consumers' culture, but ***what about the culture of the designer (the creator) himself?***

The designer - as a creator - is not a machine; he or she is a human being, his or her cultural background came from his or her society, and formed - somehow - his or her cultural identity. This cultural identity which related to the designer's "individual personal character" appears and reflects many values in his or her creations. In other words, the designer is always trying - while involved in the design process - to express himself in order to be able to solve the problems of his or her society and to meet and achieve the real needs of his or her people.

Today, the influence of cultural differences on design practice is one of the most profound problems, especially when taking into account the proliferation of globalization and its applications in various fields. The global meaning is inconsistent (at least theoretically) with the concept of the designer's cultural identity.

As an attempt to solve this dilemma from its beginning, this thesis will discuss and focus on the different meanings of culture, and investigate the core of identity. This identity has a great effect on the way of thinking about design practice. In addition to

the theoretical study of the main concepts “culture, identity, design and globalization” and throughout this thesis, the author will sketch out the correlations between these concepts through a deep discussion and a comparison between the opinions and the ideas of a carefully selected group of Egyptian and German academics and designers. The results of this thesis will work to clarify and resolve the dispute between the meaning of designers’ cultural identity stemming from the differences in culture and the concept of globalization. Integration with the theoretical study, the in depth section “the empirical study” will focus more on the field of furniture design and the results can be generalized in all fields of design.

### **Why this research? “Research background” ...**

As an Egyptian designer, in addition to the experience in assisting and teaching design (Interior design and furniture) \*, I am interested in the relationship between design and the cultural heritage of any society. This interest may be particularly strong due to the special atmosphere of Egyptian society; historical sites are everywhere, people can breathe and touch history everywhere, it is an everyday part of people’s lives. In addition, Egyptians are interested strongly in their religions (Muslims or Christians) and the majority has strong, warm family relationships. The combination of all these issues - and others - makes Egyptian society a very specific case.

These values, which have formed the meaning of Egyptian cultural identity are not static, their effects appear in all walks of Egyptians’ lives. For example, they have strong effects on the methodology of studying and teaching design in the “Faculty of Applied Arts”, Helwan University, which is the oldest design school in Egypt, in Africa and in the Middle East. I still remember when I was a student at the Interior Design and Furniture Department, there were (and still are) many subjects and many courses related directly or indirectly to the Egyptian cultural or historical background. For example, I studied and participated in teaching “Design History”. The curriculum of this course divided into three main parts, which are implemented in three years. In the first

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year, it begins - in details - with the Ancient Egyptians, and then the Ancient Greeks and Ancient Romans. The course of the second year focuses on the Christians' and Muslims' works, and the third course of the third (last year) is about Gothic arts, the Renaissance period, which is considered as the beginning of the modern movements of crafts which led to industrialization.

The idea is not only about a historical course divided into three huge courses where all students have to join in three years, maybe these courses are more stretched especially the Ancient Egyptian and the Islamic parts, but in general this historical background is important for every designer. Indeed, the interest of the historical cultural heritage extends beyond that. According to the study curriculum, there are many other courses and subjects based on how to teach students to design interiors and furniture which represent the historical and the cultural values in modern/contemporary forms (For more details, see the Prospectus of the Faculty of Applied Arts, 2010, p.134-137). This methodology does not only belong to the Interior Design and Furniture Department, but also it may be considered as the base which most of the faculty departments focus on.

During the study of my Master research (2000-2004) I worked to design contemporary furniture derived from the Ancient Egyptian furniture. Actually, it was not only an academic research, but its results applied in private work by producing many pieces of contemporary furniture which reflect many Egyptian historical values. These practical experiments consider as successful experience, many clients liked and wished to acquire this type of furniture. They frequently expressed a sense of relatedness, to discover in this furniture an expression of their authentic values.

Indeed, I am not the only Egyptian designer who thinks this way. There are many others who are older and more famous than I am. In the same sense, there are many other Egyptian designers who follow the same approach and they apply its sequences in fashion design and jewelry design ... and so on.

In brief, it is noticeable that most of Egyptian design academics and many of Egyptian professional designers believe that it is essential and more vital to protect the cultural character of Egyptian society and work hard to represent and reflect its values on their

designs, not only in their designs but also in all fields of life. Most of them work to prove and teach their students how these values are important.

In a more general context, the idea of protecting the Egyptian cultural character and defenses of the society's identity is the common debate in most of the meetings of Egyptian intellectuals. The main question here is: *Protection of what? And defense against what? ... Usually the answer is "globalization"*.

From this point, the idea of this research was derived. I know and I still believe that it is important to maintain the historical and the cultural identity of any society, but the main question is *how?* The beginning was to think about a more suitable way and logical methodology of keeping and protecting this character. This beginning would be to define the concepts used, and explain their dimensions and directions. For example, the meanings of culture, identity and globalization are quite complex, they are inter related (as it will explain during this thesis), but the problem especially in a society such as Egypt (as a developing country) is that many people tend to limit their notions of these complex ideas or think about it according to their specific perspective without recognizing the whole aspects and variables which draw the image of these complex related concepts.

So, one of the main goals of this study is to recognize and discuss the meanings and the correlation between three main concepts (culture/cultural identity, globalization, and design). Indeed, there are plenty of studies which have already discussed the core of these concepts and how they work together, especially the correlation between culture and globalization, but the claim here that most of these studies addressed the context from the perspective of sociology, economy or politics.

The idea of this thesis is to deal with these important concepts from the perspective of design, not only to clarify and understand them, but also to evaluate their influences on designers through their work and to present suggested solutions which deal with many designers' confusion. That means this study is to *establish a way of thinking about improving the intercultural design dialogue and avoid the meaning of conflict or clash of cultures*.

Finally, this thesis would be important for any designer whatever his/her field of interest (the discussions will focus on the field of furniture design, but the results can be easily generalized). This thesis would be more important for the designers of the developing countries who are still confused from the meaning of “*Globality*” or who refuse the “*McDonaldization*” of the world, but the results will be useful for any designer all over the world.

### **State of the art “literature review” ...**

As mentioned before, there are plenty of studies and books which have discussed the relationships between the concepts of this thesis, culture, identity, globalization, and design or design between cultural identity and global trends.

There is no doubt of the strength of relations between these concepts, but the unlimited discussions are about how to describe, clarify and evaluate these relationships. Additionally, there is a variety of opinions and different interpretations about the importance and extent of effect of these concepts on communities and societies. As a beginning, it is essential - in brief - to refer to the meanings of these concepts.

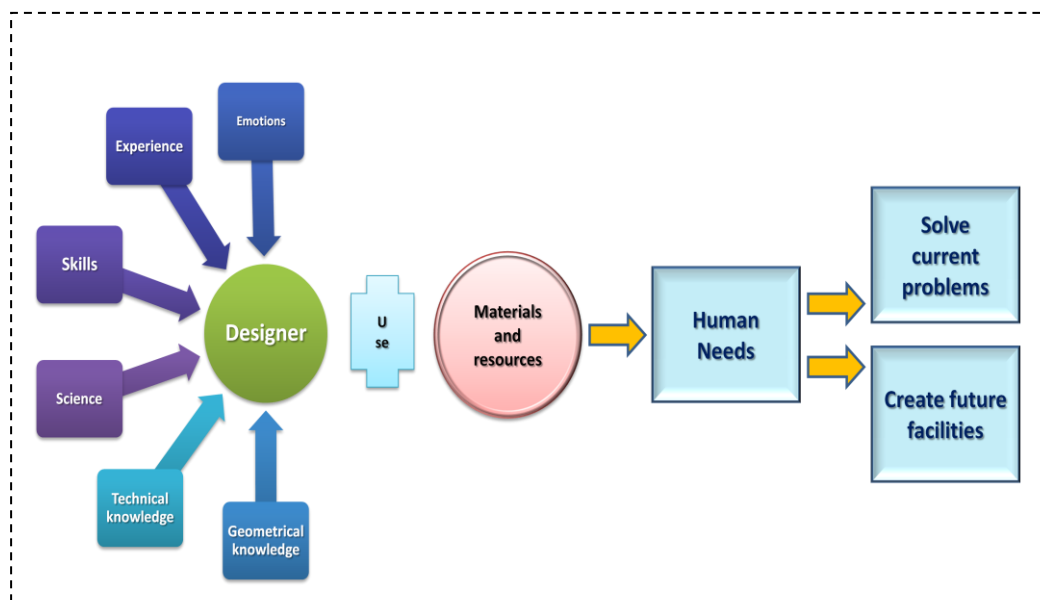
### **Design ...**

Design as a concept is a difficult term to define, it has many perspectives and plenty of explanations, but it is a very easy (common) action to practice. Every one of us can - and does - design (Cross, 2011, p.3). Indeed, Humans are designing whether or not they are specialists, and regardless of whether or not they want to.

For professionals, design is known as an innovative and intellectual process in which designers employ their imagination, skills and experiences in dealing with scientific, mathematical, geometrical, and technical knowledge to utilize different materials/resources trying to achieve human needs by solving realistic/current problems or by creating futuristic things/services (Figure 1). So, it can be said that design is as a bridge which crosses the unknown to connect between available resources and human needs.

In other words, design is a plan of arranging elements, in such a way as to best accomplish a particular purpose (Laurel, 2003, p.10). Despite the simplicity and the clarity of this meaning, there are still a lot of academic debates and popular discussions about understanding what exactly design is and how it is related to many other issues.

One of the issues which have been discussed a lot in the last two decades is the relationship between design and culture and the relationship between design and globalization. Despite the large number of these studies and their multiplicity, the correlation still needs more clarification and careful study, especially if it is addressed in a new form with a different perspective.



*Figure 1: The designing process (Source: the author).*

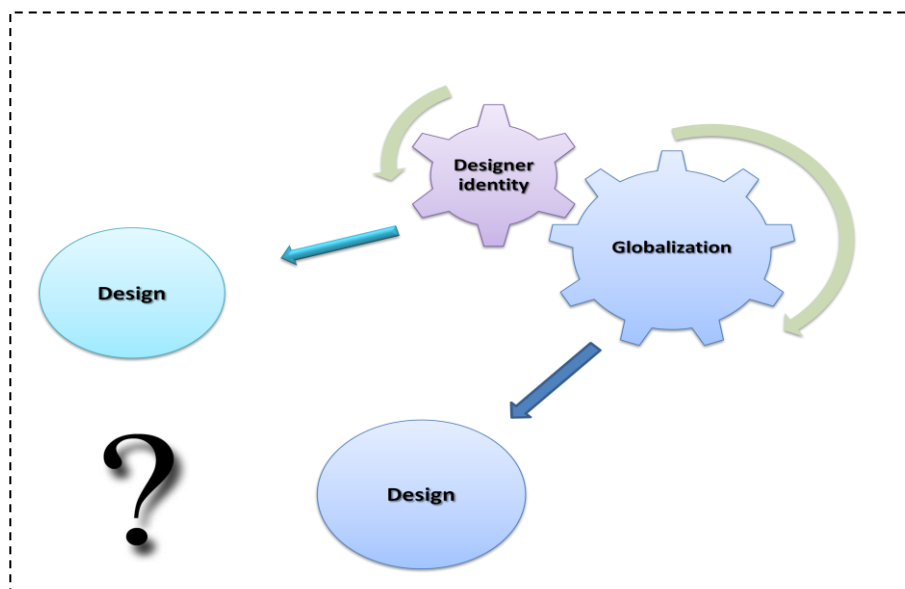
The gap which is noticed is that, there is still a kind of unclarity on the relationship between the differences of cultural backgrounds of designers and the trends of globalization. Most of the studies, which have discussed the relationship dealt with the concepts in a way which have not focused on the designer himself.

On the one hand, there are plenty of studies about design and culture, but mainly they have focused on consumers' culture or they discuss how designs had to be suitable for users and so on. On the other hand, there are also a lot of discussions about the



relationship between design and globalization, but most of these discussions have presented how globalization is changing the methodology of design process and design practice, how globalization's applications have created many useful materials which are effective for designing, or how design has become global where we can design something, produce it in another place and then sale or use it in a third place ... etc.

All these studies - and others - are essential and important, but the goal of this thesis is completely different. This thesis focuses on the designer himself (specifically, in developing countries), who still faces a great confusion about the correlation between his/her cultural identity and globalization. This thesis is an attempt to identify, discuss and investigate this problem, then give suggestions to reduce or to solve this conflict. For all designers and specifically for the developing countries' designers (such as Egypt) it is basic to recognize what and why they will design; according to the basic needs of their people/society (but is it their destiny to be local?), or they have to design according to the global trends (which usually are not match with their people's need and maybe they lose the sense of their cultural identity and in the beginning they will create a carbon copy of others' work).



*Figure 2: Designers' confusion between their cultural identity and globalization  
(Source: the author).*

So, is there a solution? Is there a strategy in between? How can designers cross and deal with the gap between their traditional cultural identity and globalization? (See,

Figure 2). The beginning of the suggested solution of this dilemma - which will be presented in this study - is to work on clarifying, identifying and discussing the loose definitions and the vague explanations of culture, identity and globalization.

### **Culture ...**

As it will be discussed, there are plenty of definitions and explanations of culture. Simply, culture is the living storage of memory as an entire combination and cumulative growth formed of a collection of science, knowledge, thoughts, creeds, arts, morals, laws, customs, traditions, mental and perception, historical, linguistic, and environmental customs which form human thinking and give a person attributes and social values which form his practical behavior in life.

Culture is an identical combination of memories, visions, values, symbols, expressions, and innovations, which leads human groups to establish a nation. Culture saves its civilized identity in a developing frame owing to its internal dynamics and its capability of communication (Benedict, 2005). Indeed, culture has many levels of understanding and many types of identifying. Moreover, the meaning of culture is usually mixed with the concept of identity and both terms are usually integrated.

### **Identity ...**

As in the case of culture, it is difficult to formulate a decisive final definition of identity, usually there are varieties of definitions which present a variety of points of view. Anneke J. Rummens (1993) defined identity as the distinctive character belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group. Despite the ease and clarity of this definition, there are many difficulties associated with the concept of identity, the main point of these difficulties is their divergence (Fearon, 1999).

Throughout this thesis it will seen clearly how the meaning of identity is different, how identity is closely related with the sense of culture and how both concepts are affecting influence on design (Heskett, 2002) and are influenced by design.

## Globalization ...

Globalization is one of the key buzzwords of our age, references to globalization are increasingly inescapable (Ray, 2007, p. x). Indeed, we live in globalized world. Directly or indirectly, globalization appears daily and everywhere, in newspapers, business magazines, radio, television, universities and so on. As the previous concepts, Globalization is not an easy concept to define; it has many dimensions and many levels of understanding.

To clarify the meaning of globalization it is essential to answer many questions, such as: What is globalization? Is it the integration of economic, political, and cultural systems across the globe? Or is it the Americanization and the United States' dominance of world affairs? Is globalization a force for economic growth, prosperity, and democratic freedom? Or is it a force for environmental devastation, exploitation of the developing world, destruction of the cultural identity of developing poor countries, and suppression of human rights? All these questions and many others are topics for endless discussion. Questions' answers and discussions' results reflect many visions which make up the world and formulate strategies for a lot of activities.

Globalization as a modern concept appeared firstly in the USA, especially after the end of the cold war, and the economic transformations that have taken place all over the world (for more details, see Stiglitz, 2002). Simply, globalization means generalizing things and stretches their circle to include the whole. Globalization in a simple definition means giving a thing universal impression, and keeping its scope in an international application.

In more detail, globalization means removing barriers and distances among nations, among each other's countries, and among each other's cultures. Thus, all come close to (global culture), (global market), and (global design). Through the previous definition, it can be said that globalization proceeds towards unifying thoughts, values, behavior types, and thinking methods among all the people of the world, as a means to provide a wide area of mutual understanding and helps people to be close together, and establishes world peace.

Globalization is based on density of movement and speed of data to the extent to feel that we are in a global village, because when events occurred in one place they appear in the next one, all what happens in one part influences another part. For more details see (Beck, 1997), (Teusch, 2004), (Eitzen, 2008).

In the same sense, globalization is a process of interaction and integration among the people, companies and governments of different nations. It is a process driven by international trade, investment and aided by information technology. This process has effects on the environment, on culture, on political systems, on economic development and prosperity in societies around the world.

Globalization is not new. For hundreds of years, people and corporations have been buying and selling to each other in lands at great distances, such as through the famed Silk Road across Central Asia that connected China and Europe during the Middle Ages. Likewise, for centuries, people and corporations have invested in enterprises in other countries. In fact, many of the features of the current wave of globalization are similar to those prevailing before the outbreak of the First World War in 1914. But policy and technological developments of the past few decades have spurred increases in cross-border trade, investment, and migration so large that many observers believe the world has entered a qualitatively new phase in its economic development. Since 1950, for example, the volume of world trade has increased by 20 times, Thomas Friedman summarized that by saying that today's globalization is "*faster, cheaper, and deeper*" than earlier ones.

After the end of the Second World War and during the past two decades, many governments have adopted free-market economic systems, vastly increasing their own productive potential and creating myriad new opportunities for international trade and investment. Governments also have negotiated dramatic reductions in barriers to commerce and have established international agreements to promote trade in goods, services, and investment. Taking advantage of new opportunities in foreign markets, corporations have built foreign factories and established production and marketing arrangements with foreign partners.

Technology has been the other principal driver of globalization. Advances in information technology, in particular, have dramatically transformed economic life. Information technologies have given all sorts of individual economic actors-consumers, investors, businesses valuable new tools for identifying and pursuing economic opportunities, including faster and more informed analysis of economic trends around the world, easy transfers of assets, and collaboration with far-flung partners.

Kofi Annan\* said “...*the earth will become, under globalization, a small ship, in which the whole is responsible for the part, the part responsible for establishing the whole, the weak becomes more powerful by the strong, and the strong provides the weak with protection*”.

Actually, Annan’s view of the global world looks simple, typical and very optimistic, but in reality it is completely different. Through a follow-up of many studies, it is clear that there are two main opposite opinions explaining our modern globalization. The first trend speaks about the badness of globalization, the advocates of this view explain that globalization is a new tool for occupation of the poor countries by control of their resources, to turn them into markets for the developed/rich countries’ products/services.

Steger (2003) representing this view, explains the income of globalization by saying “*the income of the rich countries will grow richer and the poor countries will increase poverty and the case is continues until now*” (For more details, see Steger, 2003, pp. 103-110). There are many other researchers supporting this trend, Weinstein (2005, p.11) speaks about “global inequality”. In the same context, Dorland (1996) argued that globalization is a modern tool of “cultural imperialism”, he summarized the problem by saying that “*the problem of globalization process is that it is a one way flow: from the West to the rest*”. This one way process works to wipe out the civilized and social structure of societies, destroying peoples’ traditional heritage, national cultural identity, and self culture.

In contrast, others explain how globalization is (*positively*) changing the world. They speak about the expansion of modern technology, communications. They argue that

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\* 1997-2007: former UN secretary-general

globalization benefits everyone and these benefits are working in developing and improving the intercultural dialogue. Adopters of this view refer to the importance of globalization, which directs forces and efforts to save and help the poor countries economically and socially (Bhagwati, 2004).

Indeed, this debate is endless and it is very early - in this thesis - to discuss the advantages or the disadvantages of globalization. The point here is to mention these contrasting perspectives as a way to motivate to think how to deal with them, without losing the feeling of traditional cultural identities. This dilemma is the challenge which faces everyone, especially designers.

### **Research scope ...**

This thesis focuses on many humanistic concepts; discussing the meanings of culture and identity, in addition to globalization to understand and recognize their reflections on design process and its practice, specifically in field of furniture design.

It will discuss these concepts (theoretically), and then work to discover or establish a clear, acceptable relationship between them to clarify their influence on design (empirically) through discussing opinions, visions and perspectives of a carefully selected group of Egyptian and German design academics (professors) and designers.

### **Research audiences ...**

In general, this thesis is for design students, designers, design researchers, and for anyone who has an interest in the field of humanities and design.

Particularly, the discussions, the results and the findings of this study will be fundamental, essential and important for designers of the developing countries (especially countries which have a particular cultural heritage, such as Egypt) who are still confused about the unclear relationship between their cultural identity - as a traditional value - and globalization as the reality and the future of world relationships.

In addition, the results will also be vital for the developed countries' designers, to shed a light and explain their role and their responsibility in helping developing countries' designers, and work with them to preserve and maintain the cultural background of their societies.

### **Research problem ...**

The main problem of this thesis is lack of clarity which makes confusion for many designers (especially in developing countries which have a particular cultural and historical heritage, such as Egypt) of the relationship between "designers' cultural identity" (which comes from their society self-culture and differ significantly from one place to another and from one country to another) and the concept of "globalization" and its applications, which has erased the borders and removed all barriers.

Briefly, it is necessary to clarify this controversial unclear relationship, by reviewing and discussing these concepts, then working to find out an acceptable clear explanation, which allows designers to express themselves in a global way without losing their traditional cultural background.

### **Research importance ...**

The importance of this thesis is embodied in being an attempt to bridge and fill the gap between the theoretical meanings of designers' cultural identity and their reflections on design practice, which appears to be in conflict with the meaning of globalization and its directions.

It should also help the developing countries' designers to be effective and direct them to the right way to share and participate with other designers in forming and building the global vision of the world. It should draw the attention of developed countries' designers to rethink about their responsibility and do their part in maintaining the cultural heritage of the developing countries and present the actual real needs for these societies.

### Research questions ...

This thesis will work to answer many questions, the basic important ones being:

- What is the real meaning of culture? And what is identity?
- How can those concepts be related and integrated?
- Is there something called “designers’ cultural identity”?
- If yes, how can designers understand, describe and react with its correlation to global trends?
- Are designers still interested in reflecting their cultural identity in their creations?
- If yes, how does this work? Is it positive? Or, negative?
- Are designers (specifically in developing or poor countries) forced to lose the sense of their traditional cultural identity to become a part of the global world?
- If the cultural identity of every designer is still important, is there a strategy/methodology which allows designers to keep and express their cultural values without conflicting with globalization?

### Research aim and objectives ...

This research aims at four main points:

1. Explain and discuss the mutual relationship between cultural variables and the design process which is different from one place to another due to each society’s directions, its resources, needs, and ideology (the study will compare Egypt and Germany), and how do they relate to globalization.
2. Clarify the relation between the concept of globalization and the individual culture (designer’s identity), which helps designers and directs them through the design process and design practice (focusing on furniture design).
3. Discuss and evaluate to give a clear indication of the effect of globalization on the designers’ cultural identity.
4. Build a theoretical strategy which help designers to access to their designs in line with global trends, without losing their traditional cultural identity.



## Research hypotheses ...

This thesis is based on a few main hypotheses, which will be examined through the study, the most important ones represent as the following:

- The culture of any society is formed through many inputs, the most important ones are nature, ecological systems, religious and ideological trends, and it is affected by many variables such as history, customs, traditions, and popular customs. Besides it is also affected by economic and political variables.
- The exclusive culture of every society leads to a special character and a unique identity.
- Designing products are affected by the difference of peoples' cultural content. Designers are also influenced by their cultural background. The difference of the cultural content gives each designer his/her own distinct character which can call "designers' cultural identity". Over time, products themselves contribute to this content and are considered as a part of this cultural character.
- Globalization has a great effect on all designs and innovation works, which lead to combining of many thoughts, trends, and needs, but it is necessary to any designer to express himself, which is different according to each society and its cultural identity.
- A part of designers' responsibility is to conserve and reflect their own cultural identity on their innovations, and work to maintain others' cultural heritage.
- There is a possibility for designers to be in the trend of globalization without losing their cultural identity.
- Furniture is a kind of product which still needs to relate more with the cultural character of every society, where peoples' traditions and behavior are different.

### Research methodology ...

The study of this thesis is based - in its general structure - on the “qualitative” approach. Indeed, the strength of the qualitative approach comes from its ability to provide complex textual descriptions of how people experience a given research issue. It provides information about the “human” side of an issue – that is, the often contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, emotions, and relationships of individuals. The qualitative approach can also help to interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation and the implications of quantitative data (Mack and Woodsong & others 2005, p. 1-2). That is what is exactly suitable and targetable here.

The structure of this thesis is divided into two main sections; the first section provides the “theoretical study” and the second “the empirical study” (Moody, 2002). The first section will be based on review of the literature (Creswell, 1994), explain opinions, and discuss many views and different perspectives about culture, identity, and globalization. Their influences on and their correlation with design process and its practice will be examined.

The second section will focus on a comparison between the opinions and the views of a selected group of Egyptian and German design professors and designers. The German part contains a form of “quantitative questionnaire” in order to arrive at a more focused concept for the “in-depth face-to-face interviews”.

The semi-structured face-to-face interview is one of the most common tools of the qualitative methodology. It is the optimal way for learning and collecting data from individuals’ personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored (Mack and Woodsong & others 2005, p. 2). The main reason for its popularity is that it is very effective in giving a human face to research problems. In addition, conducting and participating in interviews can be a rewarding experience for participants and interviewers alike. For participants - whether members of the study population or someone related to the population in a professional capacity - in-depth interviews offer the opportunity to express themselves in a way ordinary life rarely affords them. Many people find it flattering and even

cathartic to discuss their opinions, life experiences and to have someone listen with interest. For their part, interviewees engaged in in-depth interviews are offered the privilege of having people who are virtually strangers entrust them with a glimpse into their personal lives (For more information about In-depth interviews, see Mack and Woodsong & others 2005, pp. 29-49).

The tricky point here is using a questionnaire (quantitative method) at the same time with in-depth face-to-face interviews (qualitative method), but in the case of this study it is a positive strategy. Perhaps the structure of research looks like a form of “mixed” or “multi-methods” approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998), which combines the qualitative and the quantitative approaches together. But in fact the use of the questionnaire is to collect the primary data which will help and give a direction when conducting the interviews. Indeed, the structure design of this section is to examine and work to prove the theoretical results which will be obtained from the first section.

As mentioned, the interviews will be conducted with a carefully selected group of Egyptian and German design academics, in addition to a group of well-known furniture designers from both countries. These interviews will be recorded, in addition to the written comments, then their contents will be used in comparison (Davies, 2007) to discover, understand and evaluate the main differences between design status in Egypt (as one of the developing countries which has a vast cultural and historical heritage) and in Germany (as one of the developed countries which has a major role in the contemporary design movements).

Here “Quota sampling” will be used as a tool for collecting data from the participants through the “in-depth face-to face interviews”. In quota sampling, it was decided while designing the study how many people with which characteristics to include as participants. “Quota sampling” methodology (Mack and Woodsong & others 2005, p. 6) seeks to identify participants based on selected criteria. Characteristics include many variables such as: age (years of experience), place (Egypt, Germany), profession (Academic, practice) and so on.

## Research structure ...

The main body of the research is represented in four sections. The first section consists of many editorial structured points, while the second consists of five chapters. The third section divides into two chapters and the fourth section presents the discussion, results, conclusion and recommendations. There is also a references list and appendix.

### Section 1: Introduction

This section starts by presenting the background of the research, the state of the art and focusing on its scope and its audience. Furthermore, it clarifies the objectives, the questions, the importance, the problem and the hypotheses of the research. And then, it explains the methodology in details.

### Section 2: Theoretical study

This section consists of five main chapters. Every chapter begins by a “chapter overview” which presents the chapter’s outlines and refers to its contents. Every chapter ends by a “chapter summary”, which explains the whole idea of the chapter, presents the main findings, and creates a sequential relationship with the next chapter.

The first chapter is titled “*What is culture? And how it is different?*”. This chapter discusses many opinions and points of view about its definitions to clarify the changeable variable meanings of culture and explains its elements, its importance, its manifestations and its layers. The chapter ends by an important classification of culture, where it presents the differences between high culture, low culture and the mass culture.

The second chapter is about identity, the title of this chapter is “*Identity formation: cultural identity clarification*”. The idea of this chapter is to clarify the meaning of identity and explain its relationship with culture (chapter 1). It starts by discussing how identity is a complex aspect and why it is difficult to define it? It explains its main types, which are personal identity, social identity and cultural identity. The chapter ends by presenting the idea of consideration identity as a process.

The idea of the third chapter "*Globalization: explanations, reflections and its correlation with culture*" is to discuss and explain the essence of globalization as a concept in the light of its relationship with culture (which is already has a significant effect on the forming of identity). In other words, this chapter directly explains the meaning of globalization and clarifies its relationship with cultural identity.

This chapter discusses many points; it starts by explain the difference between international and global, then discusses the meaning of globalization as a historical process, which leads to mention many contemporary globalization definitions. In the same context, this chapter discusses the main theories of globalization and its main dimensions, where it focuses in detail on the cultural dimension of globalization and explains how this consideration is completely different from the meaning of global culture. The chapter ends by referring to the theory of "McDonaldization", and finally discussing the goodness/advantages and the badness/disadvantages of globalization to explain who the winners are and who the losers are in our global age.

By the end of the third chapter it will be clear how to describe and evaluate the correlation between cultural identity and global context. The results of this correlation have directly and indirectly effects on the designer - as a human being - and on his or her innovation process. These effects are completely different according to many aspects.

In order to discover how these effects work, the fourth chapter about "*Design process and its practice*" provides various descriptions of what design is (by reviewing its definitions), design process, who the designer is, and how designers work or create their innovations. In addition, this chapter discusses what good design is and it works to argue the idea of consideration of design as a cultural phenomenon.

The fifth chapter "*Designers' creativity and their responsibility between cultural identity and global trends*" summarizes and connects the whole theoretical study. It discusses the unclarity and the confusion of many designers between the meanings of culture, identity and the applications of globalization. It will discuss the influence of globalization on design creativity, and designers' confusion between locality and globality. This point will explain by giving a theoretical comparison between designers'

reacting and their designing methodology (between their cultural background and the global trends) in developing and developed countries (e.g. Egypt and Germany).

The discussion throughout this chapter extends as a try to identify the junction of the previous loose meanings (culture, identity, and globalization) which led to explain and discuss the meaning of “cultural homogenization” in return for “cultural hybridization”. For more details see, (Schirato & Webb, 2003), (Smith, 1990), (Tomlinson, 1999), (Pieterse, 2004), (Ray, 2007).

By the end of this chapter, it would be close to the solution of the study dilemma. The suggested solution will be based on the idea of “*Think global, Act local*” and presents the concept of “*glocalization*” instead of the struggle between “*localization*” and “*globalization*”. This idea in addition to the strategy of “*local form/global content*” or “*global form/local content*” (Wise, 2008) will be discussed very carefully and clearly to present the logical answers to the study questions. The theoretical findings of this chapter will be integrated with the results of the empirical study of the third section.

### Section 3: Empirical study

The main goal of this section is to join and test the theoretical study results in reality by comparing the views and the opinions of a group of Egyptian and German design academics, in addition to discuss and analyze some furniture designs by referring to Egyptian furniture designers.

The selection of Egypt is as a sample of the developing countries which has a particular cultural and historical background. Additionally, its instrumental role and key in the Arab region and it has the oldest design school in Africa, Arab countries and Middle East region\*. As for Germany, it is the vital (economic and political) heart of Europe, one of the best distinct developed countries. Furthermore, Germany has a great globally role in developing and improving design principles, theories and its practicing.

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\* The **Faculty of Applied Arts** is 170 years old, it had many old names and many old strategies, but generally it is considered to be the oldest high school in Egypt, the oldest design school in Africa and Middle East (for more details, see chapter 6).

The comparison and the opinions' analysis of the selected participants' points of view are discussed throughout two separate chapters (chapter 6 and 7) and are done through many methods (as it was explained in research methodology) by designing a questionnaire and conducting in-depth face-to-face interviews.

#### Section 4: Research Findings and summary

This section provides a final discussion which summarizes and clarifies the study problem, and highlights the suggested method of solution. Moreover, it contains a case study (design) which could be considered as an application of the theoretical suggested thinking methodology/strategy of the solution. The end of this section will be by giving a summation of final results, in addition to presenting author's suggested opinions as recommendations.





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Chapter 1

***What is culture? And how it is different?***

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### 2.1.1 Chapter overview ...

Culture is one of the most complicated words in the English language (Williams, 1983, p. 87). It is a very common word to use, everyday, everywhere we use it to refer to a range of issues. When we think about our behavior, our feelings, our food, clothing, music, home furnishing and all other aspects of our life style, in most of these things we refer intentionally or *unintentionally* to our cultural character. Despite all this, it is difficult to determine a comprehensive meaning of culture. Every one of us can use a different meaning, a different definition, often all these definitions are true, but what is the exact meaning of culture? Do you feel that your definition is clear and understandable? Or do you feel that any definition of culture is uncertain and limited?

Indeed, it is difficult to speak about culture (Henrie, 2004). Culture is a significant concept for sociologists because it both identifies a fundamental set of ideas about what sociologists' study and suggests a major reason for the existence of Sociology itself (Livesey and Lawson, 2006). Martin J. Gannon (2008, p. 19) said that there are numerous expert definitions of the term culture. Paradoxically, there are wide variations, and sometimes very wide variations, in these definitions. If there are wide variations, it is questionable whether the term culture itself is meaningful. In addition, J. Macgregor Wise (2008, p. 3) mentioned that culture is a word that is both powerful and ubiquitous. It is also fairly vague and can be used to mean a variety of quite contradictory things.

To explore the validity or the invalidity of the last two opinions, this chapter begins by explaining the meaning of culture from past to present, then it lists and discusses the most popular culture definitions, to answer the easy - complex - question; *what is culture?*

Furthermore, this chapter discusses the idea of culture as a shared meaning, as a behavioral rule and as a practical meaning. In addition, the discussion highlights the main elements of culture, the levels of culture and the manifestations of culture.

The end of this chapter comes when indicating the differentiation of culture (high culture, low culture and popular culture), discussing the idea of the reconciliation of cultural differences and finally giving a chapter summary which contains the ideas discussed and the general findings.

### 2.1.2 The meaning of culture from past to present ...

The meaning of culture has completely changed from past to present. Raymond Williams (1961) presented a brief detour through English history to explain what we mean when we say “culture”. For Vesajoki (2002, p. 9-10) the word culture comes from the Latin, *cultura* or *cultus*. *Cultus* means to cultivate. Before the Industrial Revolution, the original meaning of *cultus* (culture) was closely linked to cultivate of soil, which meant the tending of natural growth, like plants or animals “agri-cultura” (hence our term, “agriculture”). When applied the meaning to humans it came to mean the process of human development such as training and growth. Culture was a process, one was cultivated (For more details, see Vesajoki, 2002).

With the turn of the nineteenth century, culture became a thing in and of itself. It was used to stand for the end result of the processes of cultivation. A person had culture if they had been appropriately trained and educated. But the term was also thought more broadly to mean “the general state of intellectual development, in a society as a whole” (Williams, 1961, p. 16). Culture became synonymous with *civilization*. It came to describe what was thought of as a general, universal process of human development and the results of that process.

These results were the cultural products that were evidence of being civilized: music, art, literature, and so on. Culture was then the embodiment of a tradition and a history, the artistic record of a society. But Williams reminds us that tradition is selective; what is selected to be part of this Great Tradition, as it is sometimes called, consists of very specific items that service a social ideal. And so, therefore, for over a hundred years what was considered culture was the work of white males, usually those from the educated classes. In European writings culture was seen as an ideal that Europe had achieved but in which other countries were found wanting. At the height of colonialism, culture became a means of comparison, if not moral evaluation, of the supposed worth of a group of people.

There was another development at this time that helped to emphasize this particular elitist view of culture, and that was the growth of mass culture brought about by the industrialization of printing (resulting in cheap newspapers) and the increase in literacy among the working classes as the result of a new push for popular education. The idea of

culture as a moral evaluation was applied to these new developments. And so, within a society, Britain for example, you had two different cultures: High culture, which embodied the ideals of the nation (associated with high art, philosophy, and education) and low culture (or mass culture), which is what the bulk of the population consumed. These latter texts, songs, and artworks were decidedly not considered to embody the ideals of the society, but to be mere trash (these ideas will discuss later in detail).

In fact, according to how the term had been used, these latter texts, songs, and artworks were not considered “*culture*” at all. This distinction between high and low culture was then used to make a moral judgment of the people that consumed them. If you read the great works, the argument goes, you will become refined. If you read trashy novels, you yourself become trashy; you became one of the “*masses*.” This distinction still exists today, but to a lesser extent than before. But back in the 1950s, when Williams began writing about culture, the distinction was still very much in place and Williams took the dismissal of the greater part of the population as mere uncultured, ignorant, worthless masses personally. He took it personally because he had grown up in a working class family in Wales, had received a scholarship, and had studied at Oxford. He realized that the so-called “*masses*” who were being so easily degraded and dismissed in the teashops and lecture halls of Oxford were his family and friends, and he felt insulted. To treat any group of people, as a whole, as if they had uncritical minds and no means of creating culture, was untenable to Williams. And so he proposed the fairly simple concept that culture was ordinary. What he meant by this was that the processes of culture, which were the inheritance of a tradition and also the testing of that inheritance within the context of one’s everyday life, did not just occur with certain peoples or works, but were the basic processes of everyone’s everyday lives. They were normal processes. They were ordinary.

Williams said that culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, and its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery. The growing society is there, yet it is also made and remade in every individual mind. The making of a mind is, first, the slow learning of shapes, purposes, and meanings, so that work, observation, and communication are

possible. Then, second, but equal in importance, is the testing of these in experience, the making of new observations, comparisons, and meanings. A culture has two aspects: the known meanings and directions, to which its members are trained; the new observations and meanings, which are offered and tested. These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of a culture: that it is always both traditional and creative; that it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings.

For Williams (1989, p. 4) *“we use the word culture in these two senses: to mean a whole way of life - the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning - the special processes of discovery and creative effort”*. Some writers reserve the word for one or the other of these senses; I insist on both, and on the significance of their conjunction. The questions I ask about our culture are questions about our general and common purposes, yet also questions about deep personal meanings. Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind.

By arguing this, however, Williams is not arguing for a cultural relativism: that all cultures are equally and that we cannot make any judgments of artistic value. He writes, later in the same essay, that *“... at home we met and made music, listened to it, recited and listened to poems, valued fine language. I have heard better music and better poems since; there is the world to draw on”* (Williams, 1989, p. 5). What he is arguing against is the a priori dismissal of people and their culture, and what he is arguing for is the recognition that there are many, many other ways of making meaning, many other traditions, and many ways of testing, shaping, and challenging those meanings and traditions. In fact, he is not simply arguing that the elite should recognize the culture of the working classes, but that everyone should recognize the richness of their common cultures.

The key to accomplishing this goal is education. Education, Williams writes, is ordinary that *“... it is, before everything else, the process of giving to the ordinary members of society its full common meanings, and the skills that will enable them to amend these meanings, in the light of their personal and common experience”* (see, Williams, 1989, p. 14).

In other words, to give people the resources they need to understand the range of common cultures and the means to change these in light of their own experience. That is, to recognize that one has options (that the world is a wide place, and that there are other poems and

songs, some better and some not) and to provide some of the tools necessary to engage more directly in the forces (social, political, and cultural) that shape one's everyday life.

So, there are cultural differences because of race and ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, geographical location, generation, etc. However, which of these categories matter at any particular place and time are culturally and historically contingent.

For now, it is important to retain the general sense of culture as being a whole way of life that is culture as the ordinary processes of meaning making, of traditions, and creativity. We also need to recognize the two-sided, processual nature of culture as we discuss particular cultures in different parts of the world and their struggles between tradition and change.

For Wise (2008, p.4-8) "*culture is always dynamic and traditions are always in change*", but we also need to recognize that there might be things to retain and conserve to from a tradition, while at the same time acknowledging that just because something is a tradition does not mean that it should continue.

The opinion of Wise is respectable and completely acceptable in part (culture is dynamic and traditions are changing), but the point which needs more careful discussion is how to recognize, how and who decides what is important to conserve and what should not to continue. To do this, it is important to understand deeply what culture is and how it is working.

### 2.1.3 Culture definition (what is culture?) ...

Many anthropological textbooks open with the definition of culture as a whole way of life of a group or society as it was first formulated by the English evolutionist Edward Tylor:

*"Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society"* (Tylor, 1871/1924, p. 1).

However, if this was a point of departure for modern anthropology, it was not a basis for consensus and anthropologists in different national traditions set off along divergent paths. The anthropologist Tylor himself attempted to combine the romantic notion of the German philosopher Johann Herder that nations, and groups within nations, have distinctive

cultures, with the idea originating in the Enlightenment that each of these cultures was positioned at a different evolutionary stage (Wright, 1998). Franz Boas, the founding father of empirical anthropology in the United States, rejected Tylor's social evolutionism by emphasizing the particularity of each culture as a result of the group's responses to different environmental conditions and their specific historical development. Culture is treated as the product of historical and social forces, rather than a biological organism (Stocking, 1974), (For more detail, see Meijl, 2008, pp. 165-190).

As mentioned, culture is a highly misunderstood and misused concept, thus it needs an overall explanation. There are numerous definitions of culture. In simple words, the Oxford Dictionary defines it as the ideas, customs, attitudes and social behavior characteristic of a particular people or society (Oxford Dictionary). Dahl (2001) argues that culture is a collectively held set of attributes, which is dynamic and changing over time. We can basically distinctive between two dimensions of culture:

- **Material** culture consists of the *physical objects* "artifacts", such as cars, mobile phones and books, a society produces and which reflect cultural knowledge, skills, interests and preoccupations.
- **Non-Material** culture consists of the knowledge and beliefs that influence people's behaviors. In our culture, for example, behavior may be influenced by religious beliefs and/or scientific beliefs (Livesey and Lawson, 2006).

In other words, culture is a system of learned behavior patterns that is constantly reproduced by human communication using a certain set of symbols. Interlocutors share the meaning of these symbols, or are in the process of developing a shared meaning. In this sense, culture is reflected in symbolic and material expressions (Schadewitz, 2009, p. 37-38). Geert Hofstede (see Geertz, 1973) has defined culture as the collective programming of the human mind that distinguishes the members of one human group from those of another. Culture in this sense is a system of collectively held values. Edgar Schein, however said that culture is the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization that operate unconsciously and define in a basic "taken for granted" fashion an organization's view of its self and its environment (Schein, 1994).



A long time ago there were several attempts to get an inclusive definition of culture. More than 50 years ago, two cultural anthropologists, Alfred Kroeber and Clyde Kluckhohn (1952, p. 181) discussed and examined more than 100 definitions of culture and distilled the following definition; *“Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts, the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other, as conditioning elements of future action”*

The anthropologists, Edward and Mildred Hall (1990) have defined culture as communication, for without the ability to communicate within and across cultures neither insiders nor outsiders can understand one another. The Halls liken culture to a musical score. If we can read the musical sheet or cultural sheet, we are then able to play and sing the music comfortably. For Pasic (1998, p. 4) “culture” refers to the set of beliefs and values held in common by a group of people, reflected in their shared habits of communicating and interacting.

More recently, Harry Triandis and Eunhook M. Suh (2002) provided a short and a useful definition. They said that *“culture is a shared meaning system found among those who speak a particular language dialect, during a specific historic period, and in a definable geographic region”*. They focused on the importance of language, a specific historical period, and a definable geographical region allows us to theorize clearly how and why specific cultures develop (See also, Triandis 2001 and Triandis 1994).

Culture is something that a person learns from his family and surroundings, and is not ingrained in him from birth. It does not have any biological connection because even if a person is brought up in a culture different from that in which he was born, he imbibes the culture of the society where he grows up. It is also not a hidden fact that some people feel the need to follow the beliefs and traditions of their own culture, even though they might be not subscribing to certain ideologies within.

Culture is a complex tool which every individual has to learn to survive in a society. It is the means through which people interact with others in the society. It acts in a subconscious

way and whatever we see and perceive, seems to be normal and natural. Sometimes, other societies and people seem to be a little odd because they have a different culture from ours. We must remember that every society has a distinct culture that forms the backbone of the society. Culture does not remain stagnant, but it is evolving constantly and is in fact somewhat influenced by the other cultures and societies.

Culture is necessary to establish an order and discipline in the society. It is not only a means of communication between people, but also creates a feeling of belonging and togetherness among people in the society (Karthan, 2011). As a result of all the previous, it is essential to list the definitions of culture in summarized direct simple words, as the following:

- Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.
- Culture is a system of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people.
- Culture is communication, communication is culture.
- Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior; that is the totality of a person's learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning.
- Culture is a way of life of a group of people. Behavior, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.
- Culture is symbolic communication. Some of its symbols include a group's skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, and motives. The meanings of the symbols are learned and deliberately perpetuated in a society through its institutions.
- Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning influences upon further action.

- Culture is the sum of total of the learned behavior of a group of people that are generally considered to be the tradition of that people and are transmitted from generation to generation.
- Culture is a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.

From all the previous culture definitions, it can be said that culture in general revolves about three major aspects: culture as a shared meaning, culture as behavioral rules and culture as a practice.

#### 2.1.4 Culture as a shared meaning ...

Prof. Geert Hofstede (2010, p. 6) said *“Culture is always a collective phenomenon, because it is at least partly shared with people who live or lived within the same social environment”*.

Culture is very much about groups, and a basic need of groups is to be able to communicate, both at a superficial level (for which ordinary language largely suffices) and also at a deeper level of meaning. At this deeper level, words, actions and things can become imbued with special and specific meaning for the group, for example:

- A group-specific jargon and language, for example derogatory descriptors of outsiders.
- Rituals for greetings, meetings, punishments and other group processes.
- Artwork and artifacts that symbolize and remind the group of their history.
- People and roles that help share.

#### 2.1.5 Culture as behavioral rules ...

When a group of people are to exist together, they need a set of rules, or social norms that helps everyone know what to do in various circumstances, from arguing with one another to dealing with outsiders.

These rules help to propagate the shared meaning and also use the systems of meaning to make sense of what is happening and what is done (Changing minds, 2011, Internet).

### 2.1.6 Culture as a practice ...

Cultural practices obviously take place within the context of the social power relations of class, race, gender ... and so on, and are in this broad sense “political”. There are, for example, “elite” and “popular” cultural forms which in certain senses “express” these power relations and which may contribute to their reproduction, or provide contexts for their contestation.

Equally, most symbolic representation in modern societies is conducted within the “economic” context of the market-place (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 209). The practice of culture as an activity will lead me in the next chapters to explain the relationship between culture as a background base and design as a process.

### 2.1.7 Cultural elements ...

According to the English Anthropologist Edward B. Taylor, culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Karth, 2011). Broadly, culture related to the social heritage of a group (organized community or society). It is a pattern of responses discovered, developed, or invented during the group’s history of handling problems which arise from interactions among its members, and between them and their environment. These responses are considered the correct way to perceive, feel, think, and act, and are passed on to the new members through immersion and teaching. Culture determines what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable. It encompasses all learned and shared, explicit or tacit, assumptions, beliefs, knowledge, norms, and values, as well as attitudes, behavior, dress, and language (Business dictionary, 2011, Internet).

From the last two definitions can be listed the main elements which form any type of culture. There are different types of cultures across the world and each culture has its unique essence. While these cultures are completely different, the main elements which formed these cultures look theoretically the same. Certainly, they are not the same in details

especially when they constitute the culture of a particular region or the culture of particular people. The main elements which formed any type of culture are:

- **Language:** the oldest human institution and the most sophisticated medium of expression. The various languages are essentially an important part of the culture.
- **Arts & sciences:** the most advanced and refined forms of human expression.
- **Norms:** Every society or every civilization has a set of norms, which are an inseparable part, and an important element of the culture. This can include the folkways, mores, taboos and rituals in a culture.
- **Values:** The social values of a particular civilization are also considered as an element of the culture. The values of a culture often refer to the things to be achieved or the things, which are considered of great worth or value in a particular culture.
- **Thoughts, religion, and beliefs:** the ways in which people perceive, interpret, and understand the world around them. The religion and the beliefs of the people in a civilization play an important role in shaping up of the culture as well.
- **Social activity and social collectives:** the shared pursuits within a cultural community, demonstrated in a variety of festivities and life-celebrating events. In addition, social collectives refer to the social groups, organizations, communities, institutions, classes, and societies, which are considered as symbolic social constructions.
- **Statuses and roles:** A status or a social role is nothing but a slot or position within a group or society, which gives an overall idea of the social structure and hence is an important element of culture. This can also include traditional gender-based or age-based roles.
- **Cultural interaction and cultural integration:** cultural interaction includes all the social aspects of human contact, including the give-and-take of socialization, negotiation, protocol, and conventions. Cultural integration includes the degree of harmony or integration within the various elements of culture. This can include elements like sub-cultures, local cultures and the difference between historical and cultural traditions (Roshan Cultural Heritage Institute, 2011, Internet) (Manohar, 2011).

### 2.1.8 Cultural importance ...

As a result of scanning of all the mentioned definitions of culture which lead to list the main elements of it, one can refer strongly to the importance of culture for everyone whether he/she knows it or not. Culture is an integral part of every society. It is a learned pattern of behavior and ways in which a person lives his or her life. Culture is essential for the existence of a society, because it binds people together. In the explicit sense of the term, culture constitutes the music, food, arts and literature of a society. However, these are only the products of culture followed by the society and cannot be defined as culture (Karthi, 2011).

The behavioral patterns of people, their belief systems, their principles of life and their living are derivatives of culture. Culture is that invisible bond, which ties the people of a community together. It refers to the pattern of human activity. Art, literature, language and religion of a community represent the community's culture.

Culture manifests itself through the lifestyle of the individuals of a community. The moral values of the people of a community also represent their culture. The importance of culture lies in its close association with the living of the people.

Culture is related to the development of one's attitude. One's culture plays an important role in shaping the principles of the individual's life. The cultural values of an individual have a deep impact on his/her attitude towards life. According to the behaviorist definition of culture, it is the ultimate system of social control where people monitor their own standards and behavior. A community's culture lays the foundation of the living of its people. The cultural values serve as the founding principles of one's life. They shape an individual's thinking and influence his/her mindset.

Definitely, culture is important because it gives an individual a unique identity (as it will discuss in the second chapter). Culture of any community gives its people a character of their own. Culture shapes the personality of a community. The language that a community speaks, the art forms it hosts, its staple food, its customs, traditions and festivities comprise the community's culture. The importance of culture cannot be stressed enough as it is an integral part of living (Oak, 2011).

Despite all that, many people do not think about the importance of culture. Many of them do not realize the significance and impact of their own culture on their lives, they cannot imagine how their culture is involved in everything around them, and they cannot be aware how it related directly or indirectly to the most of their feelings, behavior, actions and decisions. The main reason is that they look so superficially to the visible part of culture without being enough aware of how this view is limited. The iceberg of culture which shown in (Figure 3) (French & Bell, 1995) explains the limited view of many people who cannot or do not care to think more deeply in their societies to discover their culture.

The figure illustrates the hidden values or the hidden elements of culture which influence the majority of human communication, just as the larger part of the iceberg is hidden under the sea level. Only a small part of culture is visible at the surface.

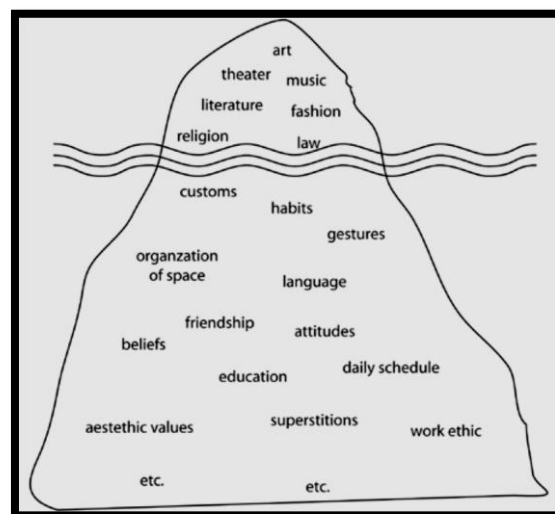


Figure 3: Iceberg model of culture (French & Bell, 1995).

### 2.1.9 Cultural functions ...

In the framework of all the previous definitions and explanations of culture, furthermore the former meaning of its importance, it could be claimed that culture “any culture” has specific functions. Mazrui (1996) identified these functions in seven main points as following:

- **Communication:** culture provides the context for the development of human communication system such as language (both verbal and non-verbal gestures and signals, for example).

- **Perception:** Matsumoto (2007) argues that culture gives “*meaning to social situations, generating social roles and normative behaviors*”. In other words, it shapes the way we look at and understand the social and natural worlds.
- **Identity:** culture influences how people see and describe themselves and others (in terms of things such as gender, age, and ethnicity). These forms of identity - and others - will be discussed in detail in the coming chapter.
- **Value system:** cultural institutions are a source of values and people’s behavior. They are - to some extent - conditioned by the cultural values they receive through the socialization process.
- **Motivation:** relates to the idea that cultural values and norms involve sanctions (rewards and punishments) for particular behaviors. Cultural values also set the behavioral boundaries in terms of maintaining certain standards of behavior (laws, for example, specify behavior that is right or wrong, acceptable and unacceptable).
- **Stratification:** All cultures develop ways of differentiating between social groups on the basis of issues such as “*social class*” (economic divisions), “*social rank*” (political divisions involving ideas like an aristocracy and peasantry), “*gender*”, “*age*” ... etc. For Lenski (1994) social stratification is “*inevitable, necessary and functional*” because it generates the “*incentive system*” required to motivate and reward the “*best qualified people*” for occupying the “*most important positions*”.
- **Production and consumption:** culture defines what people “*need, use and value*” as part of the overall survival mechanism in any society. People need, for example, to be organized and motivated to work (hence the need for a stratification system that offers rewards to those who occupy social roles that, in words of Davis and Moore (1967), are “*more functionally important than others*”) and encouraged to consume the products of the workplace (For more details, see Livesey and Lawson, 2006).

#### 2.1.10 Cultural manifestations ...

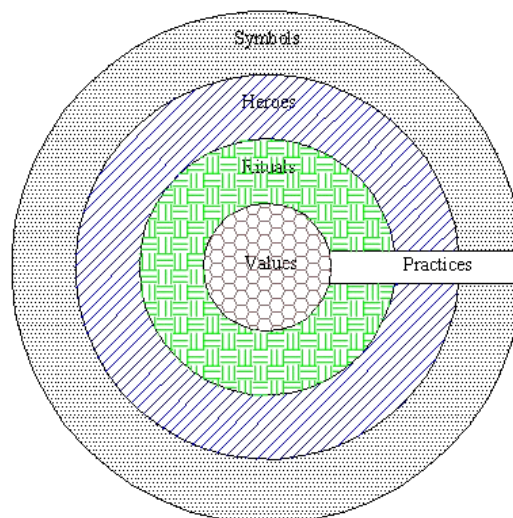
Cultural differences manifest themselves in different ways and differing levels of depth. According to (Figure 4), Prof. Hofstede pictured the manifestations of culture as the skin



layers of an “onion”. Symbols represent the most superficial manifestations of culture, while values are the deepest manifestations, with heroes and rituals in between.

Symbols are words, gestures, pictures, or objects that carry a particular meaning which is only recognized by those who share a particular culture. New symbols easily develop, old ones disappear. Symbols from one particular group are regularly copied by others. This is why symbols represent the outermost layer of a culture. Heroes are persons, past or present, real or fictitious, who possess characteristics that are highly prized in a culture. They also serve as the reference models for behavior (Hofstede, 2010, P. 7-8).

The third layer from outside is rituals which are collective activities, sometimes superfluous in reaching desired objectives, but are considered as socially essential. They are therefore carried out most of the time for their own sake (ways of greetings, paying respect to others, religious and social ceremonies, etc.).



**Figure 4:** The “onion” model, the manifestations of culture are at different levels of depth (Hofstede, 2010, p. 8).

The core of any culture is formed by values. They are broad tendencies for preferences of certain state of affairs to others (good-evil, right-wrong, natural-unnatural). Many values remain unconscious to those who hold them. Therefore, they often cannot be discussed, nor they can be directly observed by others. Values can only be inferred from the way people act under different circumstances.

Symbols, heroes, and rituals are the tangible or visual aspects of the practices of a culture. The true cultural meaning of the practices is intangible; this is revealed only when the practices are interpreted by the insiders.

### 2.1.11 Cultural levels (layers) ...

Even people within the same culture carry several layers of mental programming (expression) within themselves. Different layers of culture exist at the following levels:

- **The national level:** Associated with the nation as a whole.
- **The regional level:** Associated with ethnic, linguistic, or religious differences that exist within a nation.
- **The gender level:** Associated with gender differences (female-male).
- **The generation level:** Associated with the differences between grandparents and parents, parents and children.
- **The social class level:** Associated with educational opportunities and differences in occupation.
- **The corporate level:** Associated with the particular culture of an organization. Applicable to those who are employed.

### 2.1.12 Measuring cultural differences ...

A variable between any culture can be operationalized either by single or composite measure techniques. A single-measure technique means the use of one indicator to measure the domain of a concept; the composite-measure technique means the use of several indicators to construct an index for the concept after the domain of the concept has been empirically sampled. Hofstede (2010) has devised a composite-measure technique to measure cultural differences among different societies:

- **Power distance index:** The index measures the degree of inequality that exists in a society.
- **Uncertainty avoidance index:** The index measures the extent to which a society feels threatened by uncertain or ambiguous situations.

- **Individualism index:** The index measure the extent to which a society is individualistic. Individualism refers to a loosely knit social framework in a society in which people are supposed to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. The other end of the spectrum would be collectivism that occurs when there is a tight social framework in which people distinguish between in-groups and out-groups; they expect their in-groups (relatives, clans, organizations) to look after them in exchange for absolute loyalty.
- **Masculinity index:** The index measures the extent to which the dominant values are assertiveness, money and things (achievement), not caring for others or for quality of life. The other end of the spectrum would be femininity (relationship).

### 2.1.13 Cultural differentiation ...

According to all the previous explanations and the levels of understanding and the expression of culture, it seems that culture is a term of distinction rather than commonality. We do not say that the “cultured” man is the man who shares the most with his co-culturalists. He is not the man who is most en-culturated into his group and so most typical in his tastes. Rather, a cultured man prefers Mozart to the latest pop music, perhaps, to achieve the distinction in taste which can discriminate the high from the low – whether or not one is able to give an account of such a discrimination (Henrie, 2004).

Although societies usually present themselves as one nation or one community which have a specific culture, but each society could be divided to different classifications of culture. Simply, the idea of the differentiation or the division of culture based around the production and consumption of cultural products finds its expression in the distinction made between “high” and “low” culture, in addition to the idea of popular or “mass culture”.

Actually, sociologists state and remark many ideas about cultural division and its differentiations, few of them indicated terms such as “Highbrow, Lowbrow and Middlebrow”. Others suggest that “high” culture is somehow related to the idea of civilization, while “common culture” divides into two kinds, folk culture and popular culture. For example, Henrie (2004) in a paper focused on high culture, low culture and the

multiculturalism liberal education of the USA explained that multiculturalism refuses to distinguish the high from the low, even though, in point of fact, all cultures do themselves make such discriminations.

Without more details and in short, the coming lines shed a light on the general meaning of cultural division and its differentiation (high culture, low culture and popular culture).

### 2.1.13.1 High culture ...

High culture is a term used to explain or illustrate elite aristocratic culture. It is currently used in different ways in academic discourse, whose most common meaning is a set of cultural products. It has also been used to detach the “elite” from the “barbaric”. In other words, high culture is a term which indicates the culture of an upper class such as an aristocracy or an intelligentsia, but it can also be defined as a repository of a broad cultural knowledge, a way of transcending the class system. It is contrasted with the low culture or popular culture of, variously, the less well-educated or the masses (Wikipedia, high culture, Internet).

High culture is associated historically with aristocratic patronage: the production of something fine for a connoisseur. Folk culture, conversely, is an authentic good in its own right, made possible by a peasantry’s being wholly fenced off from the world of the elite.

High culture refers to the idea that some artistic and literary products in our society are superior in scope and form to others. An example here might be that classical music is held in higher cultural esteem than “popular music” producers (Livesey and Lawson, 2006). For Davis (2000) the *elite* or high culture is the preserve of very few in societies that involves art, literature, music and intellectual thought which few can create or even appreciate.

### 2.1.13.2 Low culture ...

Low culture is a derogatory term for some forms of demotic “popular” culture that have mass appeal. Indeed, low culture is in contrast with the term of high culture. It has been said by culture theorists that both high culture and low culture are subcultures. For many researchers low culture would mean things like “take-away” meals, gossip magazines, books

that are current best-sellers, and sports such as football and basketball. Usually they indicate the low culture by referring to reality television, popular music, escapist fiction, kitsch, slapstick, yellow journalism, pornography, and exploitation films (Wikipedia, low culture, Internet) (For more details, see Gans, 1999).

Despite wide debates about the differentiations of culture, the boundary between high and low culture has blurred especially when thinking about the term of popular culture. In milder words, low culture refers to widely distributed forms of popular music, publishing, art, design and literature. Furthermore, low culture includes the activities of leisure time and entertainment which make up the everyday lives of *ordinary* people.

In brief, Low culture, therefore, refers to cultural products and pursuits characterized by their production for, and consumption by, “the masses”. In this respect, high cultural products and pursuits correlate with the cultural interests of the rich and powerful, whereas low cultural products and pursuits are associated with the relatively poorer and less powerful (Livesey and Lawson, 2006).

### 2.1.13.3 Popular culture (mass culture) ...

There are various ways to clarify and define popular culture. The first idea which is adopted by many sociologists is the description of the term *popular* as “well liked by many people”. This meaning indicates that popular culture as a simple culture which is widely favored or well liked by many people. The second idea to define popular culture is to think about it as the culture which is left over after we have decided what high culture is (according to this meaning popular culture is a residual inferior category which is related somehow with the meaning of low culture). The third idea of defining popular culture is as *mass* culture (mass culture that is widely disseminated via the mass media). The basic point here is that those who refer to popular culture as a synonym of mass culture consider popular culture as a hopelessly commercial culture. It is mass production for mass consumption and its audience is a mass of non-discriminating consumers.

The fourth definition contends that popular culture is the culture which originates from the people. Popular culture according to this idea should only be used to indicate an “*authentic*”

culture of the people. It is a popular culture as folk culture. It is a culture of people for the people (such as, pop and rock music). Other sociologists speak about popular culture as a kind of political hegemony. They use the term hegemony to describe the way in which dominant groups in society exert an “intellectual and moral leadership”. This meaning makes popular culture a profoundly political concept. In a different way of thinking about popular culture, there are other sociologists who indicate its relationship with postmodernism. The main point here is the claim that postmodernism culture is a culture which no longer recognizes the distinction between high and popular culture (For more details, see Storey, 2009, pp. 1-14).

Storey (2009, p.1) explained that popular culture is always defined, implicitly or explicitly, in contrast to other conceptual categories: folk culture, mass culture, dominant culture, working-class culture ... etc. Storey continued his point of view that popular culture is in effect an *empty* conceptual category. It can be filled in a wide variety of often conflicting ways, depending on the context of use.

In general, popular culture is the entirety of ideas, perspectives, attitudes, images, and other phenomena that are within the mainstream of a given culture, especially Western culture of the early to mid 20th century and the emerging global mainstream of the late 20th and early 21st century. Heavily influenced by mass media, this collection of ideas permeates the everyday lives of society. Popular culture is often viewed as being trivial and dumbed-down in order to find consensual acceptance throughout the mainstream. As a result, it comes under heavy criticism from various non-mainstream sources which deem it superficial, consumerist, sensationalist, and corrupted (Wikipedia, popular culture, Internet).

Despite the previous multiplicity of interpretations, in addition to many others, the meaning of popular culture is almost identical with the idea of mass culture, which allows treating both concepts as equal. In this context, mass culture is a kind of culture produced neither for the connoisseur nor for a folk community but for the market, which is to say, for the bourgeoisie. Thus, mass culture or “Masscult” rises with the market economy, beginning in the eighteenth century. It is a culture produced for the money to be made by appealing to the masses as a mass.

Basically, the concept of mass culture is linked to the idea of mass society, a type of society, where “the masses” (as opposed to the ruling elite) are characterized. The mass production of the cultural commodities of mass culture—films, TV shows, CDs ... etc. are produced and distributed by an industrialized system whose aim is to maximize profit for the producers and distributors by appealing to as many consumers as possible (Livesey and Lawson, 2006).

In other words, mass culture refers to cultural products that are mass produced (like CDs). Popular culture is often thought of as culture that is popular (that is, that many people purchase or participate in), but a better way of thinking about it is that popular culture is culture that people themselves have made, rather than culture that is made for them.

This distinction is one emphasized by communication scholar John Fiske (1989, p. 25): *“Popular culture is made by the people at the interface between the products of the culture industries and everyday life”*. It is, in part, what we do with the mass media products once we have obtained them. Most of the time products are used in the ways that their manufacturers intended, but not always.

For Davis (2000) mass culture is regarded as mediocre, dull mundane entertainment to be enjoyed by uneducated and uncritical “low-brow” hoards. From this perspective, therefore, mass culture is a way of distracting the working classes from the real causes of their problems in capitalist society. In simple terms, the development of a mass culture that encourages passive consumption of the packed products of big business not only destroys vital, communal, aspects of folk culture, it also provides the lower classes with an illusory sense of happiness, togetherness and well-being that prevents them understanding how they are economically exploited by a ruling class (Livesey and Lawson, 2006).

Giddens (2006) summarized the idea by defines the popular culture “mass culture” as the entertainment created for large audiences, such as popular films, shows, music, TV programs. It is often contrasted with the high or the elite culture. The culture of masses as Meyersohn (1977) suggests is the popular culture consisting of all elements of human activity and life style, including knowledge, belief, art and customs that are common to a large group.

Finally, popular culture is always both the dominant uses and meanings and at least the potential for alternative uses and readings. Popular culture is, therefore, a site of ideological struggle more generally and personal struggle as one searches for one's place in family, tradition, and society at large. Popular culture becomes a way of bending the meanings of mass culture and everyday life to help oneself on one's way. Fiske (1989) borrows a term from the French sociologist Michel de Certeau (1984) and writes that popular culture is "the art of making do", which looks at acts of cultural resistance and containment. Often this resistance is not that of one who wishes to bring down the entire system, but the resistance of one who wishes to make it through a space controlled by others (school, work, the streets, home) in a way that makes life bearable and which maintains one's identity as much as possible (Wise, 2008, pp. 8-10).

#### **2.1.14 Reconciliation of cultural differences ...**

After the indication to all the previous cultural types and the differentiation of culture and before venturing on a global assignment, it is important to realize the cultural awareness of society. It is probably necessary to identify the cultural differences that may exist between one's home country and the country of business operation. Where the differences exist, one must decide whether and to what extent the home-country practices may be adapted to the foreign environment. Most times the differences are not very apparent or tangible. Certain aspects of a culture may be learned consciously (e.g. methods of greeting people), some other differences are learned subconsciously (e.g. methods of problem solving).

The building of cultural awareness may not be an easy task, but once accomplished, it definitely helps a job done efficiently in a foreign environment. Discussions and reading about other cultures definitely helps build cultural awareness, but opinions presented must be carefully measured. Sometimes they may represent unwarranted stereotypes, an assessment of only a subgroup of a particular group of people, or a situation that has since undergone drastic changes. It is always a useful idea to get varied viewpoints about the same culture.

Some countries may share many attributes that help to melt their cultures (the modifiers may be language, religion, geographical location ... etc.). Based on this data obtained from



past cross-cultural studies, countries may be grouped by similarities in values and attitudes. Fewer differences may be expected when moving within a cluster than when moving from one cluster to another.

The actual challenge here is wider and deeper than thinking about how to rebuild and represent the culture of one country or a specific society, the idea is how to rethink about the *culture of mankind*.

### 2.1.15 Chapter summary ...

- Culture is one of the most complicated words in the English language. It is used widely without clear decisive identifying of its meaning.
- Historically, the meaning and the indication of culture has completely changed from past to present. Before the *Industrial Revolution*, culture meant agriculture and during the nineteenth century it referred to the trained and the educated person. Later, culture became synonymous with civilization. There is also the differentiation of culture as high culture and low culture.
- Culture is a system of learned behavior patterns that is constantly reproduced by human communication using a certain set of symbols. Culture is a collectively held set of attributes, which is dynamic and changing over time.
- Culture can be used to refer to a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development of any society (refer to aesthetic factors, great philosophers, poets, artists ...etc.).
- Culture refers to a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period or a group (here culture means literacy, holidays, sports, religious festivities ... etc.).
- Culture can be used to refer to the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity (signifying practices, such as poetry, ballet, opera, fine art ... etc.).
- Generally, culture is a system of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people. It is a complex tool which every individual has to learn to survive in a society. Culture is necessary to establish an order and discipline in a society.

- As T.S. Eliot defined culture, it is “*what makes life worth living*” Culture in this sense concerns not “*mere life*” as the necessities of food, shelter and reproduction, but it concerns the meaning of “*good life*” (Henrie, 2004).
- Culture is communication, communication is culture.
- The main elements which form any type of culture are: language, arts & sciences, norms, values, thoughts, religion, beliefs, social activity & social collectives, statuses and roles and finally cultural interaction and cultural integration.
- Culture is essential for the existence of any society. It shapes the personality of a community and it is important because it gives every individual and every society a unique identity.
- Culture provides many functions: Communication, perception, identity, value system, motivation, stratification, in addition to production and consumption.
- The manifestations of culture are different. They usually have many levels of depth. Symbols represent the most superficial manifestations of culture, while values are the deepest manifestations, with heroes and rituals in between.
- Culture has several levels (layers) of mental expression, those levels are: The national level, the regional level, the gender level, the generation level, the social class level, and finally the corporate level.
- Culture is a term of distinction rather than commonality. Societies usually present themselves as one nation or one community which has a specific culture, but in fact, each society could be divided according to different classifications of culture.
- High culture is a term which indicates the culture of an upper class such as an aristocracy or an intelligentsia, but it can also be defined as a repository of a broad cultural knowledge, a way of transcending the class system. In other words, the *elite* or the high culture is the preserve of very few in societies that involves art, literature, music and intellectual thought which few can create or even appreciate.
- Low culture is in contrast with the term of high culture. It is a derogatory term for some forms of demotic “popular” culture that have mass appeal. Low culture refers to reality television, popular music, escapist fiction, kitsch, slapstick, yellow journalism, pornography, and exploitation films.

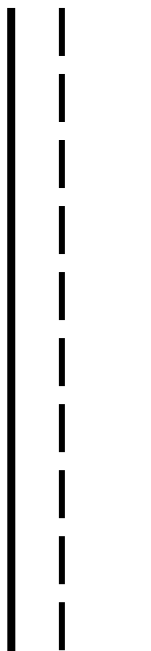
- There are various ways to clarify and define popular culture. The basic explanation of the popular culture describes it as a simple culture which is widely favored or well liked by many people. The other main idea of popular culture is to consider it as a mass culture.
- Popular culture is in effect an empty conceptual category. It can be filled in a wide variety of often conflicting ways, depending on the context of use.
- The concept of mass culture (which is a synonym of popular culture) is linked to the idea of mass society, a type of society, where “the masses” (as opposed to the ruling elite) are characterized.
- Mass culture is usually regarded as mediocre, dull mundane entertainment to be enjoyed by uneducated and uncritical “low-brow” hoards. The better way of thinking about it is that popular “mass” culture is culture that people themselves have made, rather than culture that is made for them.
- Although there are many explanations for the classification and the differentiation of culture, the differences are not very apparent or tangible. It is more vital and essential to think about the reconciliation of cultural differences not only inside the same society, but also - as possible - to think about the shared culture of mankind.



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Chapter 2:

***Identity formation; culture-related clarifications***





### 2.2.1 Chapter overview ...

*Who am I?*

How can I define myself?

*Who are you?*

How can I define other people?

*How are my beliefs about my identity affected by my beliefs about your identity?*

(Livesey, & Lawson, 2006, p.3)

Those three short questions present the main general dilemma of identity. These questions look very simple, but their answers - usually - are complicated.

Identity is a simple word to use, but it is a difficult concept to explain. It is a complex and an unclear concept that nonetheless plays a central role in ongoing debates of social or political science. Identity - as is known - is derived mainly from the work of psychologist Erik Erikson (1902-1994). In the 1950s, he was one of the influential figures who wrote about the concept of identity in adult development and personality theory. Erikson proposed a theory of identity formation in childhood and adolescence that, while based on the Freudian view of development, extended Freud's ideas through recognizing the role identity played across a person's adult life (Erikson, 1963).

As a result of Erikson's analysis, identity refers to either (a) a social category, defined by membership rules and (alleged) characteristic attributes or expected behaviors, or (b) socially distinguishing features that a person takes a special pride in or views as unchangeable but socially consequential (or (a) and (b) at once). In the latter sense, "identity" is akin to the modern formulation of dignity, pride, or honor that implicitly links these to social categories (Fearon\*, 1999, p. 0).

These two different meanings explain why people reply in a very different ways when someone asks them about their identity. It is not a controversial opinion, but variety of answers was received when many individuals were asked (colleagues and friends) about their identity. Indeed, they were not formal interviews, but they were a kind of friendly

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\* James D. Fearon (Prof.). Department of Political Science, Stanford University.

discussions as an attempt to understand the meaning of the word in their minds. Some of them referred to their life style and their characteristic attributes (a) which related to their cultural background (it is the main point of study of this chapter), others referred to their countries and nationalities or jobs, a few number of them mentioned their beliefs or religion (b). Some of them mentioned the two meanings together (a) and (b).

The main issue which is noticed is that the majority of them said that it is a difficult question to answer. Furthermore, they said that it is hard to think about this vague concept. A few of them asked for a period of time to answer, others refused to answer and said it is a personal issue; *you are not a very close friend* if you want to know about something like that!

Anyway, as a result of these discussions, most answers came in the direction of (a), a few referred to (b), in very limited cases it was both. It is clear that this kind of simple discussions does not give a scientific result, but these notices - and others - are just spotlights which help to discover the deep relationship between identity and culture and how they affect directly or indirectly in the design context and its practices.

Over the last two decades, the relationship between culture (the previous chapter) and identity has become a favorite topic in social science (Dorais, 1995, p. 294). This chapter describes and discusses this strong correlation which appeared above (a) without delving more in details of the social or the political terms, but only in the manner which supports clarifying and distilling the meaning of identity from the specific sciences to the current use in ordinary language. This discussion and clarification allows to create a bridge between these social terms (culture and identity) and design as practice process, as will become clear in the coming chapters.

### 2.2.2 Why it is difficult to define identity ...

During everyday discussions, most of us usually speak about our identities or others' identities, many television talk shows speak about its importance and how it is necessary for everyone, maybe a few of us read literature or articles about it. Most of us say; *yes identity is important, it is a very vital aspect for our lives.* The problem and the difficulty appear when



someone asks us to define or to explain it. At this moment, we feel that our words are inadequate and it is hard to explain its whole meaning in a few words.

To solve this dilemma, it is useful to begin with the opinion of Anneke J. Rummens (1993, pp. 157-159). She defined identity as the distinctive character belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group. The term identity comes from the French word *identité* which finds its linguistic roots in the Latin noun *identitas*, -*tatis*, itself a derivation of the Latin adjective *idem* meaning “the same”. The term is thus essentially comparative in nature, as it emphasizes the sharing of a degree of sameness or oneness with others in a particular area or on a given point. “Identity” may be distinguished from “identification” the former is a label whereas the latter refers to the classifying act itself. Identity is thus best construed as being both relational and contextual, while the act of identification is best viewed as inherently processive (Rummens, 2001, p. 3).

The first main point which makes identity a hard concept to explain is its *divergence*. In a study of James D. Fearon (1999, p. 2), he mentioned that in ordinary language, one can use identity to refer to personal characteristics or attributes that cannot naturally be expressed in terms of a social category, and in some contexts certain categories can be described as identities even though no one sees them as central to their personal identity.

Theoretically, there are plenty of studies about identity; they are distributed between various fields such as Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy and Political science. Identity in these sciences tends to focus on the ascribed nature of identity, the social construction and negotiation of group differences, as well as the informing and ensuing group dynamics. In sharp contrast, work in Psychology tends to focus almost entirely on identity development and formation within the individual and is therefore very much concerned with issues of identity searching, identity crisis, self-concept and self-esteem (Rummens, 2001, p. 7) (In this context, it is essential to refer to the major role of Jean Piaget\* and his theory about the “*cognitive development*”, in addition to his thoughts about the *development of memory and identity*).

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\* **Jean Piaget** (1896 –1980) was a Swiss developmental psychologist and philosopher. Piaget is well-known for his epistemological studies with children. His theory of cognitive development and epistemological view are together called “genetic epistemology”.

The second main difficulty comes from its *divisions* and *subdivisions*, there are thousands of studies about identity, some of them deal only with “personal identity” or “group identity” which look easy to understand for the ordinary people who are not specialized in these kind of studies, while many other studies referred to other forms/types of identity like “ethnic identity” or “racial identity”.

In an interesting study, Jan Assmann highlighted the differentiation between the meaning of “cultural memory” and “communicative memory” as a theory of explaining the difficulty of identifying identity (For more details, see Assmann, 1988).

To be more specific, this chapter explains - in short words - the general meaning of identity, then, refers to the division of identity and its types. The main discussion focuses on the relationship between identity and culture which will call “*cultural identity*”.

### 2.2.3 What is identity?

Identity - as it mentioned - is distinguished from identification. The description and the representation of the meaning of *identity* is a central task for psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists and those of other disciplines where identity needs to be mapped and defined (Wikipedia, identity-social science, Internet). For Vesajoki (2002, p. 12) identity came into anthropology relatively lately from the fields of philosophy and psychology.

Anthropology has often linked identity to terms such as “ethics”, “world view” and “values”.

In fact, there are plenty of definitions which are acceptable to describe and formulate the concept of identity. One of the simple definitions referred to identity as a collective aspect of the set of characteristics by which a thing is definitively recognizable or known. In other words, identity is defined as a set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group (the free dictionary, identity, Internet).

Through Erikson’s studies (which mentioned before), he identified identity as a critical issue faced by adolescents in particular. He introduced the terms “identity crisis” and “role confusion” to explain the nexus between childhood and adulthood that needed to be resolved by a person in order to define their role and purpose in life and, ultimately, their identity as an adult (Erikson, 1963).

Shaffer (1979) noted that Erikson had addressed the idea of shared identities, where individuals become intimate with others, experiencing mutual trust and an ability to care about others. Pervin (1984) suggested that Erikson made a major contribution to personality theory in three ways: by emphasizing the psychosocial aspects of personality; through extending stages of development to encompass individuals' entire life cycles; and in recognizing that both the past and the future have a major impact on how people constructed their identities at different times in their lives.

Educational psychologists Zanden and Pace (1984, p. 74) applied Erikson's ideas in defining identity as: "... an individual's sense of placement within the world - the meaning one attaches to oneself as reflected in the answers one provides to the questions, "Who am I" and, "Who am I to be?"

Atchley (1989, p. 115) also drew on the work of Erikson when he suggested that identity is *"... a set of characteristics that differentiates self from others and that persists over time. Identity can also be a goal through which people try to arrive at a conception of themselves as loving, competent, and good"*.

Gee (2001, p. 99) described a person's "core identity" as a combination of their many different experiences and self-perceptions: *"Being recognized as a certain "kind of person", in a given context, is what I mean ... by identity"*. In addition, Sfard and Prusak (2005, p. 18) proposed that individuals had multiple identities defined by the narratives, or stories people told themselves. They outlined three narrative-defined identities, first-person identity as told by the person themselves; second-person identity as told to another person; and third-person identity told by a third party to a third party (For more details see, Kelly, 2010).

In other words, Pasic (1998, p. 4) defined identity as the term which refers to the unit to which an individual belongs. It can take various forms: the unit can be all of humanity, a particular civilization, a specific nation, an ethnic group, a province, or portions thereof.

In a study by James D. Fearon (1999) about what is identity, he collected a variety of definitions, explanations and formulations of identity. Indeed, the range, complexity, and differences among these various formulations are remarkable. These opinions are mentioned because most of them are clear and they were written by specialists in this field.

- Identity is how people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others (Hogg and Abrams, 1988, p. 2).
- Identity is to describe the way individuals and groups define themselves and are defined by others on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture (Deng, 1995, p. 1).
- Identity refers to the ways in which individuals and collectivities are distinguished in their social relations with other individuals and collectivities (Jenkins, 1996, p. 4).
- National identity describes that condition in which a mass of people have made the same identification with national symbols-have internalized the symbols of the nation (Bloom, 1990, p. 52).
- Identities are relatively stable, role-specific understandings and expectations about self (Wendt, 1992, p. 397).
- Social identities are sets of meanings that an actor attributes to itself while taking the perspective of others, that is, as a social object. ... Social identities are at once cognitive schemas that enable an actor to determine "who I am/we are" in a situation and positions in a social role structure of shared understandings and expectations (Wendt, 1994, p. 395).
- Social identity is about the desire for group distinction, dignity, and place within historically specific discourses (or frames of understanding) about the character, structure, and boundaries of the polity and the economy (Herrigel, 1993, p. 371).
- The term identity references mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 59).
- Identities are ... prescriptive representations of political actors themselves and of their relationships to each other (Kowert, and Legro, 1996, p. 453).
- Personal identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose (Taylor, 1989, p. 27).
- Yet what if identity is conceived not as a boundary to be maintained but as a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject? (Clifford, 1988, p. 344).

- Identity is any source of action not explicable from biophysical regularities, and to which observers can attribute meaning (White, 1992, p. 6).
- Identity is objectively defined as location in a certain world and can be subjectively appropriated only along with that world. ... Coherent identity incorporates within itself all the various internalized roles and attitudes (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 132).
- Identity emerges as a kind of unsettled space or an unresolved question in that space, between a number of intersecting discourses. ... [Until recently, we have incorrectly thought that identity is] a kind of fixed point of thought and being, a ground of action ... the logic of something like a “true self”. But Identity is a process, identity is split. Identity is not a fixed point but an ambivalent point. Identity is also the relationship of the other to oneself (Hall, 1989) (For more details see, Fearon, 1999, p. 4-5).

For Warren Kidd (2002, p. 7) *“identity is a person’s knowledge about who they are; who other people are; what it is that differentiates them and how one should behave in certain situations considering the social group where one belongs”*. This feeling of identity has developed historically, on the basis of continuity; i.e. it comprises knowledge about who we were in the past, who we will be in the future, who our mothers and fathers, our grandmothers and grandfathers were.

Identity is a conception of oneself and therefore constitutes the basis of an individual’s relationship with the world and its interpretation, as well as their evaluation of the behavior of both themselves and others (McAdams 1997, p. 106), (For more details, see Küün, 2008). More recently, Macgregor Wise (2008) said that identity in such a model is always already in process, shaped by economic and political forces, the historical realities of one’s territories (Wise, 2008, p. 22).

As a summation of all the previous formulations of identity, it can say that identity is a concept used to describe a person’s conception and expression of their individuality or group affiliations (such as national identity and cultural identity). The concept is used more specifically in psychology and sociology. In simple words, identity may be defined as the distinctive character belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a

particular social category or group. (For more details about the meaning of identity in psychology, social psychology, social anthropology and in philosophy see answer, identity-social-science, Internet).

#### 2.2.4 Mathematical definition of identity ...

There are plenty of definitions which described identity as a mathematical term, actually this trend looks rather far from the social meaning which is the main point of this context but it is also important to indicate this mathematical meaning. Simply, identity is defined as the fundamental nature of everything, whether that thing is an objective physical entity or a subjective mental construct. To understand the nature of things we must first understand the nature of identity.

Exceeding the standard definition of identity as just self-similarity, the structure of identity expresses a duality of (1) self-similarity and (2) other-difference, for we can say that a thing (a part of all) is the same as itself if, and only if, we can say it is different than something else. As we shall see, these two aspects of identity create Absolute and Relative identity attributes. This then is the dual definition of identity:

**1. Absolute:** zero difference; the unconditional nature of a thing that is not derived from external relation; the product of internal self-similarity. Example: She must be Mary since she is the same as Mary.

**2. Relative:** nonzero difference; the conditional nature of a thing,  $n$ , derived from the difference between  $n$  and not ( $n$ ); the product of external other-difference. Example: Smith is best since he scored more than the others.

The identity of a thing is simultaneously (1) and (2). Example: the difference between 4 and 4 is 0 (4 is the same as 4) because the difference between 4 and 0 is 4. So a thing,  $n$ , is defined at the same time by both its similarity to itself and by its difference from not ( $n$ ); and thus difference (from zero difference to nonzero differences) defines the whole structure of identity (For more details, see Goddard, 1998).

### 2.2.5 Types of Identity ...

There are many types of identity such as; personal identity, gender identity, social identity, and cultural identity (which is also divided into many types). Most research literature focuses on ethnic identity, followed by national identity, then native identity and racial identity. Research on regional identity and religious identity is less well represented in terms of the total number of reports, articles and books.

The largely psychological literature focuses on cognitive development, self-concept and personality, while some of the very early and academically dated-education research examines the role of culture on improving the intellectual abilities. More recent research in the area of education concerns itself with native education, school curriculum, academic performance, academic or educational achievement, and vocational aspirations. Other work focuses on the impact of economic factors, societal and structural conditions, social status and the level of societal development on native identity. The role of the justice system is also explored, as are links with politics, self-determination and social conflict. The relationship between native identity and language, as well as its expression in art, literature, oral narratives and other discourse also receives attention, as does the link between native identity and place.

Finally, the literature search also yielded more general reference materials that cover native demography, mental and physical health, and history. Other works provide a bibliography of relevant sources or address related research issues (Rummens, 2001, p. 8-9).

### 2.2.6 Does identity matter for culture?

The answer to this question will explain the main target of this chapter which will prove or disprove one of the study hypotheses. Before any clarifications of the meaning of culture it was not acceptable to say, yes without any evidence, but after what has been mentioned and discussed about culture (in the previous chapter) and identity, it can be confirmed by saying, yes, identity is strongly influenced by culture.

Identity is also strongly related to the concept of the self in combination with membership of various social and cultural groups (Paris, 2001), as well as the cultural tools that people

interact with, such as schools, museums, films, literature or other forms of cultural engagement. Paris (2001, p. 257) also argued that people constantly formed, re-formed and shaped their identity in order to understand themselves “... *partly in relation to their own histories and anticipated futures*”.

One of the easily understandable points of view is the opinion of Kidd (2002, p. 24). He defined identity as “... *the characteristics of thinking, reflecting and self-perception that are held by people in society*”. Kidd identified three main forms of identity:

- **Personal identity:** the unique sense of personhood held by each person in their own right.
- **Social identity:** a collective sense of belonging to a group, identifying themselves as having something in common with other group members.
- **Cultural identity:** a sense of belonging to a distinct ethnic, cultural or subcultural group (Kelly, 2010).

From the last point of the previous division, it is clear that the term “cultural identity” includes many forms of meaning, one of the most influential of them is “ethnic identity” which is commonly used to refer to a group that differs from others in terms of culture (either immigrant and/or non-immigrant), *nationality*, *race* or even *religion*. In this review these main three different identity criteria have been treated separately for the sake of greater conceptual clarity.

Many studies include material on ethnic origin or heritage, the homeland, traditional culture, value orientations, ethnic norms and ethnic subculture. Attention is also given to food preferences, child rearing, home-leaving, marriage patterns, cultural transmission and socialization, as well as ethnic organizations and community governance. A few items focus on collectivist/individualist distinctions, regional differences or variations and international comparisons.

Ethnic identity expression which comes from specific culture in art, literature, the media and recreation also receives attention, as does its articulation with major social institutions including: agriculture; education (educational attainment, educational opportunities, academic performance or achievement, school, school curriculum); employment and labour



(earning capacity, economic success or satisfaction); health care; social services delivery; as well as other forms of social support (For more details, see Rummens, 2001, p. 9-10).

### 2.2.7 Personal identity ...

When we say that my identity is “who I am”, we mean “who I really am” in some sort of essential or fundamental way. We are talking about an aspect of ourselves that is in some way important to us. It would go against usage and our understanding of the concept to say that some aspect of one’s (personal) identity was a matter of complete indifference that one could take it or leave it. The problem of explaining “what personal identity is” is the problem of stating what aspects of a person it refers to and precisely in what sense these are important or “essential” (Fearon, 1999, p. 20).

The individual personal identity is unique for a person. For example, it includes a person’s biographical details, experiences, hobbies and preferences (Thoits and Virshup 1997, p. 106). In addition, there are interesting studies argue that culture and identity have biological bases (e.g. see, TallBear, 2000). The individual identity is comprised of answers to the questions of who I am and where I belong to, then collective identities are answers to the questions of who we are and where we belong to. The size of the group or its function is not important in the case of affiliation, what is important is the co-existence of this group for as long as the members of the group define themselves as the members of the group (Tajfel, 1981).

In other words, personal identity defined as a complex set of the variety of all the attributes, beliefs, desires, behavioral, temperamental, emotional and mental that characterize a unique individual; their different reactions reflected their very different personalities. Personal identity includes the meaning of gender identity, which explains identity as it is experienced with regard to human individuality as male or female; awareness normally begins in infancy and is reinforced during adolescence. In brief, the term “personal identity” is usually used to refer to the result of an identification of self, by self, with respect to others. In other words, it is a self-identification on the part of the individual (Rummens, 1993) (Rummens, 2001, p. 3).

### 2.2.8 Social identity ...

A simple answer to the question “what is identity?” would be this: It is how one answers the question “who are you” Or, my identity is how I define who I am. When academic authors offer brief clarification of what they mean by the word, this is often the way they do it (a person’s identity is how the person defines who he/she is).

One might answer the question “who are you?” entirely differently in different circumstances. For example - depending on the context - individual might answer; Egyptian, a professor, a son-in-law, a taxpayer or a Democrat ... and so on. In some situations person might even give the social security number. By this simple explanation, then, it is acceptable that one might have multiple identities, understood simply as answers to the question “who are you?”, since how you answer the question will depend on the specific context (Fearon, 1999, p. 11-12).

Social identity is the concept of individuals labeling themselves as members of particular social groups such as Nationality, Social class, Subculture, Ethnicity, Gender and Employment (Wikipedia, identity-social science). The question to be answered in this assignment is whether we are free to choose our own identity or if identity is socially constructed through ideas such as Nationality, Ethnicity, Race and Social Class (Prevos, 2004, p. 1). Indeed, there are two major streams of thought providing an answer to this question (Livesey, 2004). On the one hand, there is the *interactionist* view, which emphasizes that we have the ability to reflect upon the nature of the social world and our position in that world. This means that there is a sense of creative dimension of human consciousness that actively shapes society in our image. On the other hand, there is the *structuralist* view, which considered identity as a product of society. An example of this school of thought is the German sociologist Georg Simmel (1858–1918) who argued that individuals are defined by their membership of social groups. Simmel emphasizes membership of the groups we belong to as a source of our identity. The majority of sociologists, however, fall somewhere between these two antitheses (Livesey, 2004).

For Livesey (2004) there is no straightforward direct relationship between identity and social concepts such as Religion, Family and Gender. Our identities are embedded in a Web of Identity, which is a visual representation of the intersection between identity and society.

The Web of Identity (Figure 5) illustrates that the interaction between identity and social structure is complex and multi-layered. Individuals are surrounded by large social forces; they live out their lives, making decisions and choices but have limited options available to them.

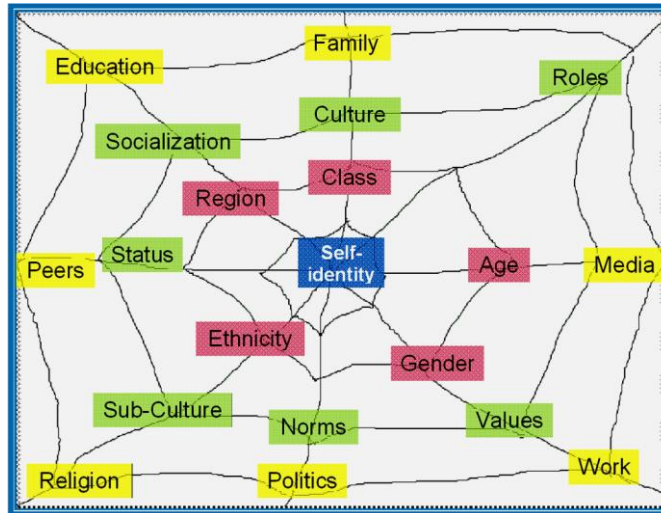


Figure 5: The Web of identity (Livesey, 2004).

The idea of the Web of Identity shows that our identity is for the most part influenced by our social surroundings, as the forces of the social collective are much greater than the will of the individual to construct his or her own identity. In contrast, postmodern philosophers have argued against this one-way influence and have deconstructed the concept of identity and the social categories it interacts with. The postmodern concept of social identity has shown that there is no fixed concept of identity; we are not simply defined by our Profession, Gender or any of the other social categories (For more details, see Prevos, 2004).

In the same context and in a survey-experimental study of Alexander Kuo and Yotam Margalit (2010), they worked to answer if the feeling of social identity is an optional changeable or it is a fixed meaning. They designed two waves of surveying people to discover the percent of individuals in "Wave 1" who chose the same identity dimension in "Wave 2". Across all identity categories, only 58% of individuals self-identified the same way in both waves and around 37% switched to a different identity dimension (For more details, see Kuo and Margalit, 2010).

Simply and apart from this controversy, the term “social identity” is used to refer to the outcome of an identification of self by other; it is an identification accorded or assigned an individual by another social actor (Rummen, 1993), (Rummen, 2001, p. 3). A social identity is the portion of an individual’s self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group (Turner & Oakes, 1986) (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). As originally formulated by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the 1970s and 80s (Turner & Rynolds, 2010). Social identity theory introduced the concept of a social identity as a way in which to explain intergroup behavior (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Social identity theory is best described as primarily a theory that predicts certain intergroup behaviors on the basis of the perceived status, legitimacy and permeability of the intergroup environment (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This contrasts with occasions where the term social identity theory is used to refer to general theorizing about human social selves (Haslam & others, 2010). Moreover, and although some researchers have treated it as such (Brown, and Zagefka, 2006) (Ashmore, & others 2004) social identity theory was never intended to be a general theory of social categorization (Turner & Rynolds, 2010). It was awareness of the limited scope of social identity theory that led John Turner and colleagues to develop another theory in the form of self-categorization theory (Turner, 1986) (Haslam, 2001) which built on the insights of social identity theory to produce a more general account of self and group processes (Turner & Rynolds, 2010).

To avoid confusion the term social identity approach, or social identity perspective, is suggested for describing the joint contributions of both social identity theory and self-categorization theory (Haslam, 2001) (Postmes & Branscombe, 2010) (For more details, see Wikipedia on Answers.com: Social identity theory, Internet).

### 2.2.9 Cultural identity ...

Culture and identity are broad and complex concepts; even scholars have tended to shy away from them. The term “culture” itself is problematic (Pasic, 1998, p. 4) and the term identity is difficult to identify.

In the early days anthropology's interest in the person was reflected in the concept of personality. The relationship between culture and personality was object of research in American anthropology especially, with a peak of interest between the 1920s and the 1950s. The rise of the so-called *culture and personality* movement in those days was brought about by the encounter between anthropology and psychoanalysis, represented mainly by Freud and the American psychiatrist Harry S. Sullivan (Harris, 1969). When the culture and personality movement had reached a theoretical deadlock in the 1950s, it was the psychologist Erik Erikson whose work on the so-called "*ego identity*" of children and youngsters made eventually that the psychological notion of identity replaced the concept of personality and entered anthropology as a key term (Erikson, 1950) (For more detail, see Meijl, 2008, pp.165-190).

Today, we are living in the age which everyone seems to be seeking an identity. On the one hand, this can be a personal endeavor, a search to find out who one "really is", how one is made up: this is a psychoanalytic or spiritual quest. On the other hand, there is a search for a cultural identity. This - of course - is connected to a personal search, but seeks a secure identity in what one has in common with others, perceived to be like himself, not what makes one unique as an individual (Wade, 1999, p. 4).

Culture identity, also known as cultural identity, has been at the forefront of many educational discussions in classrooms and at academic conferences. With issues such as terrorism, politics and religious differences overwhelming the media these days, the need for cultural awareness has become more important. With so many different identities to consider, the term "cultural identity" is used more frequently, so awareness of the definition will assist in understanding one's culture identity.

Cultural identity is the feeling of being included in a group of people, specific culture or of an individual as far as she/he is influenced by her/his belonging to a group or culture. Culture is defined by attitudes and beliefs and what a person from each culture believes is normal for that group. Since there are many cultures in society, each culture contributes to cultural diversity, creating a "melting pot of cultures". In other words, we feel that we belong to a group, this group defines itself as a group, by noticing and highlighting differences with other groups and cultures. Any culture defines itself in relation or rather in opposition to other

cultures. People who feel that they belong to the same culture have this idea because they rely partially on a common set of norms and ideas. The awareness of such common issues is possible only via the confrontation with their absence, namely, with other cultures. This awareness in addition to the confrontation builds a sense of identity.

For Dorais (1988) cultural identity may be defined as the basic consciousness of one's own group's specificity amongst other peoples, in terms of living habits, customs, language, values. Indeed, cultural identity is not just described by the belonging to a group of people or a specific identified culture. It also consists of racial, religious, class, gender, sexuality and familial identities. Additionally, national, social and personal identity also contributes to one's cultural identity. All these properties envelop the entire person and integrate to form a collective sense.

There is an opinion which says that cultural identity is a universal term, because all people in the world are conscious - somehow - of some sort of specificity that sets them apart from others. By contrast, ethnic identity (or ethnicity) only seems to occur within complex societies (i.e. societies with a state apparatus, social classes ... etc.) when it appears functional to divide people into categories based upon something other than gender, age or occupation (Elbaz, 1985). Ethnicity is linked to cultural identity, because in order to categorize people, one must often refer to some of their cultural, linguistic or religious specificities. But it is also fundamentally different. Ethnic classifications may be based totally upon language, non cultural criteria (such as physical appearance (or "race") or place of origin). One of the prerequisites of such classifications is that all "ethnic" groups interact within the same broad social structure, whether it be a national society, or the contemporary "global village", where all of the world's peoples entertain permanent contacts.

Ethnic identity is an ethnic group's sense of belonging to a specific group (Liebkind, 1995). It is composed of many factors, the combination of which has developed historically and is unique for each nation. The decisive factors are language and the culture based on it. Other factors which form a part of this are a common religion, traditions, collective self-consciousness, collective opposition to other nations (Rannut and others, 2003), (For more details, see Küün, 2008).

Ethnic identity generally operates as a way to gain access to, or be alienated from, some economic, political or cultural resources. This is why it cannot occur in less complex societies, where all resources are, presumably, equally available to everybody. Ethnic identity is thus strongly linked to politics, defined as the power to control and regulate the availability and distribution of resources (Dorais, 1995, p. 294-295). In a paper titled “*Culture as Identity*” Anthony P. Cohen (1993) summarized the relation between ethnic identity and cultural identity by arguing that “*ethnic identity is a politicized cultural identity*”.

Finally and before moving to another point it is to highlight that cultural identity is important for all people (Morrison, 2001). It is not a choice and it is not something to refuse or deny. The relationship between culture and identity is inevitable. For Cohen (1993) culture is usually represented as identity through symbols. These symbols are simple in its form and complex in its substance.

#### 2.2.10 Identity process ...

Identity process refers to identity development/formation, identity construction and identity negotiation. Identities are not just ascribed or achieved as part of the individual’s socialization and developmental process; they are also socially constructed and negotiated by social actors. These identifications of self and/or other may be accepted or they may be contested; in many cases they overlap or intersect with other significant and sometimes competing identities (Rummens, 1993). Making a distinction between self-identity, personal identity and social identity helps to shed greater light on these closely intertwined processes.

Each territory may draw on elements from diverse cultures and inflect them in a particular way. Those cultural elements used to mark territory (and identity), are also those that make it possible to move through and live in society (in other words, they are your habits). Some of these habits are personal (the idiosyncratic tics, repetitions, and predilections of each of us) and some are habits of culture. Personal habits are the ways I do certain things without thinking; cultural habits are the ways we do certain things without thinking, with the “We” referring to others in the relevant culture.

To emphasize the link between the processes of territorialization and processes of identity, it can be stated that identity is part of one's own self-formation, but also the consequence of what groups and others impose on one. The concept of identity as territorialization allows us to rework cultural debates about identity (Wise, 2008, p. 12-13).

Identity development or formation refers to the cognitive developmental processes that each individual undergoes throughout the maturation process as he or she explores his or her place in the world and develops a unique sense of self. Research literature in this area examines the different developmental stages that individuals undergo and explores variations according to age (children, adolescent, youth, and adult), ethnicity and gender.

The literature on this topic is largely dominated by the field of psychology. The latter focuses explicitly on the development of self-identity, and considers ideal self versus real self, in-group affirmation and in-group denial, as well as the development of national self-identity. It further explores self-identification processes, including the importance of identification by others, existence of discrepancies, personality adjustment, and impact of experimenter bias on research results. The existing work also examines self-labeling (ethnic) and naming processes, as well as the development of a self-concept or self-image; research regarding the latter considers self-concept clarity, as well as its sometimes negative or changing nature. It also explores the impact of significant others and measures school self-acceptance ... etc.

Identity construction refers to the creation, formulation and expression of personal or social identities for the self, either by individuals or groups. Research in this area focuses largely on the socially-determined nature of identity and much of the work falls naturally within the domains of sociology and anthropology (For more details about the construction of identity, see Fearon, 1999, pp. 7-11).

For Rummens (1993), identity negotiation refers to the political nature of social identifications of self and/or other between or among, and by or within groups, via the interaction of individuals. Identities can be ascribed, achieved or simply assumed both by individuals and collectivities. The fact that socially ascribed identities (social identity) do not always correspond to the individual's self-definition (personal identity) points not only to possible existing societal tensions, but more importantly to the power dynamics that underscore many identification processes. Rummens (2001) added that the influence of



cultural forms on identity negotiation processes is examined in work in the area of creation such as theatre, literature, media, museum exhibits and music ... etc.

The Consideration is further given to the role played by economic forces, employment, government, ideology, language, mass communications, the media, and television; the impact of symbols and importance of context or place receives mention as well. The idea is also extended to include the role of ethnic organizations, historical symbols, language and religion in the maintenance or social reproduction of socio-cultural identities, and pays special attention to such processes in settler societies (For more details, see Rummens, 2001 p. 15-19).

### 2.2.11 Chapter Summary ...

- Every country or every society has a different culture, where people share a specific language, traditions, behavior, perceptions and beliefs. Their culture gives them a special identity which makes them unique and different from people of other cultures (Kantha, 2011).
- Identity is a difficult concept to explain because of its divergence, its divisions and subdivisions. Identity differs between “personal identity”, “Social identity”, “cultural identity”, in addition to “ethnic identity” and “racial identity”... etc.
- The difficulty of defining and identifying identity comes because people describe themselves in different ways. Some people describe themselves in terms of their language, religion, race, gender and others describe themselves in economic terms, such as working class, middle class, or a farmer.
- The representation of the meaning of identity is a central task for psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists. There are plenty of explanations and definitions of identity.
- Simply, identity is a people’s knowledge about who they are, what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others. Identity is a term which refers to the unit to which an individual belongs. It is a set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group.

- Identity is a person's conception and expression of their individuality or group affiliations. It is the distinctive characteristic belonging to any given individual, or shared by all members of a particular social category or group. In other words, identity is about how individuals or groups see and define themselves, and how other individuals or groups see and define them. Identity is formed through the socialization process and the influence of social institutions like the family, the education system and the mass media. The identity of individuals and groups involves both elements of personal choice and the responses and attitudes of others.
- Individuals are not completely free to adopt any identity they like. There are many social and other factors influence the foundation of personal identity.
- Individuals have multiple identities, asserting different identities in different circumstances. Identities may also change over time. For example, as people grow older they may begin to see themselves as different from when they were younger.
- The personal individual identity is comprised of answers to the questions of "who I am" and where I belong. It as a complex set of the variety of all the attributes, beliefs, desires, behavioral, temperamental, emotional and mental that characterize a unique individual. Individual identity is unique for a person. For example, it includes a person's biographical details, experiences, hobbies and preferences.
- Social identity is how one answers the question "who are you". It is the concept of individuals labeling themselves as members of particular social groups such as Nationality, Social class, Subculture, Ethnicity, Gender and Employment.
- There is no doubt that identity is a matter for culture, it is strongly related to the concept of the self in combination with membership of various social and cultural groups.
- Culture and identity could have many different definitions, a range of social, psychological or political meanings. In general and in simple words, Laurie Carlson (1993) said that *"culture is what made you the person that you are today, the cultural background of a person is the reason of who you are and what you stand for. Identity is the certain characteristics that belong to a person which makes him different from everyone else on this planet"*.

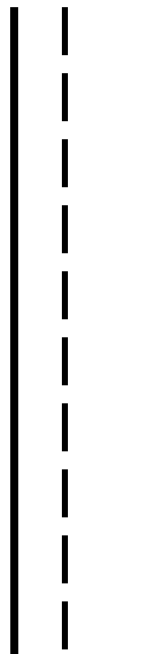
- Culture and identity are strongly correlated, integrated and difficult to separate. They include all knowledge of our own cultural traditions, and the ability to engage with contemporary cultural practices, along with respect for and acceptance of other cultural traditions.
- Cultural identity is a sense of belonging to a particular group or groups. We develop our cultural identity in our relationships with family, friends, community, geography, language and other social factors.
- Cultural identity is very important to development because it tells us who we are. A strong cultural identity contributes to our overall well-being. It gives us a firm base from which to reach out into the world and allows us to explore and appreciate cultures that are different from our own. Our cultural identity is the foundation for social awareness and connection.
- Identity process is a concept which refers to identity development/formation, identity construction and identity negotiation. Identities are not just ascribed or achieved as part of the individual's socialization and developmental process; they are also socially constructed and negotiated by social actors.
- A world with no culture or a lack of identity would be a rather boring place. Culture and identity or identity and culture are what makes this world an interesting place, there is a distinct relationship between them, and one could not exist without the other.
- Culture gives a distinct identity which manifests in our ideas, beliefs and values. A person's culture is the main integral aspect of a person's identity, and without knowing and recognizing own culture it would be hard to figure out a clear identity.
- Our own cultural self-awareness and our clear personal and cultural identity allow us to go beyond ourselves to explore and accept other cultures without conflicts and clashes.



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Chapter 3:

***Globalization: Explanations, reflections and its correlation with culture***





### 2.3.1 Chapter overview ...

Globalization is inevitable ...

Globalization is inexorable and it is accelerating ...

Globalization is fact and reality. It is happening, it is going to happen.

It does not matter whether you like it or not, it is happening, it is going to happen.

Frederick W. Smith, Chairman and CEO of FedEx Corporation (Steger, 2003, p. 99).

This chapter is about globalization, about globalism. It is the second main aspect of this study. Globalization is one of the key buzzwords of our age, references to globalization are increasingly inescapable (Ray, 2007, p. x). Directly or indirectly, globalization appears daily and everywhere, in newspapers, business magazines, radio, television, universities and what remains of the public and specific spheres.

Larry Ray\* in the introduction of his book "*Globalization and everyday life*" explained that since the early 1990s "*globalization*" has entered public and academic debate within a wide range of disciplines. However, the meaning and significance of globalization remains unclear (Ray, 2007, p. i).

This chapter provides an overview of the globalization debates. Actually, it was rather difficult for me - as a designer - to examine in depth sociological, economic and political views and their terms, which explain and clarify the core of *globalization*, not only the difficulty which was faced on writing this chapter, but also the huge amount of data and its background. During writing this chapter it was a strategy - as possible - to avoid using the complicated terms which are associated or related to globalization. Additionally, reference to many global situations, fears and concerns is avoided. Terms like (neoliberalism, capitalism, hegemonism, hybridization, global warming, global terrorism ...) need more opportunity to discuss and to clarify (the use of these terms was in the narrowest possible border). Indeed, discussing these terms is not the main target of this study; it is not the author's field of interest. It is the work of sociologists and economics or political researchers.

The original goal of this chapter, namely to clarify the meaning of globalization and explain its relationship with culture in a wider context, where the two aspects have directly or

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indirectly influence on the **designers' vision and their way of thinking which reflect many values on their creations**. These effects and these influences will be discussed in detail (Fifth chapter).

Briefly, this chapter explains, explores and assesses the meaning of globalization; it starts by referring to the difference between the meaning of international and global, then, clarifies how globalization is a deep historical process which is considered as an introduction to explain the meaning of contemporary globalization by discussing many experts' opinions.

The journey with globalization continues by discussing its theories and its directions, in addition, referring to its various dimensions in isolation (economic, political and ideological), focusing in detail on its consideration as a cultural dimension. The strong forked relationship between globalization and culture (or between culture and globalization) will guide us to think about many related issues. To clarify this correlation, the study examines many debates, speaks about the ideas of "*Homogenization*" and its forms like "*McDonaldization*", in addition to "*Hybridization*" as an opposite concept.

The different views and evaluations about globalization and its application will be discussed through clarifying the advantages (the goodness) and the disadvantages (the badness) of globalization, then, the chapter will end by referring to the *anti-globalization* movements.

### 2.3.2 International and global ...

Before beginning - and as a preface - to discuss and explain the core of globalization and how it works, it is necessary to shed light on the meaning of internationalization. Sometimes, there is a kind of misconception and confusion between the meanings of both internationalization and globalization (international and global).

International is simply "*inter-nations*". It discusses the relation of culture, economics, and politics within the framework of the nation-state, a particular organization of government. What makes the term globalization different (The meaning of globalization will be discussed in detail in the coming paragraphs) is that it discusses much more than relations between states, and in fact the state may not always be an actor in the relations that make up the global (For more details, see Sklair, 1999).



The term international tends to lock us in to looking at the issue on a particular scale, the scale of the nation-state (American, German, Egyptian), but many of the changes that globalization purports to address come at many different scales, from the most local (a Korean grocer on that corner in that town) to the most extra-national (global warming knows no borders).

What makes the idea of globalization unique is not the sets of intricate interconnections between peoples and places, or even the movement of goods around the world. Trade routes stretched the length of the Americas and crossed oceans long before Columbus encountered the West Indies. And global trade today is not much greater than what it was a century ago (Hirst & Thompson, 1996).

Wise (2008, p. 29) explained that what makes globalization new is a sense of the world as a whole; that is, that not only is one aware of other people and places, but there is a sense of simultaneity and interconnection, that events and decisions made in far-off places can have consequences for your everyday life, and that your everyday life can have consequences for many others a world away.

### 2.3.3 Globalization as a deep historical process ...

Globalization has plenty of explanations and lots of descriptions. The beginning of these explanations/descriptions is to identify its timing. With various understandings of globalization come widely different views on the actual timing of globalization. The main questions are:

*Is globalization a new phenomenon?*

*Is it a recent process of the last thirty years?*

*Or is it a long-term historical process?*

Generally, Jan N. Pieterse (2004) answered that globalization is a long-term historical process, it is not the common assessment of globalization among economists, political scientists, or sociologists, but it is among several historians and anthropologists. Taking a long view, dimensions and components of globalization include the following:

- The ancient population movements across and between continents.
- Long-distance cross-cultural trade.

- The world religions-the wanderings that have gone into the making, spread, and varieties of Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
- The diffusion of technologies including neolithic agricultural know-how, military technologies, numeracy, literacy, sciences and philosophies, and the development of new technologies due to intercultural contact (Pieterse, 2004, p. 24-25).

On the one hand, If we asked an ordinary person on the streets of London, New York about the essence of globalization, the answer would probably involve some reference to growing forms of political and economic interdependence fuelled by “new technologies” like personal computers, the Internet, cellular phones, pagers, fax machines, palm pilots, digital cameras, high-definition televisions, satellites, jet planes, space shuttles, and supertankers (may be the answer of the individual who lives in Cairo or Rio de Janeiro is a bit different). Since most of these technologies have been around for less than three decades, it seems to make sense to agree with those commentators who claim that globalization is, indeed, a new phenomenon. In the other hand, we can explain that all these contemporary innovations are based on other historical products (Steger, 2003, p. 17-18).

In fact, “*Globalization is as old as humanity itself*”. Steger\* explained that in details by dividing its development to *five* main stages, its primary forms started by the *prehistoric periods* (10,000 BC - 3,500 BC), and developed through the *pre-modern periods* (3,500 BC - 1,500 AD) (Egyptian Kingdoms, the Persian Empire, the Macedonian Empire, the American Empires of the Aztecs and the Incas, the Roman Empire, the Indian Empires, the Byzantine Empire, the Islamic Caliphates, the Holy Roman Empire, the African Empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai, and the Ottoman Empire).

All of these empires fostered the multiplication and extension of long-distance communication and the exchange of culture, technology, commodities, and diseases. The most enduring and technologically advanced of these vast pre-modern conglomerates was undoubtedly the Chinese Empire. A closer look at its history reveals some of the early dynamics of globalization. In the same meaning, many researchers considered that Ancient Rome practiced a form of globalization emphasizing colonization and mercantilism.

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The third period is the *early modern period* (1500-1750). The term “modernity” has become associated with the 18th-century European Enlightenment period of developing objective science, achieving a universal form of morality and law, and liberating rational modes of thought and social organization from the perceived irrationalities of myth, religion, and political tyranny. The label “early modern” refers to the period between the Enlightenment and the Renaissance. During these two centuries, Europe and its social practices served as the primary catalyst for globalization.

According to Steger’s sequences, the modern period (1750-1970) comes in the fourth position, where the volume of world trade increased dramatically between 1850 and 1914. Guided by the activities of multinational banks, capital and goods flowed across the borders relatively freely as the sterling-based gold standard made possible the worldwide circulation of leading national currencies like the British pound and the Dutch guilder. In addition, the modern period also witnessed an unprecedented population explosion. Other writers have noted the trade that took place along the fabled Silk Road and elsewhere and have argued that globalization in various guises existed in such situations. However, most of the discussion centers around the period 1870-1914, during which international trade and increased contact among developed nations rose dramatically. International trade (exports plus imports) as a percentage of gross national product among developed nations during 1870-1914 compares very favorably to the current situation (Wolf, 2004), (Gannon, 2008, pp. 194-197).

The final period - where we still live - is the *contemporary period* (from 1970), during this period - as all we witness - huge dramatic creation, expansion, and acceleration of worldwide interdependencies and global exchanges that have occurred since the early 1970s represent yet another quantum leap in the history of globalization (For more details, see Steger, 2003, pp. 24-36).

The previous division explains how the core of globalization - as a concept - is old. Certainly, this compressed sequenced classification needs more explanation especially the oldest three periods, but it is not needful to go into historical details which are not useful for this study.

The main result which is important to focus on is that globalization - as a concept - is not a new phenomenon. In every period it has various limitations, different dimensions, and different applications and outcomes. The fact is that all these forms of globalization are

integrated and all its applications from the oldest period to the contemporary period are related together. So, it is important to keep in mind that the dynamic driving of these applications “*processes*” actually started thousands of years ago.

In short, Gannon (2008, p.194-197) explained that our world is somehow flattening, but seemingly in a new and different manner from that of previous eras and on an unprecedented scale. Globalization is both an old and a new phenomenon, and the overlap is significant. But what the world experienced in previous eras pales in comparison to what is occurring today, especially with the ascendancy of the market-economy of China, India, in addition to many other developing nations.

#### **2.3.4 What is globalization?**

##### ***The meaning of contemporary globalization ...***

Contemporary globalization has deep origins in world history and particularly in the creation of a system of international organizations and regulatory bodies after the Second World War - including the United Nations (UN), the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (now the World Trade Organization (WTO)), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

The recent globalization was the outcome of a more specific confluence of factors: what Quah (1996) terms the “*weightless economy*” based more on trading information than goods; the end of the Cold War; the growth of 24-hour global news media, digital technologies and their application via the World Wide Web to all areas of communication and commerce (Ray, 2007, p. 3). According to that meaning, globalization is the name that is often used to designate the power relations, practices and technologies that characterize, and have helped bring into being, the contemporary world (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 1).

Since its earliest appearance in the 1960s, the term “*globalization*” has been used in both popular and academic literature to describe a process, a condition, a system, a force and an age. Given that these competing labels have very different meanings, their indiscriminate usage is often obscure and invites confusion (Steger, 2003, p. 7).

Through literature scanning, we can identify a number of positions that seek to explain and describe globalization. The many definitions in the literature range from the purely

economic (interest rates, exchange rates, mobility of finance) and the rate of human movement (refugees, migrants, mobile professionals) to the effects of power (the collapse of nation-states, technological surveillance, action at a distance) (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p.7). Today, the main fact which everybody generally agrees is that the world is rapidly globalizing, with increasing economic, political, and cultural links within and across nations. At this point it is useful to define globalization fully before discussing its issues.

Globalization as a concept has many descriptions and plenty of definitions; the differences of these definitions came from the differences of the perspective of every researcher or every scholar. Globalization - as will be explained - has many dimensions, so, the variety of studies presents globalization in more than one face.

Generally, globalization refers to the increasing interdependence among national governments, business firms, nonprofit organizations, and individual citizens. Three primary mechanisms which facilitate and process globalization are:

- (1) The free movement of goods, services, talents, capital, knowledge, ideas, and communications across national boundaries.
- (2) The creation of new technologies such as the Internet and highly efficient airplanes that facilitate such free movement.
- (3) The lowering of tariffs and other impediments to this movement (Gannon, 2008, p. 3), (For more details, see Bhagwati, 2004 - Friedman, 2005 - Gupta & Govindarajan, 2004).

Globalization refers to the rapidly developing network of interconnections and inter-dependences that characterize modern social life. The notion of connectivity is found in one form or another in most contemporary accounts of globalization. For Giddens (1990, p. 64) globalization can be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa. This is a dialectical process because such local happenings may move in an obverse direction from the very distanced relations that shape them. Local transformation is as much a part of globalization as the lateral extension of social connections across time and space.

McGrew (1992) gives a typical example, he describes globalization as “*simply the intensification of global interconnectedness*” and stresses the multiplicity of linkages it

implies: nowadays, goods, capital, people, knowledge, images, crime, pollutants, drugs, fashions and beliefs all readily flow across territorial boundaries. Transnational networks, social movements and relationships are extensive in virtually all areas from the academic to the sexual (McGrew, 1992, pp. 65-67).

An important point to draw out here is that the linkages suggested exist in a number of different modalities, varying from the social-institutional relationships that are proliferating between individuals and collectivities worldwide, to the idea of the increasing *flow* of goods, information, people and practices across national borders, to the modalities of connection provided by technological developments such as the international system of rapid air transport and the more literal *wiredness* of electronic communications systems (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 2).

Michael M. Weinstein (2005, p.1) described globalization in the introduction of this book "*Globalization: what's new*" as a slippery term that lends itself to abuse. He said that pundits argue about its consequences in part because they make up its meaning to suit their needs.

Tony Schirato and Jen Webb (2003) suggested that globalization could be understood as a set of technologies, institutions and networks operating within, and at the same time transforming, contemporary social, cultural, political and economic spheres of activity. They also stressed that globalization is as much a set of ideas, and ways of discussing these ideas, so that the changes, and the consequences associated with them, need to be contextualized within what they termed "*the politics of naming*".

In other words, it is the evaluation and interpretation - the naming - of those technologies, institutions and networks as socially, culturally, economically and historically identifiable phenomena that in a sense bring globalization into being, or makes it real to most people (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 21). Indeed, there are plenty of researchers and scholars who define globalization; the main difference comes from that everyone defines it according to his/her field of interest, see (Figure 6) and (Table1). To be more specific, it is essential to mention the study of Manfred B. Steger (2003, p. 10) who collected definitions and opinions of a group of academic professors.

*“Globalization can thus be defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa”.*

Anthony Giddens, Director of the London School of Economics

*“The concept of globalization reflects the sense of an immense enlargement of world communication, as well as of the horizon of a world market, both of which seem far more tangible and immediate than in earlier stages of modernity”.*

Fredric Jameson, Professor of Literature at Duke University

*“Globalization may be thought of as a process (or set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact - generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power”.*

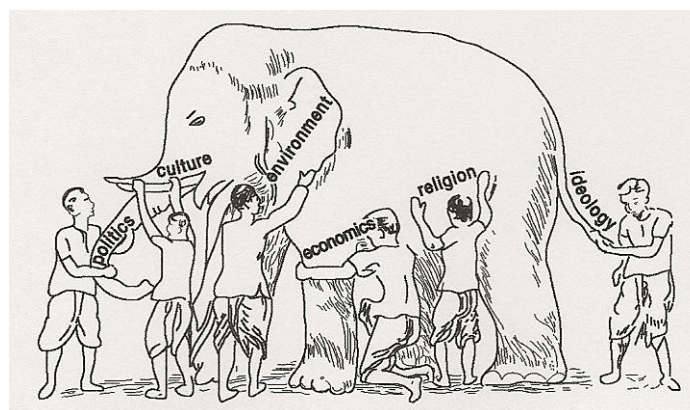
David Held, Professor of Political Science at the London School of Economics

*“Globalization as a concept refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole”.*

Roland Robertson, Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh

*“Globalization compresses the time and space aspects of social relations”.*

James Mittelman, Professor of International Relations at American University



**Figure 6:** Globalization's scholars and the elephant (Steger, 2003, p. 15).

Malcolm Waters (2001, p. 5) defines globalization as: A social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in

which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly.

Steger agreed with Waters that “*globalization*” is a multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges while at the same time fostering in people a growing awareness of deepening connections between the local and the distant (Steger, 2003, p. 13). He added that “*globalization*” is not a single process but a set of processes that operate simultaneously and unevenly on several levels and in various dimensions (Steger, 2003, p. 36). These dimensions need a focus, and that is what will be carefully discussed in the coming points.

Globalization as a term has further entered everyday commentary and analysis which is featuring in many economic, political and cultural debates. It is a rare example of an academic concept emerging in economics and sociology during the late 1980s and gaining currency in the 1990s that has had wide and deep influence in contemporary thinking in many different spheres.

Marshall McLuhan (1992), who coined the term “*global village*”, envisaged a situation in which information travelling at electronic speeds would replace language with instant non-verbal communication, creating an “*all-at-onceness*”, although he dreaded this prospect. A globalized world is one of increasing instantaneity, where communication media enable people in disparate locations to experience events simultaneously.

Finally, it is important to mention the summarization of Larry Ray (2007) who established a sequence of views and related opinions about globalization as following:

- Marshall McLuhan (1992) coined the term of “*global village*”.
- Anthony Giddens (1990) supposed that the core of globalization is the experience of “*distanciation*” as social relations get stretched across time and space and thereby take on an increasingly reflexive quality.
- Harvey (1994) talks of “*compression*” and unification of time and space in social, political and cultural life.
- Castells (1997) writes of the economy’s capacity to work as a unit in real time on a planetary scale.



- Kobrin (1998) emphasizes the increasing scale of economic activity, inter-firm alliances and information flows.
- Gilpin (1987) refers to the interdependence of national economies.

**While these writers regard globalization as a relatively recent development:**

- Robertson (1992) sees earlier historical precedents in the global missions of Christianity, Islam and Marxism in forming a compressed global consciousness.
- Martin Albrow (1997) emphasizes the impact on people's lives of the global diffusion of practices, values and technology.
- Urry (2003) sees in globalization a transformation of the world into a complex and chaotic system in which earlier sociological categories and theories collapse (For more details, see Ray, 2007, pp. 1-3).

Discipline	Definitions	Source
Economics	"Similarity of economic conditions and policies across national boundaries"	Gray (1993: 38)
	"Accelerated movement across national and regional barriers of economic 'goods,' i.e. people, products, capital, especially intangible forms of capital (technology, control of assets)"	Oman (1993: 56)
Sociology	"Globalization . . . refers both to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole."	Robertson (1992: 8)
	"A social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people are increasingly aware that they are receding"	Waters (1995: 3)
History, anthropology	"Globalization is a long-term historical process of growing worldwide interconnectedness."	Nederveen Pieterse (1995: 45)

**Table 1:** *Definitions of Globalization, (Pieterse, 2004, p.17).*

### 2.3.5 Complexity of globalization and its interpretations ...

As an extract of all the previous definitions of globalization it is claimed that it is an objective, empirical process of increasing economic and political connectivity, a subjective process unfolding in consciousness as the collective awareness of growing global interconnectedness, and a host of specific globalizing projects that seek to shape global

conditions (Pieterse, 2004, pp. 15-18). Despite the clarity of this idea, it is not always clear which globalization is being talked about. Does globalization refer to a general, open ended trend or does it refer to specific economic and political projects? Does it have a systemic character? Globalization is diverse in itself and there are wide discrepancies in the basic understandings of globalization.

The most common interpretations of globalization are the idea that the world is becoming more uniform and standardized, through a technological, commercial, and cultural synchronization emanating from the West, and that globalization is tied up with modernity. These perspectives are interrelated, if only in that they are both variations on an underlying theme of globalization as westernization (this view is not completely acceptable from the perspective of many developing or poor countries).

The proposed argument takes issue with both these interpretations as narrow assessments of globalization and instead argues for viewing globalization as a process of hybridization that gives rise to a global *mélange* (Later and in more details, there is a discussion of idea of considering globalization as a process of hybridization). In the same sense, Martin Albrow and E. King (1990, p. 9) refer to globalization as the process which works to incorporate peoples of the world into a single world society, which we can call "*global society*". (For more details, see Pieterse, 2004, p. 59).

For Martin J. Gannon (2008) it is noteworthy that researchers and theorists are now using the word "*complexity*" as a synonym for globalization, with all the attendant connotations of high risk, uncertainty, and unknown outcomes. For example, the Handbook of Global Management is subtitled A Guide for Managing Complexity (Lane, Maznevski, Mendenhall, & McNett, 2004) (Gannon, 2008, p. 8). Globalization, as justified in this chapter, is not an easy phenomenon to understand, but paradoxical research can facilitate our understanding.

The anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1996) gives a very productive image by which we could imagine the "*complexities of globalization*". Appadurai explained that globalization is not a single process, happening everywhere in the same way. Globalization is made up of a series of processes, some of which are working in opposite directions and with opposite ends. These processes are all about movement: that of people; of media images and products; of technologies and industries; of money and finance; and of political ideologies. Others have added to the list: the movement of religious ideas, of academic theories, and so on.

Appadurai imagines these processes as landscapes, so we can imagine a landscape of people, some moving and some standing still, some moving voluntarily, some out of necessity, some at gunpoint, and we see some embedded in a particular landscape for generations. Or we could picture a landscape of media images and products (see, Wise, 2008, p. 3).

Indeed, the interpretations which explain the complexity of globalization are many and different, but all of these interpretations are agreed that globalization - however we define it - is not a single process but it is a multiple process in which the elements interact and integrate together. In this context, it is fundamental to highlight a few of the important theories which discuss and explain the core of globalization.

### 2.3.6 Globalization's theories ...

There is now an extensive literature on globalization from a wide range of perspectives sociological, economic, cultural, political and technological. All these perspectives are attempts to present and to build theories about the core of globalization. Larry Ray (2007, pp. 7-13) states that there is a wide range of theories of globalization. In the light of Ray statement, the coming lines provide a compressed perspective to some of these theories.

The first theory is about a "*borderless world*", Kenichi Ohmae (1994) used this concept to epitomize the belief that globalization brings improvement in human conditions. For Ohmae (2000), an invisible continent is a moving, unbounded world in which the primary linkages are now less between nations than between regions that are able to operate effectively in a global economy without being closely networked with host regions. Increasingly, transnational corporations do not treat countries as single entities and region states make effective points of entry into the global economy. This fluidity of capital is creating a borderless world in which capital moves around, chasing the best products and the highest investment returns regardless of national origin. The cyber-world has changed not only the way businesses work but also the way we interact on a personal level.

This "*invisible continent*" can be dated to 1985, when Microsoft released Windows 1.0, CNN was launched, Cisco Systems began, the first Gateway 2000 computers were shipped, and companies such as Sun Microsystems and Dell were in their infancies. Decisions were made

on the invisible continent (the “platforms” that are created by businesses rather than governments) about how money moves around the globe.

Similarly, Friedman (2000) claimed that the “*communications revolution*” ushered in a new world that began in 1989 with the end of the Cold War period. With this came a package of shifts: from political spheres of influence to the integration of markets so that the “deal” rather than the “treaty” has become the defining agreement of international cooperation; from state regulation to de-regulation; from industrialization to digitalization; from the threat of nuclear annihilation to global terrorism as the major global threat.

Earlier nineteenth-century “*globalization*” was built around falling transportation costs - especially the railroad and steamship - as a result of which the volume of trade and population movement increased rapidly. Now globalization is built around falling telecommunications costs - of microchips, satellites, fiber-optics and the Internet - which allow companies to locate different parts of production, research and marketing in different countries but tie them together as though they were in one place (Friedman, 2000, pp.6-12).

Unlike the previous two views, Anthony Giddens established his theory in a different way. He explained that globalization is centrally understood through the concept of “*time-space distanciation*”. This is a process in which locations are shaped by events far away, and vice versa, while social relations are disembodied or “lifted out” from locations. Modernization replaces local exchange with universal exchange of money, which simplifies otherwise impossibly complex transitions and enables the circulation of highly complex forms of information and value in increasingly abstract and symbolic forms.

The exchange of money establishes social relations across time and space, which is speeded up under globalization. Specialists claim “*universal*” and scientific forms of knowledge that enable the establishing of social relations across vast expanses of time and space. Giddens (1990) describes the global order as the result of an intersection of four processes – capitalism (its economic logic), the interstate system (the world order), militarism (world security and threats) and industrialism (the division of labor and lifestyles). However, Giddens does not say what the different weight of these factors is and whether they change historically.

Indeed, Giddens (1999, p. 19) is less unambiguously enthusiastic than Friedman about globalization since it is a *“runaway world”* that *“is not – at least at the moment – a global order driven by collective human will. Instead, it is emerging in an anarchic, haphazard, fashion, carried along by a mixture of economic, technological and cultural imperatives”*.

David Harvey understands globalization as processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time. He explained the essence of globalization as a *“time-space compression”* process. Harvey said *“the time taken to traverse space and the way we commonly represent that fact to ourselves are useful indicators of the kind of phenomena I have in mind. As space appears to shrink to a “global village” of telecommunications and a “spaceship earth” of economic and ecological interdependencies - to use just two familiar and everyday images - and as time horizons shorten to the point where the present is all there is . . . so we have to learn how to cope with an overwhelming sense of compression of our spatial and temporal worlds”* (Harvey, 1994).

Time-space compression that *“annihilates”* space and creates *“timeless time”* is driven by flexible accumulation and new technologies, the production of signs and images (fake it till you make it), just-in-time delivery, reduced turnover times and speeding up, and both de- and re-skilling. In a different perspective, Urry (2000) argues that the changes associated with globalization are so far-reaching that we should now talk of a *“sociology beyond societies”*. This position is informed by the alleged decline of the nation state in a globalized world, which has led to wider questioning of the idea of *“society”* as a territorially bounded entity (in this context and for more details, it is important to return to the work of Niklas Luhmann<sup>\*</sup>). This in turn prepares the ground for claims to the effect that since *“society”* is the core sociological concept, the very foundations of the discipline have likewise been undermined. The core concepts of the new sociologies are space (social topologies), regions (interregional competition), networks (new social morphology), and fluids (global enterprises). Urry added that mobility is central to this thesis since globalization is the complex movement of people, images, goods, finances etc. that constitutes a process across regions in faster and unpredictable shapes, all with no clear point of arrival or departure.

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<sup>\*</sup> **Niklas Luhmann** (1927-1998) was a German sociologist, and a prominent thinker in sociological systems theory. Luhmann wrote many books about the system social theory, such as; *Soziale Systeme* (1984), *Die Wissenschaft der Gesellschaft* (1992), *Die Kunst der Gesellschaft* (1996), *Die Gesellschaft der Gesellschaft* (1997), *Die Weltgesellschaft* (1971) ... and many other important books and articles.

Robertson (1992) was one of the first sociologists to theorize globalization, and central to his approach is the concept of “*global consciousness*” that refers to the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole (Robertson, 1992, pp. 8-27). Through thought and action global consciousness makes the world a single place. What it means to live in this place and how it must be ordered become universal questions. These questions receive different answers from individuals and societies that define their position in relation to both a system of societies and the shared properties of humankind from very different perspectives.

Unlike theorists who identify globalization with late (capitalist) modernity Robertson sees global interdependence and consciousness preceding the advent of capitalist modernity (For more details about Robertson’s view, see Lechner, 2000).

Held & McGrew (2000) discussed the meaning of “*Transformation*”. They argue that globalization creates profound change as states and societies try to adapt to a more interconnected but uncertain world. Organizational interests (of international non-governmental organizations - INGOs - and transnational corporations) along with trading blocs develop into a new system of political globalization. Many others adopt a similar mode of argument (For more details about all the previous theories, see Ray, 2007, pp. 7-13).

After this compressed journey about the definitions and the theories of globalization, it is argued that globalization accepts all the previous - and more - explanations. Speaking about globalization as a borderless process does not conflict with its meaning as a communication revolution or with its explanation as a time-space compression theory or with its definition as a transformation process, absolutely, it is more understandable to think that all these theories - and others - can integrate together to sketch out a whole image of globalization. This image consists of and is formed from various directions and specific dimensions as they will explain.

### 2.3.7 Globalization’s directions and dimensions ...

As mentioned before, globalization became the focus of many key theoretical and conceptual debates in the later twentieth century that brought together a wide range of disciplines in addition to sociology (Ray, 2007, p. 4). There are many visions and different

views which explain the nature and essence of globalization. Despite the multiplicity of these views, they all agree and believe that globalization is not one thing, it is a multiple process. John Tomlinson (1999, p. 13) supported this opinion by saying “*Globalization is now widely regarded as a (multidimensional) phenomenon ...*”. Most analysts accept the importance of the technological, economic, cultural and political changes associated with the term “*globalization*” (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 9). Malcolm Waters\* (2001) - as a sociologist - agreed with this opinion, he suggested that globalization should be traced through three regions of *social* life that have come to be recognized as fundamental in many theoretical analyses.

Globalization can be *economic* – evidenced, for example, in the global dominance of transnational corporations, global finance, flexible production and assembly and the rise of information and service economies (Foresight, 2002, p. 23). Globalization can be *political* – understood in terms of international organizations, the growth of regional autonomy, the spread of the post-welfare state and the development of global social movements.

Globalization can be *cultural*, indicated through the growth of global consumption cultures, media and information flows, migration and identities. Throughout the latter half of the twentieth century we have seen the emergence of global brands that carry both cultural and economic significance. One of the most successful exercises in global branding was the 1971 Coca-Cola global promotion “*I’d like to teach the world to sing*” that generated a global image for the product and put the company in a highly competitive position with 300 brands in 200 countries; in 2003 it was still a leading global brand (Ray, 2007, pp. 5-7).

Briefly, Malcolm Waters proposed that the whole directions or dimensions of globalization and its issues can be determined in three main different types of exchange:

- *Material* exchanges including trade, tenancy, wage-labor, fee-for-service and capital accumulation.
- *Power* exchanges by such means as party membership, election, the exercise of command and leadership, coercion and social control, the enactment of legislation, the redistribution of surplus, and engagement in international relations.

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\* **Malcolm Waters** is an Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Tasmania, Hobart. He specializes in theories of long-term societal transformation including postmodernization, globalization and restratification.

- *Symbolic* exchanges (exchanges of signs) by means of oral communication, publication, performance, teaching, oratory, ritual, display, entertainment, provision of information or advice, propaganda, advertisement, public demonstration, research, data accumulation and transfer, the exchange and transfer of tokens, exhibition and spectacle.

Each of these types of exchanges relates directly with one of the globalization's dimensions and all the three dimensions relate together (Waters, 2001, pp. 18-20).

- Material ----- Economy
- Power ----- Politics
- Symbolic ----- Culture

(In addition to the previous opinion of Waters about globalization exchanges and dimensions, it is logical to think about natural exchanges which led to an ecological dimension and also to consider the mental exchanges which led to an ideological dimension).

In the same sense, Manfred B. Steger (2003) explained that the transformative powers of globalization reach deeply into the economic, political, cultural, technological, and ideological dimensions of contemporary social life.

Steger classified the main dimensions of globalization as economic, political, cultural and ideological. In short, every dimension will be discussed individually, but with a change of Steger's arrangement. The beginning will be by the economic dimension, then the political one, and moving rapidly to the ideological dimension. These sequences will end by discussing the cultural dimension. It is the main point here which is related to the following points. So, it will be discussed and clarified in detail.

### **2.3.7.1 The economic dimension of globalization ...**

According to many of the previous explanations of the meaning of globalization, there are many dimensions which formulate it. These dimensions are communicated and integrated together to sketch out the whole image of the global world. First of these dimensions is the economy. Malcolm Waters defined this economic dimension as social arrangements for the



production, exchange, distribution and consumption of land, capital, goods and labor services (Waters, 2001, p. 17).

New forms of technology are one of the hallmarks of contemporary globalization. Technological progress of the magnitude seen in the last three decades is a good indicator for the occurrence of profound social transformations. Changes in the way in which people undertake economic production and organize the exchange of commodities represent one obvious aspect of the great transformation of our age. Economic globalization refers to the intensification and stretching of economic interrelations across the globe. Markets have extended their reach around the world, in the process creating new linkages among national economies. Huge transnational corporations, powerful international economic institutions, and large regional trading systems have emerged as the major building blocks of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's global economic order (Steger, 2003, p. 37).

For Das (2009, p. 30) the positive side of the economic dimension of globalization is that it offers an opportunity for firms to exploit larger markets spread all over the globe. It strengthens the process of international division of labor. National economies grow and integrate with the global economy. Integrated markets expand economic freedom and spur competition among firms, leading first to higher microeconomic productivity and second to macroeconomic productivity. Another consequence of market expansion is that it provides firms with greater access to capital, technology and cheaper imported resources, which in turn has a favorable impact on productivity.

Briefly, The internationalization of trade and finance, the transnational corporations and the vast economic progress which has happened and is still happening during our global era are obvious facts which no one can deny, but on the other hand, there is an ugly aspect which Steger and Das referred to, Steger said that most studies show that the gap between rich and poor countries is widening at a fast pace (Steger, 2003, p. 42). In the same sense, Das explained that many economic policy makers discovered that globalization did not benefit everybody. While it benefited some, it passed others by. The neoliberal policies adopted during the process of globalization had serious downsides: economically and socially injurious effects that were not anticipated (Das, 2009, p. 33). This situation is very important to discuss and evaluate, this ugly aspect is one of the main downside-effects of the applications of globalization. This fact has a strong relationship with other dimensions of

globalization. For Vesajoki (2002, p. 5) globalization cannot only continue to be exclusively defined as an economic development, but its social, cultural and political effects “dimensions” must also be addressed.

### 2.3.7.2 The political dimension of globalization ...

The political dimension is defined as social arrangements for the concentration and application of power that can establish control over populations, territories and other assets, especially in so far as it is manifested as the organized exchange of coercion and surveillance (military, police, bureaucracy etc.); such institutionalized transformations of these practices as authority, regulation, administration and diplomacy; and such resources as electoral support, political donations, capacities for redistribution, citizenship rights, taxation support, lobbying, and obedience (Waters, 2001, p. 17).

Political globalization refers to the intensification and expansion of political interrelations across the globe. These processes raise an important set of political issues pertaining to the principle of state sovereignty, the growing impact of intergovernmental organizations, and the future prospects for regional and global governance. For the last few centuries, humans have organized their political differences along territorial lines that generate a sense of “*belonging*” to a particular nation-state. On the other hand, contemporary manifestations of globalization have led to the partial permeation of these old territorial borders, in the process also softening hard conceptual boundaries and cultural lines of demarcation (Steger, 2003, p. 56-66).

In this context, Steger discussed three main questions: First, is it really true that the power of the nation-state has been curtailed by massive flows of capital, people, and technology across territorial boundaries? Second, are the primary causes of these flows to be found in politics or in economics? Third, are we witnessing the emergence of global governance? (For more details, see Steger, 2003, pp. 56-68).

Today, in our global era there are many issues related to the political dimension of globalization, various situations and lots of explanations, but it is clear that is a sub-point, so, it is more vital to explain to the next dimension.

### 2.3.7.3 The ideological dimension of globalization ...

Before clarifying the ideological dimension of globalization it is important to explain the meaning of ideology in general. According to Steger (2003) an ideology can be defined as a system of widely shared ideas, patterned beliefs, guiding norms and values, and ideals accepted as truth by a particular group of people. Ideologies offer individuals a more or less coherent picture of the world not only as it is, but also as it ought to be. In doing so, they help organize the tremendous complexity of human experience into fairly simple, but frequently distorted, images that serve as guide and compass for social and political action.

These simplified and distorted ideas are often employed to legitimize certain political interests or to defend dominant power structures. Seeking to imbue society with their preferred norms and values, ideologists present the public with a circumscribed agenda of things to discuss, claims to make, and questions to ask. They speak to their audience in stories and narratives that persuade, praise, condemn, distinguish “*truths*” from “*falsehoods*”, and separate the “*good*” from the “*bad*”. Thus, ideology connects theory and practice by orienting and organizing human action in accordance with generalized claims and codes of conduct.

Like all social processes, globalization contains an ideological dimension filled with a range of norms, claims, beliefs, and narratives about the phenomenon itself. For example, the heated public debate over whether globalization represents a “*good*” or a “*bad*” thing occurs in the arena of ideology. Hence, before exploring the ideological dimension of globalization, we should make an important analytical distinction between globalization - social processes of intensifying global interdependence that have been described by various commentators in different, often contradictory ways - and globalism - an ideology that endows the concept of globalization with neoliberal values and meanings (Steger, 2003, p. 93-94).

### 2.3.7.4 The cultural dimension of globalization ...

Clarifying and discussing the relationship between culture and globalization is one of the main goals of this chapter. During discussions among people or academic meetings it is common to ask about this relationship. Normally, it is easy to answer the basic question “*is*

*there a relationship between culture and globalization?”* the logical answer will be “yes, sure, there is a distinct relationship between the two concepts” the difficulty will be about the clarification and explanation of this relationship.

Many studies investigated this relationship, and presented plenty of explanations, but peoples and researchers still think about the core and the essence of it, not only because some answers are not convincing for a few of them, but also because the relationship looks complex and ramified, which accepts more and more interpretations.

As a beginning, it is important to refer to the opinion of John Tomlinson (1999); he explained that both globalization and culture are concepts of the highest order of generality and notoriously contested in their meanings. Tomlinson addressed the reciprocal relationship between globalization and culture by saying that:

*“Globalization lies at the heart of modern culture; cultural practices lie at the heart of globalization”*

Tomlinson explained that his opinion is not a reckless claim and it is not to say that globalization is the single determinant of modern cultural experience, nor that culture alone is the conceptual key that unlocks globalization’s inner dynamic (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 1).

Malcolm Waters defined the cultural dimension as a social arrangements for the production, exchange and expression of symbols (signs) that represent facts, affects, meanings, beliefs, commitments, preferences, tastes and values (Waters, 2001, p. 17). This view agrees with the general meaning of culture which is offered and discussed in the first chapter of this thesis.

In more details, Manfred B. Steger (2003) addressed that cultural globalization refers to the intensification and expansion of cultural flows across the globe. Obviously, “*culture*” is a very broad concept; it is frequently used to describe the whole of human experience. In order to avoid the ensuing problem of over-generalization, it is important to make analytical distinctions between aspects of social life. So, if we are talking about the “*cultural*”, we are concerned with the symbolic construction, articulation, and dissemination of meaning. Given that language, music, and images constitute the major forms of symbolic expression, they assume special significance in the sphere of culture. The exploding network of cultural interconnections and interdependencies in the last decades has led some commentators to suggest that cultural practices lie at the very heart of contemporary globalization.

Yet, cultural globalization did not start with the worldwide dissemination of rock & roll, Coca-Cola, or football. Expansive civilizational exchanges are much older than modernity. Still, the volume and extent of cultural transmissions in the contemporary period have far exceeded those of earlier eras. Facilitated by the Internet and other new technologies, the dominant symbolic systems of meaning of our age - such as individualism, consumerism, and various religious creeds - circulate more freely and widely than ever before. As images and ideas can be more easily and rapidly transmitted from one place to another, they profoundly impact the way people experience their everyday lives. Today, cultural practices frequently escape fixed localities such as town and nation, eventually acquiring new meanings in interaction with dominant global themes (Steger, 2003, p. 69-70).

The idea of Steger is logically accepted, but the main question here still needs more discussion. Steger presented the relationship between culture and globalization as a *“cultural globalization”*, it means that he considered *“culture”* as one of the dimensions of globalization, culture here is like economics or politics. This meaning is an acceptable explanation because culture here works not like a single aspect, it communicates and integrates with other aspects or *“dimensions”* to present the whole image of our contemporary globalization.

In this context, there is another interesting point to investigate, there are many researchers who present the relationship between culture and globalization in a contrast form, they present it as a *“global culture”* (see the opinion of Baecker, 2001). This expression is completely different from the previous one. Speaking about the *“global culture”* means that we have a new sort or a new version of *“culture”*, this meaning has to force us to think about the old versions or the *“local culture”* and how can these classical cultural forms survive beside the global one. Anyway, it is rather early to discuss and decide being for or against the idea of the *“global culture”*, especially as it depends on its influences - as will be explained - but it is important here to discuss the idea of this *“global culture”* in more detail.

### 2.3.8 Global culture ...

Exploring the meaning of *“global culture”* is a complex task. Many studies try to describe its essence, although, the ideas are still confused and accept many interpretations. Global

culture refers to the way globalization has undermined national and local cultures, with cultural products and ways of life in different countries of the world becoming more alike. The same cultural and consumer products are now sold across the world (e.g. McDonald's, Coca Cola, Nescafé, Vodaphone, Sony ...etc.), inspired by media advertising and a shared mass culture spread through a media-generated culture industry, and they have become part of the ways of life of many different societies.

To clarify the meaning of "*global culture*", it is basic to discuss and think about a number of questions. Ulf Hannerz asked a primary question:

*Does global modernity promise to deliver a "global culture"?*

Ulf Hannerz (1990) said that there is now a world culture, but we had better make sure we understand what this means ... No total homogenization of systems of meaning and expression has occurred, nor does it appear likely that there will be one for some time soon. But the world has become one network of social relationships, and between its different regions there is a flow of meanings as well as a flow of people and goods (Hannerz, 1990, p. 237).

John Tomlinson (1999) discussed what Hannerz means, he explained that there is now a globalization of culture in our preferred sense of complex connectivity. This context of the integration - the networking - of cultural practices and experiences across the world can be understood very broadly as a "*world culture*". Hannerz rightly implies that this sense has to be distinguished from the stronger, and more commonly held, understanding of a global culture as a single "homogenized" system of meaning. A global culture in this stronger sense means the emergence of one single culture embracing everyone on earth and replacing the diversity of cultural systems that have flourished up to now (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 71).

The second question which is important to discuss is deeper than the previous one. Steger (2003) asked:

*Does globalization make people around the world more **alike** or more **different**?*

This question is most frequently raised in discussions on the subject of the relationship between culture and globalization. Steger (2003) discussed the opinions of a group of commentators, he called them "*pessimistic hyper-globalizers*". They argue in favor of the former.

They suggest that we are not moving towards a cultural rainbow that reflects the diversity of the world's existing cultures. Rather, we are witnessing the rise of an increasingly homogenized popular culture underwritten by a Western "culture industry" based in New York, Hollywood, London, and Milan ... As evidence for their interpretation, these commentators point to Amazonian Indians wearing Nike training shoes, denizens of the Southern Sahara purchasing Texaco baseball caps, and Palestinian youths proudly displaying their Chicago Bulls sweatshirts in downtown Ramallah.

The defenders of this point of view explained that the spread of American popular culture seems to be unstoppable, they referred to the diffusion of Anglo-American values and consumer goods as the "Americanization of the world", the proponents of this cultural homogenization thesis argue that Western norms and lifestyles are overwhelming more vulnerable cultures. However, there have been serious attempts by some countries to resist these forces of "cultural imperialism". Optimistic hyper-globalizers agree with their pessimistic colleagues that cultural globalization generates more sameness, but they consider this outcome to be a good thing. For example, the American social theorist Francis Fukuyama explicitly welcomes the global spread of Anglo-American values and lifestyles, equating the Americanization of the world with the expansion of democracy and free markets (For more details, see Steger, 2003, pp. 70-75).

It is one thing to acknowledge the existence of powerful homogenizing tendencies in the world, but it is quite another to assert that the cultural diversity existing on our planet is destined to vanish. Steger (2003) explained his view, that the respective arguments of hyper-globalizers and skeptics are not necessarily incompatible. The contemporary experience of living and acting across cultural borders means both the loss of traditional meanings and the creation of new symbolic expressions. Reconstructed feelings of belonging coexist in uneasy tension with a sense of placelessness.

Given the complexity of global cultural flows, one would actually expect to see uneven and contradictory effects. In certain contexts, these flows might change traditional manifestations of national identity in the direction of a popular culture characterized by sameness; in others they might foster new expressions of cultural particularism; in still others they might encourage forms of cultural *hybridity*. Those commentators who summarily denounce the homogenizing effects of Americanization must not forget that

hardly any society in the world today possesses an “authentic”, self-contained culture.

Finally, those who applaud the spread of consumerist capitalism need to pay attention to its negative consequences, such as the dramatic decline of communal sentiments as well as the commodification of society and nature (Steger, 2003, p. 75-76).

Finally, the idea of “*global culture*” can be summarized by mentioning Smith’s (1990) opinion; he said “*Unlike national cultures, a global culture is essentially memoryless. When the “nation” can be constructed so as to draw upon and revive latent popular experiences and needs, a “global culture” answers to no living needs, no identity-in-the-making ... There are no “world memories” that can be used to unite humanity; the most global experiences to date-colonialism and the World Wars-can only serve to remind us of our historic cleavages*” (Pieterse, 2004, p. 68).

### 2.3.9 How globalization is changing the world’s culture ...

After discussing the whole previous directions of globalization, and focusing more on its cultural dimension, it is acceptable to claim that globalization and its issues are changing our lives and changing our whole world. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries the pace of change associated with globalization has posed new challenges for the understanding of everyday life. Many sociologists also feel that the old ways of doing things are no longer valid in the face of profound changes in spatial, organizational, personal, economic and political relationships.

During the latter part of the twentieth century the world became increasingly interconnected by fast modes of communication facilitating global flows of money, ideas, goods, people and cultural styles. Globalization has challenged much established thinking in sociology about the nature of space, locality and social processes, yet there is still little agreement about its meaning and impact.

Larry Ray (2007) mentioned that globalization is clearly a highly controversial process; he explained that, in the 1990s, especially following the fall of the Berlin Wall, the enthusiasm for globalization spread. But this was seriously challenged by the shock of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 and new uncertainties about terrorism and economic insecurity. Fast communications, the compression of time and space and the global reach of multinational corporations does



not necessarily create a homogenous world, and certainly not a harmonious one, but rather increasing diversity and conflict (Ray, 2007, p. xiiv-xiv).

In the foregoing, the consideration of culture as a dimension of globalization was discussed, but thinking about globalization in its cultural dimension also discloses its essentially dialectical character in a particularly vivid way. The fact that individual actions are intimately connected with large structural-institutional features of the social world via reflexivity means globalization is not a “one-way” process of the determination of events by massive global structures, but involves at least the possibility for local intervention in global processes. There exists a cultural politics of the global which we can grasp by continuing the example of the ecological consequences of local actions (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 26).

Indeed, globalization describes the acceleration and compression of spatial and temporal social relations and communications facilitated by new communication and transport technologies (Ray, 2007, p. 5), but the important question is about how this globalization changes our feeling of culture. It is agreed with Ray (2007) when he asked “..... *Does globalization create a global culture of visual homogeneity in which everywhere looks superficially the “same” or, on the contrary, does it bring increased differentiation between globalization winners and losers along with eclectic hybrids of local and global cultures?*” (Ray, 2007, p. 4). The coming few lines - in addition to the fifth chapter of this study - will discuss how to answer this important question in the light of the *homogenization* or *hybridization* of globalization.

### 2.3.10 McDonaldization ...

The McDonaldization thesis is a version of the recent idea of the world-wide homogenization of societies through the impact of multinational corporations. McDonaldization, according to the sociologist George Ritzer<sup>\*</sup>, is “*the wide-ranging socio-cultural processes which whereby the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as **the rest of the world***” (Ritzer, 1993, p. 19).

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<sup>\*</sup> **George Ritzer** (born in 1940, New York) is an American sociologist who studies American patterns of consumption, globalization, meta-theory, and modern and postmodern social theory. Currently, Ritzer is a University Professor at the University of Maryland, College Park.

The expression “*the rest of the world*” bears contemplating. Is this principle of the fast-food restaurant actually suitable for the rest of the world? Is it only a principal of fast-food restaurants or it is a method of communication and dealing with this rest of the world?

Pieterse (2004) explained that McDonald’s formula is successful because it is efficient (rapid service), calculable (fast and inexpensive), predictable (no surprises), and controls labor and customers (Pieterse, 2004, p. 49). On the surface, these principles appear to be rational in their attempts to offer efficient and predictable ways of serving people’s needs.

For one, the generally low nutritional value of fast-food meals - and particularly their high fat content - has been implicated in the rise of serious health problems such as heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and juvenile obesity. Moreover, the impersonal, routine operations of “*rational*” fast-service establishments actually undermine expressions of forms of cultural diversity. In the long run, the McDonaldization of the world amounts to the imposition of uniform standards that eclipse human creativity and dehumanize social relations (Steger, 2003, p. 71).

Benjamin Barber\* in his popular book on the subject, warns his readers against the American way of life and the cultural imperialism of what he calls “*McWorld*” - a soulless consumer capitalism that is rapidly transforming the world's diverse populations into a blandly uniform market. McWorld is a product of a superficial American popular culture assembled in the 1950s and 1960s, driven by expansionist commercial interests. Music, video, theatre, books, and theme parks are all constructed as American image exports that create common tastes around common logos, advertising slogans, stars, songs, brand names, jingles, and trademarks.

McDonaldization is a variation on a theme: on the classical theme of universalism and its modern forms of modernization and the global spread of capitalist relations. Diffusionism, if cultural diffusion is taken as emanating from a single center, has been a general form of this line of thinking. From the 1950s, this has been held to take the form of Americanization. Since the 1960s, multinational corporations have been viewed as harbingers of American modernization. In Latin America in the 1970s, this effect was known as “*Coca-colonization*”.

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\* **Benjamin R. Barber** (born August 2, 1939) is an American political theorist and author perhaps best known for his 1996 bestseller, *Jihad vs. McWorld*.

These are variations on the theme of cultural imperialism, in the form of consumerist universalism or global media influence. This line of thinking has been prominent in media studies according to which the influence of American media makes for global cultural synchronization.

Modernization and Americanization are the latest versions of Westernization. If colonialism delivered Europeanization, neocolonialism under U.S. hegemony delivers Americanization (Pieterse, 2004, p. 49-50). In contrast, Pieterse (2004) explained that rather than cultural homogenization McDonald's and others in the family of western fast food restaurants (Burger King, KFC, Pizza Hut, Wendy's) usher in difference and variety, giving rise to and reflecting new, mixed social forms. Where they are imported, they serve different social, cultural, and economic functions than in their place of origin, and their formula is accordingly adapted to local conditions. In western metropolis, we now see oriental fast food restaurants and chains along with Latino, Middle Eastern, Turkish, and French eateries. Fast food may well have originated outside the West, in the street side food stalls of the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. American fast-food restaurants serve German food (hamburgers, frankfurters) with French (fries, dressing) and Italian elements (pizza) in an American management style.

Pieterse (2004, p. 51-52), continued this opinion by considering McDonaldization as a form of intercultural hybridization, partly in its origins and certainly in its present globally localizing variety of forms. Actually, it is not completely acceptable to agree with Pieterse's stand point, maybe the family of western fast food restaurants presents a variety of forms of food, but they present it in the perspective of McDonaldization. The idea is not the sort of food, in my opinion the problem is deeper than that; it is not only this simple issue which is related to restaurants and its fast-foods, absolutely not, it is related to the whole vision of global world relationships.

Indeed, McDonaldization has sparked growing resistance and wide debate (Alfino 1998, Smart 1999). In its home country, McDonald's is past its peak, its shares declining and franchises dozing. Obesity as a national disease and changing diets, saturation of the fast food market, resistance, and litigation contribute to the decline. In addition, the global commodification of labor, services, and information takes myriad forms, most of these forms work in the line of McDonaldization. Many of these forms used in our daily lives, daily we

speak or hear about: McJobs, McInformation, McCitizens, McUniversity, McTourism, McCulture, McPrisons, McCourts (Gottdiener 2000, Ritzer 2002). All these “Mc-... Forms” work to increase the loss of “*authentic*” local culture in these places. “*In short, the perceived loss of diversity would appear to be attributable to a certain rescaling of territories: from a world of more internally homogeneous localities, where diversity was found by traveling between places with significantly different material cultures to a world where one travels between more similar places but finds increasing variety within them*” (Storper, 2001) (Pieterse, 2004, p. 51-52).

Finally, it turns out that the clashing trends between growing awareness of cultural difference and globalization, is not simply contradictory but interdependent. It will be better to consider this growing awareness of cultural difference as a function of globalization. Increasing cross-cultural communication, mobility, migration, trade, investment, tourism, all generate awareness of cultural difference. The other side of the politics of difference is that the very striving for recognition implies a claim to equality; equal rights, same treatment: in other words, a common universe of difference. Accordingly, the clash between cultural diversity and globalization may well be considered a creative clash.

### 2.3.11 The goodness and the badness of globalization ...

As a result of all the previous discussions about the meaning and the explanations of globalization it can simply be stated that globalization is the sum of many variables which lead to *goods moving, people transporting, ideas sharing, and cultures changing*. These actual results need to be evaluated to answer the major question about globalization.

*Is globalization “good” or “bad”?*

The answer to this question is not easy, it will not be conclusive, and it is not fair to say generally that globalization is “*good*” or globalization is “*bad*”. The judgment of goodness or badness is a relative meaning and it depends on many aspects and plenty of variables.

Guillermo De la Dehesa (2007) supported this opinion by saying that globalization like any change process, although positive overall, entails certain unavoidable, but mainly temporary, negative economic, social, political, and cultural consequences (De la Dehesa, 2007, p. 2). So,

this section will present and discuss two different points of view; one is optimistic and the other is pessimistic.

Globalization causes a simultaneous trend of collapse and construction. On the one hand, traditional ways of organizations collapse, while on the other hand new modes of organization and cooperation are being established (Vesajoki, 2002, p. 68). One believes that globalization is “good” by showing that no one is in charge of it and how it benefits everyone, on the other hand, others argue that globalization is “bad” by showing its ugly face and speaking about its inequality. In between, and before discussing the contrast opinions, it is essential to mention a reasonable point of view. Robert Mundell\* (2000) presented this consensual opinion by saying that “*Globalization is neither good nor bad in itself; in the long-run it is a step towards efficiency; in the short-run, however, it involves all kinds of painful social and cultural adjustments. Every country has to meet the challenge of globalization in its own individual way*” (Das, 2009, p. 41).

In the same side was the opinion of Funlayo Vesajoki (2002, p. 39), he argues that globalization is useful, but certainly for westerners, simply because of its rising of the living standards. Vesajoki gives a good example of this is international trade, supranational companies, which operate in several countries, are expressly a product of globalization. If “Nike” produces tennis in Bangladesh by child labor it benefits us, because we (as westerners) can buy cheap shoes.

The fact here is that the child who works long days in that factory on the other side of the world does not benefit from globalization. It works, but the poor child does not gain anything from it. It benefits us (westerners), and the owner of the company or the stockholders. For some critical thinkers, most westerners see globalization as a kind of “countries-come-closer-to-each-other” phenomenon or “the-poor-come-closer-to-the-rich” thing, while in reality the rich grow away from the poor.

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\* **Robert Mundell**, Canadian economist, (born October 24, 1932) is a professor of economics at Columbia University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Mundell received the *Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics* in 1999 for his pioneering work in monetary dynamics and optimum currency areas. Mundell is known as the “father” of the euro, as he laid the groundwork for its introduction through this work and helped to start the movement known as supply-side economics.

### 2.3.11.1 The good face of globalization ...

#### *“Globalization benefits”*

Many Intellectuals and researchers emphasize the benefits of globalization: usually they speak about the expansion of modern technologies, the connections and communication between cultures, the increase in choice for consumers, the spread of democracy and human rights, and the chance for a better quality of life for many of the world’s peoples (Wise, 2008, p. 30). Actually, nobody denies that, but the image of globalization and its applications is not simple like that, as it will be explained later.

In this context, there are many economists and politicians who present globalization as the greatest and the best solution for most of human problems. Most of these opinions approve this goodness by referring to the generalization of globalization, meaning that no one is controlling this process and nobody is in charge of globalization, *markets and technology are*. Certain human actions might accelerate or retard globalization, but in the final analysis, the invisible hand of the market will always assert its superior wisdom (Steger, 2003, p.101-103).

Paul Krugman (US economist) explains this meaning by saying *“many on the Left dislike the global marketplace because it epitomizes what they dislike about markets in general: the fact that nobody is in charge. The truth is that the invisible hand rules most domestic markets, too, a reality that most Americans seem to accept as a fact of life”*.

In the same sense, Thomas Friedman, (New York Times correspondent and award-winning author) said *“... the most basic truth about globalization is this: No one is in charge... We all want to believe that someone is in charge and responsible. But the global marketplace today is an Electronic Herd of often anonymous stock, bond and currency traders and multinational investors, connected by screens and networks”*.

In more optimism, Robert Hormats (Vice Chairman of Goldman Sachs International) presents the *“beauty”* of globalization; he said *“The great beauty of globalization is that no one is in control. The great beauty of globalization is that it is not controlled by any individual, any government, and any institution”*. Actually, there are many contrasting claims which are against these opinions. These claims - and others - will be discussed and clarified in the coming point *“the bad face of globalization”*.

***“Globalization benefits everyone”***

The claim that globalization is good has many arguments. There are many intellectuals and policymakers who often view globalization as providing good opportunities for their countries and their people. President Vicente Fox of Mexico said *“We are convinced that globalization is good and it is good when you do your homework . . . keep your fundamentals in line on the economy, build up high levels of education, respect the rule of law . . . when you do your part, we are convinced that you get the benefit”*.

In the same context, Yoweri Museveni (President of Uganda) expressed the goodness of globalization by saying *“There is no way you can sustain economic growth without accessing a big and sustained market”* (Weinstein, 2005, p. 96).

This claim lies at the very core of globalism because it provides an affirmative answer to the crucial normative question of whether globalization should be considered a *“good”* or a *“bad”* thing. Globalists frequently connect their arguments to the alleged benefits resulting from market liberalization: rising global living standards, economic efficiency, individual freedom, and unprecedented technological progress.

Steger (2003), p. 112, discusses this idea and provides many examples of such claims:

*“There can be little doubt that the extraordinary changes in global finance on balance have been beneficial in facilitating significant improvements in economic structures and living standards throughout the world . . .”* Alan Greenspan, (Chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board).

*“Globalization’s effects have been overwhelmingly good. Spurred by unprecedented liberalization, world trade continues to expand faster than overall global economic output, inducing a wave of productivity and efficiency and creating millions of jobs”*. Peter Sutherland, (Chairman of British Petroleum).

*“We are at an optimistic time in our world: the barriers between nations are down, economic liberalism is decidedly afoot and proven to be sound, trade and investment are soaring, income disparities between nations are narrowing, and wealth generation is at record high levels, and I believe likely to remain so”*. George David, (CEO of United Technologies Corporation).

It is noticed that the previous three optimistic points of view came from very respected people, but those people present the view of high class societies which means “*developed countries*”. Maybe the view of the goodness of globalization in these societies is correct, but it is a completely different situation in the poor countries or the “*developing countries*”. Steger (2003) summarized this meaning by comparing a large number of economics studies, which starting from the onset of globalization in 1973 until 2000, reached a significant result: ***the income of the rich countries will grow and the poverty of the poor countries will increase. This case has continued until now*** (For more details, see Steger, 2003, pp. 103-117).

### 2.3.11.2 The bad face of globalization ...

#### ***“Globalization inequality and cultural imperialism”***

In contrast to what is mentioned above, there are many economists, politicians and other social scientists who regard contemporary globalization as a source of many serious problems. There are others who, logically or illogically, consider it a negative, harmful, destructive, marginalizing and malevolent influence on economies and societies.

No doubt, globalization can create opportunities for accelerating growth for participating economies, but it can also pose myriad challenges to and impose constraints on policy makers. It has created a litany of national, regional and global economic problems. In addition, it is correctly blamed for the uneven distribution of the benefits from globalization. These are badly skewed within and between countries (Das, 2009, p. 125).

For Pieterse (2004, p. 7) globalization is like a prism in which major disputes over the collective human condition are now refracted: questions of capitalism, inequality, power, development, ecology, culture, gender, identity, population, all come back in a landscape where “*globalization did it*”. Globalization crosses boundaries of government and business, media and social movements, general and academic interest. As a political challenge, it crosses the ideological spectrum and engages social movements and politics at all levels. It involves a paradigm shift from the era of the nation state and international politics to politics of planetary scope.



To be specific, the discussion of the bad influences of globalization will be presented through explaining the meaning of “*global inequality*”, then the term of “*cultural imperialism*” will be discussed. Simply, “*global inequality*” explains the differences between high- and low-income people around the world (Weinstein, 2005, p. 11). David Dollar\* said “*People use the phrase (global inequality) casually to mean a number of different things. But the most sensible definition of inequality would be the same one generally used within a country: Line up all the people in the world from the poorest to the richest, and calculate a measure of inequality among their incomes*” (Weinstein, 2005, p. 110).

Supporting Dollar’s opinion, Jay Mazur (Foreign Affairs) said “*... globalization has dramatically increased inequality between and within nations*”.

Noam Chomsky said “*... inequality is soaring through the globalization period, within countries and across countries. And that’s expected to continue*”.

In the same sense, Walter Schwarz (The Guardian) mentioned that “*... all the main parties support nonstop expansion in world trade and services although we all know it . . . makes rich people richer and poor people poorer ...*” (Weinstein, 2005, p. 96)

These opinions and others explained how globalization and its applications dominate many economic problems, these problems do not conflict with the vast benefits of globalization, but the ideas are about who are the winners and who are the losers.

Joseph E. Stiglitz\*\* - as one of the great influential economists of the world - explained that globalization has been sold as bringing unprecedented prosperity to the billions of people

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\* **David Dollar** (Ph.D. in economics from NYU.) is the World Bank’s country director for China and Mongolia, based in Beijing. From 1995 to 2004 Dollar worked in the Bank’s research department. He co-authored (with Lant Pritchett) the World Bank report, “Assessing Aid” ([www.worldbank.org/research/aid](http://www.worldbank.org/research/aid)). (For more information about Dollar’s work, see Weinstein, 2005, p. 264).

\*\* **Joseph E. Stiglitz** (Ph.D. from MIT in 1967) is University Professor at Columbia University, teaching in the Economics Department, The School of International and Public Affairs, and its Business School. From 1997 to 2000, he served as the World Bank’s Senior Vice President for Development Economics and Chief Economist. From 1993 to 1997, Dr. Stiglitz served as a member and then as the Chairman of the President’s Council of Economic Advisors and as a member of the President’s cabinet. In 1979, the American Economic Association awarded Dr. Stiglitz its biennial John Bates Clark Award, which is given to the economist under forty who has made the most significant contributions to economics. In 2001, Dr. Stiglitz was awarded the Nobel Prize. Dr. Stiglitz helped create a new branch of economics-“The Economics of Information”- which has been widely applied throughout the economics discipline. He helped pioneer pivotal concepts such as theories of adverse selection and moral hazard. He has been instrumental in developing new macro-economic theories, Prof. Dr. Stiglitz has also made major contributions to the theory of income distribution, the theory of corporate finance, the theory of uncertainty, the theory of industrial organization, and the theory of economic growth (For more details about Prof. Dr. Stiglitz, see Weinstein, 2005, p. 266-267).

who have remained mired in poverty for centuries. Yet, globalization faces enormous resistance especially in the “*Third World*”. Why so?

Stiglitz argued that globalization today has been oversold. The use the term is to refer not only to closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world that has resulted from the lowering of transportation and communication costs and manmade barriers, but also to particular policies, the so-called “*Washington Consensus*”, that have been commonly associated with globalization and pushed on developing countries by the international economic institutions.

This Washington Consensus date emphasizes deregulated markets over government provision, balanced budgets and open borders across which goods and capital freely flow and flexible exchange rates. Many critics of globalization are opposed not so much to globalization per se but to the particular set of policies that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United States have imposed on developing countries in recent decades. During this period, many countries have suffered rising poverty, a degraded environment, and a destroyed indigenous culture. Right or wrong, critics blame globalization (Weinstein, 2005, p. 228).

In other words, Stiglitz explained that for the past two centuries or so, the center of political power in most of the successful countries has been at the level of the nation state. Globalization has entailed a loss of national sovereignty. International organizations, imposing international agreements, have seized power. So have international capital markets as they have been deregulated. And there are a variety of indirect ways in which globalization has impaired the effectiveness of the nation state, including the erosion of national cultures (Weinstein, 2005, p. 235).

The other idea which needs to be focused on and discussed as one of the important bad results of globalization is “*cultural imperialism*”. Indeed, this kind of imperialism was formed through many procedures which could be intentional or not, (previously, “*McDonaldization theory*” was mentioned as a tool of this cultural imperialism).

Cultural imperialism is not a new thesis (see, Tomlinson, 1997, 1991); it has been powerfully persuasive in early theories of globalization. Cultural imperialism argues that while the old political empires have crumbled, the Western nations still control the symbolic and cultural

world by controlling the mass media. Though foreign troops may not be deployed, and a foreign government established, the presence of the empire is felt in the everyday presence of Western media products. It is not just third world countries that are feeling defensive against this cultural threat.

Europe has felt it as well. For decades there have been ongoing debates in Europe (and the UK) about encroaching Americanization. Many countries establish import quotas on American media goods, and require that their television and radio stations play a certain percentage of local content. The country that has the world's attention as a warning of what might happen is Canada. Located along an open border with the US, and lacking a language difference (except in Quebec) that could insulate the country from US media, the Canadian media system is swamped with US content. Most films shown, television shows viewed, CDs or magazines purchased, or music aired are from the US. Plus most of the Canadian population lives close enough to the US border to simply tune in to US broadcasts. Canadian government regulations have struggled to support and subsidize Canadian content that espouses Canadian values (Dorland, 1996).

***The problem with the cultural imperialism thesis is that it assumes and supposes that the process of globalization is a one way flow: from the West to the rest.***

That is, it assumes that the world will become homogenized, that it will look the same wherever you go. And one can find numerous examples of this: international tourist hotels look much the same worldwide, the same fast food restaurants are available, the same television channels are on (CNN, MTV), and so on. It assumes that the American media will have the same effect on Indonesia as it does on New Zealand or Egypt.

Political scientist Benjamin Barber, in an influential yet problematic book entitled "*Jihad v. McWorld*", argues that globalization actually consists of two different processes working in opposite directions. One of these processes he names "*McWorld*" (it is the general form of McDonald). This is the steady homogenization of the world by the giant transnational corporations. The world becomes a single market and McDonald's, Marriotts, MGM films, and Microsoft are everywhere. But there is an opposite process at work which he terms "*Jihad*", the resistance against this coming McWorld. Jihad, a term he borrows loosely from Islam, refers to a conservative, traditional backlash against the encroaching "*Westernization*" (Actually, I do not completely agree with Barber opinion, the term "*Jihad*" has many other

explanations, but it is not the point to mention or to discuss. Despite the disagreement with him, his opinion mentioned as it is). Barber continues that “*Jihad*” refers to groups clinging more fiercely (and indeed blindly) to what they see as their core beliefs. We can see this in the rise of religious fundamentalism among both Christians and Muslims, and in the terrorist attacks on the US and its allies. Each process, he argues, has its benefits: McWorld does increase choice for many people and can raise standards of living; Jihad can provide one a sense of identity, of belonging to a group, which is often lacking in the modern world. But each has its disadvantages as well: McWorld can be destructive of other forms of culture and thought and it reduces the world into things to be bought; Jihad can be stifling, hierarchical, and lack many freedoms. Globalization is a much more complex process than any simple binary can describe. We cannot just discuss opposing forces, as if each were that uniform and that these were our only choices. In harmony with Barber opinion, it is certain that we have this kind of conflict especially in the theses which are related to politics, but in the fifth chapter of this thesis, I will return in detail to these opposite views to discuss a consensual solution which is generally applicable in the field of design.

The anthropologist Arjun Appadurai (1996), in a very influential essay, argued that we cannot think of globalization as a single dimension. There are actually multiple dimensions to globalization – which are explained before - and these different dimensions at times contradict each other and combine in unpredictable ways. Appadurai asks us to consider the world in terms of a map or landscape. If we look at the world according to economics, then we get one particular map with key financial centers marked and important flows of investment and information connecting specific places. But if we look at the world according to the movement of peoples we get a different topography; we see people moving to where jobs are, or away from famines or wars, or towards the latest trendy tourist hotspot. Each of these dimensions he refers to as a “*scape*” (short for landscape) (Wise, 2008, pp. 34-37).

In addition to presenting globalization as the main cause of what is called “*cultural imperialism*”, there are many Intellectuals who consider globalization as a neo-colonialism process. Martin Khor\* said “***Globalization is what we in the Third World have for several***

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\* **Martin Khor** (born 1951 in Penang, Malaysia) is the Executive Director of the South Centre (an intergovernmental organisation of developing countries based in Geneva, Switzerland) since March 2009. Mr. Khor is also a journalist, economist and the former Director of the Third World Network which is based in Penang, Malaysia. In addition, Khor is very active in many civil society movements.

**centuries called colonization”** (Waters, 2001, p. 94). This opinion is *compatible* with many other views which speak about the great influence of the United States, the US veto and the bad effect of the huge trade organizations.

Globalization influence is not only confined to influence from America but also to that from Europe (it is not, of course, the same form). Malcom Waters (2001) explained that by saying **“Globalization is the direct consequence of the expansion of European culture across the planet via settlement, colonization and cultural replication”** (Waters, 2001, p. 6).

Ngairé Woods said *“... there is little indication that powerful member states have any intention of altering the hierarchical basis on which order has traditionally been maintained, even though that hierarchy will not serve to meet the more complex challenges of order in a globalizing world”* (Woods, 2000: 396) (For more details, see Schirato & Webb, 2003, pp. 123-125).

Finally, the whole idea can be summarized by saying that the critics of globalization worry about its impact on social cohesion, on traditional values, on culture. But advocates of globalization either pay little attention to these concerns, or see this as another attempt to intrude on consumer sovereignty: just as there should be competition for goods, there should be competition for *“cultures”*; and if McDonald’s triumphs, so be it. Critics see society from a more holistic perspective (Weinstein, 2005, p. 236). Globalization’s critics claim that, in focusing on economics, advocates have too narrow a vision of society, and of individual welfare. Anyway, critics’ opinions and the visions of others paved the way for the emergence of many anti-globalization movements, as it will be explained.

### 2.3.12 Anti-globalism movements ...

*“The essence of globalization is a subordination of human rights, of labor rights, consumer, environmental rights, democracy rights, to the imperatives of global trade and investment. This is world government of the EXXONs, by the General Motors, for the DuPonts ...”* (Nader, 1998) (For more details, see Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 105). The question is, why only these companies? And how do these companies - and other companies which are like it - govern and operate in the world?

Today, there are many academic and political critics of globalization who identify with the “*anti-globalization movement*”. Although they are working against globalization, many of these internationally organized or linked movements use globalized forms of communication (notably the Internet) and operate transnationally, mobilizing a global consciousness and solidarity.

The movement is very broad and includes church groups, nationalist parties, leftist parties, environmentalists, peasant unions, anti-racism groups, anarchists, some charities and others. If we take a broad view of globalization, though, these movements are themselves parts of the process by which global solidarities come to be formed (Ray, 2007, p. 12-13).

Many people from different walks of life and with diverse disciplinary and ideological backgrounds regard globalization as a malevolent phenomenon. They regard globalization with deep-seated skepticism and hostility. Together, they succeeded in launching a fairly successful anti-globalization movement. Evidence of trenchant and unyielding opposition to globalization is endemic. Its manifestation in diverse forms is widespread.

For Das (2009, pp. 130-134) the anti-globalization lobby or movement was born at an early stage in the current wave of globalization. Its inception took place around the late 1980s. During the 1990s, the movement had a highly visible presence. It began to wane after September 11, 2001. At the beginning, the movement was broad and simple in its anti-globalism. This was a period of declining influence of organized labor in the industrial economies as well as popular nationalist movements in the developing economies. This decline was one of the basic impulses behind the emergence of the anti-globalization movement.

The antagonists blame globalization for a litany of global economic problems, although they accept some of the assertions of its supporters. Although fundamentally they were passionately disinclined to support the policies of economic neo-liberalism, numerous diverse causes also became associated with anti-globalism. Anti-globalists regarded the majority of consequences of globalization as harmful. Downward pressure on wages and increasing unemployment in some manufacturing and services sectors were some of their principal grievances. In particular, in their discontent, they link concepts of capitalism and the behavior of large business firms. Anti-globalists have been completely averse to the policies of supranational institutions that are responsible for global economic governance.

They are sure of the erroneous, if not downright ignorant, ways of these institutions (For more details, see Das, 2009, pp. 131-145).

Anti-globalism protesters which are in places like Seattle, Melbourne and Genoa see economic globalization as necessarily “*bad*”, because it brings about the violation of traditional lifestyles, the hamstringing of the economies of developing nations, and a disastrously cavalier attitude to the environment. The Siena Declaration (Italy, 1998), prepared by the board of directors of the International Forum on Globalization (IFG), and signed by over forty organizations in twenty countries, could be their mouthpiece. It reads: *Rather than leading to economic benefits for all people, “economic globalization” has brought the planet to the brink of environmental catastrophe, social unrest that is unprecedented, economies of most countries in shambles, an increase in poverty, hunger, landlessness, migration and social dislocation. The experiment may now be called a failure* (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 85).

The main sentiment which shared by all diverse social forces which are anti-globalization is their conviction that they must protect themselves and others from the negative consequences of globalization. Indeed, it is not basic to go into details or names of these movements, but it just to point out two major patterns of these movements; the first is “*Particularist protectionism*”, the second is “*Universalist protectionism*”.

#### **2.3.12.1 Particularist protectionism ...**

Particularist protectionists include groups who blame globalization for most of the economic, political, and cultural ills afflicting their home countries or regions. Threatened by the slow erosion of old social patterns, particularist protectionists denounce free trade, the power of global investors, the neoliberal agenda of multinational corporations, and the Americanization of the world as practices that have contributed to falling living standards and/or moral decline.

Fearing the loss of national self-determination and the destruction of their cultures, they pledge to protect their traditional ways of life from those “*foreign elements*” they consider responsible for unleashing the forces of globalization. Particularist protectionists are more

concerned with the well-being of their own citizens than with the construction of a more equitable international order based on global solidarity.

### 2.3.12.2 Universalist protectionism ...

Universalist protectionists can be found in progressive political parties dedicated to establishing a more equitable relationship between the global North and South. In addition, they include a growing number of non-governmental organizations and transnational networks concerned with the protection of the environment, fair trade and international labor issues, human rights, and women's issues.

These groups point to the possibility of constructing a new international order based on a global redistribution of wealth and power. Universalist protectionists claim to be guided by the ideals of equality and social justice for all people in the world, not just the citizens of their own countries. They accuse globalist elites of pushing policies that are leading to greater global inequality, high levels of unemployment, environmental degradation, and the demise of social welfare. Calling for a "*globalization from below*" favoring the marginalized and poor, they seek to protect ordinary people all over the world from a neoliberal "*globalization from above*" (For more details, see Steger, 2003, pp. 114-119).

### 2.3.13 Chapter summary ...

- Globalization is not a new phenomenon; it is a deep (long-term) historical process. In fact, it is as old as humanity itself, it started (10,000 BC) by the "*pre-historical period*" and developed through many other periods until accessing to "*contemporary globalization*" (from 1970).
- For every period globalization has its various limitations, different dimensions, plenty of applications and outcomes, but all forms and periods of globalization are integrated and all its applications are together related.
- Globalization - as clarified - is essentially about transnational flows of (people, money, technology, cultures, goods ... etc.) across borders, simply globalization is a process of mobility.



- Globalization effects will always be spatially located somewhere, and virtual spaces are downloaded and accessed in particular places. In other words, globalization is the growing interdependence of societies across the world, with the spread of the same culture, consumer goods and economic interests across the globe.
- The essence of globalization is a subordination of human rights, of labor and consumer rights, of environmental rights and democracy rights to the imperatives of global trade and investment.
- Globalization is not a single process, it is a multidimensional set of variables which work and integrate as one to present the whole image of the global world.
- There are many theories built to explain the core of globalization. Theories like *“borderless world”* or *“communications revolution”* sketch out the idea of globalization, while, theories like *“time-space compression”* give another potential of explanation.
- The globalization image (perspective) consists of various directions and depends on many dimensions, which could be summarized as: economy, politics, ideology and culture.
- Many researchers consider economy as the most important dimension of globalization; they argue that because of the direct and the indirect benefits of global economy, that makes it the navigator for globalization’s other directions and dimensions.
- Globalization is not a choice, it is a reality which no one can deny or reject. Dilip K. Das (2009, p. 41) supported this opinion in his chapter *“winners of globalization”*, when he mentioned the words of Lawrence Klein\* (2005), *“Globalization is here to stay, one cannot back away from that fact, but today’s new order can be tapped for the advancement of the entire world economy through peaceful economic efforts”*.
- Today, nobody can ignore or deny the benefits of the economic global system, but the question is how these benefits are distributed.
- In addition to the economic dimension of globalization, there are other dimensions such as politics, ideology and culture. This study focused more on the cultural

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\* **Lawrence Robert Klein** (born September 14, 1920) is an American economist. he was awarded the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences in 1980 for his work in creating computer models to forecast economic trends in the field of econometrics at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

dimension of globalization, discussing and clarifying the distinct correlation between globalization and culture.

- In point of fact, many studies investigate the correlation between globalization and culture; a few of them consider culture as a dimension of globalization, but others think about the consideration of globalization as a dimension of culture. Tomlinson (1999) summarized this dilemma by saying “*Globalization lies at the heart of modern culture; cultural practices lie at the heart of globalization*”. The opinions which support the consideration of globalization as a dimension of culture present a new version of culture which we can call “*global culture*”.
- The term “*global culture*” is an interesting term which needs deep investigation to clarify. At first glance, when referring to this global form of culture we have to think - in parallel - about its old versions which we can call “*local culture*”, how can these classical cultural forms survive beside the global strong one?
- Global culture refers to the way cultures in different countries of the world have become more alike, sharing increasingly similar consumer products and ways of life. This has arisen as globalization has undermined national and local cultures.
- The conflict here is not only about globalization itself, but it is mainly about its bad influences on the feeling of belonging, and about the wane of the meaning of cultural identity (specifically in poor or developing countries).
- The fact which nobody can deny is that globalization is changing humans’ lives. The positive or the negative effects/influences of this change depend on many aspects, but the fear among some peoples (especially, many developing countries and specifically, the poor countries) is about becoming copies of the western global style. This idea is not a fake idea; globalization is usually interpreted as a process of world-wide homogenization, the famous form of this homogenization is “*McDonaldization*”.
- McDonaldization does not only explain the system of fast-food restaurants; the idea is deeper than that. McDonaldization presents a new vision of people’s behavior on the global world. It presents the American cultural society system (as a glossy style) to the rest of the world, which we can call “*Mcworld*”.
- The Idea of “*Mc-... forms*” has become deeper in day-to-day practices such as: “*McEducation*”, “*McTourism*” ... and “**McCulture**” (in the same context, it is acceptable to suggest the term “**McFurniture**” which will be discussed later). Either

way the real thing is that all these “Mc-.... Forms” work to increase the loss of “authentic” local culture in many places.

- As it was previously reported, many Intellectuals and researchers emphasize the benefits of globalization: usually they speak about the expansion of modern technologies, the connections and communication between cultures, the increase in choice for consumers, the spread of democracy and human rights, and the chance for a better quality of life for many of the world’s peoples. They argue that “*globalization benefits everyone*”, in contrast, others regard globalization as a source of many serious problems. They speak about the “*inequality*”, where globalization makes rich people richer and poor people get poorer. In addition, others support the consideration of globalization as a modern tool of “*cultural imperialism*”, they believe that the main problem of globalization processes is that is a one way flow; *from the West to the rest*. These opinions - and others - paved the way for the emergence of many anti-globalization movements.
- In conclusion, the idea which is critical to discuss is not to be with or against globalization, this way of thinking is useless, but it is more useful and vital to think in a liberal critically way.
- Globalization is a reality, but the challenge is how to be an effective partner of this reality without losing the feeling of belonging (to anything individual believe in) and without losing the cultural identity. This cultural identity - as it was discussed in the first and the second chapters - is not a static concept, certainly not, it is the engine or the power which directs humans through their lives whether they are politicians, economists or ... designers.



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Chapter 4:

***The design process and its practice***



### 2.4.1 Chapter overview ...

*Design* is a very ordinary word in our daily life. We use this word to refer to a plenty of issues and to describe a lot of actions: most of these issues, actions or services make our life easier, faster, and better. Bernhard E. Bürdek\* (2005) promoted this idea by saying “...Today, most people’s lives would be unimaginable without design. It accompanies us from dawn till after dusk: at home, at work, in our leisure time, in education, in health services, in sports, in the transport of people and goods, in the public sphere, everything is designed, intentionally or not. Design can be very close (fashion) or far, far away (space travel)” (Bürdek, 2005, p. 11).

This chapter is about *design*, specifically about “*the design process*”. Indeed, this chapter may be considered as a *ring* or a *bridge* which will join the previous three chapters with the next chapters. In the previous three chapters the overall relationship between culture, identity and globalization was described and discussed. As a result of those three chapters, it is clear that the cultural identity of any society is interwoven (positively or negatively) and integrated with the meaning of globalization, and both of them have an effective influence on everyone’s thoughts and their values are reflected on most of our behavior, our decisions and choices and certainly on our creations/designs.

This chapter is an attempt to promote the point of view about the strong relationship between designers (as creators) and their personal/cultural identities which are formed according to their cultural background. The idea is continued in parallel with the explanation of the influence of globalization on this relationship.

To construct this chapter in a logical context, it starts by answering a very simple “complicated” question; what is design? And what does it mean? The answers to these questions allow us to understand who the designer is, and what the designers’ types are. All these related matters formed a clear strategy to define design as a process, which is one the main goal of this chapter, in addition to discover the specific role of designers (as human beings/creators) in this process, which allows us to identify their actual responsibility and clarify their basic confusion between their personal and cultural identity and the global trends.

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### 2.4.2 The historical meaning of design ...

In considering design as a concept or as a practice from a historical perspective, it is agreed with the opinion of Gerhard Heufler (2004) who stated that design began when everything began. In the beginning *God* created “designed” the heaven and the earth, then everything He could fit into them (Heufler, 2004, p. 5). In most religions, we can observe/notice the same idea with different details; this first creation (whatever its details) is the first sample, a clear form of the design practice (In this context, it is essential to refer to the opinion of Jan Michl about *creationism* as a form of the *intelligent design*. Michl explained that creationism is the position that the Universe, Earth, and life of Earth were created by one or more intelligent agents, usually the God of Judaism, Christianity and Islam as recorded in Genesis and the Quran).

Design is as old as human civilization: the primitive ages are the earliest period of human design practice, when humans designed their first tools to hunt animals or when they designed their first weapons for defense or to protect themselves.

In the early stages of agrarian society people made whatever they needed themselves. Producer and consumer were one and the same person, and every product was unique in its own way. Specialized artisan trades emerged over the course of time. Guilds passed on craft traditions from generation to generation, ensuring high standards of quality. Because craftsmen adjusted their products to individual needs, both producer and user could identify with “their” products, each of which was unique. All this changed with the invention of the steam engine, which revolutionized everyday life by making mechanized mass production possible. The predominantly agrarian economy gave way to industrialization.

The products themselves changed, they could now be rationally manufactured in large quantities, and the price of goods dropped. In the 18th century, for example, the real value of a handcrafted metal saw was the equivalent of several months’ wages, while today less than an hour’s work can buy a machine-made metal saw.

Since mass-produced products were not tailored to the individual user, identification with them was low. In addition, whereas previously the master craftsmen had been responsible for contact with the customer, planning and production, in the industrial age these functions were split up and required specialization.



Manufacturers now had to consider what their products should look like. But as a rule, design was a stepchild of industrial production. If artists were consulted at all, the result was usually superficial decoration that disregarded the technical structure. As in architecture, industrial design followed the dictates of fashion, which was dominated by the revival of historical styles (neo-gothic, neo-rococo ... etc.). Historicism arose in response to the needs of a society in transition, which had rejected the old traditions but not yet developed its own use of forms.

At the end of the 19th century *Art Nouveau* movement attempted to overcome eclectic historicism with its organic use of forms, but tended to remain associated with handcrafts, only rarely exploring industrial production methods and the new technological advances.

Art and industry were still poles apart, but collaboration was becoming vital for the production of the numerous new consumer and capital goods. Thus the profession of industrial designer was born. One of the earliest industrial designers in today's sense of the word was the architect Peter Behrens. In 1907 he began designing not only factory buildings for AEG but also the company's products and advertising. His work marked the emergence of corporate identity.

Behrens pioneered a profession defined today by the *German Industrial Design Association* (VDID) as follows:

*"... the designer is a creator. The industrial designer is a creator working in an industrial production process. He is responsible for creating products and systems to be manufactured industrially both for individual and collective use, as wherever man comes into contact with technological products, they have to be adapted to his senses and dimensions by means of design. In an environment increasingly shaped by technology and industrialization, the industrial designer therefore shares responsibility for their quality"* (Heufler, 2004, pp. 9-12).

As an English word, "design" is a modern derivative of the Latin word *designare*, which means *to mark* or point out, delineate, contrive, by way of the French *désigner*, to indicate or designate, and can be defined as planning for action or miniature action. It is remarkable, however, that neither Greek nor Latin contains any word that exactly corresponds to the modern word "design". The closest Greek comes to a word for "design" in the modern sense is perhaps *hupographein*, to write out. Much more common are simply *ennoein* (en, in +

noein, to think) and dianoein (dia, through + noein, to think) (for more details, Mitcham, 1995, p. 173).

It is popular to regard Leonardo da Vinci\* as the first designer. In addition to his scientific studies on anatomy, optics, and mechanics, he performed pioneering work in the elementary science of mechanical engineering, producing a book of “Patterns of Machine Elements”. Da Vinci’s concept of design applied to practical objects, machines, and apparatus. Nevertheless, it decisively influenced the idea of design: the designer as an inventor.

According to the Oxford Dictionary the concept of “design” was used in 1588 for the first time. Design refers to:

- A plan or scheme devised by a person for something that is to be realized, or
- A first graphic draft of a work of art, or
- An object of the applied arts, which is to be binding for the execution of a work.

In searching about the historical meaning of design it is important to present the recent history by referring to “*Bauhaus*” or “*Ulm*” school of design, especially that these design schools have a great influence on developing many design theories and its practice. This information and more others will be discussed in detail through the third section of this thesis, specifically in the “seventh chapter”. So, it is better to ignore these details by compressing hundreds of years and think more about the core meaning of design.

### 2.4.3 What is design?

There is no doubt that design surrounds people in everywhere at home and at work, at leisure and at prayer, on the streets, in public spaces. Because of that there is an endless flow of publications dedicated to meaning, practicing and the importance of design (Bürdek, 2005, p. 11). Nevertheless, many people ask a very simple, yet complicated question; what is design? (see, Papanek, 1985).

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\* **Leonardo da Vinci** (1452-1519), is one of the most famous artists of the Italian Renaissance polymath: painter, sculptor, architect, musician, scientist, mathematician, engineer, inventor, anatomist, geologist, cartographer, botanist, and writer whose genius, perhaps more than that of any other figure, epitomized the Renaissance humanist ideal.

For Oakley (1990, p. 8) the word *design* is much used (perhaps too much). Dictionary definitions list its meaning as a plan or a scheme. The word is also used to denote the end result, particularly appearance, of a design process - as when we refer to the “design of a car”. Furthermore, discussion of the meaning of design is complicated by an initial problem presented by the word itself. *Design* has so many different meanings and many levels of understanding that it is itself a source of confusion. It is rather like the word *love*, the meaning of which radically shifts dependent upon who is using it, to whom it is applied, and in which context.

For example, the shifts of meaning when using the word *design* in English, illustrated by a seemingly nonsensical sentence:

***“Design is to design a design to produce a design”***

Every use of the word *design* in this statement is grammatically correct.

- The first is a noun indicating a general concept of a field as a whole.
- The second is a verb indicating an action or a process.
- The third is also a noun, meaning a concept or proposal.
- The final use is again a noun, indicating a finished product of some kind (Heskett, 2002, p. 3-4).

According to the previous example, the difficulty of writing or talking about design is that the word *design* has so many different meanings for different people. It can mean: a **plan**, a **process** or a **product** (Cross 1975, p.7). Now it is ok, we solved the first level of complexity of understanding design as a concept, and we can continue our discussion without getting caught in this kind of misunderstanding.

There are plenty of definitions of design, many of these definitions and clarifications are simple and others look difficult to understand easily. Richard Buchanan & Victor Margolin (1995, p. x) defined *design* in the introduction of their book “*Discovering Design*” as the conception and planning of all of the products made by human beings. Design is a form of deliberation whose result is measured in production and in the careers of individual products in culture. It is basic - for this study - to mention this definition as a beginning to refer to the link between design as a practice and the idea of culture, which will revolve around many of the discussions in this chapter.

For Heskett (2002, p. 5) *design* is a creative planning process that leads to useful products and systems. In other words, design can be defined as the human capacity to shape and make our environment in ways without precedent in nature, to serve our needs and give meaning to our lives.

Peter Schreibmayer & Josef Roschitz (2005) defined *design* as a composition of form, of giving objects shape and content. They added that this process (designing) is elemental: it affects both art and the everyday life, the merely decorative and the useful, the ugly and the beautiful. Designed objects are all around us and are the artificial part of our environment. They claimed that “*design concerns every one of us. Design is not just something for those who are directly affected, but all who are confronted by it, whether they were asked or not. Anyone who designs takes on a cultural responsibility*” (Schreibmayer & Roschitz, 2005, p. 10). Actually, it is agreed with their point of view, specially the last part, because later the discussion will be about how designers can bear their cultural responsibility as an application of the cultural ethics of design.

Through a study of the methodology of design research, Lucienne Blessing and Amaresh Chakrabarti (2009) mentioned that many definitions of design exist, very much depending on the culture and background of the author. They defined design as a complex activity, involving artefacts, people, tools, processes, organisations and the environment in which this takes place (Blessing and Chakrabarti, 2009, pp. vii-2).

Michael Erlhoff has a different trend of defining *design*, he presented this clear and current delimitation of design on the occasion of the documenta 8 in Kassel (1987): He said “*Design, which - unlike art - requires practical justification, finds this chiefly in four assertions: being societal and functional and meaningful and concrete*” (Bürdek, 2005, p. 16). The noticed point here is that Erlhoff defined design as “unlike art”, and as yet this claim is still a subject of many debates. Indeed, there are unlimited debates about the consideration of design as an art or as a science. These indecisive discussions will be mentioned through the discussions with the Egyptians and the Germans professors/designers (See, chapters 6 and 7).

The “*International Council of Societies of Industrial Design*” (ICSID) defines design, its aim and tasks as follows:

**Aim:** Design is a creative activity whose aim is to establish the multi-faceted qualities of objects, processes, services and their systems in whole life-cycles. Therefore, design is the central factor of innovative humanization of technologies and the crucial factor of cultural and economic exchange.

**Tasks:** Design seeks to discover and assess structural, organizational, functional, expressive and economic relationships, with the task of:

- Enhancing global sustainability and environmental protection (global ethics).
- Giving benefits and freedom to the entire human community, individual and collective.
- Final users, producers and market protagonists (social ethics).
- Supporting cultural diversity despite the globalization of the world (cultural ethics).
- Giving products, services and systems, those forms that are expressive of (semiology) and coherent with (aesthetics) their proper complexity.

Design concerns products, services and systems conceived with tools, organizations and logic introduced by industrialization - not just when produced by serial processes. The adjective “industrial” put to design must be related to the term industry or in the meaning of sector of production or in its ancient meaning of “industrious activity”, Thus, design is an activity involving a wide spectrum of professions in which products, services, graphics, interiors and architecture all take part. Together, these activities should further enhance in a choral way with other related professions - the value of life (Heufler, 2004, p. 16).

In addition, design requires not only knowledge of the stakeholder goals and the product, but also about its life cycle, how it is to be produced, transported, installed, used, maintained and retired, and about the process of design, how to proceed in an effective and efficient way. This implies that in order to design, designers have to draw on knowledge from areas as diverse as physics, chemistry, mathematics, engineering sciences, economics, aesthetics, ergonomics, psychology and sociology, as well as on methods and tools to support the application of this knowledge. If knowledge is not available, which is often the case, designers have to rely on assumptions while minimizing the risks, or undertake research to generate this knowledge.

Design is not only a knowledge-intensive activity, but also a purposeful, social and cognitive activity undertaken in a dynamic context, aimed “at changing existing situations into preferred ones” This meaning is matched with Simon’s opinions which he presented in many of his books (For more details, see Simon, 1996) . Design is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon, involving: people, a developing product, a process involving a multitude of activities and procedures; a wide variety of knowledge, tools and methods; an organization; as well as a micro-economic and macro-economic context. All of these facets have their own goals, structures and cultures that put demands and constraints on design, all of which have to be dealt with and balanced (Blessing & Chakrabarti, 2009, p. 1-2). For Heufler (2004, p. 17) design always creates something new. When it is a matter of reworking existing products, the term redesign is more accurate: Redesign is the creative reworking of an existing product with the aim of increasing its utility value or updating it from practical functions to aesthetics and symbolism.

Finally, the meaning of design can be summed up as a concept and as a practice in the following simple short statements:

- Design is the process through which one identifies a need, and develops a solution - a product - to fulfil the need. Design affects nearly every sphere of human life.
- Design is not only an applied science, it applies knowledge from engineering, natural, human and cultural sciences, and, if this knowledge is not available, makes assumptions to minimise risk or takes up research.
- Design is a dynamic, complex, multi-faceted phenomenon, involving people, processes, knowledge, methods and tools within an organisational, micro-economic and macro-economic context. Each design is, in some sense, unique (Blessing and Chakrabarti, 2009, p. 12).
- Design uses experiences from the past to create things for the present that look forward to the future (Hazel and David, 2009, p. 1).
- Design can be conceived (in a simple perspective) as an individual activity, such as designing a chair, but it can be transform to a complex corporate planning process that regulates innovation to meet market demands (Cooper and Press, 1995, p. 42).

#### 2.4.4 The design process ...

After the discussion about the meaning of design as a concept and the explanation of the different opinions about its essence, it is important to provide another *deeper* dimension, another level of understand and another description of design, which is *design as a process*.

Design is not only a good shape forming, selecting a color, or determining the dimensions of a product. Design has a deeper meaning; it is a decision-making process that deals with the manifestation of objects with consideration to economy and technical function and in answer to various consumer demands (Cooper & Press, 1995, p. 36). For Dubberly (2004) we are all practice design, our results are different depending on our goals. The similar is that we are designing according to equal processes which we follow.

Indeed, the design process is a purposeful method of planning practical solutions to problems; it is influenced by requirements called criteria and constraints. In other words, design is known as an innovative and intellectual process in which designers employ their skills and experience in dealing with scientific, mathematical, geometrical, and technical knowledge to utilize different materials trying to solve a realistic or futuristic problem. So, it can be claimed that design is as a *bridge* which crosses the unknown to connect between available resources and mankind's needs. We can say also that design process is a plan of arranging elements in such a way as to best accomplish a particular purpose (Laurel, 2003, p. 10).

Different designers manage the process of design in different ways (Design Council, 2005), but the idea which they should share is how to understand the design process as a temporal activity that is progressing with completion of their one step toward the predetermined goal (Erlhoff, & Marshall, 2008, p. 107). Rachel Cooper & Mike Press (1995) summarized the phases/stages of design process in arranged main five points:

1. Define the problem
2. Understand the problem
3. Think about the problem
4. Develop ideas
5. Detail design and test (Cooper & Press, 1995, p. 36).

Simply, design is a problem solving activity that requires the precise definition of the problem at the start (Design Process, 2005, Internet). There is an opinion which presents the design process as a linear sequence of events that has a start and an end point. (Sometimes we have to go back a stage if new information comes to light. In certain cases we may only look at one or two stages).

As a tool of understanding the design process, Mark Oakley (1990) set out a linear model to explain the main stages of this process (Figure 7).

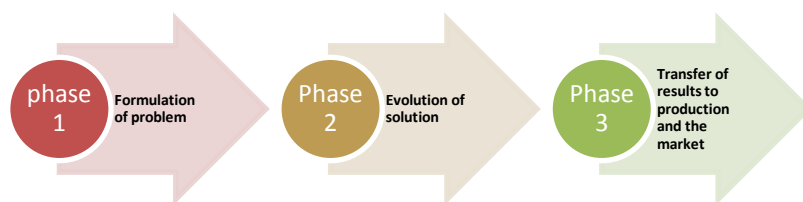


Figure 7: A simple linear model of the design process (Oakley, 1990, p. 10)

Oakley divided the design process to three main phases, starting by “*Problem formulation*”, then “*Solution evaluation*”, and ended by “*Transfer of results to production and market*”. The main weakness of this linear model is the suggestion that a perfect design result can be achieved and that the design process has a clear end point beyond which no further work is required. In real life this is not true; designs are never perfect and there is always some extra benefit to be found (Oakley, 1990, p. 10).

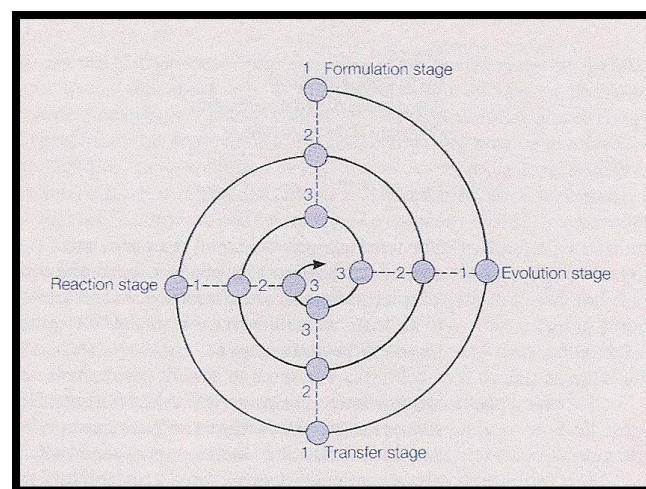


Figure 8: A spiral model of the design process (Oakley, 1990, p. 11)



In addition, there is another problem in this linear model, which is that it lacks any indication of feedback reaction. Indeed, this kind of feedback will be more logical to affect in this relationship. To solve the problem of the linear model, it would be more realistic and to think and to represent the *design process* as a spiral process which stresses that design is an evolving activity (Figure 8).

By investigating this *spiral model*, firstly, we consider that the design cycle is completed; more knowledge is gained as familiar territory is covered, leading to quicker, more efficient designing although major discontinuities may occur sometimes causing a jump inwards or outwards to another part of the spiral. Secondly, the spiral form also acknowledges that new technology is forcing previously separate activities closer together.

According to the *spiral model*, it is noticed that the design process is divided into four main phases “stages”, every phase including many sub-stages as the following:

1. Formulation
  - Problem investigation
  - Problem definition
  - Design specification
  - Project brief.
2. Evolution
  - Idea generation
  - Solution refinement
  - Prototype development
  - Design freeze.
3. Transfer
  - Manufacturing drawings, data compilation
  - Operating system modifications
  - Start-up tests
  - Full-scale operation/production
  - Delivery to customers.
4. Reaction
  - Customer appraisal
  - After-sales service demands

- Problem investigation (Oakley, 1990, p. 11-12).

More recently, many other researchers present the *design process* as a circular process (Figures 9, 10).

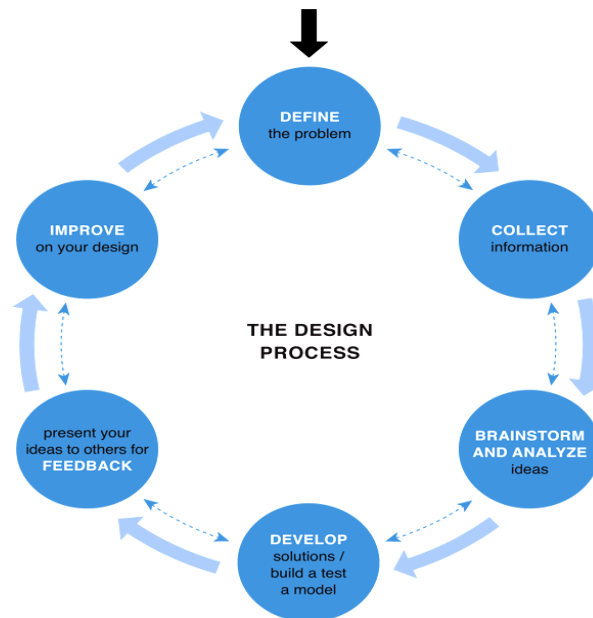


Figure 9: A circular model of the design process (Discover Design, 2012)

(Figure 9) presents the *design process* as a simple circular model, minimizing the process in six essential steps started by “*defining the problem*” and arriving at “*improving the design*” which means to discover a new problem to start the process again.

In more detail, (Figure 10) presents the *design process* in twelve stages starting by “*defining the problem*”, where the designer examines the evidence and forms some conclusions. The second step is “*brainstorming*”, then “*research and generate ideas*” where the designer may go to the library, use computer databases, write letters, perform experiments, and ask questions. The sequential steps are followed until arriving at the results of communication which allow the designer to unfold a new problem to continue the circular process (For more models and descriptions of design process and its stages, see Dubberly, 2004).

An additional point of view, the MAPS program of design process divided the previous twelve stages into three main groups; every group consisted of four stages. The first group is the *analysis* (A), the second is the *projection* (P) and the third is the *synthesis* (S) (For more details see, design process, MAPS, Internet).

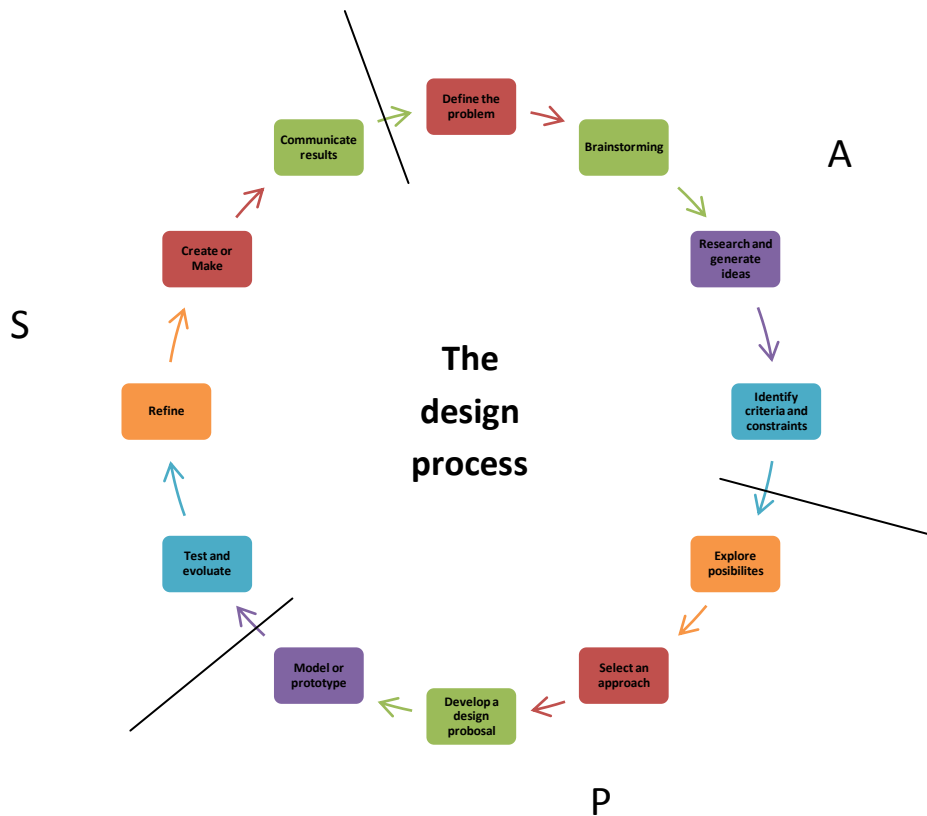


Figure 10: A detailed circular model of the design process (Gateway to technology, 2008)

Generally and according to the last two circular models (Figures 9 and 10), the *design process* is a renewable process which has no end; there are always multiple solutions to a problem and usually there are dynamic continuous stages (Abdelrazik, 2012, a).

Finally, it is important to indicate that design is an activity that has an effect on nearly every sphere of human life; it is concerned with decisions of taste, choice and sensitivity and relies on humans value judgments (Design process, 2005, Internet). The design process can be undertaken by individuals, industry, or a community, using various product development practices. The solutions resulting from these practices can be of both engineering and non-engineering nature, and may be physical (such as a coffee-maker or an aircraft), virtual (such as computer software, a plan, or a process) or a combination of both (e.g., a mechatronic system or a product-service-system, a combination of an artifact and a process (service)-such as an aircraft leasing scheme or a mobile phone service) (For more details, Blessing, & Chakrabarti, 2009, p. 1-2). In simple words, Dubberly (2004) summarized the importance of the design process by explaining that it determines the quality of products/services. So, if we wish to improve our products/services, we must improve our processes and we must

continually redesign not just our products/services, but also the way we design. For Abdelrazik (2012, a) the design process is like a navigator which directs the designer through his/her work. This dynamic process allows every designer to understand why he/she designs, how to design and enables a clear evaluation for every stage of designing, which means achieving success in the shortest and fastest approach.

#### 2.4.5 Who is the designer?

Design is one of the basic characteristics of what it is to be human, and an essential determinant of the quality of human life. It affects everyone in every detail of every aspect of what they do throughout each day (Heskett, 2002, p. 2). According to this general wide meaning, the designer will not necessarily be an engineer or architect, or any of the generally recognized design professionals. He or she might be a manager, politician, protestor, consumer, lawyer, trade unionist, pressure group, baker or candlestick maker ... etc. Generally, almost certainly, every one of humans is somehow a designer, but specifically, the term “designer” refers to an individual who practices an intellectual profession, and not simply a trade or a service for enterprises (Heufler, 2004, p. 16).

Indeed, usually, there are only visions and speculations of the future; but these visions strongly influence the technology that is designed today for use tomorrow. Change in man-made things is usually initiated with a purpose, a vision, in mind. Visions of the future are particularly important for designers, because designers have to imagine both the future conditions that will exist when their designs will actually come into use and how those conditions will be changed by the creation of the new design. In a more general sense, to be able to imagine the future is also an important part of being human (Cross, 1975, p. 7-8).

In specific words, we can categorize *designers* to many various groups according to their fields of work. Throughout this thesis, the main focus is on the “*product designer*” and the “*industrial designer*”. The concept of “*industrial design*” can be traced back to Mart Stam, who supposedly used the term for the first time in 1948 (Hirdina, 1988). For Stam, an industrial designer is someone who drafted, sketched, and planned. In his opinion designers should be employed in every area of industry, especially in the production of new kinds of materials.

The definition of design has long been a matter of intense concern, also in the former German Democratic Republic. This regime always understood design to be a component of social, economic, and cultural policy. Horst Oehlke (1978), in particular, pointed out that shaping affects more than the sensually perceptible side of objects. On the contrary, the designer must be concerned with satisfying the needs of societal and individual life (Bürdek, 2005, p. 15).

#### 2.4.6 The classification of designers ...

Regardless of the diversity of the disciplines of designers, it can say that there are many types of designers, every one of them has a very specific viewpoint, every one has a specific concept to think about, everyone has a direct amount of skills/abilities, and every one has a different target to achieve. According to the educational, the practicing experience and the role, and the responsibility of every designer, we can divide them to the following groups:

- **Novice (Beginner)**

As a first lowest level of experience, students who will graduate as designers will start to find out a little knowledge of what the design activity entails. The main objective of education at this stage is the search for generic principles that link and classify precedents, replacing the isolated instances of the naive designer. In this novice stage, the students encounter design as a formal process for the first time. To tackle the complexities of design, they also need to learn a whole series of techniques and methods of representation.

- **Advanced Beginner**

This might be the level normally attained during design education. The learning of a language for discussing and criticizing design distinguishes this state of expertise from the previous ones. Students acquire schemata or “design prototypes” (Gero, 1990, pp. 26-36). A further characteristic of this level is the recognition that design problems are highly individual and situated. Design problems at this level are considered to be less amenable to the use of standard solutions than they were at the naive level of designing.

- **Competent**

The advanced beginner begins to understand the enormous richness and variability of design situations and becomes adept at dealing with a wide range of them. The competent designer

is one who can actually handle and understand the normal kinds of situations that occur within the design domain. In process terms, a competent designer is likely to be able to become the creator of the design situation through strategic thinking. This means that by now such designers must be able to develop a brief with clients and understand the needs of their users.

Most practical designers are defined as competent, their skills and abilities should be enough to work as individual designers or as a members of a design group in “design offices or design companies”, but there are at least three ways to go from the competent state/ level, and this progression depends very much on the mentality, personality, level of ambition, and insight of individual designers themselves. The states of Proficient, Expert/ Master, and Visionary should be seen in this light.

- **Proficient**

A proficient designer may be thought of as one who is “good enough for the client”. Graduates with some small degree of professional experience would be proficient designers. Professional bodies usually have a period of post-graduate practical experience as a requirement before admitting a student to professional membership. Working at this level means that the designer is good and probably successful in his/her chosen profession.

- **Expert (Master)**

The expert designer has a rather more developed set of guiding principles than the proficient designer. He or she is known for a certain approach or set of values. In the general literature about expertise of this kind, this is characterized by a more or less automatic recognition of situations. This can be used not only to recognize key features of the situation but also to suggest a range of appropriate actions that can be taken. The master designer has taken his/her set of guiding principles to a level of innovation such that their work is seen as representing new knowledge in the field. These designers are producing design ideas that are innovative responses to situations that may have been previously considered well understood.

- **Visionary**

The visionary designers are the highest level of designers; the visionary designer may be one who has become so interested in developing new ideas that the normally expected level of

professional competence becomes less important. This may be a feature of expertise peculiar to the design world. The work of such designers may often not be realized, but it is deemed important as visionaries are explicitly redefining the design field that they are working in (Dorst, 2009, pp. 283-286).

To conclude this point in a final remark, it could be said that designers are an extremely diverse bunch of people; there are those who could be characterized as “entrepreneur”, or “artist”, or “rationalist”, or “pragmatist” ... etc. Their interests and their responsibilities are formed according to these qualities.

### 2.4.7 What do designers do?

#### What should they have in common ...

As mentioned before, everything we have around us; our environments, clothes, furniture, machines, communication systems, even much of our food - has been designed. Design includes the work of people from a wide range of disciplines: industrial designers, design engineers, architects, graphic designers, illustrators, environmental designers and all those industry and product related disciplines like textile design, automobile design, furniture design and many others. It also includes those people who are concerned with systems of these things. In attempting to describe design (describe what the designers do), we need to agree about characteristics that all design and designers share, and also which of those characteristics are exclusive to design and designers (Oakley, 1990, p. 16).

The quality of that design effort therefore profoundly affects our quality of life. The ability of designers to produce efficient, effective, imaginative and stimulating designs is therefore important to all of us. So, it is important, first of all, to understand what it is that designers do when they exercise this ability (Cross, 2010, p. 15).

In other words, we have to answer: what are the abilities and skills which you need to be a designer? Nigel Cross (1990) summarized the early work in this area in his seminal paper “The nature and nurture of design ability”. In this paper, eight key design knowledge attributes and skills are defined that together define design ability. Cross concludes that designers must have the ability to:

1) Produce novel, unexpected solutions by .....

- 2) Applying imagination and constructive forethought to practical problems
- 3) Using drawings and other modeling media as means of problem-solving. In doing this, they need to .....
- 4) Deal with uncertainty and decision-making on the basis of limited information
- 5) In resolving ill-defined, “wicked” problems. They do this by .....
- 6) Adopting solution-focusing strategies
- 7) Employing productive/creative thinking
- 8) Using modeling media.

This list of abilities, impressive though it is, does not answer the question whether design is a special ability, or a distinct form of intelligence. It is complex and diverse, and there does not seem to be an underlying coherence, a core “essential design ability” or guiding principle behind it all. On the one hand, some of these abilities are not that special: they are quite widespread among the professions, or can be learned or taught in a fairly straightforward way. On the other hand, not all of these basic design abilities can be learned easily. Some design abilities are very complicated. Some of the design abilities are deeply connected to the personality of a designer, and thus are virtually impervious to direct training (Dorst, 2009, p. 279-280).

Pragmatically, the most essential thing that any designer does is to provide, for those who will make a new artifact, a description of what that artifact should be like. Usually, little or nothing is left to the discretion of the makers - the designer specifies the artifact's dimensions, materials, finishes and colors. When a client asks a designer for a “design”, that is what he wants - the description. The focus of all design activity is that end-point. The designer's aim, therefore, is the communication of a specific design proposal. Usually, this is in the form of a drawing or drawings, giving both an overview of the artifact and particular details. Even the most imaginative design proposals must usually be communicated in rather prosaic working drawings, lists of parts, and so on.

Sometimes, it is necessary to make full-scale mock-ups of design proposals in order that they can be communicated sufficiently accurately. In the motor industry, for example, full-scale models of new car bodies are made to communicate the complex three-dimensional shapes. These shapes are then digitized and the data communicated to computers for the production of drawings for making the body-panel moulds. Increasingly, in many industries,



computerization of both design and manufacture is substantially changing the mode of communication between designer and manufacturer, sometimes with the complete elimination of conventional detail drawings.

Before the final design proposal is communicated for manufacture, it will have gone through some form of testing, and alternative proposals may also have been tested and rejected. A major part of the designer's work is therefore concerned with the evaluation of design proposals. Again, full-scale models may be made - product manufacturing industries use them extensively for evaluating aesthetics, ergonomics, and consumer choice, as well as for production purposes. Small-scale 3D models are also often used in many industries - from architecture to chemical process plants.

However, drawings of various kinds are still the most extensively used modeling medium for evaluating designs - both informally in the designer's skilled reading of drawings and imagining their implications, and more formally in measuring dimensions, calculating stresses, and so on. In evaluating designs, a large body of scientific and technical knowledge can be brought to bear. This modeling, testing and modifying is the central, iterative activity of the design process.

Before a proposal can be tested, it has to be originated somehow. The generation of design proposals is therefore the fundamental activity of designers, and that for which they become well-known or remain unknown. Although design is usually associated with novelty and originality, most run-of-the-mill designing is actually based on making variations on previous designs. Drawings again feature heavily in this generative phase of the design process, although at the earliest stages they will be just the designer's "thinking with a pencil" and perhaps comprehensible only to him or her.

The kind of thinking that is going on is multi-faceted and multi-leveled. The designer is thinking of the whole range of design criteria and requirements set by the client's brief, of technical and legal issues, and of self-imposed criteria such as the aesthetic and formal attributes of the proposal. Often, the problem as set by the client's brief will be vague, and it is only by the designer suggesting possible solutions that the client's requirements and criteria become clear. The designer's very first conceptualizations and representations of problem and solution are therefore critical to the procedures that will follow - the

alternatives that may be considered, the testing and evaluating, and the final design proposal (Cross, 2010, pp. 15-17).

To summarize the ideas discussed here, it could be claimed that the role of designers is different according to what they design, according to what are the needs that they work to achieve and which process they will use, this process including many activities, including generating novel concepts, reviewing and modifying existing concepts, carrying out experiments, building samples and seeking the constructive advice and judgments of others. Consequently, those engaged in this work must possess skills of creativity, analysis, synthesis and communication, plus knowledge of technical data, of existing solutions and of current and future trends in design.

In designing products, specific skills required include the ability to understand users' needs, wants, tastes and priorities; the ability to select the right materials and manufacturing processes; the ability to create products which fully meet aesthetic, ergonomic, quality and economic expectations; and the ability to produce drawings and explanations which communicate the final design solution to others working in the enterprise or outside (Oakley, 1990, p. 9-10).

Today, designers must work closely and persuasively with other participants, often including representatives of the general population expected to use a new product. Indeed, designers must often play the subtle and informal role of facilitator in such groups, quietly guiding the process of deliberation and encouraging the integration of sound contributions by other professionals. This requires a new maturity and sophistication in design practice that must come from better understanding of the disciplines of design and the strategies of design thinking, not only as a body of professional practices and specialized techniques, but also with the consideration of design as an art of communication (Buchanan & Margolin, 1995, p. xi-xii).

Finally, it could be said that despite of the multiplicity and diversity of needs, ideas and designs, it can be easy to summarize the core of the designers' role in achieving human needs through the use of his/her skills and abilities to solve realistic/current problems or to create futuristic issues (see Figure 1, p. 8). The important points here are; how these services or these designs will be compatible with the real and the actual peoples' needs and how we can judge if these designs/services will be good or not?

### 2.4.8 Good design ...

Good design is one of the common topics of many current academic debates. The main goal of any designer is to create or to innovate a good design (product or service), but the problem is how to judge if this design is good or not. For Peter Zec (2000, p. 8-9) the meaning of good design is difficult to describe. Zec said “... *The question ‘what is good design?’ does not have a single, absolute answer, and we therefore have to consider and discuss it again and again*”.

In 1979, the *International Design Center Berlin* defined good design in the context of an exhibition as the following:

- Good design may not be a mere envelopment technique. It must express the individuality of the product in question through appropriate fashioning.
- It must make the function of the product, its application, plainly visible so that it can be understood clearly by the user.
- Good design must allow the latest state of technical development to become transparent.
- Design must not be restricted just to the product itself; it must also take into consideration issues of ecology, energy conservation, recyclability, durability, and ergonomics.
- Good design must take the relationship between humans and objects as the point of departure for the shapes it uses, especially taking into account aspects of ergonomics and perception (Bürdek, 2005, p. 15-16).

Today, the good design meaning is extended significantly from the past. Designers place a premium on performance, but the designer’s stance is more intimately involved with human experience. Designers today explore products from the inside, focusing attention on performance as it is understood by the people who use products. For this reason, many designers explore “user experience” and employ insights from the social and behavioral sciences. They explore not only form and function, but also form and content which is behind the functionality. In short, designers explore what is **useful**, **usable** and **desirable** in products (See, the opinion of Richard Buchanan (1999) about the *internal view* of the product experience).

Astrida Valigorsky\* promoted this idea by saying “*good design is design that not only achieves a desired effect, but shapes our expectation of what the experience can be*”. In the same context, to call any design as a “good design” it must present something new; something makes the consumers stop and think. Additionally, it is also important for any design to reach consumers or users satisfied and in some cases to make them happy.

Norman Klein\*\* summarized this idea by saying “*good design is design that surprises, something that is unexpected but immediately comprehensible and pleasing*”.

In more specific words, Dieter Rams\*\*\* summed up his philosophy, his long experience as a professional designer and presented his approach in ten simple principles of “good design”. These ten principles could be considered as basics which allow to judge if the design is good or not.

### 1. Good design is innovative

Good design has to be something new. The possibilities for innovation are not, by any means, exhausted. Technological development is always offering new opportunities for innovative design, but innovative design always develops in tandem with innovative technology, and can never be an end in itself.

### 2. Good design makes a product useful

A product is bought to be used. It has to satisfy certain criteria, not only functional, but also psychological and aesthetic. Good design emphasises the usefulness of a product whilst disregarding anything that could possibly detract from it.

### 3. Good design is aesthetic

The form or the appearance of any design is a very important aspect which reflects its shadow on our decision: if the design is good or not. The aesthetic quality of a product is

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\* Manager of New Media, Museum of Modern Arts, New York, USA.

\*\* Norman Klein (Professor), cultural critic, California Institute of the Arts.

\*\*\* Dieter Rams was born in Wiesbaden, Germany in 1932. As a boy he loved to watch his grandfather at work as a carpenter and interrupted his study – of architecture and interior design at the local art school – in the late 1940s to become an apprentice carpenter. In 1951 he joined an architects’ office in Frankfurt and, four years later, was employed by Braun as an architect and interior designer. Rams can be considered as one of the most influential product designers of the 20th century. During his long career working for Braun (the German consumer electronics manufacturer), he had a paramount share in designing their signature products, which are exemplary for a stringently functional aesthetic that consistently reduces design to essentials (For more details about Rams, see Dieter Rams. Biography, Internet).

integral to its usefulness because products we use every day affect our person and our well-being. But only well-executed objects can be beautiful (this meaning refers to the concept of *form follows function* which was coined by the American architect *Louis Sullivan* in his article “*The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered*” published in 1896 (Sullivan, 1896). For more details, see Michl, 1995).

#### **4. Good design makes a product understandable**

It is not a success for any designer to present a complicated product/service, in contrast, the real success is when the design is easy understandable. It clarifies the product’s structure. Better still, it can make the product talk. At best, it is self-explanatory.

#### **5. Good design is unobtrusive**

Products fulfilling a purpose are like tools. They are neither decorative objects nor works of art. Their design should therefore be both neutral and restrained, to leave room for the user’s self-expression.

#### **6. Good design is honest**

It does not make a product more innovative, powerful or valuable than it really is. It does not attempt to manipulate the consumer with promises that cannot be kept.

#### **7. Good design is long-lasting**

This rule is relative to some extent as it differs from one design to another, but in general it is better to avoid being fashionable and therefore never appear antiquated. Unlike fashionable design, it lasts many years – even in today’s throwaway society.

#### **8. Good design is thorough down to the last detail**

Through careful study, the designer has to recognize all the aspects of his/her new innovation. Nothing must be arbitrary or left to chance. Care and accuracy in the design process show respect towards the consumer.

#### **9. Good design is environmentally friendly**

Design makes an important contribution to the preservation of the environment. It conserves resources and minimises physical and visual pollution throughout the lifecycle of the product.

#### **10. Good design is as little design as possible**

Less, but better – because it concentrates on the essential aspects, and the products are not burdened with non-essentials.

In brief, the philosophy of Rams is based on the principle of “*Back to purity, back to simplicity*”. He said “*My goal is to omit everything superfluous so that the essential is shown to best possible advantage*” (For more details about Dieter Rams, see Design Museum and Wikipedia, Internet).

On the one hand, there may be complete agreement about the importance of Rams’ rules, but on the other hand, it is noticed that most of these rules focus on the physical side of the product (function, form, size... etc.), without paying enough attention to the psychological values, the social and the cultural aspects. Those issues add important meanings for the design and raise its value to be the good design everyone desires (For more details, see Abdelrazik, 2012, b). This meaning represented in brief words through the “*Red Paper 2, Transformation Design*”, **Good design creates products, services, spaces, interactions and experiences that not only satisfy a function or solve a problem, but that are also desirable, aspirational, compelling and delightful** (see, Burns, Cottam and others, 2006, p. 9).

#### 2.4.9 Design as a cultural phenomenon ...

It is simple to say that designers create things; the study of these things is also a study of culture. All things (big and small, mundane and extraordinary, simple and complex, expensive and cheap) are essential components of the culture of everyday life. The cities we live in, the buildings we occupy, the spaces we move through, the things we use and the images we gaze upon mediate our experience of the world (Boradkar, 2010, p. 1).

In this context, it is essential to indicate the opinion of Stefan Lengyel\* about the main task of designers. He said “*The designer’s main task is to creatively embed technology in the*

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\* **Stefan Lengyel** (Professor), born in 1937, completed his studies in industrial design in Budapest in 1961. In 1964, he became an assistant at the Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, where he worked with Hans Gugelot. 1965, he began teaching at the Essen Folkwangschule, in 1969 he became the head of its Industrial Design department. In 1981, he was appointed to the Chair of Industrial Design at the University of Essen, a position he held until 2003. For many years, he was a design consultant for Miele and Rosenthal. Since 2001, Stefan Lengyel also held the Chair of Product Design at the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design in Budapest. He lectures in the United States, Finland, Italy, Spain, China, and Japan, among other places. Stefan Lengyel is a member of several expert boards and is honorary president of the Verband Deutscher Industrie Designer (Association of German Industrial Designers).

*culture*". In the previous points it was discussed who the designer is and what is his/her main task, so it is agreed with Prof. Lengyel about the designers' main task, but the question here is; which technology does he mean? And which culture? It is known that everything around us is somehow globalized and there are plenty of opinions defending the idea of global culture, but it does not mean that they are completely right, and there are no differences between cultures, or we have to work to blur the differences which formed the variety of identities. Anyway, to agree compliantly with Prof. Lengyel's opinion, it is proposed to respect these differences and work to embed the appropriate technology (the relationship between culture and globalization will be discussed in detail in the next chapter).

Design and culture have always been closely interrelated, but in many instances design is flaunted as the true measure of culture, rather than belonging to part of the cultural context of society. Somehow, design has become the embodiment of a larger process of creative "culture-mongering" that has become a means to capture ideas, innovation and enterprise and made to stand for cultural identity.

In this sense, whilst the application of design is multiplying exponentially, it is also losing its validity as an authentic cultural icon. It has become synonymous with cloning the face of global culture itself, more often representing the uniformity of mass globalization, rather than reflecting the facets of cultural difference and diversity.

Traditionally, as it was explained in the "first chapter", culture is referred to as a pattern that signifies human activity manifested by the arts, music, sculpture, theatre, dance, film, fashion, design, food and architecture. In contemporary popular culture, it also includes the Internet, entertainment, and the cult of celebrity, as part of a range of other cultural attributes. Today, the cultural attributes of difference and diversity have been fundamentally weakened, it is like a face which has undergone cosmetic surgery, and the result is a facsimile vaguely familiar but disturbingly without a true sense of identity. It is everyone's and no one's, and belongs in no single place more than another (Carlson, 2011, David Report, Internet).

Indeed, it is possible to be at the same time a member of one culture and a member of one or more subcultures that might have little in common with the dominant form. John Heskett promotes this opinion by mentioning that the influence of cultural differences on design

practice is one of the most profound problems thrown up by the growth of globalization (Heskett, 2002, pp. 85-87).

A major question for designers is how to enable people from different cultures to navigate the problems of change. The dilemma of designing across cultural boundaries, therefore, is the extent to which cultural identity is fixed or is capable of change (Heskett, 2002, p. 89). In other words, business should respond to different cultural needs in ways that improve lives: by designing products and services that are accessible, appropriate, understandable, and pleasurable, in ways people can absorb into their pattern of life. Cultural identity is not fixed, but is constantly evolving and mutating, and design is a primary element in stimulating the awareness of possibilities (Heskett, 2002, p. 90). Indeed, design can therefore be viewed from a cultural perspective as a visual barometer of changing times. Products express the evolving values and aspirations of the society which consumes them (Cooper & Press, 1995, p. 15).

These days, design determines not only existence, but also self; through products we communicate with other people, define ourselves in social groups, and thus mark out our individual place in society (Bürdek, 2005, p. 11). So, it is important to understand that the nature of design evolves in relation to changes in the mode of production and in the context of cultural and social development (Cooper & Press, 1995, p. 47).

Finally, and from all the previous explanation, it is argued that design is a broad field covering many different disciplines. It can be viewed as a discrete activity, as a total process or in terms of its tangible outcome. Design can be viewed as a management function, a cultural phenomenon and as an industry in its own right (Cooper & Press, 1995, p. 7).

#### 2.4.10 Chapter Summary ...

- Design is as old as human civilization. Everyone can - and does - design, we are all designing when we plan for something new to happen.
- Design is a common word to use every day everywhere. It concerns every one of us - as humans - and it has an endless meanings and explanations (see, Papanek, 1985).



- Design is not a simple term to explain. Its meaning is deeper and more detailed than most ordinary people think. In brief, design is a creative planning process that leads to useful products, systems or services.
- The difficulty of writing or talking about design is that the word *design* has so many different meanings and many levels of understanding. Design as a meaning may refer to a plan, a process, or a product.
- Design is unlike art and not similar to applied science. Design is a method of applied knowledge from engineering, natural, human and cultural sciences mixed with sociological, physiological and psychological values.
- Design is a dynamic, complex, multi-faceted phenomenon, involving people, processes, knowledge, methods and tools within an organizational, micro-economic and macro-economic context. Each design is - in some sense - unique.
- Design is not only a knowledge-intensive activity, but also a purposeful, social and cognitive activity undertaken in a dynamic context, aimed “at changing existing situations into preferred ones”.
- The design process is a dynamic renewable concept. It is a purposeful method of planning practical solutions to problems; it is influenced by requirements called criteria and constraints. The design process is never final; there are always multiple solutions to a problem which start the process in a new form.
- Different designers manage the process of design in different ways. In generally, the design process starts by defining the problem to understand it, then thinking about it, creating a sample or a prototype which is tested to get a real evaluation.
- The design process determines the quality of products/services. So, if we wish to improve our products/services, we must improve our processes and we must continually redesign not just our products/services, but also the way we design.
- The design process is like a navigator which directs the designer through his/her work. This dynamic process allows every designer to understand why he/she designs, how to design and allows to build a clear evaluation for every stage of designing, which means achieving success in the shortest and fastest approach.
- The designer is the person who practices design. Designers are usually described and divided according to their fields of work. Additionally, they may be divided into many classifications depending on their educational level and their practical experiences.

- Anyone who practices design takes somehow on a cultural responsibility. The sense of this responsibility is varying according many integrated factors (social, ideological, economic and political issues ...etc.).
- In designing products, specific skills required include the ability to understand users' needs, wants, tastes and priorities, in addition to the ability to select the right materials and manufacturing processes; the ability to create products which fully meet aesthetic, ergonomic, quality and economic expectations; and the ability to produce drawings and explanations which communicate the final design solution to others working in the enterprise or outside.
- There are many explanations about what the good design is; generally, it could say that good design is the design that not only achieves a desired effect, but shapes our expectation of what the experience can be.
- Designers create things; the study of these things is also a study of culture.
- Design is influenced by culture and culture influenced by design. Design and culture have always been closely interrelated, but in many instances design is flaunted as the true measure of culture, rather than belonging to part of cultural context of the society.
- Business should respond to different cultural needs in ways that improve lives: by designing products and services that are accessible, appropriate, understandable, and pleasurable, in ways people can absorb into their pattern of life.
- Cultural identity is not fixed, but is constantly evolving and mutating, and design is a primary element in stimulating the awareness of possibilities.
- The nature of design works have to evolve in relation to changes in the mode of production and in the context of cultural and social diversity and development.
- The influence of cultural differences on design practice is one of the most profound problems thrown up by the growth of globalization.

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Chapter 5:

***Designers' creativity and their responsibility  
between cultural identity and global trends***



### 2.5.1 Chapter overview ...

This chapter is the fifth chapter of the second section of this thesis. Indeed, it is the last chapter of the theoretical study sequences. Through the previous four chapters, the meanings of the key concepts of the study were clarified and discussed. The meaning of culture, identity and globalization were presented, how these concepts are strongly related together, and how every concept of them affects and is affected by the others.

The main goal of this chapter is to discuss and present a methodological thinking strategy of understanding the mutual influence of all the previously discussed concepts on the design process and its practice. In simple words, this chapter is an attempt to present a guide which helps the designer (any designer) to eliminate the confusion and cross the gap between his/her traditional cultural identity related to the character of his/her society and the strong global trends.

In the light of all the previous explanations and clarifications of the meanings of culture, identity and globalization, in addition to the design process it is held that the meanings of all these concepts are very wide-ranging and unclear, so the width and the depth of the gap is completely different according to many variables and aspects. In some cases, the gap looks vast, deep and very difficult to cross or to fill, as in the case of many developing countries which have a uniquely effective historical cultural background (e.g. Egypt). In other cases, the gap looks very narrow or insignificant, as in the case of the majority of developed countries (e.g. Germany).

This chapter will discuss and present many ideas, sometimes it returns back by referring to many discussed related aspects to explain their correlation and to present a theoretical scenario of solving the misunderstanding and fixing the conflict between these meanings.

Generally, this chapter serves to summarize the result of all the previously indicated theoretical meanings and concepts, it presents a consequential strategy of solving and treating the confusion of designers' visions by focusing on their responsibility and discussing suitable methods of creation and innovation, which let and allow them to be on the wave of globalization without losing their cultural background.

More than before, through this chapter, many perspectives of the researcher will be presented. These perspectives (points of view) are built and formulated in the light of all the previous theoretical definitions and explanations and they are based on the former results and findings.

### 2.5.2 The influence of globalization ...

*"Global consciousness does not imply global consensus"*

(Lechner, 2000)

Globalization influences everything and its effects are everywhere. Frank Lechner (2000) argued that globalization had turned the world order into an object of reflection in that everyone must now reflexively respond to the common predicament of living in one world. This provokes the formulation of contending world views. For example, some portray the world as an assembly of distinct communities, highlighting the virtues of particularism, while others view it as developing toward a single overarching organization, representing the presumed interests of humanity as a whole.

In a compressed world, the comparison and confrontation of world views are likely to produce new cultural conflicts. In such conflicts, religious traditions play a special role, since they can be mobilized to provide an ultimate justification for one's view of the globe; the resurgence of fundamentalist groups, is a case in point. A globalized world is thus integrated but not harmonious, a single place but also diverse, a construct of shared consciousness but prone to fragmentation (Lechner, 2000), (For more details, see Ray, 2007, p. 11-12).

Simply, the influence of globalization does not mean that culture necessarily remains dependent on a specific environment, or a specific region, with everyone adhering to the same broad, homogeneous set of values and beliefs. It raises the possibility of having a culture different from those around us. Cultural multiplicity (or cultural hybridization, as I will explain) rather than homogeneity and an emphasis on cultural creation rather than cultural inheritance would appear on many levels to be patterns for the future. Any such transition, however, will not be simple or easy (Heskett, 2002, p. 34).

With the growth and development of information and communication technology, relationships, communities and cultures have been dramatically affected, especially as a result of the increasing accessibility and speed of communication platforms. However, as people incorporate these emerging technologies into their social interactions, there results a tendency to lose touch with social nuances, cultural values, and the characteristics of traditional society.

In the past decade, user-centered design has become the essence of human-computer interface design, interaction design, and industrial design. In these domains, designers and system developers focus on comprehending and meeting people's specific requirements. However, for the purposes of globalization, the online application design of most commercial pursuits has been forced to confront the serious issues that relate to cultural differences, due to the great variety globally in preferences, motivations for accessing media, personal perceptions and values of users. These are definitely different from one culture to another.

Marcus (2002) addressed the fact that internationalization and intercultural and local issues cannot be ignored in the goal of globalization for worldwide production and consumption. While intercultural issues would refer to the religious, historical, linguistic, or aesthetic characteristics of a culture, localization in design might refer to the different requirements of specific local scales.

For example in interface design, Yeo (1996) argues that extensive consideration should be given to cultural characteristics in creating user interface design. He presents the concept of *Cultural User Interface "CUI"*, which takes into consideration all the covert factors and elements of interface needs that are localized for particular cultures. Such factors as people's backgrounds, education levels and social habits determine the way that they interact with others and with environments. In one culture, there will be a shared understanding among people, resulting in their having similar attitudes, behaviors or reactions in specific circumstances. On the contrary, people's perceptions and customs will vary in the light of culture. Such differences could be reflected in the understanding and reception of the visual graphics, colors, functionality, information architecture and metaphors that are applied in user interface design.

Hence, researchers and system developers need to comprehend accurately the shared knowledge of target groups in order to predict user perceptions and behaviors. By analyzing and comparing the differences in hobbies that strongly depend on culture, Yoe discusses the possibilities regarding differentiation and emphasis in interface design for several cultures. He addresses a simple principle for system development, that the functionality components and interface components of the application should be separated so that they can be replaced or tailored for different cultural requirements, and so that the system applications can be more easily adapted to conform to particular local characteristics (Yeo, 1996, 1998).

Okazaki and Rivas (2002) presented another idea which consumers' online behavior might differ in relation to different cultural backgrounds and these differences might be understood by applying content analysis of the web communication strategies of multinational companies. They argue that the online communication strategies of such companies, such as web based advertising and promotional campaigns, lack standards with regard to matching different cultural contexts. Individualism, for example, is regarded as a main philosophy of the West, whereas, on the contrary, the Confucianism of the East seeks a stable and tight hierarchy in personal relationships. These inherent cultural differences directly determine users' motivations when it comes to online behavior and attitudes toward communication media and have a great impact on design strategies (For more details, see Huang & Deng, 2008, p. 82-83).

### 2.5.3 Designers' confusion between Locality and Globality...

As a result of the whole previous discussion about the meaning of globalization, its dimensions, directions and its applications (For more details, see chapter 3), it is clear beyond doubt that we live in the era of globalization. Globalization is a fact which is inevitable and accelerating, not only this, but also we can replace the globalization by the term of "*globality*".

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\* **Globality** is the end-state of globalization – a hypothetical condition in which the process of globalization is complete or nearly so, barriers have fallen, and "a new global reality" is emerging. Globality as a term was used for first time in 1998 by author and economist Daniel Yergin in a Newsweek article that described the end-state of the globalization process.



Harlod L. Sirkin, James W. Hemerling and Arindam K. Bhattacharya (2008, p. 1) in the first chapter of their book "Globality: Competing with Everyone from Everywhere for Everything" explained that "*Globality is not a new and different term for globalization; it is the name for a new and different global reality in which we'll all be competing with everyone, from everywhere, for everything*". They said "We are in a new economic order. Who will survive and who will go down?"

Indeed and as already stated, the main goal of this chapter is NOT to determine who will survive or who will go down. This would be a wrong start, to think in this kind of division. The target which is intended is to achieve in the coming lines is how we can together survive, without absolute winners or defeated losers.

The discussion now is not about the differences between globalization as a concept and its generality as "*globality*", but it is specifically about their directions, their influences, their applications, and then their results. In the majority of Western literatures, everything becomes global; global thinking, global needs, global culture, global production and global design. In addition, there are many future studies about global feelings or global emotions.

There is a great fear that the strong tsunami of globalism or globality will transfer many undeveloped societies into carbon copies. This opinion which will be discussed carefully through the empirical study does not mean that it is better to be against globalization, *absolutely not*, for as already stated globalization is a reality which no one can deny or oppose.

Simply, and as was discussed in the third chapter, the main problem of the globalization process is that it is a one way flow; from the West to all the rest. According to the concepts of "McDonaldization" or "Cocalization" we will think in the same way, wear the same styles, eat the same foods ... and design in the same discipline.

This direction of development is dangerous. In the previous chapter (chapter 4) which was about the design process and its practice, it was shown that the main aim or the major goal of any designer is to achieve the basic or the real needs of his/her society (whatever the kind or the life quality of this society). The point here is about the progress and the development of this society. If the society still has basic problems of poverty or inequality as many

developing countries, the designers of these countries are usually working to solve realistic problems which serve to improve people's life quality. In contrast, if the society is already developed and most of the basic daily problems are solved, as in the case of the USA and the majority of European countries, so designers usually work to present and to innovate more futuristic facilities which make life better and more luxurious.

For example, the methodology of thinking, the life style and the real needs of a poor person who lives in a small village on one of the mountains of Kenya is still completely different from the methodology of thinking, the life style and the real needs of a person who lives in one of the main streets in the heart of London. Every one of these people has a very specific culture, a special character and a unique formulation of identity. Accordingly every one of them has different problems to solve, different needs and specific tasks to achieve.

These requirements need a special designer, a creative person who has the ability to scan the reality, has the ability to carefully understand and has the unlimited imagination to innovate. The idea is not only one of extremes, but also there is a qualitative difference between the person who lives in a (modern) developing country like Egypt and the person who lives in a developed country like Germany.

There are many developing countries such as Egypt, where the majority of people still believe in and react with their cultural background (a description of the details will be in the following section). This cultural background which relates to their history, traditions, emotions, language, religions ... etc. formed their identity. This sort of strong effective identity reflects its values in all walks of life and makes many designers in this kind of society confused between the directions and applications of globalization and their cultural identity. This confusion appears clearly in specific fields of design, such as fashion design, jewelry design and furniture design.

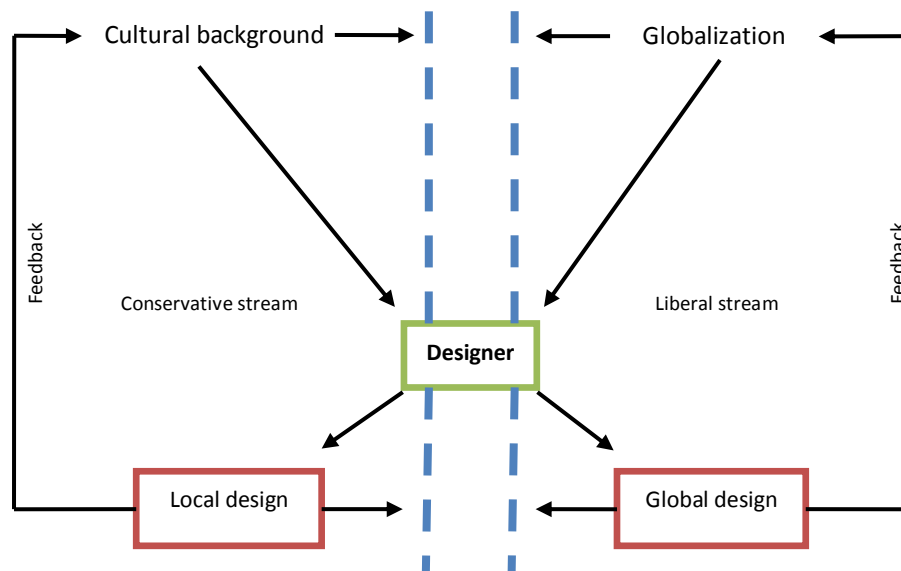
To discover and clarify the problem, its issues and work to construct a solution, we can illustrate the main point of difference through two figures as follows:

### 2.5.3.1 Designers of developing countries ...

*which have a particular cultural heritage (e.g. Egypt).*

The reading of (Figure 11) shows that the designers of these countries (developing countries which have a huge unique cultural heritage) usually have two isolated choices to think about. This isolation has happened because of the conflict and the clash between their cultural background and globalization trends. It is clear that the both concepts work in contrast and the relationship between them is not always obvious. In such a case most of designers have only one possibility, to be in the left or in the right side.

First (the left side): They keep thinking and designing to achieve the basic needs of their people according to their private identity which was formed from their effective cultural background. That means they keep and continue creating a kind of local design without any participation in the global design movement. This trend is considered as a “*conservative*” direction. Many designers of the developing countries are delving more in their past (*cultural historical background*) to derive values which are present in their current designs.



**Figure 11:** The confusion of developing countries' designers between their cultural background and globalization (Source: the author).

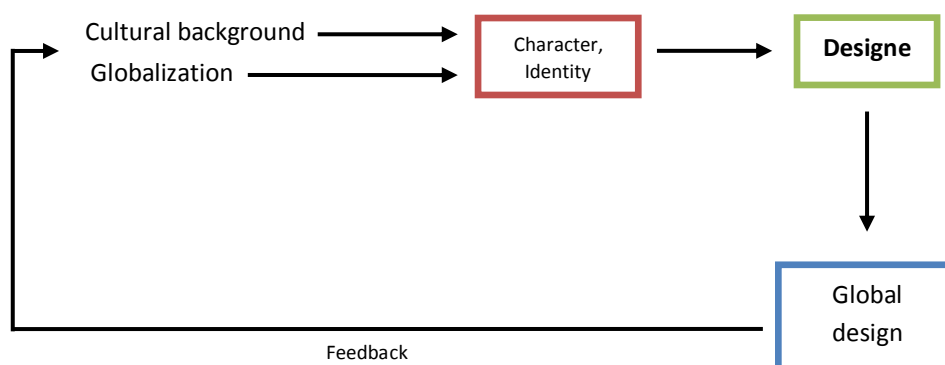
Second (the right side): They rush towards the methods and the applications of globalization, which do not match entirely/completely with the cultural background of their society and do not correspond to the basic needs of their people. This trend is considered as a “liberal” direction. Most of those designers create copied forms from global western designs, and they imagine that they are effective and positive participators in global movements.

The dilemma here - which faces many designers of these countries - is how to cross and remove these sensitive borders (dotted line) between the two sides. Actually, I think the separation of the both sides is not totally correct (as the questionnaire and the interviews will prove in the coming section), but the best way (which I will discuss theoretically) is how to keep, develop and present local cultural identity in a global context. This significant work is not typical of all the designers in such developing countries, but only that of the design experts or the designers who have visionary concepts (For more details, see chapter 4, designers' classification).

### 2.5.3.2 Designers of developed countries ...

*which are very practical (e.g. Germany).*

In contrast (Figure 12) shows how the designers of the developed countries have a clear vision in thinking and designing. There is no conflict and the amount of confusion is very limited, their cultural background works in the same direction with globalization trends. During the last three decades they were able to shorten the details and agreed together to cross and bridge the differences (with the political and the economic support).



**Figure 12:** The smooth interaction of developed countries' designers with their cultural background and globalization (Source: the author).

***Developed countries' designers deal with today to design for future.***

This successful strategy of interacting and dealing with differences allowed them to create and develop global designs. This is excellent, but ethically the majority of them do not pay enough attention to their role of improving and developing the design thinking of the developing countries' designers. Here I refer to the theoretical moral meaning of globalization.

In my opinion, it is a genuine responsibility of the developed countries' designers to help other designers to present their personal/cultural identity in a global context. It is their role to encourage the developed countries' designers to be active and effective in the contemporary life, NOT to keep these countries only as markets for their products. This idea looks very unreal and these issues relate to many economic and maybe political aspects, but design as a practice profession is one of the soft effective tools which are able to change the face of the world.

Through the coming paragraphs - and as a design researcher - I will discuss many ideas which are suitable to solve the conflict between the cultural identity background and globalization. Indeed, most of these ideas are related to business and economics, but the forthcoming lines work to "*harmonize*" features to be fit for application in the design field.

**2.5.4 Culture between homogenization and hybridization ...**

As a result from all the previous explanations, it could be argued that the first attempt to solve the misunderstanding at the core of the relationship between culture and globalization is to consider culture as a dimension of the global context (like politics, economy) not to present a new form of contemporary culture in the era of globalization, which might be called "*global culture*" (For more details, see chapter 3, culture as a dimension of globalization, global culture, pp. 93-96). The meaning of the global culture consolidates, supports and confirms the sense of the conflict between it and the local or the classical forms of culture.

In fact, some theorists argue that there can be no such thing as truly global culture because identity and cultural attachment rely on emotional and traditional resonances. The Mc or

the Coca-Colonization of the world cannot hope to achieve this because they are comparatively recent, manifestly commercial, and lack the specific signifiers of cultural identity to which people can relate. Held and McGrew (2000, p. 16) wrote in this respect that *“there is no common global pool of memories; no common global way of thinking; and no universal history in and through which people can unite”*.

Simply, this means which called “global culture” is limited in its capacity to mobilize identity and effect. Indeed, being necessarily premised on capitalism and the dissemination of narratives through the electronic media, it can exist only in so far as corporations find it profitable to construct and market new memories and new shared experiences. Rather than an actual culture, they might argue, it is a fiction conjured up and disseminated by the global media (Schirato & Webb, 2003, p. 154-155).

#### 2.5.4.1 Cultural homogenization ...

Tony Schirato and Jen Webb (2003) explained that most theorists, though, fall into one of two camps with respect to the question of a global culture. One is the *“cultural homogenization”* camp, the other is the *“cultural hybridization”* camp. The former equate globalization generally with the homogenizing of culture, the resultant retraction or dismissal of local cultures, and the Westernization of the globe (For more details, see chapter 3, McDonalidization).

Though cultural products - of course - flow across and around the globe, most of the flow is from the West outwards. And because of the power of the media to mobilize identity and effect, it is argued, the effect is of a single commodity/identity world and the destruction of the local and the authentic. According to this perspective, global culture means Western culture writ large. For those who have not the ability to resist this cultural neocolonialism, the future is Western. For those with some resources, though, they can resist and turn the homogenizing process back on itself.

Hou Hanru (1999, p. 191) suggests an inversion of the West-out flow of cultural forms. Rather, he takes up a concept previously applied to the economic sphere, the *“glocal”*. This uncommon word was coined by Roland Robertson to describe the selling of goods and

services on a global scale, but targeted appropriately to particular local markets. For Hanru, it can also describe the possibility of producing art in a dynamic tension between global and local tastes, traditions, narratives and imperatives (the meaning of glocalization will be later discussed).

This is an expression of the direction of the cultural globalization debate: the idea of cultural hybridization instead of cultural homogenization, or the blending and the mixing of foreign and local to make a new form. According to Beynon and Dunkerley (2000, p. 18-19), this flow (what Hanru calls the glocal) is two-way flow. While global culture obviously impacts upon the local in the massive production and distribution of global consumer goods and images, the local culture impacts on the global too.

Although the basic idea of “glocalization” revolves around economic practices we can borrow its essence and work to apply it in the field of design innovation. By deep thinking, there are practically limitless pools of examples of these practices. We can think, for instance, of popular music.

#### 2.5.4.2 Cultural hybridization ...

Cultural hybridization is in contrast with the idea of cultural homogenization (Westernization). Indeed, hybridization is one of the best contemporary theories which remove the hidden borders, solve the global inequality and achieve the sublime theoretical principles of globalization.

In this context, it is important to refer to the idea/the theory of Homi Bhabha<sup>\*</sup>, who speaks about the “multiculturalism”. Bhabha said “... *the culture of Western modernity must be relocated from the postcolonial perspective*”. He highlights the importance of cultural hybridization and the translation of social differences that goes beyond the polarities of self and others (East and West) (For more details, see Bhabha, 1994).

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<sup>\*</sup> **Homi K. Bhabha** was born in India (1949). He is the Anne F. Rothenberg Professor of English and American Literature and Language. Bhabha is the Director of the Humanities Center at Harvard University. He is one of the most important figures in contemporary post-colonial studies, and has developed a number of the field's neologisms and key concepts, such as hybridity, mimicry, difference, and ambivalence ...

For Jan N. Pieterse (2004, p. 77) *“cultural hybridization refers to the mixing of Asian, African, American, European cultures: hybridization is the making of global culture as a global *mélange*. As a category, hybridity serves a purpose based on the assumption of difference between the categories, forms, beliefs that go into the mixture. Yet the very process of hybridization shows the difference to be relative and, with a slight shift of perspective, the relationship can also be described in terms of an affirmation of similarity”*.

In the same sense, John Tomlinson (1999, p. 141) explained that the consideration of the globalized culture as a hybrid culture has a strong intuitive appeal which follows directly from the notion of deterritorialization. This is because the increasing traffic between cultures that the globalization process brings suggests that the dissolution of the link between culture and place is accompanied by an intermingling of these disembedded cultural practices producing new complex hybrid forms of culture. Though not always related explicitly to the analysis of globalization, this sort of cultural complexity has been a strong theme in writings about post-colonial culture and in work on broader cultural identity.

Commentators who align themselves with the hybridization argument sometimes suggest that the networking of the globe does not necessarily lead to the extinction of local culture and local forms. Rather, they argue, it may regenerate traditional practices, languages and forms of cultural production. A.D. Smith argues that the new communication technologies *“make possible a denser, more intense interaction between members of communities who share common cultural characteristics, notably language - which can re-energize - ethnic communities and their nationalisms”* (Smith, 1990, p. 175).

Beynon and Dunkerley pointed out (2000, p. 20) that many of the *traditional* arts and craft on display in tourist centres are highly dubious in their origins, and their function is not the revival of a local culture but the production of tourist goods. Difference is deployed, then, as part of the global market trajectory, and not because of any inherent appreciation of other cultures and their values (for more details, see Schirato & Webb, 2003, pp. 155-159). Indeed, this opinion looks rather bizarre, and needs more proof, but actually it is not the point here.

The main point which needs to be focused on is that it is more effective and less negative to think and apply the idea of cultural hybridization instead of the homogenization of the world. The applications of homogenization (as it discussed in chapter 3, McDonaldization)



increased the widening gap between different societies of the world. In contrast, by applying the idea of hybridization, designers in all over the world can deal, react and work together.

Design hybridization means that designers - in all fields of innovation - accept and deal with the prospective of each other and work to improve the abilities of each other by melting and removing the invisible strong borders between the specific cultural identity and globalization.

### 2.5.5 Think global/Act local "Glocalization" ...

In the same context of thinking and proposing a suitable methodology of solving the conflict between locality and globality "*the clash between cultural identity and globalization*", it is proposed to transform this negative clash into a *creative* clash by applying the idea of: "*Think global and act local*".

This simple phrase contains a deep prospective which presents a method of dealing with the global trends in a local context. For Dumitrescu and Vinerean (2010, p. 149), the idea of "think global, act local" refers to the "*glocal*" strategy which represents a middle way between the "*global*" and the "*local*" strategies (Table 2).

Global	Thinking globally, acting globally
Local	Thinking locally, acting locally
<b>Glocal</b>	<b>Thinking globally, acting locally</b>

**Table 2:** The Maxims for Local, Global and Glocal

According to Malcolm Waters (2001), the idea of "*Think globally, act locally*" has been used in many various contexts, including town planning, environment, education, and business. The original phrase "Think global, act local" has been attributed to Patrick Geddes\*.

\* **Patrick Geddes** (Sir), (1854 – 1932) was a Scottish biologist, sociologist, geographer, philanthropist and pioneering town planner. He is known for his innovative thinking in the fields of urban planning and sociology. He was responsible for introducing the concept of "region" to architecture and planning and is also known to have coined the term "conurbation".

More recently, Theodore Levitt\* used the term clearly to explain a simple deal with globalization trends in the field of marketing and business.

Global is about the size and strength of a business. Local is about the people: where they live and work, how they think, what they need, what they value, and what moves them to action. Acting local demonstrates a respect for local outlooks, priorities and traditions and an understanding of how to compromise in taking the step from global thinking to local thinking and action (Unknown, Gibbs & Soell Insight). The globalization/localization issue has received a great deal of attention in academic debates as well as commerce and marketing arenas. In an article in which they discussed how to think global and act local in the field of web design, Anna H. Perrault and Vicki L. Gregory (2000) highlighted many examples and explained how this strategy is important and useful in dealing with different peoples, their different needs and backgrounds. They explained how it is a good idea to know the basic information about the different target groups of users, which help to present the global ideas in a local acceptable context. One of the interesting examples which they mentioned in their article was about using colors on website design. Company officials at “Dell” quickly realized they had made the mistake of surrounding most of the site’s content with black borders, a sign of negativity or death in many cultures. The use of black in graphics and backgrounds is very popular in the United States, but the color has sinister connotations in Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

Indeed, the strategy of “*think global and act local*” proved successful and highly effective in marketing, specifically in the wide work of multinational corporations.

This context explains the meaning of “*glocalization*” which was previously mentioned as a methodology of solving and reducing the clash between what is local and what is global. Teasdale (1997) supports this idea, he explained that it is important to rethink how to build a solution to reduce the clash between global and local and he refers to the meaning of “*glocalization*”. He said that there are a vast tensions and discontinuities between the local and the global. The solution is to search for a new way of synchronizing or blending the diverse cultures of knowledge (For more details, see Tien and Talley 2012).

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\* **Theodore Levitt** (1925-2006) was an American economist and professor at Harvard Business School. He was also editor of the *Harvard Business Review* and an editor who was especially noted for increasing the Review’s circulation and for popularizing the term globalization. Levitt earned a PhD in economics, in addition to winning many academic awards.

Historically, the term “*glocalization*” first appeared in the late 1980s in Harvard Business Review articles which was written by Japanese economists (Khondker, 2004). For Thomas Friedman (1999) “*glocalization is the ability of a culture, when it encounters other strong cultures, to absorb influences that naturally fit into and can enrich the culture, to resist those things that are truly alien, and to compartmentalize those things that, while different, can nevertheless be enjoyed and celebrated as different*”. Glocalization, then, seems to be the art of attaining a fine balance of assimilating foreign influences into a society that add to its diversity without overwhelming it (For more details, see Dumitrescu and Vinerean, 2010). In other words, glocalization defines as the way in which ideas and structures that circulate globally are adapted and changed by local realities (Tiplady, 2003).

Jan Sucháček (2011, p. 322-323) summarized the idea of “*glocalization*” by explaining that it is comprised two processes: “*globalization*” and “*localization*”. While “*localization*” refers to human beings, individual subjects, organizations, communities or localities, “*globalization*” embraces the planetary processes. However, the underlying causes of global processes can be always found in concrete localities. Glocalization is often interpreted as “*think globally and act locally*”, which is perceived as possibly a proper strategy for the future sustainable development of the whole planet. The term expresses the human capability to overcome (at least mentally) the various territorial scales. Sucháček stated that the global and the local represent two sides of the same coin and the nature of the contemporary societal processes entitles us to use the term “*glocalization*”.

Glocalization is the future of the intercultural relationships. Emmanuel J. Duru (2011) considered it as the sustainable alternative to the process of globalization. He argued that globalization as a contemporary phenomenon has been questioned because of its perceived and obvious negative socio-cultural and economic effects on local and international communities, but glocalization is in contrast with that.

Finally, it could be claimed that the essence of “*think global, act local*” strategy can be suitable to apply in the field of design specifically in cases where the designers are confused and hesitate between their local cultural traditions and the global trends. In this context, think “*global*” probably means to use high technologies, new materials and the contemporary methods of designing and producing ... etc, but the challenge is how to

formulate all these aspects - and others - in a “local” form and in a local discipline which achieve the basic needs of users, which are different from one society to another.

Indeed, and unlike the success of the *glocal marketing*, the efforts of applying “*glocalization*” strategy in the field of design looks a bit different and difficult, but it is not impossible especially if it is based upon a group of specialized experts who are involved in practicing the selected sort of design, who are aware of its principles, its bases and who realize the actual needs of their users (specifically, it is the responsibility of design experts and visionary designers who are mentioned through the classification of designers according to their educational level and experience, see chapter four, pp. 132-134).

### 2.5.6 Local and Global/Form and Content ...

As a result of all the previous reflections about how to solve the problem, here is the last theoretical instance which looks like a summation of the whole idea. Thinking about the dialog (instead of clash) between local and global parallel with the integration of form and content is the responsibility of design researchers and the design experts of every field. This dynamic comprehensive thinking is the only way to renounce dispute, reject the conflict and reduce the confusion between the designers' cultural background and globalization.

Koichi Iwabuchi (2002, p. 44) stated that the dynamic relationship between the local and the global is important for understanding how globalization works today, especially consideration of the structures of common difference. He said “*convincing analysis of the unevenness of global interconnectedness should go beyond a global–local binary opposition. The operation of global cultural power can only be found in local practice, whereas cultural reworking and appropriation at the local level necessarily takes place within the matrix of global homogenizing forces*”.

The important question here is about the alternative formulations of this relationship. In design practice, what is more effective to present a “*local form in a global content*” or a “*global form in a local content*”?

### 2.5.6.1 Local form/global content ...

This concept is borrowed from marketing and business. J. Macgregor Wise (2008, p. 42-43) said that the idea of “local forms, global content” means to get repackaged from within the framework of the audience’s local culture. Global content (content distributed globally) is given a local form through the interpretations and discussions of the audiences that consume it. In a similar way, global culture can be appropriated for local uses, to make a local statement about identity.

Erla Zwingle (1999) argued that this process of localizing *products* is not unknown to the global corporations who take a global product (e.g. McDonald’s hamburgers, Revlon cosmetics) and produce local versions of it (e.g. McMutton sandwiches, make-up with the color palette suited to South Asian faces, and so on).

Indeed, the strategy of applying this principal in the field of design as a way of reducing the conflict between designers’ cultural identity and globalization is deeper than that. The idea is not only to represent the global *products* in a local form to be acceptable as a new generation of these products in other societies – this approach is not rejectable – but also it is more vital and more aspirant to produce the local forms in a global content which allows these local forms’ values to be a part of the global matter (see section four, the case study).

### 2.5.6.2 Global form/local content ...

In contrast with the previous idea, the anthropologist Richard Wilk (1995) supposed the strategy of “global form, local content”. He argued that the nature of globalization, of global capitalism, and, therefore, of global cultural hegemony, has changed. Global capitalism no longer promotes homogeneity; it is not trying to mass produce one widget for the entire world. That old strategy can be opposed, by those so inclined, by arguing in favor of cultural difference (we are different and so your widget won’t work here, go home).

Wilk explained that global capitalism today promotes difference (the new, the exotic), and it thrives on difference. But it promotes only a certain type of difference, and ignores other differences. It promotes the types of differences that can be easily packaged and sold, the types of differences that are not threatening to global capitalism. By promoting a limited

range of difference, it limits the range of actions available to people. He refers to this as structures of common difference, an apparently paradoxical statement.

In the same sense, J. Macgregor Wise (2008, p.45) said that cultures are allowed to be different (capitalism promotes these differences to the maximum degree), but only in certain, marketable, safe ways. Wise goes on to say that now many cultures are allowed to have safe differences in the global arena, like language, food, dance, arts, religion, and ethnicity. Indeed, if one is a tourist one looks for the local cuisine, arts, rituals and festivals, and enjoys watching the exotic people. What differences are cultures not allowed to have in the global arena? Politics and economics (non-capitalist value systems), and extreme religious beliefs.

According to Wise's opinion, it is agreed that there are many safe cultural differences accepted in the global era (it is not the context to ask who decides if these differences are safe, or not? And how?). Anyway, it is acceptable that the difference in design perspective is one of these safe issues, but the question is how to deal with the variety of the perspectives themselves.

The idea of "global form, local content" needs more efforts to prove its validity through design practice, not only as a theoretically proposed strategy, but also through presenting real products. This will discuss in detail through the in depth interviews which will present in the coming section (section 3). Additionally, there is a case study which will give an example of applying this strategy (section 4).

### 2.5.7 Chapter summary ...

This chapter is the last chapter of the theoretical study of this thesis. It is based on all the previous explanations and indications of the key concepts: culture, identity, globalization and design process. It discussed, diagnosed and presented a strategy of solving the main problem of the research. The summary and the findings of this chapter are integrating, interacting and working in harmony with all the summaries and findings of the former four chapters.

- Globalization is a fact which is inevitable and accelerating, not only this, but also we can replace the globalization by the term of “globality”. Globalization or globality influences everything and its effects are everywhere. As a result of the new global order cultures have been dramatically affected.
- The main negative effect of globality is that it is one way flow; from the west to all the rest. That means destroying or distorting many societies’ culture especially in many poor or developing countries.
- The real needs of any person depend on many integrated variables. Designers of every society are usually working hard to achieve these needs.
- There are many developing countries such as Egypt, where the majority of people still believe and react with their cultural background which has unlimited influence on the formulation of their personal, social and cultural identity. Designers of a society like that are usually confused between their unique cultural heritage and the trends of globalization. This confusion appears clearly in specific fields of design, such as fashion design, jewelry design and furniture design.
- Many developing countries’ designers have to select to work according to their society’s cultural identity and create forms of “*local designs*” or rush towards the trends and the applications of globalization (which are not fit with the real needs of their people) and create copied forms from global western designs.
- During the last three decades the majority of developed countries’ designers were able to shorten the differences of everyday-life details and agreed together to cross and bridge the ideological, social and cultural differences. Their cultural background works in the same wave/direction with globalization trends.
- The responsibility of solving the conflict and reducing the confusion of developing countries’ designers is the work of the design researchers and design experts, not only the experts of these countries, but also the experts of the developed countries.
- One of the suggested solutions which reduce the gap between “*globalization*” and “*localization*” is to “*think global and act local*”, which means to activate the meaning of “*glocalization*”.
- This strategy of “*glocalization*” starts by realizing and applying the idea of cultural hybridization instead of cultural homogenization.

- Glocalization refers to any individual, group, division, unit, organization and community which is able to think globally while acting locally.
- Glocalization from a marketing point of view is about adapting products to meet the needs and wants of consumers in foreign market (to give the impression of hybridization).
- There are many other global business successful strategies which are suitable and with adequate solutions to apply in the field of design such as: local form/global content and global form/local content.
- These strategies are successfully proved, but in the field of design the selection between local form/global content or global form/local content depends on the context of each design "product" which is differ and variable.



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Chapter 6:

***Egypt: Cultural aspects, global trends and design practice (Focusing on furniture design)***



### 3.6.1 Chapter overview ...

This chapter is the sixth chapter of this thesis; it is the first of the two chapters of the third section. This third section (chapters 6, 7) presents the discussion, interviews, analysis in a form of comparison between the cultural aspects and their influence on design practice in Egypt and in Germany. The findings of these discussions, interviews and analysis will support the theoretical results of the whole previous five chapters (section two) and more especially the fifth.

This chapter is about Egypt. It is divided into two main parts; these two parts are integrated and interrelated. The first part is about Egypt as one of the developing countries which has a unique cultural and historical heritage, in addition to its importance in Africa, the Middle East and its central vital effective role in the Islamic Arab world. Briefly, the first part of this chapter contains compressed summarized information about Egypt as a country, its location, history, traditions, population, resources, economical situation and its cultural effective background. All these issues - and others - have strong direct influences on the formation of the character and the mentality of Egyptians which reflects its shadows on creative design.

The second related part of this chapter is about design as a creative activity and as a profession in Egypt. It contains the historical background, how the modern design movement started, and how design education works. The context of this part is supported by many observations and remarks of the researcher especially the lack of documented information about the design movement in Egypt.

Through the clarification of how Egyptian designers work, many cases and examples will be mentioned which focus specifically on furniture design. These examples explain how Egyptian designers behave, think and how they achieve the wishes and the basic needs of Egyptians (many of these needs relate strongly to the Egyptian cultural background).

In addition, this chapter contains the discussion and the results of face-to-face in-depth interviews\* with a carefully selected group of academic professors of design, who are not only academics, but also have long experience in design practice. These professors are

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\* All the interviews were conducted during the period of September and October 2010. The meetings were at the offices of those professors, but in some cases they were at their homes.

considered as the pioneers of design practice in Egypt. Their opinions and their points of view explain the reality of the confusion of many Egyptian designers between their traditional local cultural background which formed their identity and the global universal design trends. The in-depth interviews with these talented academic designers were very useful and interesting. They provided a lot of facts, they identified the problems, they clarified the reasons of confusion and finally they proposed many vital methods of solution.

### The Arab Republic of Egypt ...



Figure 13: The Egyptian flag.

#### 3.6.2 Location, area and climate ...

Egypt is an Arab African country; it is located in the northwestern corner of Africa, in addition to the *Sinai* Peninsula which is part of Asia (Figures 14, 15). Egypt is bordered by the Red Sea to the east, Libya to the west, the Mediterranean Sea to the north and the Sudan to the south. Egypt is the gate between Africa and Asia, and represents the entrance to inner Africa.

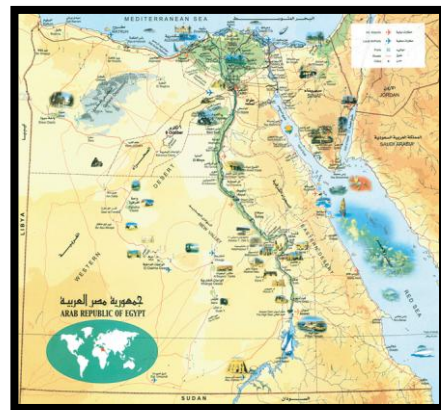
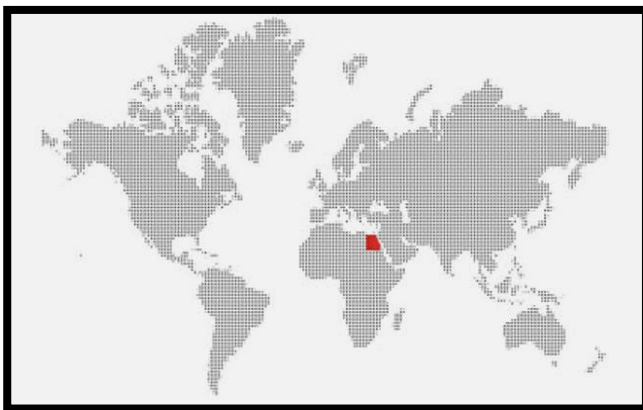


Figure 14 (Left): the location of Egypt in the world map.

Figure 15 (Right): Egypt map (in details).

The total area of Egypt is 1,001,450 sq km (Land: 995,450 sq km -- Water: 6,000 sq km). Egypt's area is the 30<sup>th</sup> in comparison to the world. The map of Egypt (figure 2) shows that Egypt is a big desert (eastern desert and western desert), these deserts are divided vertically by the river Nile and its valley. This geographical composition makes a significant difference between the climate in the Nile Valley and both sides of the desert.

Generally, the climate of Egypt is hot and dry in summer and moderate and rainy in winter. Throughout Egypt, days are commonly warm or hot, and nights are cool. Egypt has only two seasons: a mild winter from November to April and a hot summer from May to October. The tangible differences between the seasons are variations in daytime temperatures and changes in prevailing winds. In the coastal regions, temperatures range between an average minimum of 14 C in winter and an average maximum of 30 C in summer.

### 3.6.3 Population, age structure and growth rate ...

Egypt is one of the most populous countries in Africa and the biggest in the Middle East and the Arab world. In January 2013, according to the study of the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, the population of Egypt amounted to 83,000,452 thousand, the governmental report pointed out that the number of Egyptians abroad exceeds 7.8 million (according to estimates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). That means that the total number of Egyptians is about 91.2 million people.

The interesting issue here is that the population of Egypt represents 23% of the total population of all the Arab countries. The number of young people in Egypt who are aged between 15 and 24 years is about 16 million at a rate of up to 19.6% of Egypt's total population. Globally, Egypt represents the 15<sup>th</sup> position in comparison to the world's countries.

The majority of Egypt's population is concentrated in the "Nile Valley" and in urban areas, the largest blocks are "Greater Cairo" - almost a quarter of the population - followed by Alexandria; most of the remaining population live in the Delta (For more details, see United Nations Development Program, Egypt, Internet). The age structure of the population is divided as follows:

- 0-14 years: 31.4% (male 13,345,500/female 12,743,878)
- 15-64 years: 63.8% (male 26,823,127/female 26,169,421)
- 65 years and over: 4.8% (male 1,701,068/female 2,299,875) (2009)

The Egyptian population growth rate\* is unsteady, but generally it is considered as a high rate in comparison to many other countries. In 2012 it was about 1.92 % (see table 3 and figure 16) (Index mundi, Egypt, Internet).



**Table 3 (above):** in numbers, Egyptian population growth rate (2000 – 2012).

**Figure 16:** Egyptian population growth rate from 2000 to 2012.

### 3.6.4 Religion and language ...

Islam is the official religion of Egypt. Muslims - mostly Sunni - represent around 90% of Egyptians, Copts are 9% and other Christians are 1%.

Arabic is the official language spoken in Egypt, additionally, there are other limited local dialects. English is widely understood by the educated classes, as well as French and German.

\* **Population growth rate** is the average annual percent change in the population, resulting from a surplus (or deficit) of births over deaths and the balance of migrants entering and leaving a country. The rate may be positive or negative. The growth rate is a factor in determining how great a burden would be imposed on a country by the changing needs of its people for infrastructure (e.g., schools, hospitals, housing, roads), resources (e.g., food, water, electricity), and jobs. Rapid population growth can be seen as threatening by neighboring countries.

### 3.6.5 Natural resources and environmental issues ...

Since the dawn of history Egypt was known as an agricultural country, but with the start of the modern era industries were developed, especially private labor-intensive industries related to agriculture. Despite this agricultural history, Egypt has limited natural resources compared with the Egyptian population. Most of these natural resources are raw materials which are used in manufacturing, or exported. The main agricultural products are cotton, rice, corn, wheat, beans, fruits, vegetables, cattle, water buffalo, sheep and goats. The natural resources are petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, phosphates, manganese, limestone, gypsum, talc, asbestos, lead, zinc.



*Image 1 (Left): the River Nile and its Valley.*

*Image 2 (Right, above): the River Nile in Cairo.*

*Image 3 (Right, down): the River Nile in Aswan.*

As mentioned, around 99,3 % of Egyptians live in the “Nile Valley” and the Nile delta, (Images 1-3), although this floodplain is not larger than 3.5 % of the area of Egypt (Center of scientific research, Egypt, Internet). This abnormal overcrowding has caused many social and environmental problems; many kinds of pollution and a range of related problems. These include agricultural land being lost to urbanization and windblown sands; increasing soil

salination below the “Aswan High Dam”; desertification; oil pollution threatening coral reefs, beaches, and marine habitats; other water pollution from agricultural pesticides, raw sewage, and industrial effluents; limited natural fresh water resources away from the Nile, which is the only perennial water source; rapid growth in population overstraining the Nile and the natural resources.

### 3.6.6 Historical background and political system ...

The regularity and richness of the annual Nile River flood, coupled with semi-isolation provided by deserts to the east and west, allowed for the establishment and the development of one of the world’s great civilizations: “*The Ancient Egyptian Civilization*”. A unified kingdom arose circa 3200 BCE, and a series of dynasties ruled in Egypt for around three thousand years. The last native dynasty fell to the Persians in 341 BCE, who in turn were replaced by the Greeks, Romans, and Byzantines. By the end of this period many Egyptians had become Christians.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, Arabs entered Egypt and from this time Egypt is considered as a part of the Islamic Arab region. This radical change cast its shadows on all aspects of Egyptian life especially because many Egyptians became Muslims. The Arabic language grew to become the semi-official language of the country. Arab rule continued for the next six centuries. The Mamluks took control about 1250 and continued to govern after the conquest of Egypt by the Ottoman Turks in 1517.

The period of rule of *Muhammad Ali Pasha* was the stage of building modern Egypt (1805 - 1848), his reign saw internal war against the Mamluks and all his enemies. *Muhammad Ali* was strong to control all Egypt, in addition to the Sudan. During this “*renaissance*” period, he improved and renovated the Egyptian army, established many schools, factories and industrial projects as well as giving his attention to agriculture and its infrastructure. He ordered the construction of many irrigation canals and many bridges.

*Muhammad Ali* established the educational and scientific renaissance of Egypt, he built many kinds of schools, he supported the high schools of engineering, science and medicine ... etc. and he sent many students to study science, architecture, printing, arts and literature



in France, England, Italy and Austria. In addition he supported the movement of translation from the European languages to Arabic. During this time, modern *Cairo* was rebuilt in the form of *Paris* and it is considered to be one of the beautiful capitals of the world. The biggest problem was that the costs of the comprehensive renaissance of Egypt exceeded the income of the Egyptian economy. This situation prompted successive Egyptian governments to borrow money from many European countries. These debts were the virtual motivation to the occupation of Egypt. Egypt's rulers after Muhammad Ali were weak in comparison with him. With the completion of the *Suez Canal* in 1869, Egypt became a very important trade route, but this important canal cost a lot of money and it thereby increased the accumulated debt.

Great Britain ostensibly decided to protect its investments and took over control of Egypt's government in 1882, but the nominal allegiance of Egypt to the Ottoman Empire continued until 1914. Egypt became partially independent from the UK in 1922.



**Image 4 (Left):** High Dam, Aswan.

**Image 5 (Right):** Nasser Lake, Aswan.

As a result of the July 1952 revolution, Egypt started a new period of its modern history. It acquired full sovereignty with the overthrow of the British-backed monarchy. This independence was the reasons of the attack of 1956 when British, French and Israeli forces attacked Egypt. Despite difficulties and mistakes, Egypt's leadership of the Arab world was certain when the Egyptian president *Gamal Abdel Nasser* was the leader of all Arabs from the Ocean to the Gulf. In 1971, the *Aswan High Dam* (Image 4) was completed, which was considered as one of the greatest engineering projects of the twentieth century, the

resultant *Nasser Lake* (Image 5) (behind the dam) has altered the time-honored place of the Nile River in the agriculture and ecology of Egypt.

A rapidly growing population (the largest in the Arab world), limited arable land, and dependence on the Nile all continue to overtax resources and stress society. The government has struggled to meet the demands of Egypt's growing population through economic reform and massive investment in communications and physical infrastructure.

Through this brief journey of the ancient and modern history of Egypt, it is clear that Egypt was always under occupation because of its resources or its location or other reasons. Egyptians suffered a lot from wars and problems which were usually caused by others. The clear fact is that Egypt never sought war, but usually it was forced to fight to get its freedom.

In 1967, *Israeli* armed forces attacked *Sinai*, and they occupied it for 6 years until the victory of the Egyptian armed forces in October 1973. Egypt recovered part of the land of *Sinai* by war and in 1981 the whole of *Sinai* returned to Egypt as a result of the Camp David peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

From the 1950s Egyptian governments have worked hard to improve the infrastructure and to develop industry, agriculture, education, raising the standard of living ...and all other requirements of modern life. Much was achieved, but this was not enough against the quantitative increase in the population and there have been many abuses, especially in the last ten years, which led to the revolution of 25 January 2011.

### 3.6.7 The Egyptian Revolution of 2011 ...

Egypt has been officially named as a "*Republic*" since 18 June 1953 as a result of the July revolution in 1952. However, it has been under Emergency Law continually since 1967 (with the exception of an 18-month break in 1980). Between 1981 and 2011, Egypt was ruled by *Mohamed Hosni Mubarak*, who came to power after the assassination of President *Mohammed Anwar El-Sadat*.

On 25 January 2011, widespread protests began against President Mubarak's regime. These took the form of an intensive campaign of civil resistance supported by very large numbers

of people and mainly consisting of continuous mass demonstrations in Tahrir square (Images 6-7) and in many of central squares in all over Egypt. By 29 January it was becoming clear that Mubarak's regime had lost control when a curfew order was ignored, and the army took a semi-neutral stance on enforcing the curfew decree.

On 11 February 2011, President Mubarak resigned and left Cairo. Vice President Omar Suleiman announced that Mubarak had stepped down and that the Egyptian military would assume control of the nation's affairs in the short term. Jubilant celebrations broke out in Tahrir Square and in all central squares in Egypt. Mubarak may have left Cairo for Sharm El-Sheikh the previous night, before or shortly after the airing of a taped speech in which Mubarak vowed he would not step down or leave.



**Image 6 (Left):** Tahrir square, Cairo, Egyptians' revolution of 25 January 2011.

**Image 7 (Right):** Egyptians protests, Cairo, 2011.

During 2011 up till now there have been many related complex political actions and changes (and they are still happening). The fall of the President Mubarak regime, the control of the Military Council, the trial and imprisonment of Mubarak and his aides, presidential elections, the success of President *Mohamed Morsi*, the success (interim) of the *Muslim Brotherhood* to control of the state, the growth of the liberal movements which call for actual freedom, equality and social justice, the dilemma of the new constitution, the faltering of the Egyptian economy, the strong current against the Muslim Brotherhood, the protests/revolution of 30 June 2013, the deposition of President Morsi and his regime, the new constitution, the presidential elections and the victory of President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi ... etc. Indeed, these complex political matters have not been settled at the time of writing this thesis.

### 3.6.8 Social life and cultural identity ...

As a result of the diversity and multiplicity of patterns of governance in Egypt and differing ideologies and intellectual and cultural trends, Egypt has a unique collection of traditions which make Egypt a very rich country. A great number of the world's cultural monuments are in Egypt. These monuments date back to the early history of mankind. Egyptian culture has more than five thousand years of recorded history. Ancient Egypt was among the earliest civilizations and for millennia, Egypt maintained a strikingly complex and stable culture that influenced later cultures of Europe, the Middle East and other African countries. After the Pharaonic era, Egypt itself came under the influence of Hellenic, Roman, Christian, and Islamic culture. All these ideologies and all these mentalities integrated together and formed the unique Egyptian cultural identity (Images 8-16).



*Images 8-16: Egypt is the land of civilization, Egypt is a Pharaonic, Christian and Islamic country. Egyptians' cultural identity is a summation of all these vital effective civilizations.*

It is therefore difficult to describe Egypt without referring to all these mixed integrated factors. ***Egypt is a Pharaonic, Christian, Islamic, African, and Arab country.*** Indeed, all the historical cultural aspects of Egypt still exist in interaction with newer elements, including the influence of modern Western culture.

Cairo, the capital of Egypt is one of the Africa's largest important cities; it has been renowned for centuries as a center of education, arts, culture and commerce. One of oldest Opera Houses of the world was in Egypt\* (Image 17), it was the first Opera house in Africa and the Middle East. More recently, the new Cairo Opera house (Image 18) was inaugurated on October 10, 1988 on the southern portion of Gezira Island in the Nile River. The *Cairo Opera House* is the main performing arts venue in the Egyptian capital and it is home to most of Egypt's finest musical groups.



**Image 17 (left):** the Egyptian Royal opera house.

**Image 18 (right):** Cairo Opera House, designed in the Islamic style.

Egypt was known for cinema performances at the same time as France, through a long history from 1896 up till now Egyptian film production has been the pioneer in Africa and the Middle East. Since 1976, Cairo has held the annual *Cairo International Film Festival*, which has been accredited by the *International Federation of Film Producers Associations*. Another festival is held annually in *Alexandria*. Indeed, Egypt is a recognized cultural trend-setter of the Arabic-speaking world, and contemporary Arab culture is heavily influenced by Egyptian literature, music, film and television. Egypt gained a regional leadership role starting from the 1950s, which gave a further enduring boost to the standing of Egyptian culture in the Arab world.

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\* **Egyptian Royal Opera House** was dedicated on 1 November 1869 and burned down on 28 October 1971.

*Cairo University* (Image 19) is the oldest university in Africa and in the Arab world, in addition to *Ain Shams University* and *Alexandria University* (Egypt has around 20 governmental universities and around 30 private “national/international” institutions and universities). *Al-Azhar University* which was *Al-Azhar Mosque* (Image 20) is known as the oldest Islamic institution in the world, and was built over 1000 years ago.

Egypt has the highest number of Nobel Laureates in Africa and the Arab World. Many Egyptians were or are at the helm of major international organizations like *Boutros Ghali* of the United Nations and *Mohamed El-Baradei* of the IAEA.



**Image 19 (left):** *Cairo University.*

**Image 20 (right):** *Al-Azhar Mosque.*

Finally, it is important to confirm that the strength and the dynamic efficiency of the Egyptians’ cultural identity is a unique case, spanning five thousand years of continuous history. When Egypt fell under a series of foreign occupations after 343 BCE, each left an indelible mark on the country’s cultural landscape. Egyptian identity evolved in the span of this long period of occupation to accommodate, in principle, two new religions, Islam and Christianity; and a new language, Arabic.

The work of the early 19th-century scholar *Rifa’a El-Tahtawi* led to the Egyptian Renaissance and marked the transition from Medieval to Early Modern Egypt. His work renewed interest in Egyptian antiquity and exposed Egyptian society to Enlightenment principles. *El-Tahtawi* co-founded with education reformer *Ali Mubarak* a native Egyptology school that looked for inspiration to medieval Egyptian scholars, such as *Suyuti* and *Maqrizi*, who themselves studied the history, language and antiquities of Egypt.

Egypt's renaissance peaked in the late 19th and early 20th centuries through the work of people like *Muhammad Abduh*, *Ahmed Lutfi El-Sayed*, *Muhammad Loutfi Goumah*, *Tawfiq El-Hakim*, *Louis Awad*, *Qasim Amin*, *Salama Moussa*, *Taha Hussein* and *Mahmoud Mokhtar*. Those pioneers - and many others - highlighted a liberal path for Egypt to express as a commitment to personal freedom, secularism and faith in science to bring progress.

### 3.6.9 The Egyptian industry and economy ...

Egypt is one of the most developed and diversified economies in Africa and it was the best in the Arab world until the discovery of oil during the sixties of the twentieth century and the subsequent successive economic and industrial developments which occurred in the *Gulf region* (the consideration of the Egyptian economy as a successful system is separate from the Egyptian economic crisis which followed the current events/changes and the unstable/unclear political situation after the Egyptian revolution of 2011).

There is a large variety of economic sectors in Egypt such as tourism, agriculture, industry\*, the *Suez Canal* and the telecommunications services ... and so on. The Egyptian economy is rapidly developing, due in part to legislation aimed at attracting investments, coupled with both internal and political stability, along with recent trade and market liberalization. The Egyptian economy is trying to catch up with other developed countries.

Most of the Egyptian economic activities take place in the Nile Valley or beside it, in addition to many new specialized industrial cities (e.g. 10 of Ramadan City and 6 October City).

Historically, Egypt's economy was highly centralized during the rule of former President *Gamal Abdel-Nasser* (1954-1970), but it has opened up considerably under former President *Anwar El-Sadat* and President *Mohamed Hosni Mubarak*.

Recently, Cairo has aggressively pursued economic reforms to encourage inflows of foreign investment and facilitate GDP growth. In 2005, Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif's government reduced personal and corporate tax rates, reduced energy subsidies, and privatized several enterprises. The stock market boomed, and GDP grew about 7% each year from 2006.

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\* **Egypt's industries** vary between textiles, food processing, tourism services, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, hydrocarbons, construction, cement, metals, light manufactures and furniture production.

Despite these achievements, the government has failed to raise living standards for the average Egyptian, and has had to continue providing subsidies for basic necessities. These reasons - and others - are the main drivers of the revolution of 25 January 2011 (For more details, see the CIA, the World Factbook, Egypt, Internet), (The library of congress website, Egypt, Internet).

### 3.6.10 Egyptian Art and Design ...

Egyptians knew different kinds of art since ancient times. Kings' statues, paintings and carved works reflected the artistic concepts, seeking to serve the ritual of the gods and kings and the dead. Ancient Egyptian arts, such as sculpture, painting, engraving, were associated closely with architecture. None of them were independent art, but were used to decorate temples and tombs. This has greatly affected the features of these arts, and themes, and the ways to use them.

The art of sculpture flourished from ancient to modern times and produced a number of statues of different types. The Ancient Egyptians used the size of the statue to express social status. The statues of the pharaoh were larger than life-size, sometimes weighing several tons. The ancient Egyptian civilization supplied the world with many unique forms of architecture: royal tombs, temples and dams, among others. The interest in royal tombs started in the early stage of the Egyptian civilization, the grandeur of these royal tombs was represented by pyramids, 110 of which have been discovered.

When *Alexander the Great* came to Egypt, Egyptian art blended with *Greek* art and adopted methods of color and movement. It was also affected by the themes of Greek mythology. The human body has a major role in that art. Portraits and sculptures portrayed the features of the human body in great detail. This type of art lasted until the first century AD and was known as "*Hellenistic art*". In addition, multipurpose civil architecture flourished in the Greek era; notably the Lighthouse of Alexandria, the third of the old Great Wonders of the World.

By the end of the Greek and Roman era in Egypt, the *Coptic* fabric art was common and continued during the following eras with Muslim rulers; this was a high quality textile and carpet industry. Coptic culture only focused on two particular types of sculpture. The first



was the tombstone, which is a plate of limestone whose upper part is often shaped like a triangle fees. The tombstone bears the portrait of the deceased and date of death. The second type of sculpture is the cornice, which is a carved decorative element at the top or bottom of walls. These cornices were usually used in the decoration of churches and monasteries.

The artist in the Islamic era focused on plant and animal forms and engineering; the creativity of art in the Islamic era transcends the barriers of time and place, language, culture and creed. Among the features of this art, abstraction and consistency tries to abide by the mathematical rules which govern the universe. Sculpture played very little role in Islamic culture and therefore only a few statues have been found, they were not carved, but were poured in a mold. These statues were small and mainly of animals such as rabbit and deer.

Multi-purpose architecture was given a special attention in the Islamic era; represented by the construction of mosques, schools, castles, palaces, forts and homes. Also, the glass industry produced oriels of *Arabesque art*; these were popular and are also common in the Muslim era.

In *Tulunid* era in Egypt, the potter's art spread significantly, as well as the wide use of plaster in creating decorations of Islamic style. In *Fatimids* period, arts and crafts reached a very high stage of accuracy and workmanship especially in glass works such as cups and jugs, cans, plates, cups, dishes, and bottles of various shapes.

In the *Mamluk* era, the manufacture of brass antiques flourished, in addition to gold and silver works. They used the metal in supporting and decorating doors, chairs and boxes. *Mamluks* were very clever in the industry of mosaic marble which consisted of small cubes of marble of different colors and sizes. Additionally, *Mamluks* created many decorative elements of metal objects, ceramics, ivory, and fabric.

As mentioned, the renaissance of modern arts in Egypt started with the rule of *Muhammed Ali*. And with the start of the twentieth century it has been associated with a variety of factors and considerations that shaped thought and conscience together. Through this period, the advancement of arts was part of the general cultural advancement, as it was a

tool of expression of national sentiment and an element of the Egyptian national movement for independence and progress.

So it was a chance for many of the pioneers of art in Egypt to have a vital role which was that of pioneers of intellectual enlightenment, which also produced a significant contribution to the movement of the national struggle for freedom, independence and national identity.

Among these artists *Mahmoud Said, Ragheb Ayad, Mohammed Naji, Youssef Kamel, Mahmoud Mokhtar\** (Images 21-24), and others (For more details, see Egypt State Information Service, Internet).



**Images (21-24):** Mahmoud Mokhtar and selected group of his famous sculptures. Although his study was in France, the majority of his works reflect originality and Egyptian values.

It is clear that during the last hundred years there have been many art groups established, all or most of the artworks and creations of those artists are carefully documented, in contrast

\* **Mahmoud Mokhtar** (1891-1934) is one of the most famous Egyptian artists; he is one of the pioneers of modern Egyptian sculpture. In 1908, he was at the forefront enrolled in the School of Fine Arts in Cairo and in 1911 he traveled to Paris to study art. In 1916, Mahmoud Mokhtar began steps towards global fame while viewing the statue "Aida" at the Paris Salon, which was inspired by Verdi's opera "Aida". This statue was the first modern Egyptian artwork displayed in Europe. In Paris, Mokhtar presented a scale statue of the famous artwork "*the renaissance of Egypt*". The statue was displayed in the exhibition of French artists and Mokhtar won the gold medal of the exhibition.

with the roots of the design movement in Egypt. Despite the illustrious history of modern Egyptian art it is still far from the taste of many ordinary Egyptian people, like most of the classic performances of the Egyptian Opera House.

It is certain that the modern movement of art and design in Egypt was started by the establishing of the faculty of Fine Arts (1908) and the Faculty of Applied Arts (1839). Several generations of Egyptian artists, creators and designers graduated from both academic institutions, but the main interest has been to focus on documenting the evolution of art movements without considering the evolution of design practice.

The unwritten history of the Faculty of Applied Arts (Image 25) is the history of the design movement in Egypt. This faculty is the oldest academic high school in Egypt; it was established in 1839 under the name of “*School of Processes*” which only concentrated on technical and industrial aspects. At the beginning, the school had only two main departments. One was for building and the other was for design. In 1919 a third department of art and decoration was established. In 1932 the school’s name was changed to the “*School of Art and Industry*”, and in 1941, the name was changed into the “*High School of Applied Arts*”. In 1950 the name was changed again to the “*Royal School of Applied Arts*”, and finally in 1953 the name was changed into the actual name “*Faculty of Applied Arts*”.



*Image (25), the main entrance of the Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Cairo.*

In fact, these are only the headlines - which well known - about this important period of design history in Egypt. Through this unclear history, the arrangements and the division of the faculty’s departments had many changes. In 1934, the first Egyptian manager *Mohammed Hassan El-Sherbini* was employed, he encouraged the Egyptianization of the

management and faculty members, until this time a large number of professors were foreign artists from England, France, Italy, Russia and Germany. In the academic year 1956/1957 the faculty started - for the first time in its history - to accept female students, these women graduated in 1961, and from this time Egyptian women have become involved in all fields of artistic disciplines.

In the academic year 1968/1969 *post-graduate* study was introduced for the first time in the field of design studies as a result of the demand to follow trends develop study of applied arts in the light of modern scientific theories. In 1971, the first master's degree in applied arts disciplines was awarded, and the first PhD was awarded in Applied Arts in 1977.

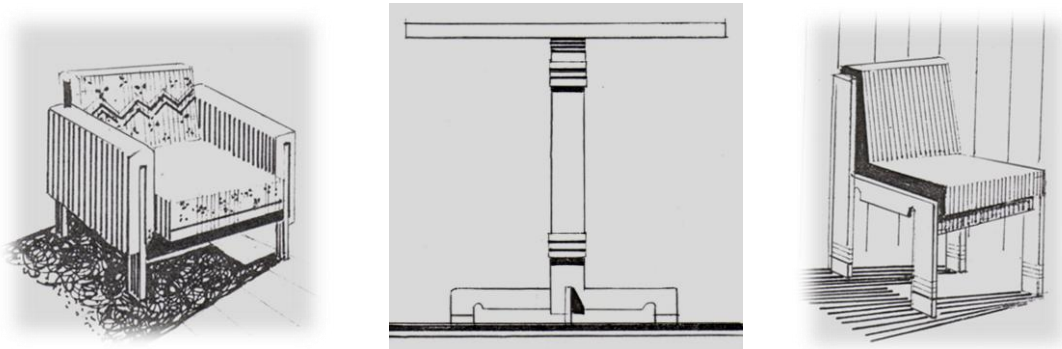
In 1975, Helwan University was established as a technological university, today, it includes 21 faculties. One of the most important of them is the Faculty of Applied Arts, which is subject to systems and laws and rulings of the *Supreme Council of Egyptian Universities*. Today, the Bachelor degree of the faculty of Applied Arts is a course of five years including a junior "*general*" year and then four years specialization in one of its 14 academic departments. Recently, a number of governmental and private applied arts institutions have been established. Generally, these faculties and institutes include a limited number of academic departments. The education and the system of study in all these institutions is still based on the study system and the professors of the pioneer faculty, which is called the "*mother faculty*".

Generally, the educational system of the *Faculty of Applied Arts* is a practical system; it is not greatly concerned with theory, in all fourteen departments the study focuses more on how to create, how to innovate and how to solve problems. The curriculums vary between artistic, engineering and technological subjects. One of the main themes which the majority of professors focus more on is how to represent the Egyptian originality and the historical cultural Egyptian identity in modern contemporary forms. This trend is very clear in departments such as: Jewelry Design, Fashion Design, Textile Printing Design and Interior and Furniture Design.

One of the famous professors who was the pioneer in supporting and adopting this trend is *Prof. Dr. Des. Ahmed M. Zaqzouq*. In 1975 he obtained his Master degree in the field of interior and furniture design. The title of his thesis is "*The Application of Aesthetic Concepts*

of Pharaonic Furniture on Contemporary Furniture which is Suitable for Modern Society in Egypt". Indeed, this academic study was like the spark which fired the engine of the modern furniture design in Egypt (Figures 17-19).

Zaqzouq has a strong interest in reflecting and presenting the ancient Egyptian heritage in his modern furniture designs. In addition to his academic interests, he was the designer and the consultant for many interiors and furniture projects in Egypt and abroad. He designed many apartments, commercial offices as well as some Egyptian embassies.



**Figures (17-19):** designs of the Master thesis project of Prof. Dr. Ahmed Zaqzouq 1975. It is clear that he worked to reflect and to represent the ancient Egyptian style in a modern way (For more details, see Zaqzouq, 1975)

One of the well known famous designs of Zaqzouq is the touristic cruise ship called "Nile Pharaoh", this ship is still working today. Zaqzouq designed its exterior and interiors as well as its furniture (Images 26-28).



**Images (26-28):** Nile Pharaoh, exterior and interior, designs of Prof. Dr. Ahmed Zaqzouq.

In the following years, many academics and individual independent furniture designers presented a range of experiments and attempts to design contemporary furniture derived from the historical Egyptian heritage (Pharaonic or Islamic). Some of these designs achieved success and others were not popular (For more samples, see Abdelrazik, 2004, pp. 395-422).

The movement of representing and reviving the Egyptian cultural heritage is not only evident in the field of product designs, but also it has many devotees and supporters in the field of architecture. A good example of this trend is the *Supreme Constitutional Court* building (Images 29-31) which was designed by *Dr. Ing. Ahmed Meto*\* and opened in 2001. The building is a mixture between ancient Egyptian architecture and the contemporary architectural style. Additionally, the interiors and furniture were designed by *Prof. Dr. Ahmed Ata* in harmony with the building.



*Images (29-31): the Supreme Constitutional Court building, designed by Dr. Ing. Ahmed Meto.*

In the same context and as previously mentioned there are many designers and academics who worked in the same direction, I am one of them. In 2004 I obtained my Master degree in interior and furniture design, the title of my thesis is “*New Formation for Designing Contemporary Furniture Derived from the Ancient Egyptian Furniture*”. This study clarified and explained many ancient Egyptian issues which are related to the furniture materials,

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\* **Ahmed Meto** is an Egyptian architect, graduated from Ein-Shams University in 1989. Meto is interested in architecture, interior and urban planning.

style and production. Before the application part of this study, there was a mention to many previous designs as a way of documentation. The applied project of this thesis was to design a group of different pieces of contemporary furniture which match our modern life and reflect and represent many historical Egyptian values (Figures 20-24) (For more details, see Abdelrazik, 2004, pp. 438-482). Indeed, these designs were not only the application project of an academic thesis, but also most of them were produced. The private clients who had these designs in their homes like them and they pointed out that these designs touched something inside themselves.

One of the famous academic designers who worked in the same trend (with a specific view) is *Prof. Dr. Des. Khaled Mehrez*, who is considered as a model of Egyptian designers' success in the last 20 years. The clear success of *Prof. Mehrez* is not only related to his special creative ability as a professional designer who designs a lot of contemporary furniture (Images 32-33) which reflect the cultural historical identity of Egypt, but also because of his success in the commercial process. *Mehrez* is the owner of one the famous design offices in Egypt, in addition he has a private show room and private furniture factory. He presents his designs in many annual furniture exhibitions inside and outside Egypt.



**Figures (20-24):** Contemporary designs derived from ancient Egyptian furniture (Abdelrazik, 2004).

*Mehrez* has a unique experience in designing and production furniture. He has a specific talented vision and has achieved his aims (the opinions of Prof. Dr. Mehrez will be presented and discussed through the in-depth interview).



*Images (32-33): Khalid Mehrez designs.*

Another example of the Egyptian famous furniture designers is *Amr Helmy*, who specializes in kitchen design. Helmy is not an academic, but he is regarded as a unique success in Egypt and abroad. He owns a private design office, many show rooms and participates in many annual international furniture exhibitions.

In 1992 Hugh Aldersey-Williams published his book “*World Design: Nationalism and Globalism in Design*”. This book presented the design strategies and experiences of twenty different countries of which Egypt was one. Williams mentioned *Amr Helmy* as one of the famous Egyptian kitchen designers and included a photo (image 34) of his Nubian style kitchen and he described his approach of using Nubian elements as much as *Hassan Fathy*\* used them in architecture (Aldersey-Williams, 1992, p. 117). Additionally, *Amr Helmy* designed many kitchens using variety of cultural elements (Image 35) which reflected many dynamic historical values.

In recent years Helmy has participated in many international furniture exhibitions (especially in Italy) and he has strong business relationships with Italian specialists. Today, Helmy’s

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\* **Hassan Fathy** (1900 – 1989) was a noted Egyptian architect who pioneered appropriate technology for building in Egypt, especially by working to re-establish the use of mud brick (or adobe) and traditional as opposed to western building designs and lay-outs. Fathy was recognized with the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, Chairman’s Award in 1980.



vision is wider and his international relationships are stronger. Despite the remarkable success of Helmy as a professional kitchen designer, he maybe lost the sense/the influence of his local cultural background or maybe he discovered (through practicing design) that the reflection of his own cultural background on his creation is no longer suitable strategy to adapt. In his earlier stages, he was interested in expressing his cultural background and his designs reflected many of the values of his society, but now the majority of his designs (which maybe considered as global) look like Italian designs (Images 36-37).



**Image 34 (right):** Amr Helmy Nubian style Kitchen.

**Image 35 (left):** Amr Helmy Islamic style Kitchen.



**Images (36-37):** Amr Helmy global kitchen style.

The controversial question here is why he changed his design methodology, his interest, his view and his vision. The question is not just to evaluate which methodology or strategy is good and which is bad, the goal is to think why it happened? Was it happened because he discovered that his “local” designs were not acceptable and not suitable to fit to the “global” international community? Or was it just commercial requirements?

Whatever the answer, the reality now is that he has lost or decided to ignore his local cultural identity to be a member of the global design community. In my opinion he is mistaken. In the previous chapter (fifth chapter) many theoretical solutions were presented and discussed. These suggested theoretical strategies explain how the designer can reform and develop his basic/hard local cultural identity in the light of the global trends (glocalization). Hypothetically, this process looks easy, but no doubt how it could be difficult to apply in realistic practice. The rational final judgment will be presented through the discussions and the interviews which were conducted with a selected group of Egyptian professors of design/designers.

Finally, and before presenting the discussions and the interviews results, it could be claimed that the gap between the localization and globalization especially in the case of designers of many developing countries which have a unique historical heritage (such as Egypt) can be reduced by rational thinking, being flexible and believing more in the dialogue between cultures (not in confrontation).

From 8-10 October 2012 there was the *Second International Conference of Applied Arts (Design between Innovation and Sustainability)*, held in Cairo. During this conference many academic papers were presented and discussed. The remarkable point was that many discussions were about Egyptian or Arab cultural identity and its formation in the frame work of globalization. This trend in itself is acceptable, but it was evident that many researchers still speak about how to improve local identity as a vital motive *against* globalization!

It is known - as it was former clarified - how Egyptians are emotional people, how they are still interested in their cultural historical heritage and how they have strong family relationships. In addition to religion influence and all other aspects which are vital and have renewed influence on all their activity, but as former theoretically explained this method of thinking is pointless. Egyptians think about their past more than what they should, sometimes they believe in their identity or their cultural background in a radical way. It was explained (theoretically) before that globalization is a reality and it is not an issue to avoid or to combat. The coming discussions with the Egyptian professors/designers will focus on this point in more realistic detail to prove the correctness of the research hypothesis.

### 3.6.11 Egyptian professors' discussions ...

The discussions with the selected Egyptian professors of design /designers were conceived as face-to-face and in-depth interviews. The interviewee professors/designers were carefully selected; these professors are a group of the pioneers of design education in Egypt, in addition to their effective active role in design practice (especially furniture design). All the interviews were conducted during 2010, a few of them took places in the professors' homes, and others were at their offices.

All the interviews were conducted in Arabic language and were they recorded, as well as the written notes and comments. After the initial analysis and organization of the structure of the answers, the results were translated into English. During the translation process the recorded context had to be reviewed many times, to try to maintain the original message without losing fluent readability.

The interviews were conducted with five academic professors/designers. Three of them are professionals in interior and furniture design and the two others are professors of Industrial Design. The arrangement of the professors' opinions and points of view is not related to their positions or their standing: their opinions are ordered according to the timing of meetings. Generally, the discussion interviews were divided into three related main parts; first was about culture and identity and their issues, second was about globalization and the third part was about design education, the design process and its practice with focusing more on the field of furniture design.

The **first** interview was with Prof. Dr. Des. **Nabil M. Abdelazeem**, which was conducted in September 2010 at his home. Prof. Abdelazeem is the professor of Design Principals, Interior Design and Furniture Department, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University. Abdelazeem obtained the Bachelor of Applied Arts in 1976, Master in 1983 and PhD in Applied Arts in 1991, Helwan University. He was appointed in the Interior Design and Furniture Department, Faculty of Applied Arts as: Demonstrator 1976, Assistant Lecturer 1983, Lecturer Dr. 1991, Assistant Prof. Dr.1999, and Professor Dr. 2004. He was appointed head of the Department 2006.

Abdelazeem was/is the supervisor, arbiter and examiner in many academic theses (Master - PhD). He has published numerous scientific papers in journals and magazines in Egypt and abroad. He has participated in many training courses, in conferences and workshops. Additionally, he is a member of many scientific, academic and industrial committees, he has participated and supervised as an academic designer in many general and specialized exhibitions and he has received numerous testimonials of appreciation.

Abdelazeem is the consultant of many projects. He has a lot of private business as a professional interior and furniture designer. The discussion Abdelazeem took around one hour and half, which was very interesting and useful. His rational understanding of how Egyptian society develops, mixed with his long experience as an academic and professional designer, gave a clear explanation about Egyptian society's problems/needs and the role of designers.

The **second** interview was with Prof. Dr. Des. **Ismael Awaad**. The interview was conducted in September 2010 at his home. Prof. Awaad is the Professor of Furniture Design, Interior Design and Furniture Department, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University. Today, Awaad is retired (according to the Egyptian educational system, he is still teaching the pre-doctoral courses not for younger students).

Awaad obtained Bachelor, Master and PhD in Applied Arts. In addition, he was the head of the Interior Design and Furniture Department. Indeed, Awaad is thought of as the pioneer of teaching furniture design, for he is one of the important furniture design educators in Egypt and he was one of the main professors who established the department of interior and furniture design in many universities inside and outside Egypt. For more than 40 years Awaad has been designing modern Egyptian furniture which reflects the Egyptian character, the Egyptian mentality and the Egyptian traditions and cultural identity (see images 38-39). Actually, Awaad is the teacher of many generations; usually he focuses on teaching how to think about furniture usability and how to design furniture in order to achieve a specific function which matches with perfect appearance.

Awaad was/is the supervisor, arbiter and examiner in many academic studies (Master - PhD). He is a member of many scientific, academic and industrial committees and he has participated and supervised as an academic designer on many general and specialized

projects. Awaad is also the consultant in many academic and business projects. He has a successful private business as a professional interior and furniture designer.

The discussion Awaad took around one hour and half. It was a very friendly and interesting discussion. The opinions and the observations of Awaad typically reflected the character of an Egyptian designer. He well understands the reality of the Egyptian society, he is proud of his cultural “historical” identity and he believes honestly in its importance which it is essential to consider, reflect and protect.



*Image (38-39): Designs of Prof. Dr. Ismael Awaad, he has attempted to provide models of contemporary furniture that reflect many of the values associated with the ancient Egyptian civilization. For more details, see Abdelrazik, 2004, p. 400-402)*

The **third** interview was with Prof. Dr. Des. **Salwa El-Gharib**. The discussion was in September 2010 at her office and took around half an hour. Prof. El-Garib is professor of Industrial Design, Industrial design Department, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University. El-Gharib was awarded her Bachelor of Applied Arts in 1973, Master in 1979 and PhD in Applied Arts in 1984.

El-Gharib has a lot of important academic positions. 2010-2012, she was the Secretary-General, *Supreme Council of Universities (SCU)*; it was the first time in Egypt that a woman was employed in this high position. 2005-2007 she was the Vice-Dean of Graduate Studies & Researches, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University (HU). 2002-2007 she was the president of the *Research Council for Planning and Society Development - Research Center for Technological Development*, HU. 2000-2005 she was the head of the Industrial Design Department, Faculty of Applied Arts, HU.

Moreover, El-Gharib was/is the supervisor, arbiter and examiner in many academic theses (Master-PhD). She has published numerous scientific papers in many academic journals and magazines. She has participated in several conferences as the keynote speaker and she has obtained numerous academic awards, prizes and certificates of appreciation. El-Gharib is the consultant in many academic and commercial projects. She is a member of many scientific, academic and industrial committees and she has participated and supervised on many general and specialized projects. The interview with El-Gharib was relatively short (around 40 minutes), but it was very useful especially that she had an early experience in studying abroad (she had a channel scholarship to study her PhD in Wuppertal University, Germany), in addition to her experiences from travelling around the world.

During the interview, El-Gharib gave her direct opinions objectively and it was very clear how her experiences are different in comparison with many Egyptian professors/designers. Her travel experiences and her up to date knowledge matched with her traditional cultural values and formed a modern individual methodology. As a professional designer and as a professor of design, she is able to realize and deal with the global facts without any separation from her originality.

The **fourth** interview was with Prof. Dr. Des. **M. Ezzat Saad**. The interview was conducted in September 2010 at his office. Prof. Saad is a professor of industrial and product Design, Industrial design Department, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University. Saad obtained Bachelor of Applied Arts in 1967, Master of Applied Arts in 1973 and then PhD in Applied Arts in 1977, Helwan University. He is the pioneer of teaching design theories and design philosophy in Egypt.

Saad has had a lot of important academic positions. 1988, he was a visitor Professor of teaching design theories in Wuppertal University, Germany. 1994-1999, he was the head of the Industrial Design Department, Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University.

Additionally, Saad was/is the supervisor, arbiter and examiner in a lot of academic theses (Master - PhD) in Egypt and Germany. He has published many books about theories, economics and philosophy of product design and he has also published many scientific papers in many academic Egyptian journals and magazines. Saad has participated in several conferences as the main keynote speaker and he has obtained numerous academic prizes and certificates of appreciation. In fact, Saad is the design consultant of several companies. He is a member of many scientific, academic and industrial committees and he has participated and supervised on many general and specialized projects.

The interview with Saad took around one hour. Generally, it was an interesting interview and like his lectures it was rather a philosophical interview. The opinions of Saad were important, for he diagnosed the problem of Egyptian society between originality and globalization and theoretically he explained the challenges to be faced.

The **fifth** interview was with Prof. Dr. Des. **Khaled Mehrez**. The interview was conducted in September 2010 at his private office. Prof. Mehrez is a professor of interior and furniture design. He obtained his Bachelor of Applied Arts in 1986, Master of Applied Arts in 1993 and then PhD in Applied Arts in 2000, Helwan University. Mehrez was appointed in the Interior Design and Furniture Department, Faculty of Applied Arts as; Demonstrator 1988, Assistant Lecturer 1994, Lecturer Dr. 2000, Assistant Prof. Dr. 2005 and then Prof. Dr. 2010.

Indeed, Mehrez is one of the most famous academic designers in the Egyptian society. In addition to his academic work, he is the owner and the principal of the Black & White consultancy firm in interior design and furniture which started 15 years ago and he has opened his own showroom in 2001. Mehrez has participated in several conferences, he has also published several scientific papers in many academic Egyptian journals and magazines, additionally, he is a member of many artistic and academic committees and he obtained numerous prizes and certificates of appreciation.

Over the last 20 years Mehrez has worked on several significant projects in interior design, furniture, murals, lighting, rugs and graphic design. He has participated in a lot of exhibitions and furniture fairs inside and outside Egypt. The interview Mehrez took around one hour, it was an interesting interview, full of realistic information. Generally, Mehrez avoided discussing the theoretical framework of the research, but he focused more on the practical side by giving examples and evaluating his current experience in furniture design.

All the interviews started by a short explanation about the research idea, the research hypothesis, the research goal and the aim of the thesis. Discussions were divided into three main parts; first about the cultural issues and their relation with identity, second about globalization and third about design process/practice in light of the previous two parts.

Hereafter and as a kind of shortcut the interviewees' opinions will mention without giving names, but using numbers as in the first column of (Table 2) (Prof. 1E), (Prof. 2E) ...etc. The letter "E" which is repeated with all numbers refers to "Egyptian". The next chapter (Chapter 7) contains interviews with German professors/designers and uses numbers with letter "G" refer to "German". The final discussion of this thesis (section 4) will recall many of the professors'/designers' opinions to use them in comparison. For example, to discuss and to compare the opinion of (Prof. 2E) with the opinion of (Prof. 5G) ... etc.

(Table 4) illustrates the interviewee professors/designers according to the date of each interview; it summarizes the field of the interest and the specialization of each professor, their current universities, in addition to the interview dates, places and durations.

	Professor's name	Field of interest/ Specialization	University (current)	Interview date/place/duration
Prof. 1E	Prof. Dr. Des. <b>Nabil M. Abdelazeem</b>	Furniture design, interiors.	Professor of "Design Principles", Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Cairo.	September 2010 Cairo (90 minutes)



Prof. 2E	Prof. Dr. Des. <b>Ismael Awaad</b>	Furniture design, interiors.	Professor of “Furniture Design” Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Cairo.	September 2010 Cairo (90 minutes)
Prof. 3E	Prof. Dr. Des. <b>Salwa El-Gharib</b>	Industrial design, product design.	Professor of “Industrial Design” Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Cairo.	September 2010 Cairo (40 minutes)
Prof. 4E	Prof. Dr. Des. <b>M. Ezzat Saad</b>	Industrial design, product design, design Theory, design philosophy	Professor of “Industrial Design” Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan University, Cairo.	September 2010 Cairo (60 minutes)
Prof. 5E	Prof. Dr. Des. <b>Khaled Mehrez</b>	Furniture Design, lighting, interior design.	Professor of “Furniture Design”	September 2010 Cairo (60 minutes)

*Table 4: the interviewee Egyptian professors/designers (experts);  
their fields of interest, current academic positions, interview dates/places and durations.*

**The first group of questions was about the meaning of culture, Egyptians’ cultural background and Egyptians’ identity from the perspective of an Egyptian professor of design/designer.**

(Prof. 1E) pointed out that we can say that culture is the outcome of all knowledge, sciences and expertise, customs and traditions. Everything around the person has formed his culture. Culture means the inputs which affect the output of everybody. It affects the style of expression, the way of thinking and the style of creativity. Culture affects also the vision of life and it directs the person’s way of judgment on everything around him.

(Prof. 2E) described the idea of the research as an important attractive idea, he said that it looks vast, large and needs a group of researchers. As for culture definition, he stated that there are a lot of definitions of culture. If we return to the Arabic language (Arabic is one of the important resources of our culture) we will found that culture means “*Remove impurities and improve the image of the thing*”. A cultured person is a person who is good learned not good educated. A cultured person is a person who can clear himself from ignorance. Culture is the sum of all science and life experiences.

(Prof. 4E) praised the importance of the research and said that interviews and internet are the most important sources of knowledge in the Third Millennium, unlike conventional thinking in the second millennium, where researchers accustomed to the use only books and works of reference. Information technology and its applications are very fast, which makes personal interviews in addition to the Internet the best and quickest ways to collect information. (Prof. 4E) added that the concept (the meaning) of culture in the third millennium is completely different than its meaning in the second millennium. In past, cultures formed according to many integrated elements such as; environment, history, language, religion, tradition, custom ... which were different from one country or one society to another. Today, the meaning of culture changed to a universal (global) culture which comes from the meaning of conflict and how every society has the ability to solve and reduce this conflict to share positively in this global culture. The huge difference between the old and the contemporary meanings of culture shows the complex situation of the clash of civilizations. Most first world countries have changed this clash into a dialogue of civilizations. It could be said that the less conflict there is in any society, the higher amount of the culture of this society.

(Prof. 5E) liked the research idea and he said that it is an interesting good approach to study the influence of the differences of culture on the creative design which forms the designer’s identity especially in the globalization era, but it is important to focus on limited points to measure these influences and effects which lead to logical and specific results. He added that culture is a difficult concept to define, it consists of many variable aspects.

**In a question about Egyptian culture, what are the main elements which formed it and how this culture has changed in the last 20 years,** (Prof. 1E) explained that culture is

different from one country to another or from one place to another depending and according to many variable elements which formed this culture. For example: You lived more than 30 years in Egypt and you have a very good relationship with Egyptian culture, but suddenly you travel abroad (to Germany) and you will spend there 4 years or more, you find yourself in a new society. This society is completely different from Egyptian society. Different weather, language, mentality, systems, way of thinking ... so different culture.

(Prof. 1E) added that it was a culture shock inside yourself. There is a conflict between the two cultures, but the correct strategy is how to make a balance. How to understand German culture and try to interact with it without losing your original culture (mother culture) and trying to select from both cultures the positive trends, the good ideas and the active values to apply.

Generally, the main elements which are formed in any culture are natural and artificial environmental elements, location, geography, resources, history, language, arts, religion, traditions, population, economy, politics ... and so on. Egyptian culture has changed during the last 20-30 years. Indeed, change is a feature of life, but the average speed and incidence vary from one society to another. The magnitude of change happens according to a lot of elements. It is difficult to measure this change without making social researches which clarify and identify the truth but we can sense this change as normal ordinary people who are living in these societies.

In the same context, (Prof. 1E) continued that it is difficult to say that there are two definitions for culture a new one and an old one. We could not say that because the change in culture and its concept usually happen gradually. It is hard to say, this is the old concept (definition) of culture, and then suddenly say, from here starts the new concept. The meaning of culture is a dynamic renewed issue and it works depending on many different variables of the society.

As for Egyptian culture, we can say that it is a complex culture because many effects, events and many actions happened in the Egyptian community but generally we can say that religion is the most important element which is played an effective role since the beginning of the ancient Egyptian civilization to the present day. Beliefs and religions were and are still the engine which moves and forms Egyptian cultural society.

The culture of Egyptian society was completely changed in the last 30 years. After the Era of openness\*, before the beginning of 1980s the Egyptian people were classified as follows; 90 % middle class, 5 % very rich (capitalists), 5 % very poor. Most Egyptians were in the same situation, in the same case. They were not happy, but they were satisfied. This situation reflected its shadows on the life style of Egyptians, on the types of clothing, eating, furnishing ... etc. All these things and others were limited. There was not much variety and the prices were very similar.

Since the beginning of the eighties of the twentieth century the Egyptian society has changed, luxuries have become a part of the life of the Egyptian people. The classification of the Egyptian society changed, the middle class was destroyed and people either had a lot of money or just had the ability to stay alive. The life style was changed and the meaning of culture was changed. There grew up kinds of schools, public (governmental) schools and international schools, public universities and private or international universities, government companies where employees had a little money or the multinational companies where employees had a lot of money.

(Prof. 1E) added that at the present time, it could be said that there are three kinds of culture in Egyptian society:

- The closed mind culture (the poor culture) where the people still think in a very old (primitive) radical way and they refuse the idea of modernism. Usually those people have little education, have inadequate health care, have not enough money and the most of the problems come from these groups of people.
- The opened mind culture where the people think in a rational way. Most of those people have a good education and they work as doctors, designers, engineers, lawyers, teachers ... etc. Those people do not usually have a lot of money, but they have a vision and a futuristic strategy about life. They know the problems of their society and they struggle to solve them.
- The ultra-modern culture (the foreign culture), most of those people have been taught in international schools or international universities. Usually they are very

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\* After the war of 1973 between Egypt and Israel the Egyptian president Sadat signed a peace treaty with Israel under the auspices of the United States. Sinai returned to Egypt and President Sadat said *"it is time to begin of the period of openness to re-build modern Egypt after long years of war"*.

rich, they are Egyptians and live in Egypt but they do not know enough about the reality of Egypt and Egyptian problems.

(Prof. 2E) supported the opinion of (Prof. 1E), he said that the philosophical meaning of culture is the same everywhere, but the difference will be in the living conditions, natural variables and life style of every country or every society. The main elements which form culture are religion, language, history, customs, traditions, arts, environment, populations, politics, wealth ... etc. Indeed, there is no change in the meaning of culture but the enormous change has happened in its elements, in its components and in the resources which change the face of this culture.

There are a lot of elements and a lot of variables which formed the Egyptian culture. If we return to history we will discover that Egypt is a very varied country. It was occupied by (or in contact with) many countries for long times, starting from the Greeks, Romans, Christians, Muslims, Mamluks and Ottomans, Turks, Britain, France ... down to the era of revolution and the transformation to a Republic in 1952. All that had a strong influence on the Egyptian character and added many values and issues to the Egyptian mentality. For example, most of the Egyptian foods have Turkish origins, Cairo more than 150 years ago was rebuilt like Paris, most of the Egyptian laws derive from French laws, and most of the interior design and furniture in the official Egyptian palaces have European origins. Egyptian culture is sum of all that and sum of a lot of integrated cultures, the idea which we have to recognize is that the strong country usually imposes its culture on the weak country.

**The next questions were about how it is important for designers to immerse themselves in their local culture and how they can represent its values.**

(Prof. 1E) claimed that this is very important, because every designer must realize and think carefully about the problems of his/her society and try hard to solve them. For example, the design students of our department, in the curriculum of the first and second years of their study focus more on Egyptian Art and design history with limited information about the world art and movements but the situation has completely changed in the last two years, the students learn a lot about the modern world schools and modern trends of art and design.

Indeed, the local cultural background of any designer affects all his life. It forms his design character and reflects many values in his creations. The strength of this factor depends on the designer himself and depends on the society which the designer lives in. For example, the majority of Egyptian designers work subconsciously to reflect their customs and cultural traditions in their creations. It is a good strategy of thinking, but the difficult point is how to represent these cultural values in the era of globalization. Many of them just use the modern global materials and the advanced techniques without paying enough attention to global methodology which allows them to present the old cultural traditions in a contemporary form. To think about your local historical cultural heritage is something great, but designers must be flexible, active and they must renew their minds to be able to present local cultural values in a global form.

(Prof. 1E) continued his opinion by saying that it is very important for Egyptian designers to know more about others' culture, not only just knowing, but also it is essential to communicate with foreign designers to share experiences. Maybe any designer will start his career by working only for his people, only for his community but not for ever. In our global world a designer must think about the possibility of becoming an international one. If he has a closed mind and he does not know enough information about the other world cultures, he will stay in his position without any progress. The idea is deeper than that, if you work inside Egypt you have to know more about others' cultures. For example, if you are working on a project to design a hotel and this hotel contains a Chinese restaurant and you focus only on your own cultural heritage, how will you began without reading, seeing and understanding a lot of information about Chinese culture. In theory at least, you have to learn how to draw Chinese ornaments, you have to know about Chinese colors and their symbolical meanings, as well as you have to understand how and what the Chinese eat and drink ...

Briefly, a designer must know a lot about his local culture, but in the same time he must have the ability and the flexibility to learn about the other countries' culture. In fact, most of Egyptian designers in all fields of design are still designing and creating for Egyptian society or for the Arab world. There are a few individual attempts which meet and achieved success, those limited cases had the ability to gain access to the global competition. For Egyptian designers, to be a vital member of the global trend is something difficult which still needs more effort and study.

For (Prof. 2E) it is very important for any designer to realize and to accommodate his local cultural background. In the beginning, a designer must deeply understand the real needs of his people and he has to be a vital part of his culture; then he can easily be a positive person in any other society. For example, there are a lot of Egyptian design students who traveled abroad to study for their PhD, they traveled to France, Britain, Germany ... What happened to them? All of them had a culture shock (it is logic), but the students who have a good relationship with their Egyptian cultural heritage were able to surmount this problem and they learned a lot from these developed societies because they can select and evaluate what are the appropriate issues which make harmony with their original cultural background. This rational logical thinking helped the European people to respect them. Those designers added new developed experiences to themselves, added a new knowledge to Egyptian society and added a new value to Egyptian culture itself.

The other students who did not care to understand the real meaning of Egyptian culture or who were not concerned to think about the importance of this culture, they suffered from rejection and alienation. They did not become like Europeans and they cannot return as Egyptians. The local culture of the designer has a significant impact on his creations, because this culture is like the content which constitutes the designer's character and usually it is reflected in the design approach. Usually the influence of the local culture is a positive influence, but sometimes it might be negative especially if it leads to a radical blocked thinking strategy. A modern professional designer has to have an open mind, has to possess the ability to adapt. The new generations of Egyptian designers have to work hard to be a positive part of the global design community, they must work and present all kind of designs which appear to be universal or the global designs but with specific values and with an innovative vision. Normally at the start they create and design for their local society, but when they are gifted enough and get career breaks they can create for everyone everywhere.

**When asked about designer identity and if there is such a term,** (Prof. 1E) said yes, there is a designer identity, but the concept of identity itself could refer to a country, a creed, a religion or any other form of ideology. It may be related to the company which employs the designer ... Generally, any designer must have a form of identity. For example, the meaning of identity in Egypt is different from its meaning in Germany. In Egypt, the meaning of

identity usually reflects the strong family relationships, it reflects the emotional feeling of home, it reflects the influence of the vast historical heritage, it reflects the orders of Islam or Christianity and many other things ... etc. (Prof. 1E) continued that in Germany (in Europe in general), the meaning of identity is more simple because everyone can create his own identity; there are no strong trends leading people in the same direction. The European identity is associated with more benefit and interest and awareness of the value of material things and not for moral and spiritual values. Mostly, the identity of any person - whether he is a designer or not - is formed according to many variables, the cultural atmosphere of society is the main effective influence on these variables, in addition to the character of the person himself.

(Prof. 2E) supported the previous opinion, he added that usually the meaning of identity refers to nationality or relates to the societal cultural background of the designer, but he thinks that there is not more preferable (it is a very restricted meaning). He said that it is more rational to think that the designer is like the professional football player, his identity changes once he moves from one club to another. He stated that the two situations are not equal but it was only an example. Generally, the meaning of designer identity must be more flexible and more ready to adapt.

(Prof. 4E) agreed that there is a designer identity, but he has a different opinion about its nature. He said that the meaning of identity in the third millennium will be formed also according to the meaning of the global culture. For example, most of Egyptian designers still think about the old meaning of identity which they believe in its formation from the history, language, religion ... This meaning is no longer in use. The professional designer can work in any company in anywhere in the world, regardless of his nationality, native language, religion and his political orientation. The only effective requirements will be linked to his ability and his efficiency. Therefore, the designer identity will be formed according to the orientations and the methodology of the company, which employs the designer.

**In discussing and answering questions about globalization, its definitions and its relationship with cultural background and designer identity ...**

(Prof. 1E) said that most people in Egypt speak now about globalization. Some of them say that it is the evil which will destroy the Egyptian cultural heritage. Others are in contrast,



they believe that it will solve all the Egyptians' problems and in a few years we will be a part of the first modern world. He added that, both views are wrong. (Prof. 1E) continued that he do not want to speak about the economic face of globalization, but in our profession the applications of globalization are very useful, in that we have the standardization in materials, the ergonomical factors and uniformity in the methods of production. The downside is (for us as designers) that in many cases we cannot pursue the rapid development of these applications and we cannot participate in their development. Most of these developed applications are based on highly technological research where we cannot take part of its processes.

(Prof. 1E) added that there are a lot of complicated definitions of globalization, but in a simple way, globalization, like a dream proposes that we have to live in one equal world: all human beings live in one community where there are no first world countries and third or fourth world countries.

There is indeed a strong relationship between culture and globalization. We can say that we live now in a global culture which has been formed (at least theoretically) from all world cultures. This young global culture still needs time to be perfect. The challenge is that there will be a lot of problems for the developing countries especially the countries which have a unique cultural heritage like Egypt. However, there is no choice, we must work hard to understand and accept other cultures and let them understand and accept us. The correlation between culture and globalization is a reality which no one can deny, this correlation has altered the meaning of the local identity which becomes global, we can notice this in the production of laptops, cars, mobile phones, ... etc., but we have to be careful with other kinds of products like furniture which is still related to the cultural character of every society and we still need a huge variety of types.

(Prof. 2E) said that globalization is not a new term, but it is just like a new invention according to the Americans' vision. Americans have no specific original identity. A few hundred years ago, it consisted of groups of adventurers who came mostly from Europe in addition to the Africans slaves and workers. So, there is no unified culture, especially because now a lot of Asian and Arab people live there (Prof. 2E used the word America to refer to the USA).

America tried a long time ago to collect the most important heritages of arts, crafts and literature of the world, it did that to become the strongest and most influential cultural country in the world and it succeeded because it has the most powerful political and economic system in the entire world. For many years (especially in the last 25 years), America has been working hard to disseminate its culture and it has achieved a vast success. So, it can redefine the modern meaning of globalization.

The relationship between culture and globalization is an inevitable relationship. People will always speak about this relation because it is an extended and renewed relationship. The third world countries must stop thinking about the conflict and clash of cultures, they have to try to become an effective part in the global universal culture.

(Prof. 3E) stated her opinion about culture, identity and globalization by saying in the eighties of the twentieth century she studied for a PhD in Wuppertal University, Germany for two years as a channel student. At that time, the meaning of globalization was not as clear as now. There were big differences between the forms of products which were designed in different countries.

For example, she participated in a research about how product forms were different from one country to another, from one society to another. They had some specific standards, and chose some products such as kitchen equipments, furniture ... etc. They studied this relationship in a few countries like Egypt, Germany, Italy, and Finland. The results were very exciting and interesting.

- Egypt (like Russia) ----- Straight lines, strong structure, intensive raw materials ... etc.
- Germany ----- Form is important as function (between Egypt and Italy)
- Italy ----- Smooth curved lines, form is more important than anything, exciting colors ... etc.
- Finland ----- the major influence of the materials (wood) in design ... etc.

That was the situation. With the start of the nineties, the situation was changed by the ease of movement and interconnections between countries as sources of raw materials and markets for products led to the melting of these differences. Most differences are now economic differences. Twenty years ago, when thinking about the country of manufacture of a product, we asked: "Is it made in Germany or in Japan?"

The yes answer was proof of the quality of this product, but this has now changed. Now, we all live in the era of globalization, we all share the era of the international or universal industry which is the era of the huge economic blocs and quantitative mass production.

(Prof. 3E) continued that, in recent years, she has traveled a lot around the world and she has noticed that there is a feeling of nostalgia and longing for the character of each community because cheap quantitative production has led to the disappearance of the concept of identity.

In comparison with many other nations, Chinese realized relatively early what the people need. They have developed the communities which produce for them and have learned their culture and their needs. They can, after suitable studies, determine the product specifications, which form is better and which range of function along with the required quality and the right price. Today, they are a very active and skilled people. Based on the foregoing, I can say that the purchasing culture is more influential than the general meaning of culture, where demand, quality and price are often more important than character, mentality and identity. This is the trend today, but for how long?

(Prof. 4E) agreed that globalization is the reality of our life, and it is not something that we can accept or reject. Internet, communications, travelling, banking ... etc., all these and more are applications of the global information technology. We should not view globalization as a product of political or economic trends. It was certainly started in this form, but now it looks like an open race and anyway we are sharing in it, whether we accept it or not. The question is, why we share and join without any skills? It will be better, if we work hard to share in a good position.

For example, what happened in Japan after the Second World War? It was completely destroyed (psychologically and physically). After a short time of the shock, the Japanese thought how to rebuild the new Japan. They had two choices: Import (user) or export (producer). They selected the second choice (to be producers) but there were a lot of problems and challenges. The important problems were:

1. They had not enough land; there were not enough skilled workers.
2. They had not enough resources.

3. They had no big markets.

According to the meaning of globalization, the theoretical solution was very easy, but it needed a lot of work:

1. They considered that the whole world is a possible land to build factories.
2. They considered that all the world's resources can be used.
3. They considered that the whole world is like a big Japanese market.

Another example is the cup of yogurt on a shelf in any supermarket; its price may change every minute. Now, we can communicate with the virtual market (not the ordinary supermarket) where the yogurt price changes according to any change in the milk price anywhere in the world. So, we can buy the milk anywhere and produce it anywhere and then we can sell the yogurt anywhere. It is the global thinking strategy which controls the global produce ...

The main conflict between globalization and the concept of identity in the developing societies or the late technological societies is how to protect intellectual property not to protect the identity. We have to work to cross this dilemma. We must destroy our fear of the control of globalization and its applications because we already live in it and we already use its applications. Globalization is not owned by anyone and it is not a tool in the hands of anyone. It is a general atmosphere but the real problem in the third world countries is the misunderstanding of the real meaning of globalization. It is the main reason for conflict. We must not stand against globalization (actually we cannot do that) but we have to work hard and quickly to be a part of the global world.

(Prof. 4E) added that there is a conflict between the old meaning of culture and globalization. In contrast, there is a vital correlation between contemporary culture definition and globalization. We call this culture "*Chaos Culture*" which comes from the philosophical theory of chaos.

Chaos theory is the philosophical theory which is leading the development in the Third Millennium especially after the fall of Darwin's theory and the return to the concept of the existence of God which is not through religions such as Christianity and Islam, but through mental perception and reflection in the cosmic phenomena. This view seems random, but in

fact, it operates according to a very stable complex system. Clouds seem to have a random shape, but actually develop according to a specific system and a very balanced law. So, when we say that we will apply the theory of chaos, it means that we will create a model which we can apply in many directions and in many situations.

The main problem of the third world countries (like the Arab world) is that they understand only the first part of the meaning which most of them still believe in the old fashioned culture forms of the second millennium. However, China and the East Asian countries were able to understand and apply the correct meaning of globalization in line with the meaning of creative chaos, this understand made them - in a short time - as a part of the important world communities.

**The final group of questions was about how could designers (specifically in the case of Egyptian designers) deal with the global trends without losing their cultural identity...**

(Prof. 1E) said that it is so difficult to answer a question like that and actually it is the main goal of this academic study. Generally, the designer has to be smart and flexible; he must try hard to present his ideas or his designs which came from his own cultural background in a global form, with global measurements, using global materials...

All the people around the world are drinking Coca-Cola, eating in MacDonal'd's and wearing jeans, it is the global lifestyle ... it is the global design. Now, there is no one can refuse these global goods, but it is important to try hard to add something from your cultural background to these elements. If you present it in a good way, people in all over the world will accept it and after a short time it will be like Coca-cola or jeans.

Furniture is not like laptops or mobile phones, it is a different product. It needs a long time to have a global furniture design. IKEA is a kind of global or universal furniture design which crossed frontiers and has huge stores everywhere. It is a successful global company, but we have to think about its ethical responsibility. Finally, I think the meaning of globalization accepts all kinds of creations but it depends on how to present your creation to the others. (Prof. 2E) agreed with (Prof. 1E), he added that designers work according to the real needs of their people, usually they do not decide from the beginning to work according a specific vision or a limited scope. The furniture which reflects any identity will still remain in its

society, maybe other people (in other societies) accept it and say “it is very nice furniture” but they will buy it as antiques.

The famous Egyptian furniture designers like *Khaled Mehrez* or *Amr Helmy* have been creating a lot of kinds of modern furniture which reflected some values of the Egyptian culture. They have achieved success inside Egypt, but when *Amr Helmy* participated in an international furniture exhibition for example (last year in Milano, Italy) he presented rootless furniture (according to the perspective of many Egyptian designers). His partition looked like any European partition. I could not say it was bad, it was good, but it had no any special value to present, it did not refer to its designer’s cultural identity; maybe it related to Amr’s economic plan. I think it would be hard for him if he presented furniture which reflected the Egyptian identity or related to Egyptian culture.

(Prof. 3E) recommended that any designer has to be flexible. He must have the ability to design anything according to any orientation. The Egyptian professional designer must learn how to design in the same direction like any other designer in the world. Maybe, he can design special models reflecting emotions, meanings, values of his cultural society. That is acceptable and will be nice, but the important point is how to present such special creations. It must be at least in the same quality as the global designs.

Finally, (Prof. 3E) said if we wish to be a visible part of the world, we have to believe that there is no conflict between identity and globalization. Designs which derive from any specific culture (identity) still find a lot of special clients who accept these treasures and they can understand their value, but this would not be inconsistent with the prevalence of universal global designs. We must easily accept the existence of both the local design and the global or universal design.

(Prof. 4E) summarized this point of view by saying that the idea of designer identity must be more rational, in the developed countries it is linked to the identity of the company where the designer works or is related to any particular orientation.

In the USA, if you are a good designer, they will give you all what you want, and you can reach the top. If you are an innovative designer you can reach a very high position regardless

of your color, your nationality and your religion. Now, belonging and identity are part of innovation and creation, not for anything else, but they require a lot of work and effort. (Prof. 4E) added if we wish to be an effective people in the global culture, we should think according to the concepts of the third millennium. We should think and work hard to destroy the conflict, not to build more walls and borders under the pretext of protecting our own culture and the identity of our community. We must teach our students to start from where the others arrived. They can easily find a large amount of information about anything which they need, but the main challenge is how to use this information, how to apply it and how to transform it into a new innovation which has a chance to compete in markets. The first world countries are changing very fast and we must think and work in the right direction.

*If any designer decides to design a new chair:*

- First, he must know what others do.
- Second, he must think about its materials, technology, recycling, price, quality ... etc.
- Third, he has to think in a new form a new shape or a new idea. Maybe this idea relates to his own cultural background or refers to a specific value. That is reasonable.
- Fourth, he should study its ability to compete in markets.

To produce this chair the designer must think about competition not about usability.

Usability is something that already exists in all chairs.

The interview with (Prof. 5E) was different and he answered the questions away from the theoretical context. He focused on his experience as a professional academic designer. He said through the last 10 years, he designed and produced a lot of modern furniture reflecting many historical and cultural values and he asserted that he represented the ancient Egyptian style. (Prof. 5E) continued that it was a completed case experience where he designed this modern Egyptian furniture style, he produced it, worked in its marketing and received reactions. After these 10 years, he could say that his work achieved and met local success, but it has no enough global success, it is still local experience. Now, he has changed his design direction and he designing according to more global concept. (Prof. 5E) added that he did not want to be imprisoned in the same frame and he would like to try other ideas, other colors and other techniques.



*Image (40-42): Egyptian modern furniture style, Khaled Mehrez.*

The produced Egyptian furniture collection was directed to the upper middle class of Egyptian society (to the persons who have enough money to pay). (Prof. 5E) stated that it was directed to the intellectual class, to the persons who can understand its meanings and its values. After a short time he discovered that he can classify most of his customers in three types:



- The Egyptian Christian people (most of them are rich and they consider themselves closer than Muslims to the ancient Egyptian civilization).
- Foreign people (most of them like the ancient Egyptian civilization and they buy this kind of furniture as if it were antique).
- The Egyptian art lovers (they search for anything strange or anything reflecting a special meaning or specific values).

(Prof. 5E) added that he thought that in spite of the simplification of the ancient Egyptian style, it is still too rich and complex for everyone to understand. It contains ideas and many values which are difficult to live with every day (if you use it as home furniture). He thought that the home furniture should be more comfortable and simple as it should be more practical. This kind of furniture is better to be used in restaurants or hotels where people stay a few hours or maximum a few days. It gives the people a state of difference and strangeness. He added that he used it in furnishing many intercontinental hotels in Cairo and most of customers liked and accepted it.

In 2003, (Prof. 5E) participated in the international furniture exhibition in Milan, Italy. It was the first time to present his collection outside Egypt and it was not very successful. The presentation area was small; it was a part of the Egyptian pavilion. (Prof. 5E) explained that he had a bad experience with this exhibition, he said in the Egyptian pavilion there were only 5 exhibitors and they all presented classical French or English furniture except him, who presented a modern collection (related to the ancient Egyptian style, but in a very modern way). He stated that he felt sad; he was in the incorrect place and in the wrong atmosphere. At the last day of the exhibition, he met a French interior designer who liked his designs and asked to buy all the collection. Directly, (Prof. 5E) agreed without any conditions and without asking what he would do with this collection. It was a bad experience, but he learned a lot from it. (Prof. 5E) believes that if he had been in the correct place and in a suitable atmosphere, maybe he could have achieved success.

Generally, when we want to speak about designer identity we have to think about the meaning of pluralism. (Prof. 5E) emphasized that it is not correct to present the situation like a war between the cultural identity of the designer and global trends. He said in reality,

there is no problem, we created this problem, and we have to think how to solve this unreal problem according to our impressions.

When we visit any furniture fair anywhere in the world we will find there all kinds of furniture; will find the classical furniture, new-classical or semi-classical furniture, modern furniture, contemporary furniture as well as many other strange kinds of furniture. There are no limits or borders which direct or control designer's imagination. Every designer establishes his own personal philosophy or his way of thinking. Sometimes this individual vision depends on the cultural historical background of the designer's society, but not only cultural aspects influence the designer's decisions, we must think about the designer's self-character. There are classical designers, rebel designers and other designers who like every new technology... Everyone can present what he wants, it is not the challenge. The real challenge is how to find success which depends on how to present your ideas, in addition to many other factors and variables such as price and quality.

When we visit any furniture exhibition we look at many furniture pieces and we make decisions, sometimes we say "it is very bad", we do not like this furniture, but there are many other people who will say "it is very nice", it is a new idea. These opinions and judgments are usually formed according to many variable issues and these issues are usually changing.

As for the educational design system in Egypt, (Prof. 5E) said we teach our students in an incorrect way. The designers in the first world countries learned in a different way. They learned to design for everyone anywhere in the world. *Philippe Starck* and *Karim Rashid* design for people in Egypt, in Britain, in Brazil or in anywhere. Maybe some people do not like their designs but there are many others who will accept and like them. We have to let our students to select what they want, not to say you can select from 1,2 or 3, this educational strategy is not correct or at least if it was correct 30 years ago, it is not correct now. Our big problem is that most of us still think in one direction and believe in old theories.

Finally, (Prof. 5E) said that Americans said the heritages in all over the world are the heritages of all human beings; they are not specific to a particular community or a selected country. Because of that they believe in "Postmodernism" and many international successful

designers apply its principles, they work to represent the ancient details in postmodern architecture and furniture. Faith in only one theory is a big mistake. It was the reason of the failure of modernism where the world developed in simple cubes which worked only to achieve usability. This situation did not last for long time and there was a reaction and desire for change. If we would like to think about a contemporary design education and design practice, first we have to accept all theories and all ideas and work as neutral judges, not as believers in only one idea who work hard to prove its validity.

### 3.6.12 Conclusion of the interviews ...

In general, the Egyptian interviewees expressed their interest in the idea of the research. They added that it is an important topic to think about and they expected interesting useful results. Many of them stated that it is a hard work for an individual researcher which needs team-work to achieve.

In discussing the meaning of culture, most of them agreed that culture is the outcome of all knowledge, sciences and expertise, customs and traditions. They said that the conceptual meaning of culture is relatively the same everywhere, but the differences came from the living conditions, natural variables and life style of every country or every society.

In deeper discussion about the core of culture, most of them (except in one case) referred to the classical old meaning of culture, which focuses on the historical, traditional and religious values. They generally agreed that it is difficult to speak about an old and a new definition or explanation of culture. They argued that cultural changes usually happen gradually, which makes it difficult to identify a specific point.

As for the cultural context of Egypt, the majority of them held that history and religion are the main elements which still have a strong noticeable influence on all Egyptian walks of life. They explained that Egyptian culture has rapidly changed through the last 20/30 years, but the important point which needs more careful understands is why and how it has changed?

The Egyptian interviewees had various opinions about the meaning of local culture and global culture, a few of them agreed on this decisive differentiation, while others disagreed in different proportions. Although most of them thought that it is important for any designer to begin by focusing on his/ her traditional local cultural, so then it would be easier to communicate

with others' cultures, others thought it could be possible and better to recognize the own local cultural in parallel with others' global cultures.

As for the designer's identity, all of the Egyptian interviewees confirmed the existence of this identity, but they added that the formation of this identity is different according to many correlated aspects. These aspects are generally societal or personal. In general, the interviewees held that it is essential for any designer to be flexible and have the ability to reform (adapt) his/her identity according to any changeable situation, but in a point of fact, many Egyptian designers have not enough flexibility and many of them have to improve their designing character/strategies.

Through the discussions about globalization, Egyptian interviewees agreed that the theoretical meaning of globalization is simple and contains benefits for everyone, but in reality and through everyday practice, it has caused many kinds of inequality and many complicated problems (especially for the developing and the poor countries). They added that for the majority of Egyptians, the concept of globalization reflects many negative meanings.

The Egyptian interviewees added that the correlation between culture and globalization is a fact which is inevitable, but in the case of a country such as Egypt it is important to explain and to identify this correlation in a more careful way. To think positively, the beginning is to stop speaking about the clash between the local tradition culture or the cultural identity and globalization, and then it is important to create and apply smart and flexible methodologies which support the dialogue and allow representing the traditional cultural context in global forms without losing its values and its originality.

A few of the Egyptian interviewees predicted that after the previous (bad and good) experience of globalization and its applications there would be a stream of returning to the originality. Through the recent years, this stream was noticed in the new lines of fashion design, jewelry design ... etc.

As for furniture design, all the Egyptian interviewees agreed that furniture is a different product which is not like laptops or mobile phones. It is still has a specific relationship with the cultural background of its users. Maybe this relation looks stronger in the case of many developing countries and is more than what it is in most of the developed countries, but in general furniture is a product where users still need and expect more values in addition to its usability.

### 3.6.13 Chapter summary ...

- Egypt has a great old civilization. This historical values still has a significant impact on the lives of Egyptians, and their way of thinking (it is one of the important resources which formed the Egyptian character).
- Egypt is a transcontinental country, a major power in Africa, the Mediterranean region and the Arab Islamic world.
- Egyptians lived for most of their lives under the occupation of many countries (Greeks, Romans, Christians, Muslims, Mamluks, Ottomans, Turks, Britain, France...) these occupations were limited in time, but they gave Egyptians many qualities and characteristics such as patience, endurance and a sense of responsibility. These occupations brought Egyptians into contact with a lot of peoples and many societies, which gave them a lot of experience, knowledge which developed the Egyptian character and added many interesting elements to the Egyptian mentality.
- Most Egyptians think about emotions related to their social life and strong family relationships. These emotions appear faster than logical scientific thinking, with good and bad results.
- Religion and belief are the most important influences linked to the lives of Egyptians. They affect all life decisions and choices.
- Egyptian culture is a very complex term. It is the summation of religion and the historical experiences in addition to the contemporary experiences. Most Egyptians still believe in their local culture and refuse the meaning of global culture.
- Egyptian identity is the sum of the ancient Egyptian identity, identity of the Mediterranean and Arab Muslim identity.
- Egyptians have known arts and design since ancient times, but many contemporary Egyptian creators are still confused between originality and modernity.
- Design studies in Egypt must be re-arranged to focus on the modern global concepts of design without too much emphasis on the historical stages.
- Many Egyptian intellectuals still believe that globalization is the enemy which will destroy the Egyptian and Arab cultural heritages. This opinion will not stand for ever. Globalization is a reality which no one can choose or refuse. It is necessary to deal

with it quickly (actually we are late). Egyptians have to work hard to solve the conflict between the East and the West. They must have more flexibility and practical rational thinking to accept a globalization methodology and give ourselves a chance to contact the global applications and work hard to add to them.

- Egyptians have details in everything around them. There are a lot of details in their daily life, there are many details and relationships in their historical side of the Egypt's civilization (Pharaonic – Christian – Muslim), and there are a lot of details and issues in Egypt's religion. So, it is not easy for the Egyptians to accept modern global furniture which has fewer details and depends basically on flat colored surfaces without any ornaments or accessories. Because of this most Egyptian furniture designers work to re-present the classical styles in new modern forms which contain some of the original details and decorative elements along with some of the important values.
- Furniture production is one of the promising industrial fields in Egypt. Most Egyptian furniture production depends on producing the famous English or French styles.
- In the last 30 years many Egyptian furniture designers tried to design modern styles. Most of them achieved local success, but it is still difficult to be successful at the global level.
- Modern furniture may be designed according to any theory or any methodology and this furniture may reflect any historical values or relate to any ancient civilization, but the main challenge is how to present this specific furniture and how its ideas will be suitable to a modern global life.
- It is positive if many Egyptian furniture designers like designing a type of furniture which is derived from their Egyptian cultural heritages, especially that most of the Egyptians are still interested in this kind of furniture, but it is more important to work hard to present these new modern creations in international furniture exhibitions to get more feedback to improve this unique kind of work.

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Chapter 7:

***Germany: Cultural aspects, global trends and design practice (Focusing on furniture design)***





### 3.7.1 Chapter overview ...

This chapter is the second chapter of the third section of this thesis. The work-strategy of this chapter corresponds and is in harmony with the previous one (chapter 6). They work in parallel to discover and indicate the realistic spacing and the intersection points - from the perspective of design - between the understanding of culture, its values, its influences and the course of globalization in Egypt (as an example of the developing countries) and Germany (as one of the developed countries).

The former chapter was about Egypt and this one is about Germany. It begins in its first part by a summarized description about Germany as a country. It presents the main basic information about Germany; location, population, resources, history, economy, industry, cultural trends, educational system ... etc. The point which is clarified in more details is its vital role and its strong influence in developing the meaning and the practice of design starting from the beginning of the twentieth century up till now, covering the influence of arts and crafts movement, Bauhaus school, Ulm school and the modern movement of design.

The second part of this chapter focuses on the questionnaire study and the results of the face- to-face interviews which were conducted with a carefully selected group of German professors/designers who may be considered as pioneers in the academic field of design theory, design thinking, and design strategy. In addition to the actual practical activity, many of them are professionals in fields such as architecture, industrial design, product design, interiors and furniture design. The main goal of these interviews was to know and to discuss with these specialists about the meaning of culture, their perspectives about cultural identity and designer's identity, and to discuss with them about the correlation between culture, identity, globalization and how all these concepts work and react with design.

The findings and the outcomes of these interviews will be discussed and compared with the findings and the outcomes of the interviews which were conducted with the Egyptian professors/designers (see chapter 6). Both realistic findings/outcomes will together be evaluated in the light of the theoretical results of the former chapters (chapters 1-5). The process of discussing and highlighting the final results will be presented in the final section of

this study (section 4) to find out the points of agreement and differences which allow to establish and develop an acceptable theoretical strategy explaining the interrelationships between the various above-mentioned concepts.

### The Federal Republic of Germany ...



Figure 25: The German flag.

#### 3.7.2 Location, area and climate ...

Germany is an European country; it is located in the center of Europe (Figure 26) with a strategic location on the North European Plain and along the entrance to the Baltic Sea. From the north, Germany borders the Baltic Sea and the North Sea, and from east, west and south it is surrounded by nine European countries (Figure 27). The total area of Germany is 357,022 sq km (Land: 348,672 sq km -- Water: 8,350 sq km). Germany's area is the 62<sup>nd</sup> in comparison with other world countries (The CIA, the world factbook, Germany, Internet).

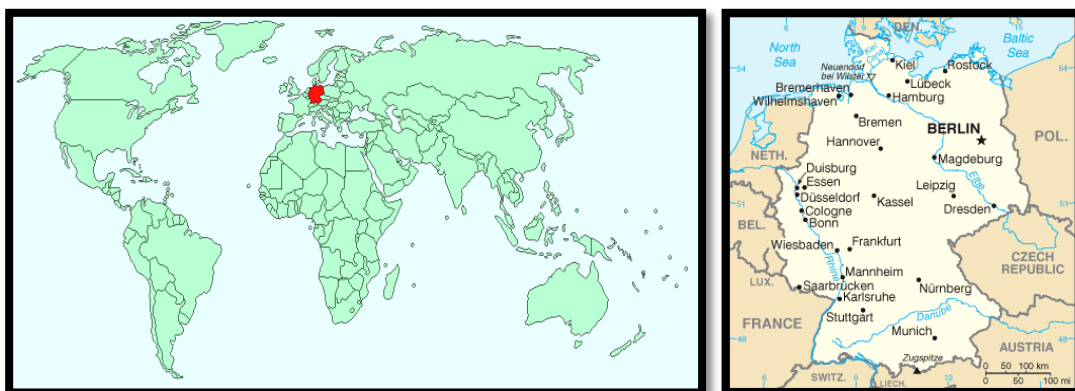


Figure 26 (left): the location of Germany on the world map.

Figure 27 (right): the German map (in details).

Germany has mountains (the highest mountain is Zugspitze 2,963 m), forests, rivers (the longest river is the Rhine 1,320 km) and beaches. There are four clearly distinct seasons of

the year. Germany usually has a clear spring (March – May), where trees turn green and everything blooms. In summer (June – August) it can be hot with temperatures frequently higher than 20 degrees Celsius. In autumn (September-November) the leaves of trees turn bright orange and yellow and the weather gets windier. In winter (December-February) the weather gets very cold where temperatures fall below freezing (Destination Germany, 2010).

### 3.7.3 Population, age structure and growth rate ...

With almost 83 million people, Germany is the most populous country in the European Union and has the second largest population in Europe (after Russia). Germany ranks as the 16<sup>th</sup> largest country in comparison with the other countries of the world. Its population density stands at 229.4 inhabitants per square kilometer. There are many major urban cities such as Berlin (capital) 3.438 million, Hamburg 1.786 million, Munich 1.349 million, Cologne 1.001 million (2009). Germany's population is characterized by zero or declining growth, with an aging population and a smaller cohort of youths. The age structure of Germany is divided as follows:

- 0-14 years: 13.7% (male 5,768,366/female 5,470,516)
- 15-64 years: 66.1% (male 27,707,761/female 26,676,759)
- 65 years and over: 20.3% (male 7,004,805/female 9,701,551) (The CIA, the world factbook, Germany, Internet, 2009).

Generally, the population growth rate (PGR) in Germany is very low in comparison with many other countries (in position 208). In 2012, the population growth rate of Germany was about -0.2 % (see table 5 and figure 28) (Index mundi, Internet).

Years	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
PGR	0.29	0.27	0.26	0.04	0.02	0	-0.02	-0.03	-0.04	-0.05	-0.06	-0.21	-0.2

**Table 5:** In numbers, German population growth rate (2000 – 2012).

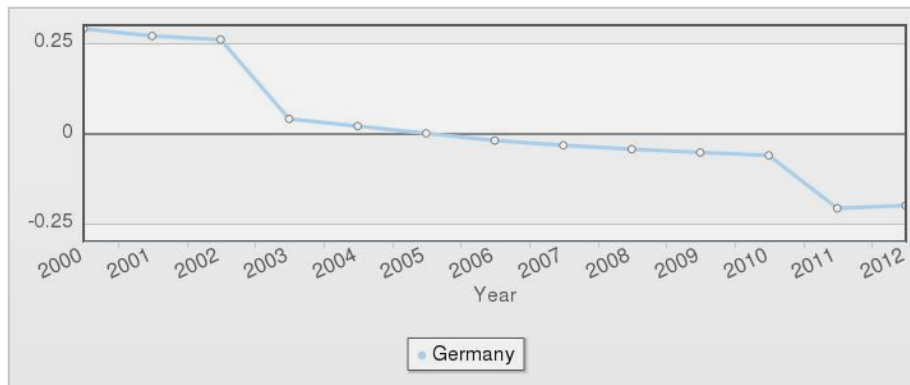


Figure 28: German population growth rate from 2000 to 2012.

The United Nations Population Fund lists Germany as host to the third-highest number of international migrants worldwide. More than 16 million people are of foreign/immigrant descent (first and second generation, including mixed heritage and ethnic German repatriates and their descendants). 96.1% of those reside in western Germany and Berlin. About seven million of them are foreign residents, which is defined as those not having German citizenship (For more details, see Wikipedia, demographics of Germany, internet).

In modern history, there are two main immigrant groups in Germany. The first group is made up of foreigners who came from southern and southeastern Europe in the 1950s and Turkey in the 1960s as “guest workers” (The largest ethnic group of non-German origin are the Turkish) to participate in the booming German economy. Most of those workers returned to their home countries, but many of them stayed in Germany. About 1,5 million foreigners have taken German citizenship. The second immigrant group is made up of people with German heritage, who have been living in the states of the former Soviet Union, Romania, and Poland for many generations (the German information center, 2007).

While most of these migrations had an economic background, Germany has also been a prime destination for refugees from many developing countries, in part because its constitution long had a clause giving a “right” to political asylum, but restrictions over years have since made it less attractive (see, Wikipedia, demographics of Germany, Internet).

### 3.7.4 Religion and language ...

German is the official language of Germany. It is considered as the mother tongue of roughly 100 million people, more than any other language in the European Union. English is well known by a large margin, especially in the university-educated classes and the younger generations.

In Germany, there is no state religion. In schools, students learn about all major religions, abstractly they discuss moral values and ethical issues (the German information center, 2007). The basic law\* "*Grundgesetz*" of the Federal Republic of Germany grants all Germans the freedom of religion (See basic rights, article 4, Freedom of faith and conscience, the basic law for the Federal Republic of Germany, 1949).

According to an organizational report based on projections in 2008 about 34.1% of Germans have no registered religious denomination. According to a poll by "*Der Spiegel*" magazine, 45% of Germans believe in God, and just a quarter in Jesus Christ.

Christianity is the largest religion in Germany, with around 49.4 million adherents (62.8%) in 2008 of which 24.5 million are Protestants (29.9%) and 24.9 million are Catholics (30.0%), the remainder belong to small denominations (each considerably less than 0.5% of the German population). The second largest religion is Islam with an estimated 3.8 - 4.3 million adherents (4.6 - 5.2%), followed by Buddhism and Judaism, both with around 200,000 adherents (0.3%). Hinduism has some 90,000 adherents (0.1%) and Sikhism 75,000 (0.1%). All other religious communities in Germany have fewer than 50,000 (<0.1%) adherents.

According to the "*Eurobarometer*" Poll (2005), Germans citizens voted as following:

- Around 47% agreed with the statement "I believe there is a God"
- Around 25% agreed with "I believe there is some sort of spirit or life force"
- Around 25% said "I do not believe there is any sort of spirit, god, or life force".

(For more details, see Wikipedia, demographics of Germany, Internet).

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\* The basic law "**Grundgesetz**" of the Federal Republic of Germany (23 May 1949), became the constitution of the united Germany on 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 1990.

### 3.7.5 Natural resources and environmental issues ...

Germany has not many natural resources. Silver was very important in the past. Other resources such as coal, lignite, natural gas, iron ore, copper, nickel, potash, salt, and timber are found. Generally, Germany is relatively scarce in raw materials. Only coal and potash salt are available in significant quantities. Oil, natural gas, and other basic resources have to be imported from other countries (Germany-info, Internet).

Germany is one of the main countries actively supporting environmental protection. For example, Germany is worried about the amount of green house gases it produces. In order to change that, it has already lowered its emissions of green house gases and it has many strategies to reduce it future. Recycling is a significant part of German national environmental efforts. The Green Dot "*Grüner Punkt*" is Germany's recycling system and one of the most successful recycling systems in the world. The green dot system helps Germans to use less paper, thinner glass and less metal to produce less waste. A major part of the success of this system is the proper sorting of garbage so it can be easily recycled (the German information center, 2007).

Indeed, the German government is very active in establishing programs to reduce air pollution, acid rain, pollution of the Baltic Sea from raw sewage and industrial effluents from rivers in eastern Germany ... etc. (The CIA, the world factbook, Germany, Internet). Relatively early, Germany knew that a progressive climate policy is vital for a healthy economy leading to economic growth, increasing employment, industrial innovation and greenhouse gas emission reductions. To achieve a low carbon growth path, the current energy system is being transformed towards sustainable energy, particularly renewable energy resources. Furthermore, energy can be supplied and used much more efficiently and smarter. Bearing this in mind, the German government has developed a comprehensive energy concept on the basis of scientific studies, covering the triangle of energy policy: energy security, economics and climate protection. The German government has decided that Germany's energy supply should be generated primarily from renewable by 2050 (For more details about renewable energy and Germany energy efficiency system, see Germany-info).

### 3.7.6 Historical background and political system ...

The concept of Germany as a distinct region in central Europe can be traced to the Roman commander *Julius Caesar*, who referred to the unconquered area east of the Rhine as *Germania*, thus distinguishing it from Gallia (France), which he had conquered. The victory of the Germanic tribes in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest (AD 9) prevented annexation by the Roman Empire. Following the fall of the Roman Empire, the Franks conquered the other West Germanic tribes. When the Frankish Empire was divided among Charlemagne's heirs in 843, the eastern part became East Francia. In 936, Otto I the Great was crowned as king at Aachen; his coronation as emperor by the Pope at Rome in 962 inaugurated what became later known as the Holy Roman Empire of German national, which became to be identified with Germany. In 962, Otto I became the first emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, the medieval German state.

In the High Middle Ages, the dukes and princes of the empire gained power at the expense of the emperors. Martin Luther led the Protestant Reformation against the Catholic Church after 1517, as the northern states became Protestant, while the southern states remained Catholic. The two parts of the Holy Roman Empire clashed in the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648), which was ruinous to the twenty million civilians. 1648 marked the effective end of the Holy Roman Empire and the beginning of the modern nation-state system, when Germany divided into numerous independent states, such as Prussia, Bavaria and Saxony.

After the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars (1803–1815), feudalism fell away and liberalism and nationalism clashed with reaction. Later, the 1848 March Revolution failed, the Industrial Revolution modernized the German economy and led to rapid growth of cities and to the emergence of the Socialist movement in Germany.

The capital Berlin grew in power. German universities became world-class centers for science and the humanities, while music and the arts flourished. Unification was achieved with the formation of the German Empire in 1871 under the leadership of Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. The new Reichstag as an elected parliament had only a limited role in the imperial government.

By 1900, Germany's economy matched with the Britain's and allowed colonial expansion and a naval race. Germany led the Central Powers in the First World War (1914–1918) against France, Great Britain, Russia and (from 1917) the United States. Defeated and partly occupied, Germany was forced to pay war reparations by the Treaty of Versailles and was stripped of its colonies as well as certain Polish areas and Alsace-Lorraine. The German Revolution of 1918–1919 deposed the emperor and the kings and led to the establishment of the Weimar Republic as an unstable parliamentary democracy.

In the early 1930s, the worldwide Great Depression hit Germany hard, as unemployment soared and people lost confidence in the government. In 1933, the Nazis under Adolf Hitler came to power and established a totalitarian regime. During this time, many political opponents were killed or imprisoned. Nazi Germany's aggressive foreign policy took control of Austria and parts of Czechoslovakia, and its invasion of Poland initiated the Second World War.

After forming a pact with the Soviet Union in 1939, Hitler and Stalin divided Eastern Europe. In spring 1940 the German blitzkrieg swept Scandinavia, the Low Countries and France, giving Germany control of nearly all of Western Europe. In June 1941, Hitler invaded the Soviet Union. The systematic genocide program known as the Holocaust killed six million Jews in Germany and German-occupied areas, as well as five million Poles, Romanians, Slavs, Soviets, and others (Germans also suffered a lot especially in the post-war period. Indeed, there were no winners and losers, all were losers).

In 1941, however, the German invasion of the Soviet Union faltered, and after the United States entered the war, Britain became the base for massive Anglo-American bombings of German cities. Germany fought the war on multiple fronts through 1942–1943. Following the Allied invasion of Normandy (June 1944), the German army was pushed back on all fronts until the final collapse in May 1945.

Under occupation by the Allies, German territories were split up. In addition to the advent of the Cold War and its results; it led to the division of the country into the western Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) and the Eastern German Democratic Republic (GDR).



The democratic FRG embedded itself in key Western economic and security organizations, the EC, which became the EU, and NATO\*, while the Communist GDR was on the front line of the Soviet-led Warsaw Pact. Millions of ethnic Germans fled from Communist areas into West Germany, which experienced rapid economic expansion, and became the dominant economy in Western Europe. West Germany was re-armed in the 1950s under the auspices of NATO, but without access to nuclear weapons. The Franco-German friendship became the basis for the political integration of Western Europe in the European Union. In 1989, the Berlin Wall was destroyed, the Soviet Union collapsed and the end of the Cold War allowed East Germany to be reunited with West Germany in 1990 and Berlin became the capital of Germany. Since then, Germany has expended considerable funds to bring eastern productivity and wages up to western standards (For more details, see the CIA, the world factbook, Germany, Internet) and (Wikipedia, history of Germany, Internet).

The Federal Republic of Germany was founded as a parliamentary democracy (indirect democracy). It consists of 16 federal states (13 states and 3 city-states). Each state has its own political sphere of jurisdiction, for example, in matters of culture, finance and education (Destination Germany, 2010).

Germans are free to choose their own leaders through local, state and national level elections. The German constitution guarantees basic rights to all citizens, such as freedom of religion, freedom of expression and equality before the law.

As mentioned, Germany was one of the six nations that were a part of the first European community in 1951, which eventually led to the European Union. In 1998–1999, Germany was one of the 3 founding countries of the Euro-zone. Germany remains one of the economic powerhouses of Europe, contributing about one quarter of the Euro-zone's annual gross domestic product. Today, the European Union is a growing community of European nations. There is a single currency, the Euro, which used in many of the EU countries, including Germany (Germany switched to the Euro on January 1, 2002. Before the Euro, Germany used the Deutsche Mark for many years).

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\* **NATO** is a European organization founded in 1949 based on the North Atlantic Treaty which was signed in Washington on 4 April 1949. The NATO headquarters is in Brussels (Belgium). The main role of this alliance is to guard freedom and protect its Member States through military force. NATO plays a role through the political crises and all its Member States contribute military forces and equipment which formed the organizational power of the military alliance.

The EU unites 28 member states and nearly 500 million people. The EU seeks to bring the different member countries closer together while each country maintains its independence and cultural traditions. The EU makes travelling and working abroad much easier for EU citizens (the German information center, 2007), (For more details about the political views and the governmental system of Germany, see The CIA, the world factbook, Germany, Internet). In the early 2010s and up till now, Germany has played a critical role in trying to curb/resolve the escalating Euro crisis, especially regarding Greece and other Southern European nations.

### 3.7.7 Social life and cultural identity ...

Germany is a modern cosmopolitan country, with about 83 million inhabitants, 19 percent of them have an immigrant background. The German society is shaped by a plurality of lifestyles and truly different ethno-cultural diversity (For example, there are noticeable differences between peoples who grow up/live in the main German cities and those who grow up/live in any village of the German countryside). Generally, most people (especially young generations) are well educated and enjoy a high standard of living as well as sufficient freedom to plan their lives as they themselves see fit. Young people are continuously reinventing how things are done, from the latest technology to the newest forms of music or most popular fashions (German-info, internet). German society faces many social challenges, such as an aging society and dealing with immigration, but generally, people from all nations, cultures and religions live together in peaceful coexistence.

Family relationships are important in Germany (although their formulation is different now than it was in past). Almost 90% of Germans place the family first in their list of priorities. Young people also value it very highly: 70% of 12-15 years-olds think that being happy is dependent on having a family. 60% of mothers in Germany have jobs and families have become smaller than they were in the past. There are more single-child families than those with two or more children (The German information center, 2007).

Germany is a multicultural country. There are many famous central cities. Berlin is the capital of Germany, as well as one of its largest and most important cities. In addition there

are many well known cities such as; Dresden, Düsseldorf, Munich, Frankfurt ... Germany is very famous for some of its tradition typical foods and drinks.

Germans like to celebrate; there are many festivals and public holidays all year around. Many public holidays in Germany have a religious (Christian) tradition. Of course, even non-believers like to celebrate them (Destination Germany, 2010). Christmas is one of the main holidays in Germany. German families open their gifts on December 24. Unlike the U.S., Germany celebrates Christmas over two days “December 25-26”. The second most important public holiday of the year is Easter. Additionally, there are many local holidays that are celebrated all around Germany where every region has its own festivals/holidays calendar.

Germany is an open society. Germans watch television shows, programs and movies from all over the world. Often most of these are translated into German. Popular songs in Germany come in all different styles and in many different languages. Everything from rock to rap and much more in German, English, and other languages can be heard on German radio stations. Germany has also produced many famous classic composers like Beethoven, Brahms and Bach, in addition to many recent movies and music stars. Germany was also home to many famous scientists such as Albert Einstein ... and many famous modern artists such as Gerhard Richter. Football is the most popular sport in Germany. Germany has twice hosted the World Cup. Other sports such as hockey, motor racing, tennis, skiing, cycling, handball and many more are also popular in Germany (The German information center, 2007).

### 3.7.8 Industry and economy ...

It is difficult to present Germany industry and its economy in a few lines. It is a long story of defying the odds, facing challenges and achieving success. Since the mid-20th century, Germany's economic policy has been based on the concept of the social market economy “*soziale Marktwirtschaft*”. The central idea of this policy is to protect the freedom of all market participants, while simultaneously ensuring social equity. This means providing an effective level of social security for people unable to earn a market income due to age, disease, or unemployment, without constraining market freedom (For more details, see Germany-info, Internet).

Today, Germany is one of the most industrialized nations and a top exporter in the world. Its economy is the largest in Europe and the fourth largest economy in the world. In addition, Germany is the world's third largest exporter after China and the United States, with 1.06 trillion Euros (ca. \$1.3 trillion) in goods exported in 2011. Giant technology firms such as Siemens are based in Germany and employ thousands of people all over the world (The German information center, 2007). Consumers around the world regard the label "made in Germany" as a seal of quality. Germany is among the world's largest and most technologically advanced producers of machinery, vehicles (BMW, Mercedes, Porsche, Audi and Volkswagen ...), chemical products, pharmaceuticals, and electronics. In addition to other industries such as iron, steel, coal, cement, food, shipbuilding, textiles ... etc. Germany is furthermore the leading producer of environmental technology such as wind turbines and solar power technology.

In 2011, the 10 largest German companies listed on stock exchanges measured by revenue were Volkswagen, Allianz, E.ON, Siemens, Metro, Deutsche Telekom, Munich Re, BASF, and BMW. Other well-known global brands are Mercedes Benz, Daimler, Adidas, Puma, Porsche, DHL, T-Mobile, Lufthansa, SAP, Nivea, Hugo Boss, Bayer, and many others (Germany-info, Internet). Roughly 3.7 million small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and self-employed professionals form the heart of Germany's social market economy and serve as the key engine of growth and employment. They represent 99.7 percent of all businesses and produce 38 percent of taxable revenues. SMEs are defined as businesses with annual revenues of less than 50 million Euros and with fewer than 500 employees.

During the world banking crisis, the German economy began to contract in the second quarter of 2008 as the strong euro, high oil prices, tighter credit markets, and slowing growth abroad took their toll on Germany's export-dependent economy. The reforms launched by the former government of Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, deemed necessary due to chronically high unemployment and low average growth, led to strong growth in 2007, while unemployment in 2008 fell below 8%, a new post-reunification low. Germany's aging population, combined with high chronic unemployment, has pushed social security outlays to a level exceeding contributions, but higher government revenues from the cyclical upturn in 2006-07 and a 3% rise in the value-added tax cut Germany's budget deficit to within the EU's 3% debt limit in 2007. The current government of Chancellor Angela Merkel

has initiated other reform measures, such as a gradual increase in the mandatory retirement age from 65 to 67 and measures to increase female participation in the labor market. The modernization and integration of the eastern German economy - where unemployment still exceeds 30% in some municipalities - continues to be a costly long-term process, with annual transfers from west to east amounting to roughly \$80 billion. While corporate restructuring and growing capital markets have set strong foundations to help Germany meet the longer-term challenges of European economic integration and globalization, Germany's export-oriented economy has proved a disadvantage in the context of weak global demand (For more details, see the CIA, the world factbook, Germany, Internet).

### 3.7.9 Education, innovation and creativity ...

Germany has a very specific education system. It begins as normal as kindergarten. German schools officially begin with first grade, usually at the age of 6. Elementary school "*Grundschule*" goes from first grade until fourth grade. Then, parents and teachers choose one of several types of schools (it is not a free choice, but it depends on many variables related to the child). Many German children go on to a *Gymnasium* "college preparatory high school" from fifth grade until twelfth or thirteenth grade. When students graduate from *Gymnasium*, they get a diploma called an *Abitur* which allows them to join colleges (universities). Other children may go to a *Realschule* "technical academic high school" from fifth grade until the tenth. Students who graduate from a *Realschule* after tenth grade can continue to study at a *Gymnasium* or start to learn a trade. Another choice is *Hauptschule* "secondary school", where students study general subjects. Students must attend a *Hauptschule* for at least 5 years (The German information center, 2007).

Germany's educational system is decentralized. All 16 states have their own university regulations and guidelines. The universities themselves are largely independent which explains why study regulations vary so often (Destination Germany, 2010).

There are three types of universities in Germany:

- Universities with scientifically-oriented programs.
- Universities of applied sciences "*Fachhochschulen*" with practically-oriented programs (For more details, see *Fachhochschulen in Germany*, 2002).

- Colleges of art, film and music with artistic/design-oriented programs.

More than two-thirds of Germany's (around 1,9 million, 2010) students are enrolled at a university. At the present time about 12% of all students at German universities are foreigners. That is more than 240,000 students. Around fourteen thousand degree programs are offered at 371 nationally accredited universities (110 universities, 206 universities of applied sciences, 55 colleges of art and music) in more than 150 towns and cities in Germany (Destination Germany,2010).

With high qualified resources and advanced facilities, Germany's education system supports and encourages creation and innovation. Uncommon innovative ideas have strongly shaped Germany's past and will surely continue to do so in the future. Germany has produced a long list of revolutionary inventions, such as automobile, the airbag, X-ray technology, Aspirin, the computer, the chip card and the MP3 data compression format. Science and research have long tradition in Germany and are still highly valued today. The oldest German university was founded in Heidelberg in 1386. The list of German Nobel Prize recipients is quite impressive. There are almost 70 German laureates in the natural sciences and medicine alone. The long list includes Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen, Robert Koch, Max Planck, Albert Einstein, Christiane Nüsslein-Volhard and Harald zur Hausen. Germany is also called the "land of poets and thinkers", this is not just courtesy, the name has been well-earned. In addition to many thinkers, philosophers and composers such as Kant, Hegel, Adorno, Goethe, Heine, Brecht, Bach, Beethoven and Brahms... etc., many contemporary German designers, artists, actors, musicians and athletes are famous around the world (Destination Germany,2010).

### 3.7.10 German Design movements ...

Without going into the historical determinants/values and the evolution of the movements of German arts since ancient times through the stages of the Renaissance and beyond, the relationship between German art and the actual think/practice of design has overlapped - as in many other nations - and passed through many stages of development. The beginning was with the *Jugendstil* "Art nouveau" movement, the influence of the English movement of "arts and crafts" and the development of the principals of industrialization. The early 1900s were marked by an awareness of the full force of industrial design. Central to this was the

German “*Werkbund*”<sup>\*</sup> which has an essential influence on the development of the design practice in Germany. The real beginning of the design excellence in Germany was established according to certain precepts of the *Bauhaus* school and more particularly, of the *Ulm School of Design* <sup>\*\*</sup> practical teaching programs.

The Bauhaus school which may be considered as the first academy of design was founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar in 1919 as a merger of the Grand Ducal School of Arts and Crafts and the Weimar Academy of Fine Art. In spite of its name, and the fact that its founder was an architect, the Bauhaus did not have an architecture department during the first years of its existence. The school existed in three German cities (moved from one to another) under the leadership of three different architects.

- Weimar from 1919 to 1925, Walter Gropius (1919 - 1928)
- Dessau from 1925 to 1932, Hannes Meyer (1928 - 1930)
- Berlin from 1932 to 1933, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1930 -1933)

The school was closed in 1933 by its own leadership under pressure from the Nazi regime (the Nazis claimed that the school had become more international and exiled from the German tradition). The changes of venue and leadership resulted in a constant shifting of focus, technique, instructors, and politics.

In more details, it is important to understand that there were many reasons which helped the emergence of the Bauhaus, most of them were political reasons. The defeat of Germany in World War I, the new liberal Weimar Republic and many other tangled political issues allowed an upsurge of radical experimentation in all the arts, previously suppressed by the old regime. Many Germans of left-wing views were influenced by the cultural experimentation that followed the Russian Revolution, such as *constructivism*. Also important was the influence of William Morris <sup>\*\*\*</sup>, who argued that art should meet the needs of society. The Bauhaus style, also known as the International Style, was marked by

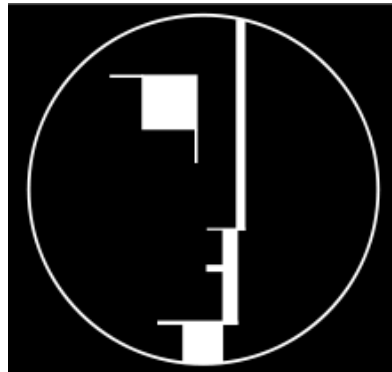
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<sup>\*</sup> **Werkbund** is a German organization founded in Munich in 1907 by a group of twelve manufacturers and twelve designers (for more details, see Aynsley, 2009, p.49-52).

<sup>\*\*</sup> Hochschule für Gestaltung Ulm, HFG Ulm.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> **William Morris** (1834 – 1896) was an English textile designer, wallpaper designer, artist, writer, libertarian and socialist. Morris wrote and published poetry, fiction, and translations of ancient and medieval texts throughout his life.

the absence of ornamentation and by harmony between the function of an object or a building and its design.



*Figure 29: the Bauhaus-Logo, 1922 designed by Oskar Schlemmer*

The Bauhaus was founded at a time when the German *Zeitgeist* had turned from emotional expressionism to a matter-of-fact new objectivity “*neue sachlichkeit*”. An entire group of working architects, including Erich Mendelsohn, Bruno Taut and Hans Poelzig, turned away from fanciful experimentation, and turned toward rational, functional, sometimes standardized building. Beyond the Bauhaus, many other significant German-speaking architects in the 1920s responded to the same aesthetic issues and material possibilities as the school (Bauhaus-online, Internet), (Bauhaus Dessau, Internet), (Wikipedia, Bauhaus, Internet).

Although the moving from one city to another and the short life of the school, the Bauhaus style became one of the most influential currents in modernist architecture and modern design. After closing the school, many of its teachers and students traveled and worked around the world especially in the USA. The Bauhaus had a profound influence upon subsequent developments in art, architecture, graphic design, interior design, industrial design, and typography.

The second important German school was the *Ulm School of Design* which is known for its educational model, particularly for design and visual communication. The Ulm school of design has been widely acknowledged for its pioneering model of design education. It was one of the most progressive institutions for teaching design and environmental design in the 1950s and 1960s. The idea of establishing the Ulm School of Design (HfG) helped to



characterize West Germany during the postwar years (after the World War II). The school was founded in 1953 by Inge Aicher-Scholl, Otl Aicher and Max Bill, the latter - a former student at the Bauhaus - designed the school building and became its first Rector.

In other words, the main task of HfG Ulm was to incorporate design into industry and to shape Germany material culture. In the post-war years, the process was marked by a crisis of values and resources, and this fact drove the Ulm School to re-think the meaning of creating forms in the contemporary world and to democratize the access to design. Actually, the systematic approach of the school included for the first time the integration of science with art. The importance of the Ulm School in the history of design comes from the strict methodology they imposed on project development. Focusing on an inter-disciplinary work and objective design analysis, it rejected design as an artistic activity and spread it through industry to all walks of life. The school was recognized worldwide for its approach of focusing on the design of the system rather than the object (Domusweb, the Ulm school, Internet).

The HfG Ulm rapidly gained international recognition and is now viewed as being second only to the Bauhaus as the most influential school of design. HfG closed in 1968 as a result of many related issues, in addition to the funding curtailed by the local (Stuttgart) government. During its operation from 1953–1968, new approaches in design were investigated/implemented, and put into practice within the departments: Visual Communication, Industrial design, Product Design, Building, Information and later Filmmaking.

The campus of HfG reflected the teaching concept, namely the integration of work and life in one place. Indeed, the history of the HfG was shaped by innovation and change, consistent with the school's own image of itself as an experimental institution. This resulted in countless modifications to the content and organization of classes (HfG-Archive, Internet). The history of HfG evolved through innovation and change, in line with its own self-image of the school as an experimental institution. Although the school ceased operation after fifteen years, the "Ulm Model" continues to have a major influence on international design education (Wikipedia, Ulm School of Design, Internet). HfG influence was strong continuously on many German students/designers and professors of design.

This influence and the philosophy of Ulm were very clear in many products which were spread inside and outside Germany. The principles of Dieter Rams (see, chapter 4, pp. 139-141) as the director of product design at Braun reflected many of Ulm principles/values such as usability, simplicity, flexibility and the ergonomical aspects (Aldersey-Williams, 1992, pp. 30-39). In graphic design, one of the famous well-known examples was Lufthansa, which commissioned the school with the task of designing the corporate identity. HfG Ulm involved graphic design, logos, typography, packaging, among others. In graphic design, the Ulm school also worked on projects related to communication systems, based on a methodological analysis of communication problems beyond an artistic approach and with a deep understanding of semiotics that was then applied to communication analysis. One of the most important figures of the Ulm period was Otl Aicher, who designed the system of pictograms of the Munich Olympics (1972). In recent years, Norman Foster commissioned Otl Aicher to design the corporate image and communication system for the Bilbao metro (Domusweb, Ulm school, Internet).

During the end of the seventies and the beginning of the eighties the movement of New German Design "*Funktionalismuskritik*" developed/changed many traditional values in German design. Early Modernism (Bauhaus, Russian constructivism ... etc.) had a strong influence, in opposition to the slick ergonomics and styling that so often disguised the construction of conventional products. Contrary to what some imagined, the movement of New German Design did not aim to present a mindless opposition to the rule of functionalism, but it did hope to bring a new flexibility to bear. The impresario behind the movement was Christian Borngreber, who established the "Designwerkstatt" as a forum for the manufacture and presentation of its prototypes (For more details, see Aldersey-Williams, 1992, pp. 30-39).

As mentioned, one of the challenges which faced Germans was the unification between East and West. The difference between East and West Germany was enormous. In contrast with East Germany, most of the industries, economic associations and innovative institutions were in the West. It was not only a political challenge, but it was also an economic and social challenge which was strongly correlated with design and innovation. In a couple of years, Germans filled the gap rapidly. They dealt perfectly with the temporary difficulties and achieved parity between East and West. In the longer term, the likelihood of a reappraisal of

Ulm and Bauhaus values will be strengthened by consumer demands for environmentally responsible design. Now, German designers are working in the light of the global markets and they meet success in all fields of design.

### 3.7.11 Questionnaire study ...

After conducting the interviews and the meetings with the selected group of Egyptian professors/designers, and after presenting and discussing their opinions and their points of view about culture, identity, globalization and design practice (See chapter 6), it was important to think about a suitable method to do the same with German professors/designers. In fact, the main idea and the goal of the interviews and discussions on both sides “Egyptian and German” were the same, the main prepared questions were the same, but - as expected - the cultural background, attitudes, and characters of both were completely different.

In contrast with many Egyptian professors/designers who were unsure and confused from the wide gap between their strongly influenced cultural identity (which is historically based) and the globalized world in their designing processes (see, the interviews and the discussions of chapter 6), it was difficult to explain the idea and to clarify the research problem to many Germans and in a few cases to convince them that there is a problem needing study and research.

This difficulty was the main reason leading to the design of a questionnaire before conducting the in-depth interviews (for more details about the importance of using a questionnaire study, see section 1, research methodology, pp. 17-21). This questionnaire included a very short introduction explaining not only its idea, but also clarifying the whole idea of the study. Additionally, this questionnaire worked as a preface and preamble before the face-to-face in-depth interview. So, in the beginning the selected individual received the questionnaire (Online form\*) which gives a quick idea about the study, what and how it is. When the targeted individual answered the questionnaire that signified at least that its idea

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\* LimeSurvey.com

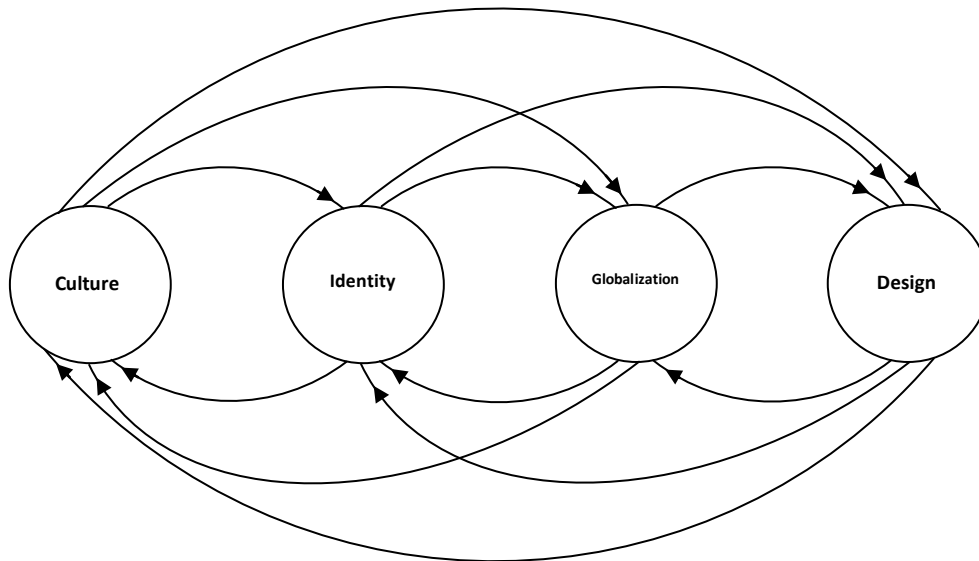
(and consequently, the idea of the study) is in the frame of his/her interest. Then the next step was to conduct the interview.

Indeed, by answering the questionnaire there were many benefits; first, it meant that the professor/designer who answered the questions has enough interest in the study idea. Second, it made the interview goal clearer and understood. Third, it shortened the interview-time (actually it was relatively hard to meet many German professors/designers because of their work schedule). Fourth, receiving the answers before conducting the face-to-face in-depth interviews was vital because they gave a guide-light about the character and the perspective of each interviewee especially in the case of added comments to the answers. This allowed for preparation before each meeting to focus on the unclear points or the opinions which needed more explanation.

Indeed, the idea of designing a questionnaire used as a preparation tool before the interview was a successful strategy not only because of the above reasons, but also because it collected much additional data (quantitative data) from many individuals who were not targets of the face-to-face interview (young researchers/PhD candidates).

The questionnaire (See appendix, p. 323) began by a short clarification preface (clarified the study idea, the main goal of the questionnaire, gave an indication that all the responses would be anonymous and used only for academic purposes), then there followed four basic questions “Basic Information” which were about the job/work description of the participant, the specific field of design, years of experience and finally the participant’s nationality. The main body of the questionnaire consisted of 34 questions (statements) about the main correlated concepts of the study (culture, identity, globalization and design). The questions were not just personal suggestions of the researcher, but in contrast, the majority of them were formulated directly or indirectly according to the opinions and the points of view of the interviewee group of the Egyptian professors/designers.

In order to discover, clarify the reality and to get decisive clear answers, the questions (statements) about the study concepts were integrated and well related. They were arranged sequentially, every phrase being based on the previous one and related to the next one (See, Figure 30).



**Figure 30:** Questionnaire strategy: questions were integrated, well correlated and sequentially arranged (Source: the author).

It was found that the questionnaire needed around 12-15 minutes to answer. For each question, only one answer could be selected: totally agree, partially agree, do not know, partially disagree or totally disagree, in addition to the possibility of adding a comment after each question. The questionnaire ended by giving the participant the choice of writing the name, the work and the email address, thus enabling contact for more information in the future. 25 participants returned complete answers. They included the answers of seven of the German selected professors/designers who collaborated for the in-depth interviews, in addition to answers of other design researchers/freelance designers from Egypt, Germany, Portugal, India, Australia, USA ...etc.(See answer tables of appendix ).

### 3.7.12 German Professors' discussions ...

During the study of more than four years of this PhD thesis there were many direct and indirect discussions and debates with many students, PhD candidates and design professors, especially through participating in academic meetings, seminars and conferences\*. These discussions in addition to the personal individual observations established that the

\* The author participated many times in the German PhD colloquium design "Design Promoviert", in addition to taking part in international conferences in Finland, Egypt and Turkey.

differences between the German and the Egyptian culture are very ramified. Additionally, they clarified how the understanding and the influences of the concepts such as culture, identity and globalization are different between the two societies.

These informal discussions in addition to the results of the questionnaire worked together as a guide-light which led to many interesting in-depth interviews with a carefully selected group of German professors/designers. The discussions with these German professors/designers took the form of face-to-face and in-depth interviews. The interviewees professors may be considered as pioneers of the field of design education in Germany, in addition to their effective actual role in design practice. The aim was to hold and conduct interviews with a large number of German professors/designers to find out their views and discuss their ideas, to understand and realize the core of German cultural identity from the perspective of designers and design academics, and so evaluate the influence of these values on the design process and its practice. In the end eight interviews with German Professors/designers were held. They came from different generations, from different schools of art/design and they had different distinctive experiences. Three of them had PhD degrees in design theories, four of them are specialized in furniture design practice in addition to their academic work.

Most of the interviews were conducted during 2013 after finishing the theoretical study, while the first two interviews - with Prof. Detlef Rahe and Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Jonas - were conducted in 2011 and only one interview (with Prof. Bernhard E. Bürdek) was conducted in 2012. All the interviews took places in the professors' offices where they teach, except the interview with Prof. Arno Votteler which was held at his private studio/home in Stuttgart and the interview with Prof. Heiko Bartels was at his home in Dusseldorf. All the discussions except two were conducted in the English language. One was with Prof. Arno Votteler and the other was with Prof. Dr. Siegfried Maser. Those two interviews were conducted in a mixture of German and English. All the discussions were recorded, as were many written notes and comments.

The interviews consisted of open-ended questions - which are based on the questionnaire answers of the interviewees and their observations - to encourage free discussions and the sharing of knowledge. The interviewees were free to express their thoughts and experiences

on their different projects and were allowed to give anecdotal and empirical data. In fact, each interview was interesting, unique and each interviewee was alone except for the interview with Prof. Dr. Brigitte Wolf who invited two of her assistant-researchers to participate in the discussion.

During the interview process, the majority of questions was about the three main related concepts of this thesis; first was about the general meaning of culture and the German cultural identity, second was about the meaning of globalization and its correlation with culture, and the third part was about design, design education, the design process and its practice in the light of the previous two concepts and their issues relating to the field of furniture design. The opinions of the German professors/designers and the results of their interviews will be discussed, compared and joined with the opinions of the Egyptian professors/designers which were presented in the previous chapter (see chapter 6). This comparison will be presented in detail in the coming final section of this study (section 4) which will be utilized in harmony with the suggested theoretical results (see chapter 5) to form the final general results of the whole thesis.

Finally and before beginning the presentation and the discussion of professors' opinions, it is essential to make it clear that the arrangement of the professors and their opinions/views bears no relation to their status or their careers, it is simply organized chronologically.

The **first** interview was with Prof. **Detlef Rahe**. The meeting was conducted in November 2011 at his office in the Institute of Integrated Design, University of the Arts Bremen\*. From 1984 to 1988 Rahe studied product design at the Academy of Design in Schwäbisch Gmünd. Then he studied Industrial Design at HDK, Göteborg University. His study was followed by research at the Institute for Industrial Planning, School of Architecture at Chalmers University of Technology in Gothenburg. Since 1989 he has been both in teaching at various universities, and working in the field of technology transfer. In 1994 he was the first appointed as a professor of design at the Hochschule Anhalt in Dessau. In 1998 he changed to the University of the Arts Bremen and been the responsible for the subject of 3D Design and he is the founder and the director of the Institute for Integrated Design. Rahe has

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\* Hochschule für Künste Bremen (HFK Bremen).

multiple major international design and architectural awards, and he has contributed to various trade publications in Germany and abroad (For more details, see HFK Bremen, Internet).

In addition to his academic interests, Rahe is practicing design as a professional designer through his own design company (rahe+rahe design). His work varies between product design, furniture design, graphic design, media design and interior design (see, Rahe+Rahe design, Internet). On his website, he summarizes his design methodology by saying:

*“... Design creates relationships. Relationships between user and product. Relationships of humans to the physical environment. Relations of man to man ... Design aims to improve the built environment, on products as well as to information on services. Design is a cross-border discipline: it is a creativity connected with science and technology, with logic and emotion, with ergonomics and semantics, economy and ecology to innovate integrated design solutions ...”*

The interview with Rahe took around 40 minutes, and although brief due to his available time it was an intensive, direct and important discussion. Indeed, Rahe’s opinions were very interesting and significant as it will be explained later.

The **second** interview was with Prof. Dr. Ing. Habil. **Wolfgang Jonas**. The interview was conducted in December 2011 at his office at the Institute of Transportation Design, Braunschweig University of Art\*. Jonas is the main supervisor of this research and naturally there were numerous meetings and ongoing debates with him to discuss ideas and to know his observations, suggestions and guidance. During the specific interview which will be referred to below, the discussion with him was not as a supervisor, but was to know his personal opinions as a German professor of design who has a long experience in design research and design thinking.

Jonas has an engineering background in ship design. From 1971-1976 he studied Naval Architecture at the Technical University of Berlin and from 1978- 1984, he worked as a research assistant at the Institute of Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering at the TUB. In 1983 he obtained a PhD degree in engineering. From 1988-1992, he worked as a research

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\* Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig (HBK Braunschweig).



assistant at the department of art education, School of Art in Berlin (Hochschule der Künste Berlin), then at the design department of the University of Wuppertal. In 1994, Prof. Jonas obtained his teaching qualification (Habilitation) for “Design Theory”.

Jonas has a long experience as an academic member in many German Universities, in addition to being a visiting professor in the USA and Canada. He was the Professor of “Process Design” at the School of Art and Design Halle Burg Giebichenstein. From 2001-2005 he was the Professor for “Design Theory” in the department of Integrated Design at the University of the Arts, Bremen. Then from 2005-2010 the Professor of “System Design” at School of Art and Design, University of Kassel and finally since 2010 he has been the Professor for “Design Sciences” at Braunschweig University of Art (See, HBK Braunschweig, Internet).

Jonas is a member of many scientific organizations. He participated in many design and art symposiums, conferences and exhibitions. He was the author and the editor of many books in addition to a huge number of articles. In brief, Jonas has been working for more than 20 years in theoretical and practical research, development and teaching of design.

Additionally, He is focusing on the development of tools and methodological clarification of design-driven innovation, economic and social nature “Design Thinking”. The discussion with Jonas took around two hours and it was an interesting objective discussion. The simplicity and the objectivity of this interview were due to the deep understanding of Jonas (as the main supervisor) of the goal of research and its methodology. The opinions of Jonas were direct and useful, and clarified many fundamental issues.

The **third** interview was with Prof. **Bernhard E. Bürdek**. The meeting was in November 2012 at his office at the School of Design in Offenbach am Main<sup>\*</sup>, where Bürdek works as a Professor of Design Methodology, Design Theory and Design Strategy. Bürdek was a student at the Ulm Design School, the School of Arts and Design at Kassel and at the Institute of Environmental Planning of the University at Stuttgart. From 1971-1972 he studied Business Economy and Political Economy at the University of Stuttgart. Since 1971 he has worked as a designer and consultant for product planning and product design. In 1972, he was appointed

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<sup>\*</sup> Hochschule für Gestaltung Offenbach am Main (hfg Offenbach am Main).

as a lecturer at the School of Design Offenbach am Main, Industrial Design department and in 1979 he was appointed as a Professor. His working fields are Design Methodology, Product Planning, Interface-Design und Design History. Bürdek has been a guest lecturer in Brasil, Mexico and Romania.

Throughout the academic life of Bürdek he participated in many projects and cooperated with many professors in different German universities such as his work (2000-2002) in a research project sponsored by the German Ministry of Research and Technology “Development of a knowledge-based internet system for social sciences”, together with the University of Cologne and the Institute for Social Sciences at Bonn. Additionally, in 1990 Bürdek was a co-founder of the design office Vision & Gestalt at Obertshausen/ Frankfurt am Main, which concentrates on Design Communication and Human Interface-Design. This office works in design development and consulting projects for many German and international clients e.g. AGFA, ADI, Bosch-Telenorma, CETRA, Deutsche Lufthansa, Digital Electronic, Drägerwerk AG, Interface Computer, JIDPO, Panasonic National and many others. Bürdek is a member of many German design associations, in addition to his membership in many international ones such as the international Advisory Board Faculty of Industrial Design Engineering at the Delft University of Technology, Netherlands. He is the author of many well-known publications, e.g. of the authoritative book “Design: History, Theory and Practice of Product Design” Köln 1991 (2nd edition 1994), which was translated into Italian (1992), Spanish (1994), Dutch (1996) und Chinese (1996). Bürdek is a constant advisor, a co-editor and the editor of many design magazines. (For more information, see HFG Offenbach, Internet).

The discussion with Bürdek took around one hour and half and was very useful and interesting. Bürdek’s answers reflect his status as a cultured intellectual professor not only in the field of design, but also in all walks of life relating to design practice. Throughout the discussion, the opinions were always simple, clear and objective.

The **fourth** interview was with Prof. **Arno Votteler**. It was made in February 2013 at his private studio where he also lives in Stuttgart. Prof. Votteler is considered as one of the pioneers of furniture design in Germany. He belongs to the old generation of modern German designers/professors: in the beginning, Votteler studied interior design at the arts

and crafts school in Bonndorf (1948-1951) and then in 1955 he continued his study of interior and furniture design at the Art Academy in Stuttgart.

From 1956 to 1960 he worked as a freelancer-designer for Gutmann in London, in 1959, he was a founding member of the Association of German Industrial Designers (VDID) and in 1961 he took an appointment at the School of Art at Braunschweig as a professor of industrial design. After various guest professorships in Rio de Janeiro, Ahmedabad and Columbus, he was appointed in 1975 as a professor of interiors and furniture design at the Stuttgart Art Academy, where in 1980 he founded the Institute of Interior Architecture and Furniture Design. As head of the Institute, he undertook various research tasks, and developed numerous publications on the history of design (For more details, see Designlexikon, Internet). Additionally, he is the author of many important books about design and its practice.

Votteler is a member of many design organizations and he has received numerous awards and distinctions. Since 1960 he has run his own design office, focusing on workplace, office and furniture design for public and private sector buildings (Votteler, Cheng and Geberzahn, 2005). Votteler has developed many successful designs such as the chairs “333 M” (1952) and “350” (1952) for Knoll, which are considered as classics of the “50s designs”. Also the office chair series “H” (1980) and the work and meeting group “collection D” (1980) for Martin Stoll (See, Votteler, 1993).

The meeting and the discussion with Votteler was very useful and very friendly. Indeed, the interview with him was the longest interview of all. The interview took more than three hours, included many discussions that looked slightly away from the core subject of the interview, but all these debates were about design and its direct and indirect influences on society and human lifestyle in addition to many other related issues.

The **fifth** interview was with Prof. **Heiko Bartels**. The meeting was in June 2013 and took place at his home in Düsseldorf. Bartels studied at the Art School Krefeld. Since 1975 he has worked as a freelance designer in the areas of kitchen design, mobile camps and motorcycle development. In 1977 he studied architecture enhanced with lighting design and interior design. In this regard, he was involved in many projects in the UK, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, Japan and USA. From 1980 to 1992 he was a lecturer at the Department of Architecture of

the architectural lighting FH Dusseldorf, from 1991 to 1992 Visiting Professor at the Department of Design at the University of Kassel and with the founding of the School of Design in 1992 at the Bauhaus University Weimar he was appointed as a professor there.

Bartels is a founding member of the group “Kunstflug” which is recognized worldwide. He designed with his partners in Kunstflug many designs for Alessi, ClassiCon, Thyssen, BMW Motorsport Ltd., Seagram Germany, Matsushita Electric, Osaka, Olivetti, Dusseldorf and Munich airports and FSB and ESB Indetec. In short, it could be said that Bartels - in addition to his academic work - is a product designer, lighting designer and consultant of many contemporary art exhibitions. In addition, He has designed the lighting installations for many public spaces; churches, squares and bridges. For instance, the design of the artistic light installation in the Cathedral of Wesel, the Basilica of St. Clement in Wissel and the Dutch Paper Biennial 2008 in Appeldoorn. Bartels has many written publications and received many prizes (For more information, see Heiko-Bartels, Internet).

The interview with Bartels took around two hours and generally it was an objective and accurate meeting. The discussion was very useful, interesting and it showed how Bartels is a deep-thinking person. In addition, he has an attractive ability to formulate his opinions - which are based on real facts and long experience - in direct, carefully selected words and in clear simple phrases.

The **sixth** interview conducted with Prof. **Volker Albus** in June 2013 at his office at the University of Art and Design in Karlsruhe\* where he works as a professor of product design. From 1968 to 1976, Albus studied architecture at the RWTH Aachen. Since graduation until 1982, he worked as a freelance architect, and then he designed furniture and interiors. He quickly became one of the main protagonists of the new German design and its intellectual mouthpiece and he established, organized and participated in several exhibitions inside and outside Germany.

Since 1984 Albus has worked as a publicist and from 1984 to 2001 he regularly wrote essays in the journal “Design Report”. Since 2003, he has had a regular column in the magazine “Form”. In addition, he is an author/editor of numerous books, including “Design in the 20th century”. Albus has participated in many collaborative design projects and he has been

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\* Staatliche Hochschule für Gestaltung Karlsruhe (hfg Karlsruhe).

awarded many prizes such as in 2001 when he was awarded the International Design Award Baden-Württemberg. Academically - as mentioned - since 1994 he has worked as a professor of product design at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design (HFG Karlsruhe, Internet).

During the discussion - which took an hour - it was clear how Albus is a practical designer. He explained his opinions simply, in harmony with and depending on his experience. Generally, the discussion was interesting, useful and valuable as it will be explained through his opinions which will be presented later.

The **seventh** interview was with Prof. Dr. Dr. habil. **Siegfried Maser**, it took place in June 2013 at his office at Industrial Design Department, Wuppertal University. In 1958 Maser began his study of philosophy, mathematics and physics in Stuttgart and Tübingen. In 1965 he received a PhD with Professor Max Bense at the Institute of Philosophy and Economic Theory, the Technical University in Stuttgart, and then he worked as a Research Assistant at Bense until 1969.

In 1968, Maser received the “Habilitation” in Stuttgart with a thesis on “Numerical Aesthetics”. The Habilitation was special for “logic and logistics with special reference to communication research”. In 1969, he worked as a university lecturer in Stuttgart, and from 1969 to 1971 as a lecturer for “General Communication Theory” at the Institute of Experimental Environmental Planning at the former Ulm School of Design. Between 1971 and 1978 he was Professor of “Systems Analysis and Planning Theory” in the Department of Environmental Design of the Academy of Fine Arts in Braunschweig and he was its rector from 1976 until 1978. Since 1978 he moved to Wuppertal University as a professor of “Design Theory” in the Department of Design. The main areas of Maser’s work are; Design philosophy, planning and systems theory, communication theory, aesthetics and ecology. In 1983 he was appointed as the Vice-Rector for Teaching, in 1987 he became the Rector of the University of Wuppertal until 1991 and from 1993 to 2003 he was the Chairman of the Audit Committee there (Wikipedia, Siegfried Maser, Internet) (University Wuppertal-Press archive, Internet).

Besides the numerous academic activities of Maser inside Germany, he has many projects and activities abroad. Since 1976, he has worked in Egypt (cooperated with Helwan

University). Additionally, he was a lecturer at the Art University in Linz and he was a Visiting Professor at the Technical University of Kosice where he obtained a honorary doctorate.

In addition to the academic excellence of Maser, he has many social activities and interests and he has received many prizes and awards. Maser has participated in many academic projects, is a member of many design and social organizations and he is the author of several publications (For more details, see Wuppertal University, Prof. Dr. Dr. Siegfried Maser, Internet). Maser, who retired in 2004, was awarded the Honorary Ring of the city of Wuppertal, and the Tolerance Order. Indeed, the discussion with Maser - which took around one hour and half - was significant and very interesting. Most of his opinions and observations were clear and objective, however they were mixed with generalizations and many philosophical aspects/ideas.

The **eighth** interview was with Prof. Dr. **Brigitte Wolf**. The meeting was in June 2013 at her office in the Industrial Design Department, Faculty of Art and Design, Wuppertal University. From 1970-1975 Wolf studied Industrial Design at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Braunschweig. This was followed by a study of psychology at the Technical University in Braunschweig (1976-1978). From 1978 – 1981 she obtained PhD degree from the University of Kassel. As for work, she worked as an assistant in the development department of the Rowenta-Werke GmbH in Offenbach, then from 1978 – 1981 she was a Research Associate at the Department of System Design at the University of Kassel (Wikipedia, Brigitte Wolf, Internet).

In addition, Wolf participated in many projects and academic activities outside Germany. She participated in designing systems and project controls in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia), Damascus (Syria) etc. In Havana (Cuba) from 1984 – 1986 she was the UNIDO Consultant, and then in 1987 she was a visiting professor there. From 1987 – 1991 Wolf was the Deputy Technical Director of the German Design Council in Frankfurt and in 1991 she was appointed as the Technical Director and Managing Director of this council.

As for the recent academic positions, Wolf was the professor of “Design Management” at the Cologne International School of Design, University of Applied Sciences Cologne (1992 – 2007). Since 2007, she has been teaching at Wuppertal University as a Professor of “Design Theory”, focusing on methodology, planning and strategy. From 2006 – 2008 she was the

director of the Centre of Applied Research for Brand, Reputation and Design Management, Inholland University Rotterdam, Holland.

As mentioned, Wolf has had many activities outside Germany; she gives many lectures, has participated in many projects and organized many exhibitions. For instance, she co-founded the group “Featured Environment” (1994- 1999). In cooperation with the Goethe Institute, she conceived the exhibition “Featured Environment - Prospects for an Ecological Future” and organized the exhibition tour: Berlin (Germany), Barcelona (Spain), Dresden (Germany), Sao Paulo (Brazil), Brasilia (Brazil) , Porto Alegre (Brazil), Bogota (Colombia), Mexico City (Mexico), Montreal (Canada), Thessaloniki (Greece), Sofia (Bulgaria), Sydney (Australia) and Lyon (France). Wolf obtained many awards and she has many interesting publications (Wuppertal University, Prof. Dr. Brigitte Wolf, Internet).

The meeting with Wolf took around one hour and half. Generally, it was an interesting meeting, though it was perhaps the most difficult discussion in comparison with all other interviews. The first main difficulty was that Wolf did not answer the questionnaire which could be considered as the base (preface) of the in-depth interview. She explained that she did not like this form of questionnaire and preferred not to answer. The second difficulty which was related to the first one is that the explanation of the study idea took too long. In addition, time was spent to convince her that there is a problem worthy of study (this will be clear through her opinions and observations). Furthermore, there was another difficulty in that she invited two assistant researchers to join the interview and to participate in the discussion. The problem was not because they were there, but because it was rather hard (in limited time) to explain the whole idea of the study and to explain it to three persons who had no idea about it beforehand. In addition, each of them had a specific different cultural background.

In brief, all the eight interviews were interesting and very useful. Each interview was unique because of the different experience of each professor, their academic background and their interests. The interviews contain a multiplicity of ideas and difference of opinions which sometimes were in harmony and other times in contrast. (As it will be seen in the following explanations).

(Table 6) illustrates the interviewees/professors according to the date of each interview (chronologically). The table summarizes the field of the interest and the specialization of each professor, their current universities, in addition to the interview dates, places and durations. As a simplification, during the presentation of the interviews with the professors and reference to their opinions (according to table 6), the professors' names will be shown only as (Prof. 1G) or (Prof. 2G) ... etc.

	Professor's name	Field of interest/ Specialization	University (current)	Interview date/place/duration
Prof. 1G	Prof. <b>Detlef Rahe</b>	Product design, furniture design, graphic design, media design and interiors.	Professor of "3D Design", Institute of Integrated Design, University of Arts Bremen	November 2011 Bremen (40 minutes)
Prof. 2G	Prof. Dr. <b>Wolfgang Jonas</b>	Design theory, system design, design sciences and design thinking.	Professor of "Design Sciences", Institute of Transportation Design, Braunschweig University of Art	December 2011 Braunschweig (120 minutes)
Prof. 3G	Prof. <b>Bernhard E. Bürdek</b>	Design methodology, design theory and design strategy.	Professor of "Design Methodology", School of Design in Offenbach Am main	November 2012 Offenbach (90 minutes)
Prof. 4G	Prof. <b>Arno Votteler</b>	Industrial design, furniture design and interiors.	Professor of "Furniture Design" Retired	February 2013 Stuttgart (more 180 minutes)



Prof. 5G	Prof. <b>Heiko Bartels</b>	Architecture, product design, lighting design, interior design.	Professor of “Product Design”, School of Design, Bauhaus University Weimar	June 2013 Düsseldorf (120 minutes)
Prof. 6G	Prof. <b>Volker Albus</b>	Product design, architecture, furniture design and interiors.	Professor of “Product Design”, University of Art and Design in Karlsruhe	June 2013 Karlsruhe (60 minutes)
Prof. 7G	Prof. Dr. <b>Siegfried Maser</b>	Design Theory, design philosophy, planning, systems theory, communication theory, aesthetics and ecology	Professor of “Design Theory”, Industrial Design Department, Wuppertal University	June 2013 Wuppertal (90 minutes)
Prof. 8G	Prof. Dr. <b>Brigitte Wolf</b>	Design Theory, design methodology, planning and design strategy	Professor of Design Theory”, Industrial Design Department, Wuppertal University	June 2013 Wuppertal (90 minutes)

*Table 6: the interviewee German professors/designers (experts);  
their fields of interest, current academic positions, interviews dates/places and durations.*

After the opening exchange, all the interviews began by explaining the study idea and clarifying its problem, its methodology and its hypotheses. Most of the beginnings were about how the face-to-face interviews are important as a tool of discussing ideas and sharing knowledge especially that their results will compare with the results of the interviews which were conducted with the Egyptian professors/designers. Interview results can access a

realistic evaluation showing the amount of agreement and disagreement between professors and designers from different cultures and who have different characters. The interviewees clarified their understanding and their appreciation of the study idea, its goal and its importance. All of them - except Prof. Wolf - found it as an interesting point of study and were optimistic that it would reach success (at least theoretically). Only one was doubtful and thought that might be difficult to reach meaningful results.

**The actual beginning of all the interviews/discussions was by asking about culture (from the perspective of design); its explanations, how its meaning is different from one society to another and how to describe its influence on designers' work.**

(Prof. 1G) pointed out that culture is not only the outcomes of knowledge, science and expertise. He said that it is the way of living, the applications of knowledge in real artefacts, situations and events. So, it is not enough to say that culture is the input which influences the output, indeed there is always (hopefully) a free decision to accept or deny a certain culture. (Prof. 1G) added that cultural understanding is different from individual to the whole of society and it relates to many various issues. (Prof. 3G) explained that there are many books full of definitions of culture which are different according to the perspective of every author and researcher. (Prof. 2G) agreed that it is hard to give a definition of culture in a sentence, he maintained that the meaning of culture is much the same in every society, culture is the sum of all knowledge, science and expertise of any society which affects the output of anybody, but he commented that it is important to think about many other implicit elements of any cultural behavior. (Prof. 5G) added that *now* the meaning of culture is wider than before and it is difficult to give a precise fixed meaning. Nowadays, societies are not close. In contrast, societies' borders are as open as their physical frontiers. The meaning of culture is changing everyday according to many internal and external variables. For instance, German society (as a European society) is an opened one (borderless society), there are many Turkish, Russian, Polish ... etc. people who are living, studying, working in Germany. These people and others have a strong sense of visible and invisible influences on German society and its culture. (Prof. 5G) summarized his opinion and said that the theoretical meaning of culture is indeed the same in every society, but (today) the actual meaning of culture is usually in a process of change. The opinion of (Prof. 6G) was similar to that of (Prof. 5G), he added that in the global era you are open to face many variable

impacts which influence your original own culture. It is like in the case of travelling, humans are confronted with a lot of different knowledge, different experiences and different cultures ...etc. which make and force individuals to *rethink* their own traditions and their own cultural values (it is a kind of collage of different thoughts, traditions, experiences and cultural aspects).

Generally, the opinion of (Prof. 7G) was not far away from all the previous points of view. Although he presented his idea about the meaning of culture in more philosophical way, it was easy to summarize his view in few clear equations, as follows:

Culture = all logical (rational), ethical (intuitive) and aesthetic (emotional) aspects.

- “Culture in the broader sense” = language, science and technology ... etc.
- “Culture in the narrow sense” = art, literature, music, architecture and *design*.

(Prof. 7G) disagreed that the theoretical meaning of culture is the same everywhere. He said “*Culture is a dynamic process of gaining experiences*”. The meaning of culture is constantly changing (to learn and to forget). It is influenced by training and education. (Prof. 8G) said that culture is all what you learn starting from your first day on earth.

(Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 5G) pointed out and agreed that the main different (elements/aspects) of culture are based on the variety of natural environment, history, traditions, customs, language, arts, religion, economy and politics, and these differences lead to differences in people’s way of thinking, living conditions, life style and everyday needs. (Prof. 6G) agreed partially with this, he explained that it is a classical view about culture. He added that we are on the way to lose the *domestic* meaning of culture which contains positive and negative on the same context. (Prof. 6G) gave an example of the people in China or Korea. How they work hard to be international (positive), they copy many European strategies, products and devices (positive goal mixed with negative behavior) and how they drift away from their cultural values (negative). Between both streams there is a kind of confusion which differs from one society to another. The opinion of (Prof. 7G) was in harmony with the opinions of (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 5G), but he referred again to the vital role of *education* and how it can improve the understanding of the core of each element/value.

(Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G), (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 8G) completely agreed that there is a strong cultural effect which has many impacts and determines the way of thinking, living, speaking, and the needs of everybody, but for instance (Prof. 2G) explained that the effect/impact of history, traditions or religion as cultural elements (for the majority of European people) is not large in comparison with the effect/impact of these elements on the way of thinking of Egyptian people.

(Prof. 4G) stated that during his long experience of teaching it was rather difficult to communicate with foreign students because of their different cultural background, but recently these differences have lessened and the intercultural aspects are more common.

(Prof. 8G) added that all these differences are a kind of diversity which is important and positive.

**When asked about cultural change and its forms**, (Prof. 1G), (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 5G) agreed that cultural perspectives have changed (*dramatically*) in the last 20 years, but they did not completely agree about the rigid distinction between “local culture” and “global culture”.

(Prof. 2G) did not agree about the differentiation between them as black and white terms. He said that it can be accepted as a working hypothesis, but of course there are other intermediate forms; especially in cases of communication and media design there are a lot of hybrid forms. (Prof. 5G) had a different point of view that he disagreed about the term of “global culture” itself. He wondered if it exists at all and he said that he has difficulty to accept and to believe it. (Prof. 5G) added that there are indeed huge numbers of global products/facilities which we all use every day everywhere, but all these things do not create a “global” culture.

(Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 6G) were in disagreement with the previous opinions and they believed more in the differentiation between “local design” and “global design”. (Prof. 4G) gave an example from his experience when he was in Brazil. There was a new office chair which was designed and produced in the USA, and people tried to sell it in Brazil. The result was that no one bought it, first because the chair was very modern (at that time) and second because of its high price in comparison with the incomes of Brazilian people. He continued that generally it is important to think carefully about the circumstances, needs and the cultural background of the target group of customers. (Prof. 4G) summarized his

idea by saying that certainly there are many differences between “local design” and “global design”, but in spite of all differences and difficulties, good design can cross all these borders.

(Prof. 6G) repeated that while one can speak about unstable and unclear relationships between “local culture” and “global culture”, he did not accept the consideration which speaks about a conflict between them. He added that the problem is that the global culture, global ideas, global products ... etc. are so strong. He simply understood the real danger that faces traditional cultures and local creations, but he could not suggest how to solve the problem.

(Prof. 7G) partially agreed about the differentiation of local and global culture. Cultures can be compared to “common” (global) and “differences” (local), but generally there are not just two, but many forms of culture. (Prof. 7G) also disagreed that there has been a cultural change in the last 20 or 30 years. He repeated that culture is always in a process of constant change. Without changing/moving culture dies, and its ideology and culture are preserved in a museum. (Prof. 8G) wondered what “*global culture*” is. She said that every country or every society has its own local culture.

**In the discussion about the own culture of every design, how it is important and how is the strength of its influence of design,** (Prof. 1G) said that this study point/idea is interesting and he understood the difficulty and the confusion of the designers of a country like Egypt who have more influence from their cultural background on their designs and their struggle to discover a strategy to present their creations outside their own culture. (Prof. 1G) continued that the question here is how far could the designer (any designer) respect customers’ wishes, demands, and behaviors? And how far can he/she step inside himself/herself as a designer, author, artist or a creator of a product?

Taking Prof. Mehres’s furniture (see chapter 6) as an example of the influence of the cultural background on design practice and how people accept or refuse it, (Prof. 1G) and (Prof. 8G) agreed that it is very important to think about customers and their needs. Every designer should respect what people like and he/she has to identify who are his/her target consumers, and if not the design will fail. (Prof. 1G) added that, in focusing on furniture because it is a little different than communication design or machinery or industrial design,

furniture is an expression of culture much more than many other types of design. (Prof. 1G) said that we have to look on the role model of a designer. **What is a designer doing?**

There are many different ways to design ... and there are totally different approaches for design. If we look to the designer as an artist who is trying to find something from his own inside where the designer is the only measuring for the quality of his design, it is a problem because in the basic model of the design process, design is always a plan to produce something for someone. The producer is always a company, in addition to customers who buy the productions. In this model, designer is not the producer and not the clients who buy things; designer is just the one who combines the producer possibilities, wishes, demands with clients. So, designer has to think deeply because he is responsible about the both sides (the producer/the company and the customers/the user) more than about what he would like to present. Designer has to fit the company strategy, production possibility ... etc. and even the unformulated expectations of clients which are logically different from one place to another. Clients in Egypt (because of their strong cultural influences) are different than the clients in Europe or in Australia (in some cases they are similar and in many other they are different).

So, the main question is who do you address? Country, age, culture, behavior, lifestyle, situation ... and many other social variables. Designers have to respect human beings and they have to look for whom they address. If any designer denies this and just thinks that he is doing what he would like to do without caring about clients needs, he does not care about them, he does not care about himself as a designer.

In spite of this, there is another model of designers who are working as artists; they do not care about their target groups or whom they address. And usually they design and then produce what they like, what they wish and what they care about. In this model the design idea is about "I" and "me", which can be formulated in a piece of furniture or any other form of design. The important element here is that the designer should not be disappointed if no one accepts his design. Between the two models we can propose a strategy to develop a bridge which joins the two sides together.

In the same context, (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G) and (Prof. 4G) agreed, however (Prof. 7G) partially agreed that it is important for any designer (especially during his/her study) to research

more and explore his/her local culture in greater depth to discover its values, to be able to evaluate his/her cultural character, before communicating with others' cultures. (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 6G) agreed with the same meaning, but said that we can discover our native/ actual culture in parallel with understanding others' cultures especially in the global era where there are easy facilities of communication. (Prof. 6G) continued that if we would like to focus more on German culture, theoretically it is not possible, because Germany is not isolated from the world. It means, when we study the history or the culture of Germany we study in parallel the history and the culture of many other nations. Human cultural traditions have plenty of intersections which are difficult to break.

In more details, (Prof. 2G) described the meaning of designer's culture, how it is important and how it has an influence on the design practice as a *normative* meaning which the majority of people will agree with, but the question which needs more effort to answer is "why". (Prof. 4G) supported this idea by referring to the importance of studying the *human* cultural historical values, art history and design history. He said that these kinds of studies are essential for any beginner designer (student) to understand many basic issues. (Prof. 8G) said it is not a choice to dive or to think about our local culture, because it is already a part of us. She added that the exchange of culture is usually an interesting process.

(Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G), (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 6G) asserted that communication with peoples' native culture (whether he/she is a designer or not) is something vital and very important. Working to solve the problems of his/her own society is also logical and important, but creating or designing according to this logical relationship is a different issue. (Prof. 2G) continued that it is essential and important for any designer to express himself, but this expression is not only by reflecting his own culture on creations. (Prof. 5G) agreed with the opinion of (Prof. 2G), but he objected to saying that it is the essential or the important way ..., he suggested saying that it is a possible way ...

(Prof. 5G) pointed that it is a good way for any beginner (young) designer to think about and work to solving the problems of his society, but as he explained before, societies have no fixed limits where there are many shared problems and challenges. He added that *maybe* it is a good way for the beginner designer to look inside and to work for his local society, but it is not the ideal way.

In this context, the opinion of (Prof. 7G) was not far from others' points of view, but he highlighted an interesting opinion by saying that sometimes the problem which needs to be studied and solved is bigger and wider than any society. He gave an instance by mentioning the environmental problems which are challenges for all people and need the efforts of everyone. (Prof. 7G) continued that these general "global problems" need universal solutions independent of regional habits. In contrast, (Prof. 8G) continued that culture is all what we learn starting from our first day on earth and we do not reflect our culture, it is only a part of us which is usually in change. We see only the visible part of culture.

(Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 3G) agreed that it is still a part of the role of any designer to save/keep the local cultural character of his society, especially in the societies/countries which have a very unique cultural character, but it is only a part of the role of the designer, not his whole role. (Prof. 1G) disagreed and in contrast he said to design means to create new solutions which means always to extend a culture, not to save or to protect it!

In the same context, (Prof. 3G) explained that for any designer it is not only the way of expressing himself by reflecting his/her cultural values on his/her designs. Although this methodology is not rejected (it is not wrong if people like its results), but by looking to many Asian countries such as Korea, Taiwan, China, Japan ... most of them have a very strong cultural identity, but they reflect nothing of their cultural traditions in the products which they produce. All Chinese or Japanese products are designed for global markets. Maybe in their local homes they still keep their cultural traditions, but this trend is also very weak in their younger generations. (Prof. 4G) agreed with the opinion of (Prof. 3G) especially in the case of furniture design. He added that if people want and are interested in the forms of design which reflect some historical or cultural values, it can be accepted, but generally it is not a methodology to teach design students to follow and it is not the main strategy of furniture production. These forms of products are acceptable (if there are people who want it), but the question is about its quality and how close it is to "Kitsch".

(Prof. 5G) was in contrast with the previous opinions of (Prof. 3G) and (Prof. 4G). He disagreed and supported the view of (Prof. 1G). (Prof. 5G) added that there are many designers who simply have no interest *at all* in any cultural aspects. Those designers do not work directly for specific customers, but they work for the producers, and there is a big



difference between the two sides. In brief (Prof. 5G) said that it is not correct to force designers to be culturally aware, the majority of them are in reality not like that. He said that the main motivation for any designer is to create new things (in the beginning without caring about its importance). Additionally, designers need to earn more money and they like to be famous ...etc. In simple words (Prof. 7G) said it is not the role of designers to keep or reserve culture. Designers develop culture, but in the narrow, slow sense. This opinion does not preclude that there are *traditional* and *progressive* designers. (Prof. 8G) supported the opinion of (Prof. 7G), she said that it is not the role of designers to keep or to reserve culture. Designers have to work to achieve the needs of their clients.

**The next main point which was carefully discussed through the interviews was about the meaning of identity, its relationship with culture and design. This part of the discussions was interesting and full of multi-opinions.**

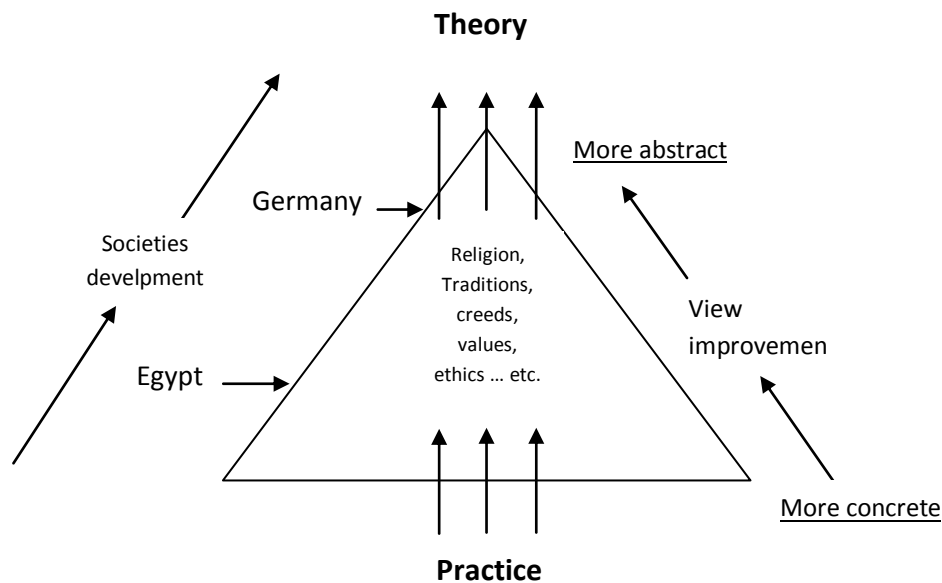
(Prof. 1G), (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 5G) completely disagreed that the designers' identity is always formed according to their society's cultural character, while (Prof. 3G) and (Prof. 4G) were in contrast and they completely agreed about this meaning. (Prof. 2G) supported his point of view by explaining that the formation of the identity of any human is different from one society to another and from one person to another according to many cultural aspects, but we could not deny or neglect the strong external influences such as media and globalization trends. In this context, (Prof. 6G) had an interesting opinion. He said that it is difficult (generally) to define a designer's identity, but we have to distinguish between two types of designers. Some of them have a type of identified style (such as Philip Starck) which we could call an identity and many others have not this formal attitude (such as Konstantin Grcic). (Prof. 6G) continued that it is difficult to suggest that the second group have no identity, but those designers have no formal constant attitude. They usually search for new ideas, new influences and new motivations to give very special work approaches. In brief, the designer's fixed identity sometimes can be helpful and other times it is a source of weakness.

(Prof. 7G) agreed *conservatively* that designer-identity is always formed according to their society's cultural character and said that human/designer identity is always a matter of education and training. He explained that logically, everyone has his individual Identity

which is related in one way or another way with his cultural background, but in general the cultural identity of anyone (any nation or any society) is like a pyramid (see, figure 31) which everybody climbs and goes up during his long life and through experiences and education.

During life, we meet many “Gesichtspunkte” experiences which are as fundamental categories and present the main issues for every individual. People improve their understanding from bottom “practice” to top “theory” through variable aspects such as tradition, religion, ethics ... etc.

(Prof. 7G) added that when any baby was born he was basically on the bottom and through his life he improves his understanding about god, environment, traditions, values ... etc. through education. The main difference between societies is based on the speed and the depth of the developing and improving views. In other words, it based on how people could improve their views which create more abstract visions.



**(Figure 31)** Cultural identity pyramid of human or any nation  
(The original sketch of Prof. Dr. Dr. **Siegfried Maser** was drawn during the interview).

(Prof. 7G) continued that the amount of view improvement which differs between practice (more concrete) and theory (more abstract) is the main motivation to ask questions about religion, ethnicity, nationality ... etc. Is it important to ask if I am German or Egyptian? Is it essential to think if I am Christian or Muslim? ... If our cultural and behavioral attitudes are

well enough improved which means that our society is well developed the answers to these questions and many others are useless. It is enough to say that we are human. (Prof. 7G) highlighted that it is an individual responsibility of everybody to find and improve his personal view to understand his real identity. The feeling of this individual responsibility also varies from one society to another.

(Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 5G) agreed that designer identity grows automatically inside every designer according to the variables of his cultural background, while (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 6G) rejected the idea of the automatism of designers' or humans' identity. (Prof. 7G) also rejected the idea of the automaization of identity. He stated that as in the case of culture, "identity" is also a dynamic process. Humans change their identity over the course of life. This change usually happens according to many cultural variables, but there are a lot of uncultural influences (school, politics, economy ...).

(Prof. 1G), (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G) and (Prof. 4G) were in harmony and they highlighted that identity is not very flexible to change, but there are always many possibilities of change (level of a free choice). (Prof. 2G) continued that however, it was hard to change the grown identity (the cultural one), but it is also common to develop and improve the personal identity according to many social experiences and variables. (Prof. 2) stated (as a European German individual) that once you have established your identity it is hard to change it. There was a deep interesting discussion about the meaning of "identity establishment" and if humans have this ability or if it happens automatically without choice according the local cultural variables. (Prof. 2G) said (from his perspective) that people have a degree of choice to influence their identity. Culture has a big effective influence on identity formation, but it is not everything. The opinion of (Prof. 5G) was rather on the same side with (Prof. 2G) although he said that human identity is a flexible aspect which changes during human life. He added that the amount of flexibility and freedom has to be more in the case of designers. In this context (Prof. 6G) said the hardness or the easiness of changing a designer's identity is something relative which depends on many human psychological aspects, in addition to the wishes and the success of every designer.

In more detailed discussions about "designers' identity", (Prof. 1G) and (Prof. 3G) believed partially in its existence. (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 5G) were on the same side, they added that it

is important for every designer to have a clear specific identity, but this does not mean the formulation of this identity *only* according to the cultural aspects. (Prof. 1G), (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 6G) continued that designer-identity influences appear intentionally and unintentionally in designer creations. (Prof. 5G) added that the cultural identity influence may appear in designer creations, but not with all designers and not in all their creations. (Prof. 2G) explained that this impact and the strength of this appearance depend not on the type or the field of design, but on the intensity of the process itself (if it is a new or a routine job).

In different words, (Prof. 3G) added that now it is difficult to speak about one specific culture, or about one isolated identity. Cultural standards are mixed together. The globalized world is not about keeping the cultural traditions or not about protecting identities. People who have money can import what they want from anywhere in the world. For instance, what is the current German tradition of design? Is it the Bauhaus, or the influence of the Ulm school? Certainly not, now Germany is a globalized country and all its previous traditions of design are in museums.

(Prof. 3G) explained that many young German designers are confused by the meaning of designer's identity. Many of them work to establish their own studios which allow them to think and design individually. (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 4G), (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 6G) partially agreed with this opinion. (Prof. 2G) said that according to his experience there is too little reflection about how to deal with this conflict/confusion. He was certain that many young German designers prefer to establish their own projects, but not because of the confusion of the meaning of designer's identity. In more direct words, (Prof. 1G) denied this confusion and he said that the motivations of the majority of young designers were completely different from any cultural identity influences. (Prof. 5G) said that it is not confusion, but it is a kind of difficulty. (Prof. 6G) agreed with the opinion of (Prof. 1G), he said that in case of German designers there is no such difficulty and the majority of them are not confused. He added that in general the amount of confusion or the strength of difficulty depended on which cultural identity we speak about (which country or which society).

**About globalization, its meanings and its applications,** (Prof. 1G) said that globalization is a reality, it is not a choice. During the globalization era, media and communications facilities

have changed our behaviors dramatically and culture is always a question of change. We live in a global world where it is just about how to convince others by yourself (your ideas/designs). (Prof. 2G) explained that there is a kind of complexity and individuals have many levels of understanding. So, if it is a bit difficult to understand, it would be more difficult to apply and practice.

In different words, (Prof. 3G) and (Prof. 4G) stated that “now” everyone speaks about globalization, but the meaning was not clear. (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 6G) were on the same side, they repeated that globalization is not easy to understand and also is not easy to deal with. (Prof. 6G) added that the ease of understanding (or how to deal with) is a difficult approach because it depends on how far or near you are from it. For example, if you live in Germany, you will say globalization is very easy to understand, I am a part of the global world and it is my daily life. But if you are far away, your opinion will be in contrast. (Prof. 3G) thought that the main sign of globalization is about economy, money and markets, not about nations and their cultural traditions.

In this context, the opinion of (Prof. 7G) was direct. He said that globalization in its beginning form was a simple idea worked to solve many economic problems by establishing and creating new markets. Now, globalization is more complex. It is a part of everything around us, so it is normal to deal with (whether you know or not, and whether you agree or not), but it still difficult to define.

**In discussing the correlation between designers’ cultural identity and globalization,** (Prof. 2G) agreed while (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 6G) partially agreed that there is still a kind of conflict between the concept of designers’ identity, which is related to the designers' own local culture and the meaning of globalization. (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 7G) said “no”, there are differences, but they are not up to the extent of a conflict.

(Prof. 6G) added that it was not easy to speak about the relationship between designer’s cultural identity and globalization. The variation of the distance between them is different from one society to another and different from past to today (it will be more different in future). In many cases the distance has already disappeared. Simply, there are no differences which lead to any conflict.

For example: What is (now) the typical German culture?

It is difficult to answer because it is a global type which looks the same in many countries.

What is (now) the typical German food?

Sure there are typical German foods, but it is difficult to identify what is real typical. We can consider "Pizza" as a typical German food. Maybe others like and eat "Sushi" and they consider it as a part of their daily life. It is a global world and there are no limits and no borders.

So, what is the typical German design?

(Prof. 6G) continued and he gave an example of himself when he cooperated with Prof. Hardy Fisher\* in designing furniture and in establishing exhibitions during the 1980s. He said that their works were much more typically German than now. There were no internet and no fast communication facilities. They focused more on the local German situation and they reflected the German cultural values more statically. Nowadays, everything is different in the criss-crossed global world. (Prof. 8G) clarified that there is no either or ... she does not see the idea as conflict at all. She described it as diversity. (Prof. 8G) continued that the work of design is depends on and determine by many influences. Most of them are not cultured, but economic aspects.

(Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G), (Prof. 6G) explained and agreed that most first world countries mostly have *no* big conflict because they benefit from globalization. (Prof. 5G) agreed with the previous opinion and he added that because the power of these countries they could deal and cross most differences, maybe they could not solve the core of the conflict, but they have the reasons/the desires to deny and to cross it. In the same tone was the opinion of (Prof. 7G), he added that there is no such conflict between most of the developed countries because of dealing with design as a science (or a future science), Then we would have global design (like mathematics, logic, economics ... etc.). Simply (Prof. 7G) said *"The rationale is universal/global and the emotional is local"*.

On the other hand, (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 4G), and (Prof. 6G) agreed that many of the third world countries (developing countries), especially the countries which have a huge cultural

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\* Prof. **Hardy Fischer** is a professor of "Industrial Design" at the School of Art and Design in Kassel (Kunsthochschule Kassel).

heritage like Egypt, are still confused and oscillating between the clash and the dialogue of cultures. (Prof. 4G) said that the way of success for these countries is to develop their abilities and to improve and enlarge their views/visions. He mentioned China as one of the successful countries which has applied many different flexible strategies and now all the world appreciates China and knows its position. (Prof. 5G) said that he agreed about the problem description, but he refused the reference to first or third world countries. (Prof. 7G) agreed that there is a problem, but he explained that the main reason of this problem is that these countries often look for a “national character” which is not rational and not reasonable!

**During the discussion about the goodness and the badness of globalization and how these relative variable values influenced culture and design practice,** (Prof. 1G) repeated that culture is always changing and it is changing faster during globalization. He said that we are very sad to lose traditions or certain culture, but there is no better consent or no better choice. The idea is just to let people decide; even when they lose something, they get another and this is better than losing freedom. (Prof. 1G) continued that people have to decide freely according to their own behavior, not according to any outside power or authority.

(Prof. 2G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 5G) pointed out that no one can deny globalization benefits in all walks of life. On the other hand, (Prof. 5G) continued that globalization has a very dark side and sometimes it works as colonialism. (Prof. 7G) said that globalization has many positive and negative influences, it depends on the perspective of the observer (in which camp he is). (Prof. 6G) was in harmony with the opinion of (Prof. 7G), he repeated his previous opinion and said that the amount of the positives and the negatives of globalization depends on how far you are from it (global benefits).

(Prof. 5G) agreed with (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 6G) that one of the main bad results of globalization's trends is the destruction of the local cultural heritage of many societies, especially in poor countries which have a huge cultural heritage. (Prof. 2G) stated that the challenge is how to save and stop destroying these heritages (traditions), not by denying and being against globalization, but by dealing with its trends without losing the originality. (Prof. 3G) was certain that globalization destroyed many local cultural heritages,

but there is no possibility to step back. He felt that he understands the problem and how difficult it is, but there is no possibility to stop the globalization process and the feeling of free change. In simple words, (Prof. 8G) said that there is not destruction ..., but it is only the people free choice, which we have to respect.

(Prof. 1G), (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 6G) partially disagree that over time, during the era of globalization, the poor/weak countries (societies) will lose their traditions and their local cultural character. Designers of these countries will not follow the strong influence/stream of the first world countries designers, and their creations will not look like carbon copies. (Prof. 1G), (Prof. 4G) and (Prof. 5G) said it could happen, (Prof. 5G) said that he hoped it would not happen, and added that no one needs those copied designs. (Prof. 1G) stated that all good designers *anywhere* would refuse to copy other designers' works. The right approach is to improve their knowledge, allowing them to present their own designs in a suitable acceptable way.

In the same context, (Prof. 4G) repeated that globalization is not completely bad, sometimes its power forces people to do their best. Globalization gives any good design (from all its aspects; usability, quality, price ... etc.) a chance to cross any borders and to reduce any conflicts in an indirect way. He added that a good design can be presented and people will accept and use it, whatever its background and however it was produced.

**When asked about design practice between cultural identity and global trends,** (Prof. 1G) and (Prof. 8G) said that people (the consumers) have the free choice to select what they need according to what they believe in. (Prof. 1G) continued that it is not correct to try to find a policy to deny or to make decisions of right or wrong. A free decision is the main right to respect. (Prof. 6G) thought that there is no problem in differentiating between "local design" and "global design". He added that sometimes the distance between them is very close and other times it is large. The opinion of (Prof. 2G) was rather close, but he rejected the strong rigid distinction between the local and global design. He said that there is a possibility of many forms in between. In harmony with the opinion of (Prof. 5G), (Prof. 2G) agreed and hoped that there would be no doubt that design pays closer heed to national cultural identity, which is growing in importance as designers begin to voice their concern that global design is not all to the good. (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 5G) also totally agreed that



designers *can* present their new ideas in the way of reflecting/referring to their own local culture, in the form of the global context (building on the positive aspects and employing the opportunities afforded by the global context). (Prof. 2G) added that the important issue is how to build the strategy which achieves this positive hypothesis. In this context (Prof. 5G) referred to many academic projects which he called *local products for global markets*, while (Prof. 6G) felt that it was a difficult approach and needs more than individual efforts. It needs the support of many associations and organizations.

Generally, (Prof. 3G) had the same opinion as (Prof. 1G), but he had not the same optimistic vision of (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 5G). (Prof. 6G) said it was very difficult approach. (Prof. 3G) summarized his idea by saying that design is driven by the economy, maybe this strategy is not ethical, but it is the global reality. He gave an example by referring to the fight between Apple and Samsung or between motor vehicle production companies, the struggle is not a fight between cultures or identities, but it is a fight to get markets. Simply, the whole story is about money and about the economy.

(Prof. 4G) had a different opinion; he said that there was no problem to have a separation between “local design” and “global design”. This separation - in its fact - is not strict. There is a change of the processes and all that depends on the design itself. What is today local maybe become tomorrow global. He liked the idea of “*glocalization*” as a middle concept between “localization” and “globalization”. (Prof. 8G) agreed that there is no problem. If the designer wants to serve the local market it is ok, but if he/she wants to serve the global one there are many different aspect to concern which have to understand them.

**By focusing on furniture design and mentioning of IKEA as an example of a global furniture company,** (Prof. 1G) highlighted that no one can force people to buy or not to buy a specific kind of furniture. In the global era, we live in an open free market and no one could isolate people. The only possibility is to work harder and to fight to represent what you like to design, but in all cases people are free to buy or use what they want, there is no consultant or power which decides what is right and what is wrong. (Prof. 1G) explained that he completely understood the problem and the strong challenges which face many developing countries’ designers and he was (as many others) sad that there are many cultural values

lost by the global companies, but the opposite of this is not to be free. And actually it is not fair and it is worse than globalism itself.

(Prof. 1G) continued that he understood the problem, but also people have to be free. The example of IKEA which has stores all over the world and its strategy of presenting cheap prices ... etc. is a good example of the global world. He agreed that they make the traditions weak and present another global lifestyle, but the only possible method to face this is to help companies to present better products. (Prof. 1G) summarized his opinion by saying that IKEA is a good global example, and if its products are not suitable for what people need, then no one will buy them.

In more detail, (Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G), (Prof. 6G) and (Prof. 8G) supported the opinion which considers furniture as a product which is not like a laptop or a cell phone. It is a kind of product which still needs to relate more to the local cultural character of every society, where peoples' traditions and behavior are different. (Prof. 5G) was not far away from the previous opinions, he added that furniture is usually produced in a different way from electronics and machines. Furniture production still contains handcraft processes. (Prof. 7G) agreed with the previous opinion, he continued the idea of (Prof. 5G) in deeper words and said *"Furniture includes not only rational (universal/global) problems, but it is also concerned with/ contains many emotional/aesthetic aspects (cultural values)"*.

All the interviewee professors agreed that IKEA furniture is a good example of global design which presents the main functional requirements for everyone, but its form, colors, and materials are not suitable for everywhere. (Prof. 5G) and (Prof. 6G) added that IKEA is European Scandinavian design, and its products are completely suitable for that society. Maybe *now* it is not correct *ethically* to present the same products everywhere without caring about people's actual needs which are different from one society to another, but economically the main reason of IKEA's success is its global concept (fast, cheap, simple, small package ... etc.). (Prof. 3G) continued that IKEA in its beginning had many problems. Most of people went there to take a look without buying anything. (Prof. 3G) continued that recently, IKEA has become a cultural standard of lifestyle for many young people. IKEA creates its own community which is like the Apple or Porsche communities. Every global company (as IKEA) works to keep and increase the members of its community.

(Prof. 2G) claimed that IKEA is sure that people will buy its products, because of the cheap price and many other issues, but this does not mean that they know exactly what people need. (Prof. 2G) agreed that sometimes people do not exactly know what they actually need, because of lack of education, and he supported the idea which considers the designer as an expert who has to work to explore the actual basic needs of his people. Many global companies (especially those trading with the developing societies) do not care enough about this human-right (people's real needs) and they think more about how to sell as much as possible regardless of the negative or positive impacts.

(Prof. 2G), (Prof. 3G), (Prof. 4G), (Prof. 5G), (Prof. 6G) and (Prof. 7G) did not consider IKEA furniture as neutral furniture. (Prof. 3G) explained that at the beginning of IKEA, they presented more values of Scandinavian taste (e.g. direct strong lines and massive heavy blocks of wood) and over time they developed their style to be more simple and suitable for more people around the world. In spite of this (Prof. 6G) said that actually there are many IKEA products which present unsuitable values to many people who are not Europeans.

**By the end of the discussion**, (Prof. 5G) said that most Germans (Europeans) have a good idea about the historical patterns of Egypt, but for the majority, Egypt has no modern design image. The success of Apple, Samsung or IKEA is an international (global) success. This international success is the result of many hours of work and improvements, which deliver a level of quality that is internationally accepted as value. If an Egyptian designer wants to sell a piece of furniture (e.g. a chair) to a German customer, he/she has to present an argument, why should the German buy this chair ... It is the main design problem that any designer has to translate an idea or a value (maybe it is historical or traditional, it does not matter) into a design language which is understandable, clear and acceptable.

(Prof. 5G) continued that if there is a group of Egyptian furniture designers ... and they would like to be acceptable globally, they have to deliver products (designs) which are recognizable. The beginning of success is when a customer in Germany or anywhere says that is an interesting product, it is different from what I know, it is different from what I have seen before, it is different from what I have, but it has a certain value (it has a quality). If they attain that, it means that they will reach success, whatever the values or the reflections which they present in this kind of products.

In the same context (Prof. 7G) explained that today, there is no place for more conservative design concepts. Design ideas have become more liberated. It is no longer important to say that I follow a specified school of design which related to nationality or any identified trend (I am a German designer, I am a Bauhausler or I am a Muslim designer ...). The most important practical value about your work is, how it is interesting and useful. It is useless to say that this design is German, Italian or Egyptian. The important simple question is “Is it a good and useful design? Or not?”. If a designer (any designer) would like to design a chair he has to create a new chair which is better than what already exists. The process of creating the new chair happens simply regardless of the designer’s religion, nationality or any other variable. If the new chair is good, it will be successful all over the world irrespective of its background. A chair is still a chair, its rational physical usability (material, size, weight, color ... in addition to its price) are more important than any other cultural values.

Finally (Prof. 7G) highlighted that our design decisions have to be more rational and less ethnical or emotional. We have to clarify the definition of design. Is the designer an artist or a scientist? This idea was discussed and changed a lot during the last century, but it is still a background for many debates. (Prof. 7G) added that the distance of design between art and science depends on the product itself. For instance, designing a car is some distance from art, while it is very close to science and engineering. (Prof. 8G) summarized her opinion and said that any designer has to build his own brand ... and he/she has to understand the clients’ attitude to design their needs. Then, people have the free decision. Simply, (Prof. 8G) called the study idea as not as a problem or a conflict, but just an acceptable *diversity*. She added that it is *ok* to try to represent the traditional characteristic of furniture interpreted in a global form, but the challenge is how to formulate this *business strategy* and for which market. The problem if we could call it as a problem is an economic one.

### 3.7.13 Conclusion of the interviews ...

The majority of the German interviewees (professors/designers) stated that the study point/idea was interesting. They understood the difficulty and the confusion of many designers of a country like Egypt who have more influence from their cultural background on their designs, and their struggle to discover

a strategy to present their creations on the line of globalization. They simply understood the real danger that faces many traditional cultures and local creations, but they could not suggest how to solve this complex problem. One of them stated that they were very sad to lose traditions or certain culture, but there is no better alternative or no better choice. The idea is just to let people decide; even when they lose something, they get something else and this is better than losing freedom.

The German professors/designers gave many variable interesting opinions about the meaning of culture. They explained that now the meaning of culture is wider than before and it is difficult to find a decisive definition in a short sentence. They added that the meaning of culture is different according to the perspective of every author and every researcher. A few of them agreed to define culture as the outcome of knowledge, science and expertise, but they added that is not enough and it is important to think about many other implicit elements of any cultural behavior. One of the interviewees summarized the meaning by saying "Culture is a dynamic process of gaining experiences". He added that the meaning of culture is constantly changing (to learn and to forget) which is influenced by training and education.

Most of the German interviewees pointed out and agreed that the main different (elements/aspects) of culture are based on the variety of natural environment, history, traditions, customs, language, arts, religion, economy and politics ...etc.

They added that these differences lead to variables in people's way of thinking, living conditions, life style and everyday needs, but for instance the influence of history, traditions or religion as cultural elements (for the majority of European people) is not large in comparison with the effect/impact of these elements on the way of thinking of the Egyptian people.

All the German interviewees agreed that the meaning of culture was/is in a process of constant change, but their opinions are multiplied and divided between agreed and dismissive of the idea of the rigid distinction between "local culture" and "global culture". A few of them wondered, how to define "global culture" and if possible, how to measure the distance between both kinds of culture.

All the German interviewees agreed that it is essential and important for any designer to express himself, but this expression is not only by reflecting his/her own culture in creations. In focusing on furniture, they stated that it is

different than communication design or machinery or industrial design. Furniture is an expression of culture much more than many other types of design. One of the interviewees added that if people want and are interested in the forms of furniture design which reflect some historical or cultural values, it can be accepted, but generally it is not a methodology to teach design students to follow and now, it is not the mainstream of furniture production.

The Germans gave variable opinions about the concept of “designer identity”, especially if its meaning related to the cultural background of the designer’s society. A group of them accepted the meaning and others rejected it. One of them accepted the meaning conservatively and he explained that human/designer identity is not only related to culture, but also it always a matter of education and training. Another opinion highlighted that it is personally depends on every designer; there are many designers who have a type of identified style which we can call an identity and many others have not.

Many German interviewees agreed that designer identity grows automatically inside every designer according to the variables of his cultural background, while others rejected the idea and supported the meaning of identity flexibility. One of them explained that as in the case of culture, “identity” is also a dynamic process and humans change their identity over the course of life. In the same meaning, other opinion stated that people usually have a degree of choice to influence their identity. Culture has a big effective influence on identity formation, but it is not everything.

The interviewees pointed out that in case of German designers there is no such clear difficulty and the majority of them are not confused by the meaning of designer identity. Indeed, most of them have different motivations and many problems which are far from cultural matters.

In different words, all the German interviewees explained that globalization is a reality and it is not a choice. During the globalization era, media and communications facilities have changed humans’ behavior dramatically and culture is always a question of change. One of them added that the main sign of globalization is about economy, money and markets, not about nations and their cultural traditions.

On the one hand, most of the German interviewees stated that most of the first world countries have no big conflict between their traditional cultural background and globalization because they benefit from the global trends

and because the power of these countries allows them to deal with differences. In the same sense, one of them added that there is no such conflict between most of the developed countries because of dealing with design as a science. Simply “The rationale is global and the emotional is local”. On the other hand, many of them agreed that many of the developing countries’ designers, especially in case of the countries which have a huge cultural heritage like Egypt, are still confused and oscillating between the clash and the dialogue of cultures and between their strong cultural influences and the global stream. The only way to reach success for those designers is to develop their abilities, to improve and enlarge their views/visions through flexible dynamic strategies.

The majority of the German interviewees pointed out that no one can deny globalization benefits in all walks of life, but one of the main bad results of globalization’s trends is the destruction of the local cultural heritage of many societies, especially the poor countries which have a huge cultural heritage. One of them repeated that it is certain that globalization destroyed many local cultural heritages, but there is no possibility to step back. He felt that he understood the problem and how difficult it is, but there is no possibility to stop the globalization process and lose feeling of free change. In contrast, there was an opinion that there was no any destruction; it is only the process of improvement which gave a sense of diversity.

In focusing on the design process between cultural identity and global trends especially in case of many developing countries such as Egypt, the opinions of the German interviewees were variable. Their opinions explained how they understand the core of the problem, the confusion and the strong challenges which face many developing countries’ designers, but there is no choice. Consumers have to have the free choice to select what they need according to what they believe in (whatever that it is). Another opinion summarized the idea by saying that design is driven by the economy, maybe this strategy is not ethical, but it is the global reality. Others hoped to get a solution to save the traditional heritages of many societies and to reduce the gap between traditional cultural and the global trends, but they did not know how. Others claimed that designers of the developing countries can present their new ideas in the way of reflecting/referring to their own local culture, in the form of the global context and they refer to projects which worked to create local products for global markets. They explained how it would be difficult approach, but it is the only possibility. Finally, there was an opinion said that there is no such a problem related to culture. It is an open market and designers have to understand how to deal with.

### 3.7.14 Chapter summary ...

- Germany is one of the most influential countries in Europe and in the world. It has a special old history and globally it has an important current industrial, economic and political role.
- Germany was/is a welcoming place for many immigrants and foreigners. It hosted to the third-highest number of international migrants worldwide. In modern history, there are two main immigrant groups in Germany (most of these migrations had an economic background). The first group is made up of foreigners who came from southern and southeastern Europe in the 1950s and Turkey in the 1960s. The second immigrant group is made up of people with German heritage.
- In Germany, there is no state religion. The basic law “Grundgesetz” of the Federal Republic of Germany grants all Germans the freedom of religion.
- Germany is one of the main countries actively supporting environmental protection. It creates many successful programs to reduce pollution, solve environmental problems and to improve the renewable energy technologies.
- Germany is a modern cosmopolitan multicultural country, with about 83 million inhabitants, 19 percent of them have an immigrant background. Generally, people from all nations, cultures and religions live together in peaceful coexistence.
- Today, Germany is one of the most industrialized nations and a top exporter in the world. Its economy is the largest in Europe and the fourth largest economy in the world. Furthermore, Germany is the world’s third largest exporter after China and the United States.
- Germany has a specific education system. Its universities, colleges and schools became world-class centers for technology, science and humanities.
- The relationship between German art and the actual thinking/practice of design has overlapped and passed through many stages of development and many stories of success.
- The real beginning of design excellence in Germany was with establishing the Bauhaus school and more particularly with the Ulm School of Design.

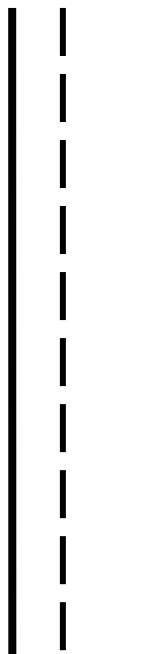


- The Bauhaus style became one of the most influential currents in modernist architecture and modern design. Indeed, the Bauhaus approach had a profound influence upon subsequent developments in art, architecture, graphic design, interior design, industrial design, and typography.
- The Ulm school of design has been widely acknowledged for its pioneering model of design education. It was one of the most progressive institutions for teaching design and environmental design in the 1950s and 1960s. The importance of the Ulm School in the history of design came from its strict methodology which they imposed on project development. Focusing on an inter-disciplinary work and objective design analysis, it rejected design as an artistic activity and spread it through industry to all walks of life.
- One of the main challenges which faced Germans was the unification between East and West. The difference between East and West Germany was enormous. It was not only a political challenge, but it was also an economic and social challenge which was strongly correlated with design and innovation. In a couple of years, Germans filled the gap rapidly. They dealt perfectly with the temporary difficulties and achieved parity between East and West.
- In contrast with the relatively easy interviews with the selected group of the Egyptian professors/designers, the questionnaire study was important as an introduction to the deep discussions with the selected group of the German professors/designers.



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***Research findings and summary ...***





## 4.1 Discussion ...

The first phrase of the preface of this thesis mentioned that design and culture have always been closely interrelated, and throughout the seven chapters of this thesis the goal was to explain and discuss this meaning from many perspectives and according to various points of view. At first glance, this meaning seems simple and logical to accept, but after careful consideration it is clear that there are many questions which need decisive answers:

Which culture do we mean?

How can we describe the relationship between culture and identity?

Which design do we speak about?

How are both concepts (culture and identity) interrelated with design especially in the light of globalization? ... etc.

In addition, there were many other questions such as: how to describe, how to evaluate and how to react to the influence of the cultural variables on the designers themselves especially in the case of many developing countries (such as Egypt), where many designers are still confused (or they imagine that ...) by the conflict between their traditional cultural identity and the trends of globalization ...

To answer all these questions - and others - the research plan endeavored to examine carefully, to clarify and to explain the actual meaning of every concept separately. This has been done through the first four chapters of this thesis. Through these four chapters, the intention was not to mention the researcher's personal opinion - it only happened in few positions - and the preference was to work on the presentation and the discussion of various opinions and offer many interpretations, which describe and explain the meaning of each concept, especially since these concepts are intertwined among many forms of study (sociology, anthropology, psychology, economy, politics ... etc.). In fact, this decision was the right one, because after presenting the various opinions the view became clearer and this gave a good chance to use and build on these clearer meanings during the problem diagnosis, through conducting the interviews and giving suggested solutions.

The first main discussed problem was the meaning of culture, the level of understanding its core, the physical results and the values of this level of understanding. Without repeating

the details mentioned theoretically in chapter one (pp. 25-51), it is clear that culture has many definitions and it is difficult to decide which definition is the decisive one. The core of the conflict is here. As a result of the interviews conducted with the two selected groups (Egyptian professors/designers and German professors/designers) it is clear that the majority of them highlight the importance of culture and its strong influence on the design process (it was perhaps the expected result). The interesting point was that each group described a different form of culture and each group thought about a different level of understanding.

In the case of the Egyptian professors/designers the opinions were relatively varied (pp. 203-228), but in general they focused on the traditional meaning of culture. Not only the opinions of the Egyptian selected group, but also in the researcher's experience as an Egyptian citizen, designer and design teacher. This experience pointed out that the majority of Egyptians think about culture like this. They usually speak about their cultural heritage, referring to historical events or religious values (e.g., see the opinions of (Prof. 1E) and (Prof. 2E)), which is possible to describe as an **emotional static culture**. The static meaning here refers to the cultural heritage and the traditional fixed habits/values.

In contrast were the opinions of the selected group of the German professors/designers. None of them referred to the traditional meaning of culture. It does not mean that they have none, but it means that they think about a different perspective/level of understanding of culture, which is possible to describe as a **rational dynamic culture** (e.g., see the opinions of (Prof. 1G), (Prof. 2G) and specifically the opinion of (Prof. 7G), who summarized this meaning in a sketch of the developing of a cultural identity pyramid, see figure 31, p. 274). In the same sense, and according to the researcher's personal experience of more than 5 years living and studying in Germany, it is possible to say that Germans (as an example of European people) consider culture as a **communication** concept (see Baecker, 2001) and this abstract meaning accepts anything that contains life variables.

The idea which is important to highlight here is that it is not a comparison between Egyptians and Germans, but both are examples of a direction of thinking (in the field of design), and the two countries are examples of the developing and the developed countries.

The result now is obvious and the main reason of the conflict is clear. On the one hand, many people (focusing on designers) in the developing countries define culture as a traditional historical heritage or a religious linguistic meaning (or both). The majority of them believe that this traditional culture formulates their identity which means that they define their identity only according to and in harmony with their cultural background. This static view is acceptable, but usually it does not match with the trends of globalization (e.g., see opinions of (Prof. 1E) and (Prof. 2E)). This situation creates a kind of confusion especially in the case of creators or designers (see figure 11, p. 163).

On the other hand, many people (focusing on designers) in the developed countries have not interest in the classical forms of culture which are based on historical or religious values. They usually think more about everyday culture which is more physical and more transient (e.g., see the opinions of (Prof. 1G), (Prof. 3G) and (Prof. 6G)). This dynamic view is also acceptable, but because it is often matched with global trends and enables them to realize many benefits, they do not care enough about the local cultural traditional forms and unfortunately they forget their current ethical responsibility to poor or weak societies (see figure 12, p. 164).

In brief, the distance and the gap in the cultural understanding between East and West (e.g. Egypt and Germany) is like two individuals want to speak to each other (in many cases they do not want). One of them speaks old Latin and the other speaks contemporary English. The result is that they cannot understand each other. The first one claimed that the old Latin is the origin of many contemporary languages (it is a fact) and it is important to keep using it. The other one claimed that contemporary English is easier and it is the global language (it is a fact) which everyone has to speak. Indeed, both have respectable points of view, but in communication process they are mistaken. If they think deeper they will discover many words (thoughts/values) are in common. The first one has to realize that originality is essential, but it is important Not to be isolated, to be flexible and accept the meaning of development which allow to positive communicate. The second one is already developed, but it is important to keep caring on the originality so as not to lose the cumulative meaning of identity, which extends from the past to the present and interact with future. It is also important to help the first one which allows both to communicate positively.

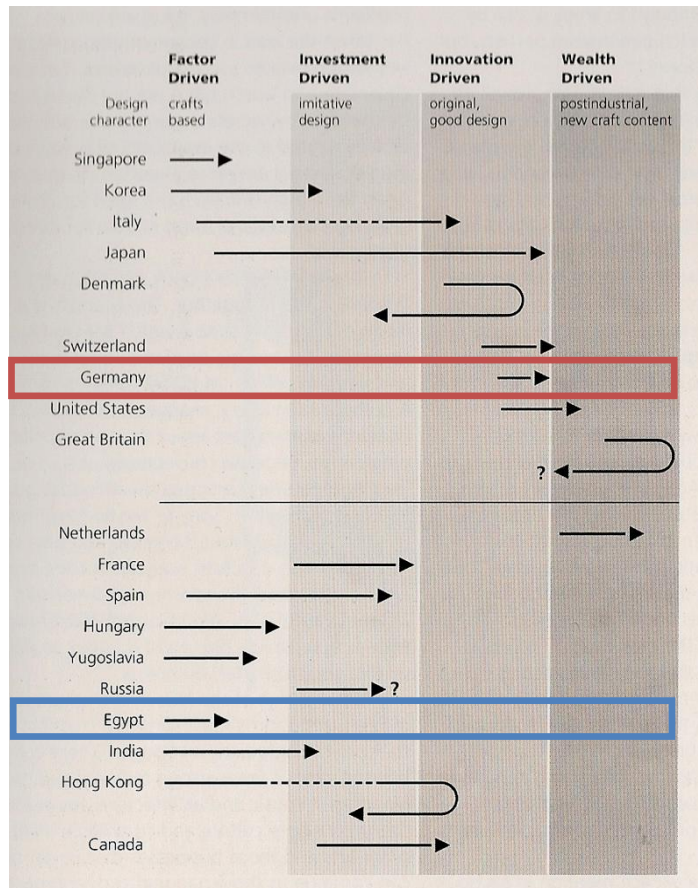
Like the gap and the differences in the explanation and the level of understanding of culture and identity in the light of the global trends there is another developmental gap. This gap is about the difference of the character of design and the dealing with its practice between Egypt and Germany. Through the relatively long evolving of design practice, it has never been static. Over the decades new disciplines have evolved in response to changes in the economic and social environment. Historically, design grew from craft activity. Modern product design has its roots in the interpretation of the Arts & Crafts movement by the Bauhaus in Germany between the two world wars. The post-war period onwards saw a gradual move towards a customer or market-focused approach. Design practice developed through the 1950s to 1980s and then, in turn, has influenced the contemporary approach to product design, which has emerged as the dominant model in the 1990s and 2000s: that of “user-centered” design. This approach considers the needs of the user – the person who will ultimately use a product or service – primary when setting the goals and outcomes of the design process. In the first decade of the 21st century, new approaches appeared where the interest focused on design thinking, designing human behavior and service design (For more details about the evolving of design practice, see Burns, Cottam and others, 2006 , pp. 9-11).

In simple words and according to the previous explanation of the evolving of design practice, it is claimed that design practice (and interactively with the design education) in Egypt (as in many developing countries) is still **centered on designing good forms or at most it is interested in achieving the basic users’ needs**, while design practice in Germany (as in many developed countries) has developed **beyond this approach (goes beyond problem solving) and now focuses on design thinking, improving human behavior through design and presenting new innovative services**. This theoretical meaning was tested through the face-to-face interviews which were conducted with the selected group of Egyptian and German Professors/designers.

Hugh Aldersey-Williams (1992) estimated the distance of this gap through his table which presented the position and the design character of many countries (see table 7). Although this table diagnosed the situation more than 20 years ago, it gives a sense about the position of design practice in every country. German design - as it is clear from the table - is in a very advanced position. Today, it is in an even better position. Indeed, there are many reasons for this high advanced position which are explained and discussed in detail in chapter seven (see



pp. 232-251). In comparison, the Egyptian design movement is still in the beginning. Through the last 20 years, there has been a slight improvement, but it is not enough to transform Egypt to the next stage.



**Table 7:** the estimated evolution of national design competitive development (Aldersey-Williams, 1992, p.13).

Indeed, the late ranking and the relatively static character of the Egyptian design is based on many correlated complex variables (economic, political, educational ... etc.), which were explained throughout chapter six (see pp. 178-202). The main reason of the slow speed of improvement depends on the methodological atmosphere of the design community of Egypt. As previously explained, there is a strong influence of the cultural background and the traditional cultural identity on the way of designing and the methods of design studying. This meaning was very clear in the answers of the Egyptian Professors/designers during the interviews (see pp. 203-228).

In the same sense, Mossad El-Kadi\* said “*we must have a national character like Japanese or German or English design. If only we can take something from the Islamic style and adapt it in a new way*” (see Aldersey-Williams, 1992, p. 116). This was the opinion of one of the academic pioneers of design in Egypt. El-Kadi said that more than 20 years ago. Now, maybe he has changed his opinion, and maybe not, but this point of view in addition to what was mentioned during conducting the in-depth face-to-face interviews explains why many Egyptian designers still have a confused design vision and many of them have a real conflict between their local cultural identity and the global trends of design.

To respond to what El-Kadi said, and to explain the wide gap between Egyptian and German design visions, it is essential to refer to the development of modern German design. Aynsley (2009, p. 11) stated that one of the main reasons which improved and developed German design was the conception of a national culture of design as flexible, at least in the German case, if not in all other national cases.

Hugh Aldersey-Williams (1992, p.114) took the same view. He said: “*The Egyptian designer is inclined to sift through the past in search of inspiration, whereas a European or an American will seldom pause to look back more than a hundred years. The Egyptians cannot escape the weight of fully five thousand years of national cultural history*”.

In brief, in the case of Egypt the concept of design (and design practice) is strongly infused by the sense of local culture and its traditional values. In contrast, in the case of Germany, the concept of design is in a process of change and correlated with the changeable global context. For example, Jonas (2011) discussed the developing meaning of design and design thinking through comparing the opinions of many specialists (see, table 8). Jonas highlighted his opinion about design by saying “*design is a process which uses knowledge to generate new forms and new (forms of) knowledge*”.

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\* **Prof. Dr. Mossad El-Kadi**, who established the industrial design department at the Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan university, Cairo, Egypt.

authors	Subject matters / areas of interest		
Platon	The beautiful (τὸ καλὸν)	The true (τὸ ἀληθές)	The good (τὸ ἀγαθόν)
Vitruvius	The beautiful (Venustas)	The solid (Firmitas)	The useful (Utilitas)
Immanuel Kant	judgement	reason	moral
David Pye (1978)	The beautiful	The efficient	The useful
Bruce Archer (1979)	products	process	people
Nigel Cross (2001)	Phenomenology study of the form and configuration of artefacts, the 1920s	Praxiology study of the practices and processes of design, the 1960s	Epistemology study of designly ways of knowing, the 2000s
Alain Findeli (2008)	aesthetics	logic	ethics
Wolfgang Jonas	forms	processes	knowledges

**Table 8:** The development meaning of design and design thinking (Jonas, 2011)

Throughout the interviews conducted with the selected German professors/designers there was a chance to show them a few modern Egyptian furniture designs which reflect the ancient Egyptian or the Islamic values (see figures 17-24 and images 32-42); the purpose was to know their impressions and their opinions as European specialists about this type of designs. The opinions varied between:

“I like these designs ... and I understand why Egyptians design like that ...”.

“Good designs, but I do not want to keep any of them in my home”.

“These designs look suitable for Egyptians, but globally no-one will understand why they look like that”.

Others wondered ... Are these designs acceptable for the local consumers ... they look like antiques”.

In two cases the comments included the German word “Kitsch” which has a negative meaning and reflects a bad impression about any issue.

Despite the multiplicity of the previous opinions, all of them reflect one main negative meaning. The meaning is that these designs are not acceptable or suitable to compete in the global market. Actually, and away from the formal interviews, this experiment repeated with many friends “Germans, Romans, British ...” and usually the impressions were the same. Many of the participants said encouraging words, but when asking about the possibility to buy any of this furniture, the answers varied between:

“No, it is not suitable for me”.

“Because of details and ornaments, I think it is difficult to clean this furniture”.

“This furniture looks huge and heavy”.

“I think the price will be very high”.

These opinions - and many others - show that there is a real problem. This problem is not specific to each design separately, but in generally, the problem is linked to the design strategy and the approach of thinking in itself. A few Egyptian designers and many Egyptian design professors realize this problem, especially those designers/professors who had a chance to study abroad or who communicate practically with people from other cultures (e.g. see the opinions of (Prof. 3E) and (Prof. 4E)), but their efforts were individually which were not enough to make a significant impact.

The theoretical suggested solutions (see chapter five, pp. 165-174), which were presented to improve design strategy in the case of many developing countries (e.g. Egypt) treat the problem and give a chance of flexible design strategies which allow designers to deal with the trends of globalization without losing their traditional cultural identity. Ideas such as cultural hybridization instead of the westernization and the homogenization of the world, glocalization (see Glocalization, 2003) as a sense of a compromise between the extremism of localization and globalization, local form/global content and global form/local content are suggested strategies to develop the design methodology in all fields of design in the case of many developing countries, but the condition here is the conscious understanding and the real support of the developed countries’ design communities.

This condition is considered as important as the development of the methodology of the developing countries’ design communities. In simple words, it is not logic and not ethical to ask the disadvantaged societies/countries to improve their views or their thoughts to be

more acceptable for the global world without supporting them and without recognizing that developed societies/countries are a genuine part of the problem. The main claim that many developed societies/countries have not enough sense about their actual responsibility to the developing societies/countries was formed. Somehow this meaning was clear through the interviews conducted with the German professors/designers.

Theoretically, and as it was mentioned In chapter three, it is difficult and unacceptable to impose one direction of thinking by claiming that you are aware of the whole world and you are the most prevalent and the powerful whether this was intentional or not. Here it is important to refer to the meaning of “global culture” which widely used instead of considering culture as one of the dimensions of globalization. The question is: If the poor or weak societies/countries agree reluctantly with this meaning, what about their local traditional cultures? (For more details, see pp. 99-108).

Practically, and through the interviews conducted with the selected German professors/designers, many of them expressed recognition of the problem, they pointed out their understanding of the conflict between cultural identity and the global trends which faces many developing countries’ designers (e.g. Egypt)(e.g., see the opinions of (Prof. 2G) and (Prof. 5G). They claimed that it is important to establish a methodology which works to produce convergence and reduce the gap between East and West (focusing on the field of design). In contrast, others said phrases such as: *“yes, I completely understand the problem and the confusion which face many developing countries’ designers, but what can we do! It is an open global market and consumers have to have a free decision”* (e.g., the opinion of (Prof. 1G)). Another professor said *“I know that the meaning of the global world creates an actual global culture and destroyed many local traditional cultures, but it is reality which no one can change”*.

Indeed, it is not necessary here to repeat all opinions which were presented in detail through chapter seven, but it is difficult to understand that many of the German professors/designers sufficed only by explaining the problem from its economic side without referring to their responsibility (as European designers and as citizens of one of the developed countries) and without enough caring about the struggle of many developing countries’ designers (e.g., see the opinion of (Prof. 3G)).

Even though the problem is only linked to the economics of the market and the requirements of consumers, it is possible to ask who is responsible for that ... In fact, it is useless to ask this question, but it is important to state that it is a shared responsibility, and the problem cannot be explained away by reference to market requirements. It is not only a case of diversity where consumers control markets according to their free decisions (e.g., see the opinion of (Prof. 8G)). Despite the simplicity of this idea, it does not offer any solutions because it simply denies the existence of the problem.

## 4.2 Case study ...

As theoretically mentioned, there are many suggested thoughts and strategies to solve the present Egyptian designers' confusion between their traditional cultural identity and the trends of globalization, to reduce the cultural gap between East and West and to activate the meaning of cultural dialogue instead of the cultural clash. One of these strategies is "local form/global content" or "global form/local content". In this context, it was clarified that the suitability of each meaning is basically depending on the product or the service itself (see chapter 5, pp. 172-174).

On the practical side, there are many Egyptian designers/professors who understand how Egyptian design practice/education is far from the global approach (e.g., the opinions of (Prof. 3E) and (Prof. 4E)). In focusing on the furniture industry in Egypt, many of them realize that the distance is not only about materials or technological production equipments (economic issues), but it is also related to the design strategies and strong influence of the traditional cultural heritage (e.g., see the opinion of (Prof. 5E)).

Indeed, there were many individual successful attempts and many governmental efforts aimed to improve this important design sector. For example, in 2003-2005 there was an ambitious governmental multi-project aimed to develop the furniture industry in Egypt. This project consisted of many multi-stages; one of these stages was to give lectures by groups of academic design professors/experts to the furniture craftsmen, producers and furniture

factories' owners in Damietta\*. These programs were organized and sponsored by the *Social Fund for Development (SFD)* and were under the support and the supervision of the *Technology Development Research Center of Helwan University*. Away from indicating the details of these lectures, the main goal was to increase knowledge and explain many modern strategies to develop the furniture industry (design practice). This face to face contact between the furniture producers and the furniture academic experts worked to discuss, diagnose and to give solutions of many actual problems which face the furniture industry sector in Egypt.

Through one of these lectures where I gave a speech as one of the academics, the discussion was about furniture export problems. Indeed, Egyptian furniture faces many export challenges (e.g. the increasing production of Southeast Asian countries and the fierce price competition ... etc.). One of the issues discussed was how to rearrange furniture pieces in containers in order to increase the number of pieces in limited area. Despite the apparent simplicity of the problem, still bothers a lot of furniture exporters. Actually, it was a challenge to solve this problem especially that most of the exported furniture is in classical styles which are huge and full of details/ornaments (most Damietta furniture production is a variation of classical French, English, Italian ... furniture styles). My idea was to divide each piece into many parts, and so reduce the space and make it easier to package and transport (the idea in itself was not new. It is the basic idea of many global furniture companies such as IKEA, but for Egyptian classical furniture it was not applied before). This idea was discussed with the head of the Technology Development Research Center of Helwan University (at this time was Prof. Dr. Des. Salwa El-Gharib\*\*). She accepted the project idea and decided to finance it. After giving one of the lectures I visited a small factory and I bought two equal tables and two equal chairs (the four pieces were in wood and before any

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\* **Damietta** or **Domyat** is a port and the capital of the Damietta Governorate in Egypt. It is located at the Damietta branch (a distributary of the Nile), 15 kilometers from the Mediterranean Sea and about 200 kilometers north Cairo. In addition to many industries, Damietta is very famous for its woodworking industries and furniture production. In addition to the Egyptian market, its furniture is sold in the majority of the Arab countries, Africa, Europe and the USA. Damietta has almost no unemployment. It produces about two thirds of the Egyptian production of furniture. The official Egyptian numbers speak about 35 thousand small workshops, a lot of medium-sized factories and many big modern factories where more than 100 thousand manual workers and craftsmen create many forms of furniture. For more information, see Damietta. The official website, the State Information Service/ Your Gateway to Egypt and Wikipedia, Damietta, Internet).

\*\* For more information about Prof. Dr. Des. **Salwa El-Gharib**, see p. 205-206. In addition, see her opinions through the conducted interviews (chapter 6).

finishing). After enough study, sketching and many drawings, in addition to the help of a group of workers (e.g. craftsmen, carpenters ...), one of the two tables was cut into pieces, and the other one kept as it was. The same process was done with the two chairs. The cutting was at carefully selected points (jointing points), then specific metal fittings/joints were used to re-assemble the cut table and chair. After testing the durability of the fittings, it was the decision to finish the two tables and the two chairs using the same materials and in the same colors.

At the next lecture the four furniture pieces were presented and the audience was asked to test all of them. They approved them and recognized the producer, but they remarked that they were finished differently. The audience was surprised when it was explained that one table and one chair were different and there was a possibility to dismantle and reassemble. As already mentioned, the idea was not new and the metal joints/fittings used are generally available. The new issue here was the possibility to use these metal joints to re-create classical furniture which can be re-assembled (as a furniture designer, it is clear that it is difficult to apply this idea in all kinds of furniture especially in the case of classic styles, but even a partial success is noteworthy).

Actually the idea of producing Egyptian furniture which can be dismantled and re-assembled was interesting, especially after its success - at least - in the prototypes presented, but - in fact - this furniture is not Egyptian. Although it was produced in Egypt by Egyptian artisans and that is important for export, but it was not enough to develop and increase the value of the furniture industry in Egypt. If the producer or the factory produces its own design (not producing copies from others' designs, even it was classical well known pieces) it would be easier to compete in markets, offer a suitable price, create a brand and create a name, in addition to increase the value of the intellectual property of design.

In 2004 and after several months of presenting the previous idea I obtained a Master's degree in design (for more details, see pp. 198-199). The idea of the Master thesis was how to design contemporary furniture which are derived from or reflect the Ancient Egyptian values. The additional idea was to take the advantage of the achieved success in the previous experiment by applying the assemble system on two of the designed furniture pieces which were presented as the applied project of the Master thesis (images 43-50). The



idea was discussed with the head of the Technology Development Research Center of Helwan University, which approved and financed the prototype production as a research project.



*Images 43-46: contemporary table derived from the Ancient Egyptian values (dismantle/re-assemble), designed by the author.*



*Images 47-50: contemporary chair derived from the Ancient Egyptian values (dismantle/re-assemble), designed by the author.*

Through 2005, the work on this project was relatively easier and faster than the first experiment and the aim was deeper. In the first experiment the goal was only to present a prototype to prove the possibility of applying the dismantle/re-assemble system in classical furniture produced in Egypt, but in the second experiment the aim was to present contemporary/modern Egyptian furniture in a global form. Indeed, the term of local form/global content was not mentioned as a specific strategy, but its meaning was very clear and actually targetable.

By examining the images and trying to evaluate the prototypes it is claimed that it was a successful experiment as a personal effort, especially as it continued and integrated with the efforts of other designers/researchers to design the packaging of this proposed kind of furniture. Today, designers/experts may agree or disagree with the assessment/the evaluation of these designs. Although this furniture was designed by the researcher (ten years ago), it can be held that it still needed more simplification to become more suitable for global markets.

Finally and away from any evaluation, the aim of presenting this experiment/case study here is that it was an attempt to achieve some development in Egyptian design thinking; it was an attempt to represent the Egyptian heritage/values in a contemporary/modern form away from the stereotypes and introversion and also away from the unconscious copying of others' designs.

As with the explained experiment, there have been many individual efforts which met some relative success and other attempts which failed, but as stated before, such individual efforts are not enough even if supported or funded by any governmental organization. In the end these efforts will stop and at most will be successful as research projects.

In direct words, the real solution suitable for the Egyptian design community (it would also be suitable for many developing countries) is to develop design education to promote a meaningful dialogue between cultures rather than focusing only on self-values (see the opinions of the Egyptian interviewees, pp. 203-228).

### 4.3 Final results ...

Throughout the study of seven chapters of this thesis – in addition to the discussion and the case study - there were many highlighted ideas, results and findings which were presented by the end of each chapter “chapter summary”, here I would like to reformulate and sum all these results together to give general meanings.

- **Culture and identity** are used widely without clear decisive identifying of their meanings. They have plenty of definitions, a range of social, psychological or political explanations which vary according to the personal perspective and the field of study of the author/researcher. Culture and identity are strongly correlated, integrated and difficult to separate.
- Generally, **culture** is a system of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people. It is a complex tool which every individual has to learn to survive in a society. This meaning is wider than the classical meaning of culture which usually refers to history, language, religion, traditions ... etc. as the main elements which form any culture.
- **Culture** is essential for the existence of any society. It provides many functions: Communication, perception, identity, value systems, motivation, stratification, in addition to production and consumption. Culture has several levels (layers) of mental expression which gave a multilevel of understanding and applications.
- **Identity** is a difficult concept to explain because of its divergence, its divisions and subdivisions. Identity differs between “personal identity”, “social identity”, “cultural identity”, in addition to “ethnic identity” and “racial identity”... etc. Simply, identity is a people’s knowledge about who they are, what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others. Identity is a term which refers to the unit to which an individual belongs. It is a set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group.
- Most of the **developed countries’ citizens** speak about culture and identity “cultural identity” as flexible concepts which are dynamic and in a process of change. In

contrast, many of the **developing countries' citizens** consider them as static solid concepts. These different views reflect the vast amount of the inconsistency of visions, behavior and the decisions of everyday life ... design practice.

- **Globalization** has many definitions and plenty of explanations, it is essentially about transnational flows of (people, money, technology, cultures, goods,... etc.) across borders, but its effects will always be spatially located somewhere and virtual spaces are downloaded and accessed in particular places. In other words, globalization is the growing interdependence of societies across the world, with the spread of the same culture, consumer goods and economic interests across the globe. Globalization is not a single process, it is a multidimensional set of variables which work and integrate as one to present the whole image of the global world.
- **Globalization** is not a choice, it is the actual reality which no one can deny or reject. However, there are differences and conflicts between the assessment of its impact/influence as positive or negative. The difference of view depends on the distribution of benefits or the amount of harm which happens to societies and individuals.
- In point of fact, many studies investigate the correlation between **globalization and culture**, a few of them consider culture as one of the dimension of globalization, but others think about the consideration of globalization as a dimension of culture. This second view presents a relative conflict between this global form of culture and the static classical forms of culture. The evaluation and the rate of this conflict depend on many variables, but in general it creates the main gap between the developed and the developing countries.
- The main **negative effect of globalization** is that it is a one way flow; from the west to all the rest. That means destroying or distorting many societies' culture especially in many poor or developing countries.
- There are many **developing countries such as Egypt**, where the majority of people still believe and react with their cultural background which has unlimited influence on the formulation of their thoughts, decisions and the practice of everyday life.

**Designers** of a society like this are usually confused between their unique cultural heritage and the trends of globalization. This confusion appears clearly in specific fields of design, such as fashion design, jewelry design and furniture design.

- Many **developing countries' designers** have to select between working according to their society's cultural identity and create forms of "*local designs*" or rush towards the trends and the applications of globalization (which may not match with the real needs of their people) and create copied forms from global western designs. In contrast, the majority of **developed countries' designers** have been able to shorten the details and agree together to cross and bridge ideological, social and cultural differences. Their cultural background works in the same *wave* with globalization trends.
- The **responsibility of solving the conflict** and reducing the confusion of developing countries' designers is the work of design researchers and design experts, not only the experts of these countries, but also the experts of the developed countries.
- **Design** as it defined is unlike art and not similar to applied science, it is a method of applying knowledge from engineering, natural, human and cultural sciences mixed with sociological, physiological and psychological values. According to this meaning, design is an effective tool to reduce the gap between East and West, it is the way to solve the conflict between the variable static forms of cultural identity and the monotype dynamic activities of the global trends.
- The beginning is to recognize the existence of the problem, then to increase the sense of the shared responsibility between developed and developing countries' designers. The gap and the conflict can be reduced through the applying of many correlated strategies, such as the meaning of "*glocalization*" which starts by realizing and applying the idea of **cultural hybridization** instead of cultural homogenization.
- On the one hand, the **developing countries' designers** have to develop their thoughts/abilities, widen their understanding of their fixed cultural beliefs which allow them to accept others thoughts/believes and apply the idea of **cultural dialogue** instead of cultural clash. Finally they have to adapt and update their design

educational systems to be in harmony with the general global trends. On the other hand, the **developed countries' designers** have to recognize that there is a problem and they are a main partner of its solution, then, they have to create and establish programs which support and increase the efficiency of the classical design programs of many developing poor countries.

#### 4.4 Recommendations ...

As a result of this study and through the researcher's experience (studying, teaching and practicing design in Egypt, then studying for getting a PhD degree in Germany), it is remarkable that the gap between curriculums, teaching methods, design practice and the structure of design community in both countries is very vast, much larger and deeper than what appears outwardly. The reasons are many, complex and vary between the environmental, historical, economic, political issues ... etc. In fact and as a result of this study, it is believable that in the field of design it is relatively easy to create convergence, where thoughts, services, innovations can jump over all the massive classical variables. According to this perspective, a few points may be suggested as activating recommendations:

1. **Communication and co-operation:** It is important to encourage and activate actual continuous communication and co-operation between the various colleges and design schools in the world (especially between East and West, between the design schools of the developed countries and the design schools of the poor or the developing countries) to bridge and fill the gap between the views/visions through more flexible curriculum frameworks and interactive teaching methods/projects.
2. **Student exchanges:** Create realistic programs of student exchanges between design schools worldwide. The suggestion here is that each student should be required to study for one semester (during the period of study) in another society/country which is different in language, tradition, culture ... etc. This program would offer many interesting experiences. Far-reaching benefits and unusual convergence would happen if a group of German students would spend a semester in Egypt, others

spend a semester in India, and other groups spend a semester in Brazil ... so on. This idea looks very optimistic and difficult to apply widely, so the proposed idea is to start in stages ... maybe through exchange summer schools programs.

- 3. Global council of design education:** Work to create a *methodological cooperation protocol of design* or a *general manifesto of design study* between all colleges and design schools in the world not only to achieve specific exchange programs, but as a preamble to establish a “*Global Council of Design Education*”. The membership of this suggested council is free-open for all colleges and design schools worldwide, each college/design school would be represented by one person of its staff. This person could be changed annually through an election within each institution. The annual meeting of this council would be held each year in a different country, but under the supervision and the financial support of all members. Contrary to what is prevalent in conferences, this meeting will be a real chance for the exchange of ideas, the transfer of expertise and the building of positive intercultural dialogue. In addition, the recommendations of every annual meeting would be as a framework to create convergence and improve the actual cultural communication between all members of the global community for design. It is well known that there are many national and many international associations/organizations which are working and interested in developing arts and design education/practice, but most of these associations/organizations have variable goals and usually focus on specific regions or limited territories (e.g. ELIA, ALIA, AICAD and CUMULUS ...\*). The idea of the suggested council is more global and adopts a comprehensive vision.
- 4. Glocal design and staff exchange:** The proposal here is to teach a subject under the name “*Glocal Design*” or “*Intercultural Design*”; the content of this subject would be managed according to the general view and strategy of every design school, but the subject should be taught once in each semester under the supervision of a visitor professor/lecturer. This professor/lecturer should come from a different cultural

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\* (ELIA) European League of Institutes of the Arts (For details, see ELIA website. Internet).

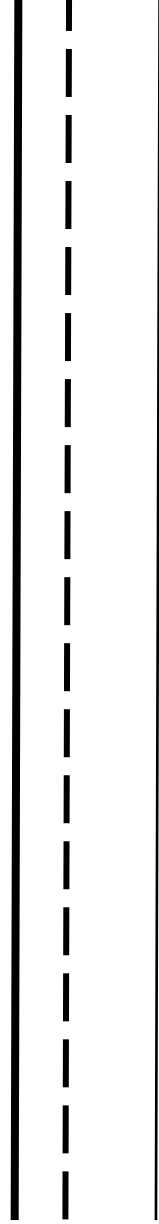
(ALIA) Asian League of Institutes of the Arts (For details, see ALIA website. Internet).

(AICAD) Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (For details, see AICAD website, Internet).

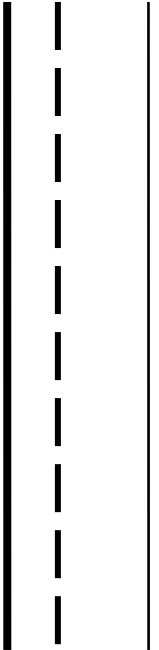
(CUMULUS) International Association of Universities and Colleges of Art, Design and Media (For details, see Cumulus website, Internet).

background. In more details, the idea here is to teach this subject 6 or 8 times during the period of study depending on the number of semesters which are different from one school to another. On the one hand, we can imagine the added theoretical/practical values and the variety of knowledge which could be acquired by design students who are studying a subject for more than six times at the hands of more than six different professors who are from different societies and have different cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, the added value would be for the professors themselves. Maybe this idea is somewhat strange, but in reality and away from the easy free mobility of the developed countries' professors, there are many other professors/lecturers who have not this facility because of many complex reasons. In many developing countries there are many professors/lecturers who would like to travel abroad to refresh or to improve their practical knowledge, maybe they could do that once or twice by participating in a symposium here or in a conference there, but it is not enough to improve their view, to recognize a wider atmosphere of culture which has a direct relationship of developing the design educational systems and their practice. Through teaching this suggested subject there will be many benefits: For the design community of the developing countries (students and professors) it will be a real chance to communicate with the global world, to recognize up to date thoughts and visions, to extend their imagination, creativity, perceptive skills and to widen the meaning of local culture to reach the global cultural concept. For the design community of the developed countries (students and professors) it will be an actual chance to discover others' cultural identities, to understand the ethical responsibility towards the developing countries and to realize the actual needs of many distant people.





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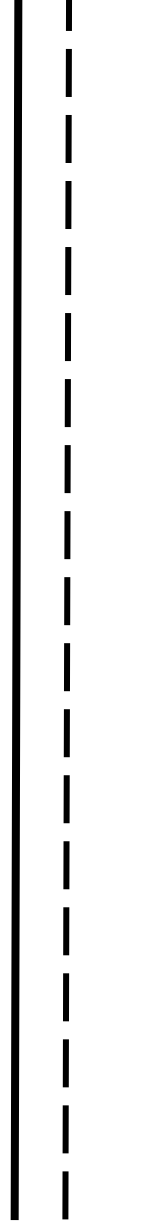
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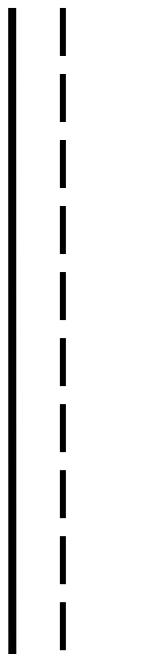
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## ***Appendix***







This appendix contains the “*questionnaire study*” which was done as a preamble before the face-to-face in-depth interviews which were conducted with a selected group of German professors/ designers (for more details about the questionnaire idea, goal and structure, see pp. 240-242). In the beginning of this appendix the questionnaire was showed as it was presented to the participants (on internet), then the answer of each question was presented on the left side of each page with a comment boxes on the right.

All answers are presented in tables which summarize the results in a simple form.

As already mentioned, the content of the questionnaire’s statements are built simply as a summary of many theoretical thoughts and basically they depended on the opinions and the observations of the interviewees Egyptian professors/designers (see chapter 6, pp. 194-217). Moreover, it is important to explain that the main goal of this questionnaire was NOT to get numbers or percentages, but the figures (counts/numbers) presented in each table reflect many meaningful insights. All these meanings were useful to explain the profound discussions with the selected German professors/ designers.

In forming the answer tables it would have been possible to give percentages in addition to the numbers, but this idea was ruled out and replaced by comment boxes. These comment boxes dovetail with each answer table to explain the results, to provide additional information or to give the opinion and the point of view of the author.

**The questionnaire as presented (online) to participants ...**

(LimeSurvey.com)

[https://www.uni-kassel.de/hrz/db4/extern/culture\\_design/limesurvey/index.php?sid=24363&lang=en](https://www.uni-kassel.de/hrz/db4/extern/culture_design/limesurvey/index.php?sid=24363&lang=en)

**Culture & design (PhD Research Questionnaire)**

Thank you for your participation!

My name is Ahmed M. Abdelrazik. I am an interior and furniture designer from Egypt. There, I work as an assistant lecturer at the Interior Design and Furniture Dep., Faculty of Applied Arts, Helwan Uni., Cairo.

For more than three years, I'm studying my PhD in Germany. Now, I am a PhD candidate at the Industrial Design Dep., Braunschweig University of Art. My supervisor is Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Jonas, he is the Prof. of Design Theories (Designwissenschaften), HBK-Braunschweig.

My PhD research title is “**Cultural Variables and Their Impact on the Furniture Design Process in the Era of Globalization**”. It studies the effect/the impact of the difference of culture on designers' identity, how are designers think? and how can they create their innovations (products)?, according to their own cultural character or according to the trends/directions of globalization.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to discover the relationship between the main aspects of the research: culture, design process, designers' identity, and globalization. This questionnaire was designed as a tool to compare the opinions of a numbers of designers, design professors and design researchers in Egypt and Germany.

This questionnaire consists of 4 basic questions and then 35 questions, it will take only 12-15 minutes to complete. For every question, please select only one answer. There is a free box, where you can add your comments/observations after each statement.

Your responses will be anonymous and used only in my PhD thesis for academic purposes. Your participation is completely voluntary, and you are consenting to participate by filling out the survey.

*If you have any queries concerning this questionnaire, please email the researcher.*

Ahmed Abdelrazik  
[s\\_uru75k@student.uni-kassel.de](mailto:s_uru75k@student.uni-kassel.de)  
[abdelrazik17@hotmail.com](mailto:abdelrazik17@hotmail.com)

**Basic information ...****1. How would you describe yourself?**

(Select the most relevant description)

- Designer / consultant
- Design educator / Academic
- Design student
- Other (please specify)

Please enter your comment here: -----

**2. Indicate your specific field of design.**

(Select the most relevant description)

- Communication design
- Environmental design
- Fashion design
- Graphic design
- Industrial design
- Interaction design
- Interior design
- Management design
- Product design
- Service design
- Sustainable design
- System design
- Other (please specify)

Please enter your comment here: -----

**3. Please indicate years of your design experience including any formal design education.**

(Choose one of the following answers)

- Less than 5 years
- 5 -- 10 years
- 10 -- 15 years
- More than 15 years

**4. What is your nationality?**

(Choose one of the following answers)

- Egyptian
- German
- Other (please specify)

Please enter your comment here: -----

**The main questions ...**

1. Culture is the outcome of all knowledge, sciences and expertise of any society. It looks like the inputs which affect on the output of anybody.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

2. The theoretical meaning of culture is rather the same in every society.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

3. The main difference in culture is based on the variety of natural environment, history, traditions, customs, language, arts, religion, economy and politics.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

4. The difference in culture leads to differences in the people's way of thinking, living conditions, life style and everyday needs.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know

- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

5. Cultural perspectives have changed in the last 20 years, which we can say that there are two forms of culture: local culture and global culture.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

6. It is important for any designer (especially during his/her study) to dive more into/explore his/her local culture in greater depth to discover its values, to be able to evaluate his/her cultural character, before communicating with others' cultures

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

7. The suitable/ideal way for any beginner/young designer to focus more on the problems of his/her local society, and work to achieve the needs of his/her people, then he/she can easily think and create for the global society.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

8. It is important for any designer to express himself by reflecting/imparting his/her own culture on his/her creations.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

9. It is still a part of the role of any designer to save/keep the local cultural character of his society, especially in the societies/countries which have a very unique cultural character.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

10. Designers' identity is always formed according to their society's cultural character.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

11. Designer's identity is something grown automatically inside every designer according to his/her cultural background.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

12. It is very hard to change or to reform the designer's identity.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

13. Designer's identity is a very flexible aspect. Any professional designer can renew/change his/her identity according to many variables. (Where he/she lives, trends of the company where he/she works,...).

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

14. The reflection/ the effect of the designer's identity appears unintentionally in most of his/her creations.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

15. Many designers are confused both about the nature of their local cultural identity and about how to express/reflect it in their works.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree



- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

16. Many designers clearly believe that there is no thing called designers' identity.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

17. Globalization as a concept is an easy term to understand.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

18. Globalization as a concept is a hard term to apply.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

19. There is still a kind of conflict between the concept of designers' identity, which is related to the designers' own local culture and the meaning of globalization.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

20. The first world countries (developed countries) could easily cross, solve and deal with the conflict between the local culture of every country/society and globalization. Now most of these countries use terms like: global culture, cultural globalization and multicultural era.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

21. Many of the third world countries (developing countries), especially the countries which have a unique/huge local cultural heritage like Egypt, are still confused and oscillating between the clash and the dialogue of cultures.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

22. Globalization is a very positive, effective aspect. Its trends/applications can lead/activate forces to save the economically and socially poor countries.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

23. One of the main bad aspects/results of globalization's trends/applications is the destruction of the local cultural heritage of many societies, especially in poor countries which have a huge cultural heritage.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

24. Over time, during the era of globalization, the poor/weak countries (societies) will lose their traditions and local cultural character. Designers of these countries will follow the strong influence/stream of the first world countries designers, and their creations will look like carbon copies.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

25. There are two kinds of design: local design and global design.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

26. Most of global products reflect nothing more profound than the power of their manufactures/societies.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know

- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

27. There is no doubt that design pays closer heed to national cultural identity, which is growing in importance as designers begin to voice their concern that global design is not all to the good.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

28. Designers can present their new ideas/innovations in the way of reflecting/referring to their own local culture, in the form of the global context. (Building on the positive aspects and employing the opportunities afforded by the global context).

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

29. Designers in all the world have to think and work more to present what they believe in, not just to run in a marathon to achieve what people need, regardless of the negative or the positive value of these products/services.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

30. Furniture as a product is not like laptop or mobile phone. It is a kind of products which still need to relate more to the local cultural character of every society, where the peoples' traditions and behavior are different.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

31. IKEA furniture is a good sample of the global design.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

32. IKEA furniture presents the main functional requirements for everyone, but its form, colors, and materials are not suitable for everywhere.

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

33. We can describe most of IKEA furniture as a "Neutral-cultural Design" or "Uncultured Design".

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

34. Most of IKEA furniture looks suitable - as an european design - for many european people, but it presents unsuitable values to many people who are not European (IKEA have stores in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Emirates ...).

Choose one of the following answers

- Totally agree
- Partially agree
- Don't know
- Partially disagree
- Totally disagree

Comment : .....

- If you like, complete the following details to receive more information.

(It is an optional question)

- Name
- Work/study
- E-Mail

Thank you for your participation.

Your response is very important and useful for me!

*Please forward this link to anybody you think he/she will interest.*

Ahmed Abdelrazik

## Questionnaire results ...

### Basic information ...

#### How would you describe yourself?

(Select the most relevant description)

Answer	Count
Designer / consultant	6
Design educator / Academic	10
Design student	5
Other (please specify)	4

Here is the description of the 25 participants who completed the answers. The ten design educators included seven of the eight German Professors/ designer interviewees. The general comments of many participants show that many of them are practicing design in addition to their work as academics.

#### Indicate your specific field of design.

(Select the most relevant description)

Answer	Count
Communication design	1
Environmental design	0
Fashion design	1
Graphic design	0
Industrial design	2
Interaction design	2
Interior design	2
Management design	0
Product design	4
Service design	0
Sustainable design	2
System design	3
Other (please specify)	8

The answer to this basic question provided the key to the participants' field of design. In addition to the mentioned fields of design, eight participants answered "others", their comments varied between strategic design, space design and architectural design. Many of them commented that they were interested in many fields at the same time.

**Please indicate years of your design experience including any formal design education.**

Answer	Count
Less than 5 years	5
5 -- 10 years	7
10 -- 15 years	1
More than 15 years	12

The answer of this question gave a clear indication of the experience of the participants.

12 of them have been practicing design for more than 15 years. This result gave more credibility for the following answers.

**What is your nationality?**

Answer	Count
Egyptian	3
German	10
Other (please specify)	12

Although this questionnaire was basically for non-Egyptians, there were three Egyptian participants. The main targetable participants were Germans. Moreover there were participants from Portugal, India, Australia, USA, and Iran.



## Main questions ...

**1. Culture is the outcome of all knowledge, sciences and expertise of any society. It looks like the inputs which affect on the output of anybody.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	15
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	0
Totally disagree	1

**2. The theoretical meaning of culture is rather the same in every society.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	4
Don't know	4
Partially disagree	6
Totally disagree	4

**3. The main difference in culture is based on the variety of natural environment, history, traditions, customs, language, arts, religion, economy and politics.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	15
Partially agree	8
Don't know	1
Partially disagree	0
Totally disagree	1

These answers were a good beginning which explained how the majority of participants (whatever their views and their cultural backgrounds) agreed totally or partially with this simple definition of culture. The interesting point here is that most of the Germans answered “partially agree” not “totally agree” (as in case of Egyptians), in their comments they thought that the meaning has to be wider than was suggested.

The diversity here reflected the different point of views of the participants. This was one of the main points which were discussed through the in-depth interviews.

The 15 “totally agree” answers in addition to the 8 “partially agree” supported the theoretical meaning of cultural difference. Indeed this result was expected and it is in harmony with the study hypotheses and what was theoretically proposed.

**4. The difference in culture leads to differences in the people's way of thinking, living conditions, life style and everyday needs.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	15
Partially agree	8
Don't know	1
Partially disagree	0
Totally disagree	1

It is clear how the answers of this question were in harmony with the previous one. Indeed, it was a basic question which allowed building on its answer.

**5. Cultural perspectives have changed in the last 20 years, which we can say that there are two forms of culture: local culture and global culture.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	9
Partially agree	12
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	1
Totally disagree	1

This question was one of the main which led to deeper discussions about culture and its understanding. The big count of "partially agree" referred to the different evaluations of cultural change. Some wondered why only in the last 20 years, others claimed that culture is usually in a process of change ... many interesting opinions which were discussed in detail through the face-to-face interviews.

**6. It is important for any designer (especially during his/her study) to dive more into/explore his/her local culture in greater depth to discover its values, to be able to evaluate his/her cultural character, before communicating with others' cultures**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	13
Partially agree	5
Don't know	4
Partially disagree	1
Totally disagree	2

Here is more indication of the meaning of "local culture" and "global culture". It is clear from the answers that the majority varied between "totally agree" and "partially agree". The opinions which did not completely agree questioned, why "*before*" communicating with others' cultures. Indeed, it was an interesting observation; they claimed that it is better to understand one's own culture in parallel with others' cultures

**7. The suitable/ideal way for any beginner/young designer to focus more on the problems of his/her local society, and work to achieve the needs of his/her people, then he/she can easily think and create for the global society.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	10
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	2

**8. It is important for any designer to express himself by reflecting/imparting his/her own culture on his/her creations.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	8
Partially agree	6
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	5
Totally disagree	4

**9. It is still a part of the role of any designer to save/keep the local cultural character of his society, especially in the societies/countries which have a very unique cultural character.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	9
Partially agree	6
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	5
Totally disagree	3

The comments on this question were in the same direction as the previous one. Many wondered why “then ...”. Participants who selected “partially agree” pointed out that sometimes problems are general and global which are not tied to a specific culture or society. Here it is important to refer to the global perspective of the German participants in comparison with the Egyptians who focus on the specific challenges which face their society.

Answers to this question varied and it was difficult to identify the main stream. Many participants agreed, partially agreed and many others disagreed in different proportions. The main point which was discussed in detail was about reflecting the designer’s own culture in creations. Participants who were against this meaning explained that designers can express themselves in many other different ways.

This question was a part of the dilemma as the previous one. The variety of answers explained how the points of view were different.

The Germans who disagreed somehow explained that it is NOT the role of designers to keep or maintain the cultural character of their society. This opinion is completely in contrast with the view of the Egyptian side.

**10. Designers' identity is always formed according to their society's cultural character.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	10
Don't know	1
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	3

This question is about “designers’ identity” which discussed its meaning and its relationship with culture. Answers showed that the majority agreed in different proportions. Discussions showed that there were some who do not accept the meaning itself. Others clarified that designers’ identity was formed according to many correlated variables not ONLY according to the cultural context.

**11. Designer's identity is something grown automatically inside every designer according to his/her cultural background.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	9
Partially agree	9
Don't know	0
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	3

This question is an extension of the previous one. The in-depth discussions were about “automatically” or not and again about the cultural background and its influence on the building of designers’ identities.

**12. It is very hard to change or to reform the designer's identity.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	3
Partially agree	7
Don't know	3
Partially disagree	7
Totally disagree	5

The variety of answers here reflected how important and interesting it was to discuss this idea in detail.

**13. Designer's identity is a very flexible aspect. Any professional designer can renew/change his/her identity according to many variables. (Where he/she lives, trends of the company where he/she works ...).**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	8
Partially agree	11
Don't know	0
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	2

In other words and in contrast with the previous question, this question was designed to test the credibility of participants. Answers showed that the majority agreed in different proportions. Many participants explained that it is not suitable to say "very flexible ...", they suggested only to say "flexible ...". Others agreed in principal, but they thought that grown identities are hard to change.

**14. The reflection/ the effect of the designer's identity appears unintentionally in most of his/her creations.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	8
Partially agree	13
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	1
Totally disagree	1

Continuing the discussion about "designers' identity", this question focused on how its influence appears. Answers showed that the majority of the participants agreed in different proportions about its appearance unintentionally.

**15. Many designers are confused both about the nature of their local cultural identity and about how to express/reflect it in their works.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	3
Partially agree	8
Don't know	7
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	4

Answers to this question provided many different perspectives. These points of view started with those who accepted that there is a kind of conflict (which is different according to many variables), ended with those who rejected the idea itself. Moreover, there were a few opinions which objected to this kind of generalization (they suggested giving a kind of limitation/ identification).

**16. Many designers clearly believe that there is no thing called designers' identity.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	2
Partially agree	4
Don't know	5
Partially disagree	5
Totally disagree	9

This question was the last direct question about “designers’ identity” it repeated asking *negatively* to test how many participants believe in its meaning. Answers show that many disagreed in different proportions which mean that they support the positive meaning in contrast with the structure of the statement.

**17. Globalization as a concept is an easy term to understand.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	5
Partially agree	7
Don't know	0
Partially disagree	6
Totally disagree	7

As a beginning of asking about globalization, the answers reflected how difficult it was to decide if its concept was easily understandable or not. The count looked equal between those who agreed and those who disagreed. Discussions showed that the choices came according to the character of each of them, where they were living and their life styles ... etc.

**18. Globalization as a concept is a hard term to apply.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	5
Partially agree	10
Don't know	3
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	4

This question was considered as the second part of the previous one. Asking about the application of globalization as a concept was important to identify the perspective of each participant. Moreover, it was a starting point to discuss the level of accepting or rejecting of the globalized world in light of design practicing.

**19. There is still a kind of conflict between the concept of designers' identity, which is related to the designers' own local culture and the meaning of globalization.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	4
Partially agree	11
Don't know	5
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	2

**20. The first world countries (developed countries) could easily cross, solve and deal with the conflict between the local culture of every country/society and globalization. Now most of these countries use terms like: global culture, cultural globalization and multicultural era.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	4
Partially agree	8
Don't know	6
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	4

**21. Many of the third world countries (developing countries), especially the countries which have a unique/huge local cultural heritage like Egypt, are still confused and oscillating between the clash and the dialogue of cultures.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	7
Don't know	6
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	2

This question was about designers' confusion between their cultural identity and globalization. The variety of the answers was a chance for deep discussions through the face-to-face interviews. Discussions showed that there were those who did not accept the meaning of confusion and considered it as diversity. In addition, there were those who had no answer "don't know" and repeated that the statement is too general to give a specific answer.

This question focused on the case of developed countries. Answers showed varied points of view. Participants who previously refused the idea of confusion selected "don't know" or somehow "disagreed". Others agreed in different proportions, they thought that the meaning is acceptable with objecting to the word "easily". Additionally, some commented added that the meaning is still general and built on a non-neutral perspective. Through discussions many participants referred to the economic issues, power, and benefits ... etc.

Answering this question was difficult for many of the participants. Most of the participants were European (focusing on Germans) and it was not clear how the problem is complicated and correlated with many variables in the case of many developing countries such as Egypt. This was one of the main points, which was discussed in detail through the face-to-face interviews.

**22. Globalization is a very positive, effective aspect. Its trends/applications can lead/activate forces to save the economically and socially poor countries.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	3
Partially agree	8
Don't know	5
Partially disagree	6
Totally disagree	3

**23. One of the main bad aspects/results of globalization's trends/applications is the destruction of the local cultural heritage of many societies, especially in poor countries which have a huge cultural heritage.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	12
Partially agree	6
Don't know	3
Partially disagree	1
Totally disagree	3

**24. Over time, during the era of globalization, the poor/weak countries (societies) will lose their traditions and local cultural character. Designers of these countries will follow the strong influence/stream of the first world countries designers, and their creations will look like carbon copies.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	9
Partially agree	3
Don't know	6
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	3

There are many discussions about the positive and the negative aspects of globalization. As mentioned in chapter 3, the positive aspects (values) of globalization trends depend on many correlated variables, this question focused only on if it is in reality helping the poor developing countries. As shown, the participants' answers varied between agreement, don't know, and disagreement.

The proposed meaning here was formulated - as many other statements - as a result of the discussions/interviews with conducted with the selected Egyptians professors/designers. As showed, the majority of participants supported this call by selecting "totally agree" or "partially agree".

This question explained the worst scenario which was expected according to the perspective of the Egyptian professors/designers. They explained how it was becoming a reality, and every day there were many signs which show the loss of the traditional local cultural character. The answers provided a range of points of view which formed the base of the Germans' individual face-to-face interviews.



**25. There are two kinds of design: local design and global design.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	4
Partially agree	9
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	7
Totally disagree	3

**26. Most of global products reflect nothing more profound than the power of their manufactures/societies.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	7
Don't know	3
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	4

**27. There is no doubt that design pays closer heed to national cultural identity, which is growing in importance as designers begin to voice their concern that global design is not all to the good.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	4
Partially agree	10
Don't know	7
Partially disagree	2
Totally disagree	2

Although there are many types/kinds of design, this question referred only to correlation between design and the local or the global context. As the counts explained, it was difficult to identify the main stream of the participants' opinions. There were those who agreed and those who disagreed in different proportions. This result becomes a point of deeper discussions through the conducted interviews.

There were many participants who agreed and partially agreed with this statement. Participants suggested adding other variables such as the power of mass consumption and consumerism. In contrast, there were those who disagreed in different proportions. Their main reason was using "*nothing more ...*". These opinions - and others - were discussion-points in the face-to-face interviews.

The meaning of this question was rather general and allowed every participant to understand the meaning according to his explanation (Indeed, it was a call for comments more than selecting a specific answer). Maybe this was not perfect and made the point not clear enough. The participants' answers varied between agreement, do not know and disagreement, although most inclined to agree with the wish for this to happen.

**28. Designers can present their new ideas/innovations in the way of reflecting/referring to their own local culture, in the form of the global context. (building on the positive aspects and employing the opportunities afforded by the global context).**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	7
Partially agree	10
Don't know	6
Partially disagree	1
Totally disagree	1

**29. Designers in all the world have to think and work more to present what they believe in, not just to run in a marathon to achieve what people need, regardless of the negative or the positive value of these products/services.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	5
Partially agree	10
Don't know	4
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	3

**30. Furniture as a product is not like laptop or mobile phone. It is a kind of products which still need to relate more to the local cultural character of every society, where the peoples' traditions and behavior are different.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	10
Partially agree	10
Don't know	1
Partially disagree	2
Totally disagree	2

This question presented one of the main hypotheses of this thesis. It was clear how the count of participants' agreement and agreement partial supported the idea and this was a point of deep discussions about the methods to use. It was not clear enough why few participants selected "don't know", but generally the whole idea was discussed in detail through the fifth chapter and then in the conducted interviews.

Again, one of the general questions which led to comment as well as selecting an answer. Although the counts indicate general agreement, there were those who did not know, in addition to those who disagreed in different proportions. Many comments explained that it depended on the environment of every designer, the society they live in, its wealth and many other variables.

This question was directly about one of the hypotheses of this thesis which focused on furniture as a product and its relationship with the local cultural character of every society. As it is clear from the count of answers and according to the comments through the conducted interviews, the majority of participants agreed somehow with the context of this statement.

**31. IKEA furniture is a good sample of the global design.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	6
Partially agree	8
Don't know	3
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	5

**32. IKEA furniture presents the main functional requirements for everyone, but its form, colors, and materials are not suitable for everywhere.**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	10
Partially agree	8
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	4
Totally disagree	1

**33. We can describe most of IKEA furniture as a "Neutral-cultural Design" or "Uncultured Design".**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	5
Partially agree	4
Don't know	2
Partially disagree	9
Totally disagree	5

This simple question about IKEA furniture was a topic of many comments which showed the opposite of what was expected.

Many participants agreed in different proportions, in addition to those who did not know and who disagreed. There were many comments which indicated IKEA as Swedish design more than its global context.

Another question about IKEA furniture, it is clear how the numbers of agreement in comparison with the disagreement. The main goal in asking about IKEA was its consideration as one of the successful global examples of furniture companies. More details were discussed through the face-to-face interviews.

Answers to this question came in contrast to the expected result. This statement was only to test and measure the extent of the participants accepting the idea of the additional cultural value of furniture. Despite the well known Swedish origin of IKEA, there were many participants who agreed in different proportions with this claim. This interesting result was a point of detailed discussions.

**34. Most of IKEA furniture looks suitable - as an European design - for many European people, but it presents unsuitable values to many people who are not European (IKEA have stores in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Emirates .....).**

Answer	Count
Totally agree	4
Partially agree	9
Don't know	8
Partially disagree	3
Totally disagree	2

The averages of agreed and disagreed in answering this question showed how the majority of participants supported the proposed claim. From comments and through discussions participants who selected “don’t know” said that they have not enough idea to evaluate and to give a specific answer and so they preferred not to give a definite answer. Through the face-to-face conducted interviews this point was discussed in more detail and created a debate about the actual responsibility of the designer in light of the global real trends.