

**Decolonising Design and Heritage in Craft Development Discourses:
Examples from Sri Lanka, India and Scotland**

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Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Heriot Watt University

School of Textiles and Design

June 2018

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Abstract

Craft tends to be recognised both as a material culture and as a practice which ranges from local production schemes to global design industries. As much as it is a cultural asset, craft is also valued highly as an economic asset that offers development opportunities to most parts of the world, where ‘Craft Development’ becomes a concern of national and international agencies which exercise a hegemonic view, and is often said to marginalise the local participation during that process.

When development cascades to the more discreet levels of the grassroots communities, precarious conditions are created that affect the material culture of craft objects, ideas of creativity, labour practices, class structures, the identities of makers, production processes and markets. It is also the case that corporate and government regulations put in place to ameliorate such issues actually exacerbate them. However, little is known about how the ‘local people’ adapt to these changes alongside a hegemonic view and in return the way they construct their everyday realities. In this context, multiple actors are involved in shaping craft development discourse (e.g. international and national institutions, governments, NGOs, businesses, designers, design schools etc.) where they use ‘heritage’ and ‘design’ to create a particular view about craft development and to talk about it. By mapping how local heritage craft is understood in relation to the global design industry, who mediates and how they mediate in this local-global process, a multi-sited ethnographic research strategy is adopted by following people, metaphor, story and things in, Sri Lanka, India and Scotland—which also provides a comparative interface between East and West.

The analysis of the case study and fieldwork data argues for a ‘decolonising’ situation being promoted for design and heritage, moving away from the established authorised notions to have more marginalised viewpoints included. Ways in which this might be achieved were tested as part of this study, through anthropological enquiry, and in the form of a ‘charrette’. In doing so the research attempts to fill one of the critical gaps in both heritage and design studies—that is to propose ‘approaches’ to increase community participation. This is also a major limitation of UNESCO’s 2003 convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), of which traditional craft is a part. The research concludes by offering insights into the formation of policy and practice through an interdisciplinary framework that combines heritage, craft, and design and anthropology.

Dedication

To Amma, Thaththa and Dinesh

Acknowledgements

This thesis would not have been possible without the generous support and kindness of many individuals, communities and organisations in Scotland, India and Sri Lanka. First, my thanks goes to Dr. Britta Kalkreuter, who is both my supervisor and mentor as well as being the person who directed me on this long journey from start to finish—it is thanks to Britta that I became interested in heritage studies.

I am deeply grateful to everyone who contributed time and effort when I was conducting my fieldwork, others who invested their time during ad-hoc interviews, and those who helped me with translation. Whenever possible I have acknowledged them in my research, but due to confidentiality I may not have been able to mention all of their names, and I regret that I cannot thank them individually. Many thanks to those who welcomed me into their factories, work places and homes, and provided me with access to stay and observe them. Thank you for your friendship and insight!

I am also grateful to many academic institutions: the Pearl Academy Jaipur, the Indian Institute of Craft and Design (IICD) and the National Institute of Design, India, with which I was affiliated during my fieldwork in India. I would also like to thank the Department of Integrated Design, University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka, for allowing me to work with their staff and students very closely. My deepest thanks are owed to all the staff and students at each of these institutions, and for the lifetime friendships that were forged during my visits.

I would never have been able to embark on my PhD journey, had it not been for Heriot Watt University offering me a fully-funded PhD scholarship. I gratefully acknowledge financial support from the Fiona Watson Memorial Fund, the Principal's Public Engagement Prize and the Santander Mobility Grant, which collectively enabled my research. In particular, I thank the library staff of the Scottish Borders Campus for going to such great lengths to ensure that I have always had the study materials and support that I needed to finish my work, and special thanks are due to Jamie McIntyre and Zoe Turner. I cannot forget my work buddies at the School of Textiles and Design. Other friends and colleagues, who read versions of my work, advised and provided other help will always be remembered.

My parents, Jayantha and Manel, and husband Dinesh, who are the pillars of my life, have endured much due to my long absence and not having had enough time to pay attention to family life or talk to them as much as I would like. Dinesh especially

allowed himself to be uprooted from Sri Lanka to stay with me in Scotland, and has had to sacrifice a lot just to be with me. When the entire PhD process became an emotional rollercoaster ride, he always remained supportive, encouraging and above all believing in me. I have benefited throughout from Dinesh's moral support and thank you for being such a supportive husband. I hope my parents and Dinesh are now relieved and happy to see the end result, and know that this thesis would not exist without their love and support.

I also dedicate this thesis to numerous artisans I met, as this is all about their struggles and victories to continue their craft. One Indian artisan told me, "*Kala khabhi khatam nahi hoti—Kalakar khatam hota hai*" (The artisan may depart, but the art never dies).
Respect to you!

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The Scope of the Research

This thesis is about the mediation of craft (both as material culture and practice) as it moves from local production schemes to global design industries. Widely discussed as part of a global process, craft also promotes the vernacular, the mundane, the local and handmade with significant effects on cultural identity and traditional values. As much as it is a cultural asset, craft is also valued highly as an economic asset that offers development opportunities to most parts of the world (Daskon and McGregor 2012, Venkatesan 2009, Parts et al. 2011).

In the context of such mediation between the local and the global, craft is associated with complexity and is often portrayed as a double-edged sword. For example, craft at one point is recognised as being a promising and flourishing discipline offering benefits of social, cultural and economic values to the people who engage in it, while at other points is seen as being in decline, thus needing revival, partly through putting safeguarding measures in place. Therefore craft is often seen as a development activity under the auspices of international and national bodies and local agencies that draft policies, plans, and schemes to establish an authorised view of craft – that is both economically sound and culturally sustainable.

‘Development’ also often tends to create an idea of ‘progress’, that is benchmarked against Western socio-economic conditions, and this creates a “utopian vision of a postcolonial future” (Yarrow and Venkatesan 2012), where craft is evaluated through the same ‘western’ lenses, while marginalising ‘eastern’ ways or the ‘other’ (Tunstall 2013). However, there is little understanding of the effects of western hegemonic views as in on shaping the ‘local’ when development cascades down to the more discrete levels of the grassroots (Venkatesan 2009). The examination of craft also offers us a useful means of understanding complex global relations in that the reality of such relationships can be seen to be reflected in the local in a nuanced and subtle way. DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber’s (2016) account is useful to understand why craft matters in the way in which it constructs everyday realities without disregarding dominant discourses. They say, “...craft is a vital and fertile means to understand relationships between places, people and time. Craft, like history, is a tool that people

use to negotiate their roles and places within the material and social environment. The labour of craft work, the translation of craft export and design, and the material value of consumption all help those involved to ‘tell themselves’ in very different but often related and overlapping contexts” (DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber 2016, p1). It is in this sense that this research looks into the ‘everyday’ lives of the craftsmen and women, to see how this ‘telling’ happens through their knowledge, material practices and their experiences of the making activity.

To explore how these often unnoticed and unacknowledged everyday constructions happen, the thesis builds on several disciplines, namely heritage, design and anthropology. At the same time, studying craft and artisanship opens up avenues and evokes questions that support discussions around sustainability, ethics, labour, class, gender, identity, innovation, production and markets, modernity, colonialism, industrialisation, development and so on. Often it is impossible to separate these, and this research therefore pulls together complementary areas to bring about a contextualisation of grassroots understanding of social, cultural, economic and political changes of craft.

Situating craft within shifting local and global processes, in social and historical contexts, and amongst places, people and institutions, the thesis examines into craft from an interdisciplinary point of view, by evaluating it from heritage and design studies perspectives. To elaborate the need to review craft development from both design and heritage perspectives, the research sets out to explore Herzfeld’s (2004, p2) powerful concept of a ‘global hierarchy of values’ which talks about a ‘universal’ appeal, where certain assumptions of a consensus emerge concerning cultural, moral and aesthetic values. There is a danger that such consensus might lead to homogenising, rather than promoting diversity in craft, design and heritage. This study also examines craft and craft development from the point of view of ‘decolonising’—a concept that is the focus of much scholarly debate in the fields such as design (Fry 2017, Tlostanova 2017, Rizvi 2018) heritage (Smith 2006), and development (Escobar 2012a). The research questions whether it is possible to attain decolonial approaches in craft development, and if so, how. Moreover, such context-specific understanding of applied research regarding ‘Global North’ and ‘Global South’ would be useful to ensure the delivery of positive social, cultural and economic benefits.

In order to explore this in detail, the research looks specifically at those situations where craft practices encounter global design practices, and are engulfed in the tropes of development discourses. To do so, the thesis defines the term ‘discourse’ which will be discussed alongside ‘craft’, ‘design’, ‘heritage’ and ‘development’ in turn, by borrowing Lynch’s (2007) use of the term ‘discourse’ in relation to power and agency. Lynch explains that ‘discourse’ means more than merely ‘speech’ in that analysing discourse it is necessary to examine “the underlying assumptions and relations of power embedded in forms of speech” (Lynch 2007, p248).

The use of ethnographic accounts is expected to contribute to the understanding of grassroots craft practices in relation to the intersecting discourses of heritage and design. It is hoped that such work will identify which particular ideas, relations and practices are promoted and which are ignored within craft development discourse. This study therefore pays particular attention to the interface of craft and design that took place at various locations in Sri Lanka, India and Scotland, which together provide a means of comparing East and West.

The following research aims and questions were therefore formulated to provide a more nuanced understanding of local heritage craft in relation to the global design industry. The research is intended to bring comparative understanding in terms of how local-global relations work, what forces are visible in controlling these narratives and who the main actors are. The research also examines what approaches might be taken to reduce marginalisation in craft development and mitigate its effects.

These aims and objectives need to be understood as being part of an iterative research design process, which the researcher evaluated, re-evaluated and redrafted at various points during the research design, in order to better place the study within the nascent scholarly debates of craft, design and heritage studies. This research is also informed by craft theory, design studies, cultural studies, anthropology, and heritage studies as it was concerned with the production of craft work, knowledge and identity formations including gender work, labour practices, participation in global design and commodity cultures, conditions of modernity, and the use of participatory methodologies.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

Aim 1: What are the different types of knowledge, material practices and experiences visible in craft and design engagements within local-global relationships and in what way do they contribute to heritage discourse?

Objectives:

- a) to analyse a specific knowledge exchange project
- b) to identify who participates and how they collaborate
- c) to identify the ways in which participants construct a heritage narrative in relation to particular discourses about craft and design.

Aim 2: Develop an understanding of key actors involved in craft and design engagements within local-global relationships, and their contribution to heritage craft practices.

Objectives:

Observe and analyse

- a) a traditional craft community,
- b) a craft enterprise,
- c) craft projects conducted by higher educational institutions and
- d) compare these within two cultural settings (India and Sri Lanka).

Aim 3: Design participatory approaches to heritage management, for work on heritage craft and design interfaces that work towards developing decolonising approaches.

Objectives:

To propose

- a) a collaborative engagements model with multiple heritage actors by reflecting on the findings of the craft and design engagements studied,
- b) plausible methods and tools and
- c) design and test a model of a participatory engagement

1.3 Thesis Structure

There are several themes that run through this thesis, and each chapter depicts the way in which these themes are interlinked and how they inform each other. Therefore:

Chapter 1 introduces the scope of the research and places it amongst the broader literature of craft, design, heritage and anthropology studies while identifying the less explored areas through which the interdisciplinarity could address the gap. ‘Craft development’ is understood here as a dominant trope that involves socio-cultural, economic and political presentations.

Chapter 2 provides a theoretical background based on the relationship between craft, design, heritage and anthropology and is therefore divided into three major sections as it reviews existing research. For example, Section A discusses the craft and design relationship, taking into account definitions of relevant terms as used in various historical and disciplinary contexts. It points out the distinctions and divisions that result from such categorical or disciplinary boundaries, and then examines the differences between the approaches of First world-Third world, Global North-Global South and Eastern-Western countries in the field of craft and design, while more specifically focusing on craft and design interventions from various quarters. The section also highlights the nascent scholarly debates regarding ‘decolonising’ and then moves onto Section B, which discusses heritage and craft relationships and clarifies the use of terminology that this thesis adopts. It also contextualises craft as an intangible cultural heritage and thus grounds it within heritage studies and work relating to globalisation. This section of the chapter also highlights key issues within heritage studies and identifies a gap in the field, namely the lack of participatory approaches for heritage craft and design engagements. Following on, Section C examines participatory approaches in more detail, turning its attention to design studies to compare and contrast available methods, and evaluate the suitability of design anthropology as a plausible methodology for craft and design engagements.

Chapter 3 sets out the methodologies adopted in this research and argues for the use of various research philosophies. It moves on to explain the research design that was adopted, based on a dialogical process consisting of four different phases. Each phase is examined, showing what particular research methods were chosen, and before

explaining how these methods were amalgamated to achieve the set of objectives outlined for this research.

Chapter 4 starts the primary research of this thesis as it focuses on a specific example of knowledge exchange activity-where East meets West and craft meets design. Through this example, specific encounters of different actors are presented where artisans, designers, cultural and heritage practitioners, development agents, NGOs, HEIs, and the public come together to make, discuss and present their own interpretation of craft and design practices. Discussions during these encounters covered many topics including, invented traditions, generational activities, contemporary craft practices and questions regarding collaborative interfaces aimed at sharing heritage values.

Chapter 5 moves away from ‘planned and facilitated’ knowledge exchange activities to embrace the ‘reality’ on the ground. It looks at the development of a traditional block printing craft in Sanganer, India and discusses how varied actors are involved in shaping this industry. By discussing the physical work of printing in relation to the symbolic representation of materials in social, cultural, political and economic contexts, the ethnographic study identifies the key stakeholders and actors within this craft as well as examining how artisans feel about, and understand, their work. It questions how these varied narratives may differ from those idealised viewpoints of official discourses and thereby affect the development of craft on the ground. The chapter also presents design schools’ involvement in the craft development discourse and shows how the craft sector is conceptualised to the benefit of more privileged social strata and hierarchies.

Continuing the above discussion, Chapter 6 selects specific examples and investigates the shifting dynamics of craft communities in Sri Lanka. It focuses on two communities in order to evaluate interactions between artisans and craft development schemes. Examining one prominent textile-weaving community that has achieved considerable success due to external design interventions, the chapter outlines the alliances and negotiations artisans made with fellow weavers of the village and outsiders such as designers, traders, development agents, researchers and so on. The chapter goes on to analyse the agency between a community of basket and mat weavers and a particular craft enterprise, i.e. those that present examples of the way development recasts people’s identities and labour. Given that a number of Sri Lankan design schools have embarked on projects within the craft sector that involve co-creational activities with

local artisanal communities, the chapter examines one such case and shows that this type of design intervention may lead to outright hostility regarding the ownership of the resulting design and their copyright. Such interventions involving as they do a collaboration between schools, their students and local artisans may also leads to the furthering of a particular heritage narrative that is then perpetuated through the pervasive ideology of design.

Chapter 7 pulls together issues, implications and opportunities from the previous chapters and explores how participation can be increased in heritage craft and design engagements. It also examines how multiple actors may shape the narratives of craft and looks at how the collaboration of such actors may lead to a weakening, or even a breaking down, of prevailing, undesirable power structures. It brings craft, design, heritage and anthropology into one framework to discuss increasing participation as a means of bring in a decolonising status to design and heritage, which is argued as taking their cue mainly from a Western culturally elitist point of view.

Chapter 8 concludes the findings of each aim and objective. It offers a final reflection and foregrounds the key discussions in terms of their contribution to policy and practice.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In 2016, the Journal of Design History dedicated a special issue to discuss the relationships of design, anthropology and culture where heritage, tradition and craft debates were also stated (Garvey and Drazin 2016). It established the view that research must consider the current thinking in its constituent parts on these areas, as such interdisciplinary dialogues encompass larger social practices and systems by which we relate to each. Therefore, section A provides an overview of the key debates and discussions on definitional, historical and contextual aspects of craft and design. Section B: grounds the study in heritage discourse, with particular emphasis on craft and participatory approaches to heritage management. Section C finally discusses how design studies can usefully add to these discussions and bridge the gap, particularly where participatory and collaborative aspects of design thinking might link heritage, craft and design as an inter-disciplinary study and not so much as contested domains, but rather complementary areas of practice.

Section A) Craft and Design

This section reviews the important debates on craft and design, drawing on definitional, historical and contextual distinctions. It particularly compares Western and Eastern approaches to craft and design showcasing the parallels and intersections within disciplinary recognitions. Further highlighting current issues, implications and prospects of craft and design interventions, the section provides the basis for later development of a conceptual framework of craft and design.

2.1 An overview of craft and design: seeking definitional clarity

Defining the term ‘craft’ is difficult (Dormer 1997) and as an elusive term with complex social discourses with multiple meanings attached, Kouhia (2012) states that its credentials are unsettled. Thus it has warranted debates on how to position craft as a discipline or category, an idea, its context of uses, meanings and values, while at times craft being all of these according to Adamson (2007). Likewise, defining design is also challenging, constantly evolving and often contentious (Heskett 2002). Both craft’s and design’s conceptual and etymological association with art have initiated scholarly discussions based on their historical development and contemporary recognition

creating further ambiguity (Adamson 2007, Adamson 2013, Fariello 2005, Cardosa 2010).

Dormer (1997), agreeing on the partially informed and generalised definitions given to describe craft, assigns two modes of definitions; craft as a practice (i.e. studio crafts) and as a process. Adamson (2007) also denotes craft as a process, however Adamson's approach to defining craft interrelates through the philosophical approaches of supplemental, material and skills as well as highlighting cultural aspects within which craft is structured e.g. as pastoral and amateur. Placing craft within the process of making, Marchand (2016) reviews the multifarious works of designing, making and producing craftworks as a problem solving activity, which is also visible in Sennett's (2009, p9) definition of craftsmanship when he describes craft as "a dialogue between concrete practices and thinking; this dialogue evolves into sustaining habits, and these habits establish a rhythm between problem solving and problem finding". Sennett (2009) organises an entire school of thought around craft within knowledge, transmitted skills and labour, methods of working, tools and materials and associates with craft as a desire to do well.

Adamson rejecting that craft being "a movement or field", describes it as a process of making (Adamson 2009, p2). He says, craft "is a way of doing things, not a classification of objects, institutions or people" (Adamson 2007, p4). However, efforts also remain to categorise craft generating boundaries, providing a taxonomy (see Risatti 2007) while others propose craft to be an expanded field (see Veiteberg 2005), where craft overlaps with design and (high)art, without being recognised as exclusive disciplines (Shiner 2012). This is even extended when scholars such as Campbell (2005), Elliot (2016) and Daya (2016) recognise the importance of making, using and consuming experiences of craft as a mode of self-expression, other than its material culture concerned. Therefore, craft can be seen within the domains of practices, processes, objects and materials as well as within the social and cultural systems of production, uses and consumption.

Based on the etymological evolution of the word design, Krippendorff (2007, p69) proposes an acceptable definition of design as "...making sense of things [to others]". Also by taking account of the linguistic, and etymological definitional clarity, Sparke (2004) illustrates a double level of meaning to design within a normative and a formative expression, or as a noun and a verb. By establishing the patterns and

structures through generic definitions, Heskett (2002, p5) describes design 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”. This aligns with Krippendorff’s (2007) definition of design as sense making activity within experiences, perception and appearances, but emphasises the choices the human makes specifically. Earlier definitions to describe design can be seen as a way of giving form with concerns for materiality (Alexander 1971) and as a problem solving activity (Simon 1969). These narrow and partial views still define what design means to date according to Kimbell (2011), whether in material culture as artefact making or within the profession of design. Moving on from defining design to be an activity with material connotations attached to it, there are debates that question how design should be placed amongst other disciplines. For example, Clay (2009) situates design anywhere between art and technology: from an artist to an engineer, Nigel Cross on the other hand admits design as a discipline as distinct from the sciences and the humanities (Cross 2001, Cross 2006). Therefore a consensus currently cannot be formed as to what design means, what it takes hold of, where it takes place and who does it or could do it. While sustained efforts continue to be made to describe design as a problem solving activity, addressing ill-defined problems (Cross 2006) or wicked problems (Buchanan 1992), more recent thinking has moved towards recognising design both as a practice and as an output (Kimbell 2012). Design is also considered as “a fragmented discipline” (Kimbell 2011, p290), and is recognised as one of expanding boundaries which have shifted from “sense making activity” (Krippendorff 2007) to “worldmaking” (Agid 2012), “...as a form of...future-casting—some-times utopic, at others dystopic, often based in market-driven logics or socially-driven goals [or, at nexus of these]” (Agid 2012, p47). This then explains the multifaceted nature of design, which places it among diverse audiences and disciplines with a purpose attached to its activities.

The above review of craft and design literature confirms that a definitional approach does not provide a conclusive understanding of their terms, and hence a careful review of its historical and contemporary developments are discussed in the next section with a view to select an approach appropriate for the use of this study. Greenhalgh (2009) also, reviewing much of the current writings in craft publications, stresses an absence of history about craft in their discussions, at times showing how dominant and parochial views centre around American or Western craft. This lacuna in the literature will be briefly addressed in the next two sections.

2.2 The historical development and the contemporary view of craft and design

Providing a review on the historical development of craft and its relationship with industry, Cardoso (2010) argues how the terms craft and design were synonymously used in the pre-industrial era, and describes the way they later got recognised as denoting separate categories, creating a dichotomy between the two as it reached the 20th century. Such developments created the definitions of craft to be used conventionally and archetypically (Greenhalgh 1997). Greenhalgh further traces how over the last three centuries the word craft has “moved from being an adjective to being a noun; from being a description of things to being a thing...” (Greenhalgh 1997, p25). This disjuncture generated a view of recognising humanity as a core essence of craft practice, while branding industrialisation as a dehumanising process according to Campbell (2005). This is mainly due to the 19th century industrialisation associated with factory production that took precedence over industry’s usual connotations of “skill, dexterity, diligence and assiduity” which craft was also affiliated with (Cardosa 2010, p322). Here the role played by the Arts and Crafts movement, initiated by intellectuals such as John Ruskin (1819-1900) and William Morris (1843-96), has been identified as embracing the handicrafts in reaction to the loss of skills to mechanised production. Such thoughts were echoed as far afield as Asia by scholars like Ananda Coomaraswamy who adamantly claimed that modern is evil as he went on to value homebased craft practices and craftsmanship (Coomaraswamy 1910).

The Arts and Crafts movement was taken forward around that time by experimental communities such as C.R. Ashbee’s Guild of Handicraft, Charles Rennie Mackintosh in Glasgow, Hoffman and Moser’s Wiener Werkstätte (Friel and Santagata 2008), and Elbert Hubbard’s Roycraft Community in East Aurora in New York (Crawford 2004, p31). Campbell (2005), writing about the Arts and Crafts movement, stresses that the re-contextualisation of craft as being opposed to modernity still continues to this day as a romanticised view with pre-industrial connotation. It creates a dichotomy between craft and mass production by machines, in which the division between design and manufacture necessitated an entirely different mode of production bringing in its wake an altered perception of object culture and on the idea of consumption (Campbell 2005). As the Arts and Crafts movement is being criticised for portraying an antithetical picture of modernism and industrialisation, the rhetorical implication of the term craft is said to be creating a division between the authentic/non authentic;

revolutionary/mainstream; artist/factory; handmade/mass production where industrial became 'impure' while the artisan became associated with 'pure' (Rice 2015, p218-219). In other words, craft goods generated an aura of "good taste" while mass produced commodities created "alienation" (Campbell 2005, p39).

Greenhalgh's (1997) explanation of the historical development of design and later Sparke's (2004) take on modern and post-modern designer roles illustrate how craft became dis-engaged from design due to several ideological, politicised and institutionalised changes that emerged as distinct disciplines. For example, design was first invented for finished work, then was adopted for problem solving scenarios, design also became professionalised with academically trained designers, and the entrepreneurial middlemen distanced the maker from making. The emergence of the designer culture with specialised roles of design consultants hence appeared to bridge the gap between consumption and production. In this process, craft skills were applied to industrial uses while specialisation on design practices created sub-disciplines such as interior, graphic, fashion and automotive design which maintained a strong link with modern ideologies (Sparke 2004).

Note that traditional craftsmanship and culture of artisans were promoted as an antidote to modernity and industrialisation, and continued thereby to dominate during the Arts and Crafts movement. According to Cardoso (2010) the return to the handmade and craftsmanship is explicable against the backdrop of the 19th century where quality was superseded by speed and quantity. However, the Arts and Crafts movement can also be seen as favouring the idea of design as an opposition to the capitalist mode of industrial economy, working at 'the Unity of Art', 'Joy in Labour' and the idea of 'Design Reform' which was directed at improving the design of the object for better public consumption (Crawford 1997). Heskett (2002) favours this idea claiming although the industrialisation changed the role of craft, it also opened up new roles for craft in the global market while adding new interpretation and new uses to design. He promotes viewing this historical development as a continuous evolution of "replacing what went before...[where] each new innovation stage changes the role, significance, and function of what survives" (Heskett 2002, p 6-7), where 'new' is interpreted based on the old, without actually replacing the old (Heskett 2002). Such views attempted to naturalise the tired dichotomy between craft and design and acknowledge the change, so that design is not viewed as antithesis to craft.

This is also the case when Cardoso (2010, p331) proposes a closing gap between craft and design where the terms have become complimentary once more as a collective-shared culture and as a process “...shaping experience through the interaction between people and things”. More recently, scholars have gone onto propose the need of new design methodologies to work towards eliminating the false distinctions between art, craft and design which Tunstall (2016) says is a result of the Eurocentric epistemological foundations.

In order to review this fully, and also for the purposes of this research, an understanding of what design and craft mean within an Eastern/non Western context is discussed in the next section.

2.3 Eastern and the Western/First world and third world approaches to craft and design

Jani (2011), in her edited volume titled: “Diversity in Design: Perspectives from the non-Western World” introduces the term Western as having been popular in the 19th century due to specific philosophical, religious and intellectual influences that region had over the time. The non-Western tradition on the other hand treads a path that was different because such regions as Asia, Africa and the Middle East had a different civilization for thousands of years thereby developed their own distinct values and belief systems. Jani (2011) therefore argues diversity in design traditions in their art, architecture and culture also greatly varies from their Western counterparts, hence urges to develop culturally appropriate design responses by understanding various design approaches that exist outside the Western design models (also see Tunstall (2016) for similar discussions).

In the same respect and nearly three decades ago, Ghose (1995) addressed key debates of Western and Asian approaches to design. Assessing the impact of borrowed modern capitalist design models to Asian contexts, she revealed problems in adopting and appropriating these solutions to a local context. The study indicated that new parameters for Asian design had been set by evaluating and comparing their success rate through the lens of Western design, where Asian approaches often tend to be recognised as “late comers” or “slow learners” as opposed to the First world models (Ghose 1995, p188). This has been likened to colonial times where Western became the “progressive and superior” benchmark compared to “native” (Athavankar 2002, p44). While

acknowledging that Western design and educational models indeed had a huge impact on local traditions in the East, scholars such as Balaram (2005) however claims this idea of marginalisation was an erroneous and superficial one as irrespective of having Western cultural influence on modern India, the Indian culture itself had been sustained throughout. Similar observations of how cultural traditions are providing resilience amidst political, social and cultural changes have been made elsewhere in the Asian context (for example see Daskon 2010b). Nevertheless, Eastern traditional design emerging as a bulwark against the Western influences cannot only be viewed as a sustaining quality of that culture, as such relationship needs further examinations in terms of what comes out from its constant negotiations in response to the more complex structure of local and global.

Citing the seminal work of anthropologist Arturo Escobar (2012a), Alison J. Clarke (2016b) asserts that a clear hegemonic vision was imposed by the North American and European industrial traditions on the “Third World”, inculcated through technology and design movements during the post-war period of the 1950s-70s. Reviewing this from politically instituted design policies inculcated through educational programmes that created new values and identities within countries such as India (Ghose 1995, Mathur 2011, Clarke 2016b), scholars confirm a different take on Western design that attempted to influence peripheral economies with politicised agency which was often enacted through a top down approach (Clarke 2016b).

Such issues of Western design principals disciplining the native taste, cannot only be confined to cold-war political developments, but can also be seen in the 19th and 20th century establishment of Art School models in Asia where design and the designer roles changed the context of traditional craft (see Jones 2008). Influenced by William Morris’s ideology, and soon followed by the industrial design principals of academic art and craft teaching, these art schools produced “mechanistic, soulless objects” (Ghose 1995, p193), with new designers emerging as “copyists” (Balaram 2005, p12). This in return marginalised the traditional societal craft model. In the modern professional design context, the marginalisation is said to have enacted by those urban middle class designers, as well the elite professional and business class, whose language of operation often became English and therefore had close associations to their Western counterparts, rather than to their native population who lived in the rural areas, such as the craft sector (Ghose 1995, DeNicola and DeNicola 2012). This in turn created professional designers as “designer stars” with a “glamour image” who visited the rural marginalised craft

sector for sources of inspiration and also had to manage both “integration and modernisation” with that of “exclusion and marginalisation” (Ghose 1995, p190-192). DeNicola also echoes about this new middle class designer role emerged as “creative elites and experts”, as “knowledge producer” and “social mediator” with tasks ranging from the protection of traditional practices, the using and selling of traditional craft products and the rendering and appropriating to global market needs, effectively providing “implicit patronage” to the Asian design context (DeNicola and DeNicola 2012, p792-94). Das reminds that this new role of the modern designer was different from the traditional Indian designer who was not “treated as a demigod; [but who was] only one element of a cultural team [where] innovation per se has little meaning” (Das 2005, p51). This is related to seeing design in Asia, away from its First world associations as mentioned by Ghose (1995). She writes that,

what “if design is seen as an ancient activity that has gone on for several centuries rather than as a brand new profession, then our whole perception of what constitutes as Asian design begins to change and, thenceforth, issues pertaining to Asian design assume different forms. The transition of seeing things in terms of continuity to seeing things in terms of discontinuity marks the principle break between traditional design and modern design” (Ghose 1995, p192).

This proposes an indigenous way of debunking design imperialism which can still be seen at work in the present day, as evidenced by Tunstall (2013) who criticises Western design thinking strategies as dominating the solutions implemented for the third world, when e.g. using design for social impact. Also in response to this, scholars are now attempting to re-orient design by promoting decolonial¹ approaches away from its modern/colonial imposition on the global south where indigenous, and other local communities were given the prominence (Fry 2017, Escobar 2017a, Tlostanova 2017, Onafuwa 2018).

In this respect traditional practices such as craft can be identified as serving pluriversality (Fry 2017), which is about embracing ‘a world where many worlds fit’

¹ A powerful argument about decoloniality, challenging Western-colonial modernity can be found in the seminal work of Walter D. Mignolo (2011, xvi-xvii), as he promotes a ‘pluriversal world order’ where everyone will be included and will not be rejected on the basis of knowledge, authority, gender, sexuality, assumptions based on racial and class distinctions, universality grounded on theo- and geo-politics (i.e. developed/ underdeveloped or First/Second/ Third worlds). To achieve a decolonial option, Mignolo says that it should not be seen as aiming to have a blueprint; instead it should focus on building communal futures.

(Escobar 2017b), especially when compared to those design practices which often reside within an institutional and professional sphere that has a universal appeal. Here craft and design interventions become an important discussion, with burgeoning scholarly work published in journals (DeNicola and DeNicola 2012), as book chapters (Friel and Santagata 2008, Tunstall 2013), in PhD research work (Ladd 2012, Fathers 2012), and in those international policy and guide booklets (UNESCO 2005, Commonwealth Secretariat 2001). The following section therefore reviews some of the key ideas about craft and design interventions.

2.4 Craft and Design Intervention

The importance of craft and design interventions is evident when UNESCO published a practical guide book that included working tools for designers, artisans, design institutes or anyone working in the field (UNESCO 2005). In it, designers were seen as mediators, bridging the consumer needs with the know-how of artisans. The report hence went on portraying the artisan as someone disconnected from the global market. This view has to an extent been contested by Kasturi (2005, p70) who considered it as one of the five popular myths that exists in the Indian design climate: “Craftspeople can’t be expected to design contemporary products; they need to join with someone who has exposure in the urban and international markets”. She also showed how such views portrayed design as aiding the craft sector when designers, government officials, development professionals, and cultural academics all engage as ‘uppers’, while exerting power and influences on artisans. Kasturi (2005, p77) therefore suggested, the bridging between the traditional and modern should start at the design school education where expanded views on design can facilitate collaborations with artisans. This is despite the fact that she also admitted a lack in that vision within the existing design education system. In addition, there is some discussion that promotes the Western approaches, targeting the less developed Asian craft sector within craft and design interventions. For example, Freil and Santagata (2008) recognising the importance of design interventions, asserted that heritage craft needs to be upgraded from its traditional status, to soft industrial designs following high quality and high quantity parameters (Friel and Santagata 2008).

Views also appear when design gets introduced as benefiting the ‘poor’ craftspeople who then advise design interventions as modes of poverty alleviation and sustainable

development (Thomas 2006), which on one hand shows an asymmetry between the poor and the rich nations that gets promoted through craft and design associations. Although such studies clearly indicate the social and economic benefits design brings to the craft sector (Friel and Santagata 2008, Thomas 2006), it needs to be evaluated as in how these good intentions might still carry practices of imperialism as they fail to fully acknowledge a value system that is admissible to the local communities (Tunstall 2013, p238). This is irrespective of those examples that highlight other implications of craft and design interventions such as tensions that occur as a result of constant mediations between tradition and innovation between designers and artisans (DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber 2016, DeNicola and DeNicola 2012).

What emerged out from this discussion about Western and Eastern approaches to craft and design, in terms of how they have been categorised and defined and implications that arise during ‘interventions’ leads to frame this study as one that connects both these world views. It attempts to include as many categories and interpretations as possible, to provide an inclusive approach to the research. Based on the above review, the following conceptual framework is used to understand the key areas to focus on within this study.

2.5 Conceptual framework for this study

Considering the blurred boundaries that exist between craft and design, with proposals to eliminate such categorisations (Tunstall 2016), this study will follow Shiner’s (2012) strategies to rethink craft by: a) Identifying craft as a process and a practice b) Understanding the differences in various craft practices, i.e. studio, DIY, trade, ethnic, amateur etc, c) Understanding craft’s relationship to design d) Identifying the role of digital design within craft. And in the field of design, Heskett (2002) introduces three contextual influences to review design. a) The professional organisation of design, and the designer role, b) the business context in which the design practice is located, c) government policy.

Combining these strategies and influences, this present study constructs a framework (see table 1) that complements both craft and design, and seeks to draw on relationships between Western and Eastern, developed and developing contexts amidst globalisation. In order to retain focus, the framework’s scope is on the making rather than the consumption of craft.

Table 1: The conceptual framework

The aspect	Focus	Criteria of assessment
The differences in various craft practices	A) Traditional craft practices B) Contemporary craft practices	1. Distinctions in processes and practices 2. Who is involved 3. The context in which it resides
Craft's relationship to design and the business context of design	Professionalisation and Institutionalisation of design	1. How design works 2. The designer role 3. Identify the interfaces of craft and design
Craft and Design at policy levels	A) Cultural policies (craft and heritage) B) Design policies	1. Policies at national and international levels

2.6 Summary of section A

This section addressed the key definitional, historical and contextual distinctions between craft and design, while indicating parallels and intersections between Eastern-Western, First world-Third world, or Developed-Developing contexts. It reviewed traditional and contemporary craft practices and how design is considered within these categories. Further describing key movements amidst global changes like colonialism, post-independence, industrialisation and post-industrialisation it described how the disciplinary context and ideologies of craft and design have changed over time. To comprehend the varied dichotomies and divisions uncovered in this review, a conceptual framework to view practices of craft was thus constructed.

A recurring theme of much of the reviewed literature indicated how craft is described as traditional, as a heritage practice and a cultural asset, and therefore the following section will further explore this under the specialist heading of heritage and craft in order to present a current picture of seminal thinking in this area.

Section B) Heritage and Craft

The following review of heritage and craft literature pays particular attention to titles that consider intangible cultural heritage or ‘living heritage’ in the context of craftsmanship. It seeks to highlight the debates, gaps and contradictions of craft being considered within the domain of intangible cultural heritage, and comments on the role of globalisation within that.

2.7 The concept of Heritage and Tradition

The concept of heritage has changed over time, leading to multiple meanings and associations. According to Graham and Howard (2008) heritage is a slippery, ambiguous yet an important concept. Such broadening of the concept of heritage as an interdisciplinary field (Logan 2015) has resulted in examples of heritage impact being as wide ranging as its perceived role on development, poverty alleviation, wellbeing, social cohesion, and identity creation (Labadi 2010). In addition, heritage has also been assigned a role within globalisation, authenticity, conflicts of national identity vs. diversity, with particular interest in human rights and intellectual property rights (AlSaiyyad 2001, Labadi 2010, Logan 2015).

AlSaiyyad explores the etymology of heritage when he defines the term by its French meaning of “property which devolves by right of the inheritance in a process involving a series of linked hereditary successions”. Tradition on the other hand is in this way defined as “the action of transmitting or handing down from one to another a variety of beliefs, rules and customs” (AlSaiyyad 2001, p2). Despite the fact that heritage associates with the past, a broader consensus can also be found amongst scholars as heritage being a process that gets co-produced as a result of interactions of different social actors (Smith 2006) for an example by supra national agencies, the state, researchers, investors and local communities (Varutti 2015).

Reviewing how the concept of heritage as it is been understood today shows it as a recent phenomenon that started as part of the 19th century romanticism and nationalism, and especially John Ruskin and William Morris’s idea of ‘conserve as found’ (Smith 2006). It emerged as part of rejecting industrialisation and witnessing the disappearance of traditional practices, and much of the idea of conservation focused on the tangibility of the materials (ibid). In recent debates, defining heritage within the cultural domain

has often suggested the need for a paradigm shift (Logan 2015) in order to recognise intangible aspects of heritage such as skills, knowledge and traditions in addition to the material and monumental aspects of culture.

One of the most powerful criticism that emerged from these discussions is the Authorised Heritage Discourse (Smith 2006) or Official Culture Debate (Labadi 2010) where the recognition, institutionalisation and politicisation of heritage has shaped what qualifies as heritage and what does not, mainly from a Western–culturally elitist perspective, often marginalising the indigenous or grass-root level voices in heritage production, who are not necessarily recognised within the official discourses. In this view, criticism of an East–West dichotomy on heritage has been much discussed with regard to the institutionalised, bureaucratic nature as well as the tangible and intangible polarisation (Smith 2006, Smith and Akagawa 2009, Askew 2010). Accordingly, recent research demands a more holistic view on culture, considering both tangible and intangible aspects and practicing an inclusive approach that involves the voices of all cultural bearers (Logan 2015, Bortolotto 2010, Kreps 2012). The paradigm shift from tangible to intangible (Logan 2015) urges us to consider heritage as a dialogical process (Harrison 2013), promoting heritage towards a democratic decision making process that is based on materiality, connectivity and dialogue, discussed further in section 2.8 as part of Intangible Cultural Heritage. Moreover, this research will also attempt to bring a nuanced understanding to the production of heritage at the grass-root level, by local communities, and alongside the authorised discourses which claim to be lacking in heritage studies (Varutti 2015). It is in this process, that ‘tradition’ brings an important dimension to the present discussion. As highlighted by many scholars, tradition often gets recognised as a confusing term with problematic connotations that might portray a romanticised and nostalgic image. It is also said to be emphasising a salvage paradigm as it may stress a notion of loss or disappearing (Varutti 2015). This is in spite of having other misconceptions about tradition such e.g. being static, thus inhibiting progress (Kockel 2007a).

When reviewing the main arguments and contextualisation of heritage, scholars tend to identify both heritage and tradition in different ways. For example, Kockel (2007a, 2007b) asserts a clear distinction between heritage and tradition as he says “ ‘heritage’ is culture that has [been] dropped out of the process of tradition...[and those] cultural practices and artefacts only become heritage once they are no longer in current, active use” (Kockel 2007b, p20-21). However, for the purpose of this study, and considering

the multiple constructed nature of heritage by different social actors (Smith 2006), this research endeavours to use a broader definition of heritage to support its discussion which is explained later in the chapter in terms of the definitions adopted for this research study. As Alsayyad (AlSayyad 2001, p2-3) pointed out in his article about ‘manufacturing heritage and consuming tradition’, he asserted that the two terms are always contested in the age of globalisation and often play amongst and between the different needs of heritage actors, therefore such terms will “continue to be used in different ways” giving an opportunity for researchers to adopt them according to the context and the uses of the study.

2.8 Craft practices and Intangible cultural heritage

As discussed earlier, the understanding of Cultural Heritage has been expanded over the last few decades to go beyond just sites, monuments and objects in order to acknowledge the diversity in cultural expressions and practices of communities, including the passing on of traditions generationally, and this has been termed intangible cultural heritage (UNESCO 2011).

The recognition of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) into international cultural heritage policies and practices remains a relatively recent event, marked in particular by the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. It acknowledges Intangible cultural heritage as:

“practices, representation, expression, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts, and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity...” (Adopted from UNESCO (2003) convention article 2 §1, 2 and it is manifested in the following categories of)

- a) Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
- b) Performing arts
- c) Social practices, rituals and festive events

- d) Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- e) Traditional craftsmanship

This manifestation is a result of the gradual development of heritage discourse moving from tangible to natural heritage and then to intangible heritage as a recognised cultural domain². The 2003 ICH convention has been acknowledged as an attempt to counterbalance the dominant eurocentric-western perspective to heritage, often associated with safeguarding only monumental and material aspects (Smith and Akagawa 2009). It also exemplified an attempt towards recognising heritage as a concept rather than a category (ibid), and to overcome the practice of assigning value to heritage merely by official categorisation and listing via authorised, legislative and professional practices such as states, institutions and charters (Smith 2006, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, Harrison 2013). Bortolotto (2015) highlights that the moving away from the dominant eurocentric and colonialist perspective to acknowledge Asian heritage practices such as those practiced in Japan, and increasing the community participation have been the two most significant features in the 2003 ICH convention. However, this is not without ramifications. Although intangible cultural heritage celebrates its ‘living’ expression (Logan 2015), Deacon (2004) asserts that the definition of ICH has misdirected heritage as something that harks back to the past rather than recognising contemporary expression.

Moreover, criticism also appeared concerning the dualism created by the tangible-intangible dichotomy, seen as yet another categorisation for heritage (Harrison 2013, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). Harrison stresses that the 2003 convention also created a separation between objects and places as opposed to tradition and practices (Harrison 2013). This created a “Cartesian dualism” (ibid) between the tangible and intangible irrespective of efforts to minimise heritage creation by professional and bureaucratic organisations that still prevails today as evidenced e.g. in the hegemonic involvement of UNESCO. This matter is central to one of the recent debates, and several studies make efforts to address this issue or suggest approaches to include community orientation to heritage. According to Smith and Akagawa (2009) the dichotomy between tangible and intangible does not favour an inclusive approach (Smith et al. 2011, Smith 2015).

² UNESCO’s Universal Copyright Convention on 1952 focused on protecting intellectual property and copyrights (to protect folklore as part of this convention somehow is said to have failed according to Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004) and the 1972 World Heritage Convention focused on recognising cultural and natural heritage. Later on a particular interest towards protecting traditional practices and folklore came into force through 1989’s Recommendations on the Safeguarding of Traditional and Culture and Folklore, which gave prominence to the practitioners and practices in safeguarding heritage. (See more (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004, Smith 2006, Smith and Akagawa 2009, Stefano et al 2010)

Vecco's (2010) semantic evolution of the concept of heritage demands such an integral approach to heritage, and Nic Craith's (2008, p57) suggestions for a holistic understanding on both tangible and intangible categories and their interactions with objects, cultural spaces, processes and products along with people as "tradition definers and tradition bearers" also exist. This inclusive sense to heritage is further extended by Smith and Akagawa (2009) as they promote a bottom-up approach to heritage interventions, involving communities. Kirshenblatt-Gamblett (2004) advises to consider ICH as a meta-cultural production with the important shift from preservation of tradition to reproduction of tradition, where the focus is not "masterpiece" but "masters". This movement requires committing to culture as including artefacts, people, habitus and habitat, life space and the social world where both materials and embodied knowledge are taken into account. This people-centric approach to heritage chimes with recent debates on intangible heritage studies (Bortolotto 2010, Stefano 2012) that particularly give focus to the community in their inclusive approach. This involves both the direct and indirect members within the production and consumption of heritage (Sarashima 2013).

Another paradox of intangible cultural heritage is the freezing of living culture into a standardised universal heritage notion (Alivizatou 2012b, p10) and in response there have been calls to accept the re-appropriation, re-working and renewal of past tradition in a contemporary context (ibid), challenging heritage's fragile, non-renewable expression favoured by authorised heritage discourse (Smith 2015). Bortolotto (2015, p250) reviewing UNESCO's ICH policy notes that the most controversial aspect thus far has been its inability to fully implement "participatory approaches", rather than dealing with "intangible nature" of heritage. She, therefore claims ICH policy as one that still carries an authorised discourse in its operations, with a "heavy governmental" tone in the decision making process driven by expert knowledge and authority (ibid, p250). It is on this particular issue of 'lack in participatory approaches' that this study will concentrate on and build upon going forward, in terms of how participatory approaches are initiated with a special attention to heritage craft practices, and how such relationships are connected to international, national and local levels.

2.9 Orientating the study within globalisation

2.9.1 Globalisation and Intangible cultural heritage

Globalisation is not a new phenomenon and has existed for many centuries. Early forms of globalisation took place as e.g. military conquest, trade routes like Silk Road, colonisation, imperialism, and industrialisation (Labadi 2010). Contemporary globalisation, however, became omnipresent only in the 1990s due to industrial, financial and technological shifts (Sparke 2013). Also, the establishment of the supra national agencies like the United Nations and Bretton Woods institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank generated global political and economic policies across and between cultures and countries for integration. Instead of the economic impulsion that came into effect through free trade and liberal democracy, contemporary globalisation also includes culture as a key player influencing the consumption and appropriation of cultural heritage (Labadi 2010).

Although ‘Globalisation’ is a concept without consensus and remains ill-defined (Appadurai 1999), it resides in the transnational flow of goods and ideas (Appadurai 1996). This clearly influences the heritage discourse, because heritage is a discipline where global-local discourse strongly resides as part of globalisation (Bortolotto 2010).

The influences and impact of globalisation on heritage are varied. On the one hand, it encourages appreciating the local and Eastern approaches to heritage within the global processes. One such example is the introduction of UNESCO’s 2003 convention on ICH as mentioned earlier. It was regarded as a way of counterbalancing the Eurocentric view on cultural heritage to appreciate the diversity in other cultural forms, particularly valuing non-Western expressions (Labadi 2010). On the other hand, globalisation is considered a threat to ICH. Being considered a ‘fragile heritage’ (UNESCO 2011), paves the way for safeguarding measures aimed at protecting intangible cultures, paradoxically freezing living practices (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). As Brumman and Cox (2009) describe, the idea of safeguarding and preservation emerged due to the effects of globalisation, in order to maintain cultural diversity in the hybridisation process, so that homogenisation could be avoided. However, within globalisation the multi associations of the transnational networks change the way locality is created, hence affecting local identity (Scounti 2009). Another criticism of globalisation is the irony played by hegemonic global organisations in shaping heritage. For example,

UNESCO is being criticised for promoting the idea of universal heritage in the light of it being a supra national agency (Bortolotto 2010, Bortolotto 2015), made worse by authorised heritage discourse (Smith 2006, Smith 2015). This remains a challenge for inclusion of grassroots levels in heritage and craft development as development agencies work towards the “technification of the culture” (Telleria 2015) that marginalises non-Western traditions through “cultural domination” (Escobar 2015).

In summary, the effects of globalisation on heritage are manifold: it may be contributing to the formation of new legislation, renewed interest in heritage as well as progression of heritage by admiring and promoting cultural diversity. Whilst on the other hand it could also impose challenges on the local cultures contributing to diminish the diversity through homogenising effects as well as imposing dominant global expressions and asymmetries of power. It also exerts a substantial influence on preserving the living culture while hindering the dynamic nature of culture. In this context, the challenges Nic Craith (2008) identifies for ICH in the 21st century are critical in terms of acknowledging globalisation to enhance the local rather than rendering local identities obsolete. Nevertheless, finding the right balance between standardisation and differentiation in achieving glocalisation is complex and “two way traffic” requires negotiations and acknowledgement of “pluriversatility” (Salazar 2010, p133)³.

2.9.2 Globalisation and Craftwork

A growing body of literature is available on the impact of globalisation on craft, particularly with regards to how global forces have extended the boundaries of local communities. This varies from integration of artisans into global markets as part of transnational commodity cultures (Jackson et al. 2007, Dwyer and Jackson 2003), to shifting tastes and global consumer demands (Nash 1993, Edwards 2005), touristic production and marketing of craft goods as ethnic–exotic indigenous crafts (Little 2004, Scrase 2005, Chibnik 2003), to concerns for educational programmes and design mediations for craft within the contemporary global structures (Kasturi 2005, DeNicola and DeNicola 2012). Other examples highlight concerns on legislative practices for safeguarding of traditional knowledge (Basole 2015, Fowler 2004). Similarly, intellectual property (IP) based methods (Chan 2011) are also used within global export

³ Salazar (2010, p143) points out that “instead of one universally accepted meaning, the significance of heritage...is characterised by pluriversatility:...be it natural or cultural, tangible or intangible” where he encourages to acknowledge the needs of various parties and their interests in ‘glocalisation’ of heritage as part of sustainable heritage management.

markets to keep traditional products competitive. Apart from these works on contemporary craft economies, studies on early forms of globalisation such as colonisation also provide evidence of how cosmopolitan forces and British art officials exercised power when constituting traditional design (McGowan 2005).

In his review of precarious artisanal production in the third world with respect to globalisation, Timothy Scrase (2003, 2009) describes how conditions within the local-global divide vary. Examples of changes brought by global processes to the production and consumption patterns have clearly affected the divisions of artisanal work as First World and Third World, or developed and developing contexts. He posits that crafts produced in the Third World carry a sense of nostalgia, a romanticised production with variety, bringing a sense of exoticism for the West. For developing countries, on the other hand, Scrase (2003) highlights exploitation and poverty issues as a direct result of globalisation transforming artisan communities.

Various studies have described the implications created by mass produced or counterfeit goods, design copying (Scrase 2012), replacement of materials with cheap substitutes (Ganguly-Scrase 2001) as well as transformation of the social value systems of local artisanal communities through global capital (ibid). Research has hence gone on to portray the artisan as a vulnerable character needing development (Kumar Jena 2010). Other scholars have reported on de-skilling of artisans with implications on communal making contexts, e.g. fragmented labour processes (Wilkinson-Weber 2004), outsourcing labour (Esperanza 2008, Murray 2010a) and occupational displacement (Scrase 2012). The extent to which such global economic and cultural forms influence local productions is explicit in the examples of commodity chains and commodification of craft (Tiffany 2004, Bunn 2012), which at times can be driven by Western trade regimes (Kathuria 1988 cf Scrase 2009) and strict middle men involvement which has created a dichotomy in craft often describes as “tradition/modernity, local/global, handmade/industrial” (Esperanza 2008, p27).

Other studies present convincing evidence of globalisation resulting in artisan labour issues such as gender inequalities, exploitation and segregation (Wilkinson-Weber 1997), identity formation (DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber 2016) and marginalisation through state initiatives and NGO involvement (Kasturi 2005, Mohsini 2011). Another well documented concern has been imposed skill developments through the introduction of globalised entrepreneurial business models (Kasturi 2005) where the rising

entrepreneurship changes the community kinship structures (Venkatesan 2006). This is reinforced by studies that demonstrate the insecurity brought by unreliable global market trends, and how changing global consumer demands such as fair trade and ethnic branding affect development outcomes, consumerism and social justice in the local contexts (Scrase 2009).

Many of these examples highlight the implications for non-Western craft making contexts. However the organisation of the craft sector in the West, such as the Scottish example that McAuley and Fillis (2005b) consider, shows how the idea of global is manifested in a remote island craft production scenario. It reflects how the production takes place within transnational cultural flows where craft is seen as a business with multiplier effects providing economic benefits, innovation capabilities, opportunities for tourist markets and opening up of entrepreneurial activities. In this process, tradition becomes an historical route for creativity and a mode of re-interpretation for contemporising the craft. Another longitudinal survey in England and Wales (McAuley and Fillis 2005a) further confirms the effects of globalisation on Western craft. However, globalisation is largely seen here as positive, enabling a change from the occupational practices of hobby crafts to micro enterprises with rapid internationalisation and technological developments.

While some scholars refer to globalisation with problematic encounters (Scrase 2009, Scrase 2003, Scrase 2012, Esperanza 2008, Murray 2010b), with concerns about authenticity and cultural appropriateness (Makovicky 2011), others view it as a positive response as a reflection on developing more interconnections between people, practices and territories (McAuley and Fillis 2005a, McAuley and Fillis 2005b, Curtis 2016). The latter cases can be identified as localisation generating a competitive advantage by producing for niche markets, strategising for diversification to cater to global markets (Berg 2013), a hybrid of practice producing both for local and international consumers (Hart 1995) or innovation through tradition which uses territorial knowledge and craftsmanship (De Massis et al. 2016). Therefore the incorporation of traditional knowledge and practices for contemporary uses in response to global market demands is encouraged (Liebl and Roy 2004). Further benefits of globalisation are seen in the linking of local and global where the transformation brings continuity and survival (Little 2004) rather than disappearance of the craft (Maldini 2014, Cohen 2007) offering a new or an extended life-cycle to the product.

In this context Köhler and Wissen (2003) argue that those same sources that empower globalisation could also hinder it, thus indicating a double edged nature to globalisation. This is explicit in fair-trade and ethical markets when Johnson (2002) argues about the inequalities of fair trade, while others (Curtis 2016, Littrell and Dickson 2010) support ethical and fair trade market practices as consequences of globalisation. Difference of opinion also exists on transnational and shifting markets; while some scholars debate sanctioning and coping with those transformation (Ganguly-Scrase 2001, Murray 2010a, Murray 2010b), Evans (2007) describes a situation on how transnational flows contributes to counteracting the effects of neoliberal globalisation. In addition, Winslow's (2009) study shows that adjusting to changing socio, economic and technological differentiations builds resilience within community crafts. This is also the conclusion in Little's (2004) Mayan identity creation example, where artisans use craft practices to maintain their identity while commodifying their culture for the touristic market demand.

Reviewing varied scholarly debates about globalisation and craftwork reveal that effects of globalisation may not necessarily be one way, from developing to the developed, or vice-versa, but are in fact multidirectional flows (Chibnik 2003). From this perspective, rather than treating the West as the centre and non-Western localities as the periphery, Kikuchi and Lee (2014) suggest a transnational cultural approach to design and craft within the idea of global. This study therefore moves between local and global reviewing community's appropriation of globalisation and identifying how they construct everyday realities due to changing economic, cultural and social processes.

2.10 Considerations on heritage, craft and globalisation for this study

Reviewing Section 2.9.1 and 2.9.2 on how globalisation shapes the heritage discourse and operates at a very discrete level in crafts production, two levels of globalisation can be seen at work. Sparke (2013) differentiates this double identity of globalisation by using a small and an upper case initial. The former, globalisation, looks into the global interdependencies which are mainly about how the global ties are formed on trade, labour, economy, ecology, legal and human rights etc. It considers how the two way ties of 'here' and 'there' affect each other. This reflects much about the cultural flows between the local-global, developed-developing, East and West, showcasing "the extension, acceleration, and intensification of consequential worldwide interconnections" (Sparke 2013, p3). The latter focuses on a politically charged buzzword that shapes the

political debates and policy making with pro-market reforms which tend to affect social, political and personal relations (ibid).

An account of the different levels of negotiations is important for the debate of this thesis. It presents the case for understanding the effects of globalisation rather than arguing whether it is good, bad or ugly as Sparke (2013) suggests, for it allows relating the connections and contradictions from personal (micro level) to wider implications (macro level) and vice versa in terms of how one responds to the global responsibilities. Further, reviewing how to achieve the ‘glocal’ approach to heritage practices (Nic Craith 2008), macro and micro dimensions of the research study are equally considered important as they will allow identifying various localised responses to globalisation within heritage craft. Moreover, the idea of local perspectives being promoted within globalisation is emphasised by many heritage scholars. This proposes another consideration for the present study, namely to give authority to the community with proposals to act beyond global frameworks (Akagawa 2016, Kreps 2012, Bortolotto 2010, Denes 2012). As Watson and Waterton (2010) emphasise, studies that propose community engagements for heritage practices need to go beyond box ticking or reporting yet another study like approach to combine theory, practice and experience in an international context. This belief closely aligns with globalisation discourse, such as Appadurai’s (2000) grassroots globalisation which showcases the need to support the micro implications of globalisation on heritage practices without disregarding the macro implications. The following section hence reviews how local-global relationships and heritage discourses are aligned with the objectives of this study and how the definitions are constructed within it.

2.11 Re-framing heritage discourse to the aims and objectives of the study

The above analysis of the extended heritage discourse and particularly heritage and tradition debates, suggest that there are variety of ways to describe it, which can be utilised differently depending on the different contexts it resides in (see for example Alsayyad 2001). Therefore, adopting a specific stance on heritage and the relevant definition is based on the objectives and the area of the study. On this basis, the present study sees ‘heritage’ from a constructionist point of view that is multiply constructed by different social actors (Smith 2006). In terms of ‘tradition’, the research follows Varutti’s (2015, p1038) understanding of tradition “as a transformative process [as being]...enforced, reinvented, transformed, denied or contested [that also] brings to the

fore the very nature of heritage as something inherently harking back to the past, yet also inevitably adapted and reinterpreted to make it relevant and significant in the present and in an imagined future”. Adopting such a broad and dynamic definition, then attempts to avoid using tradition as “static and branded ‘bad for progresses’ ” according to Kockel (2007a, p98).

Considering the context of craft production within global processes for example in the nature and impact of design, commercialisation and commodification of craft, effects of transnational flows of ideas, cultural goods and information that affect the knowledge production and exchange practices in different interfaces. These aspects appear suitable in terms of a constructionist approach to heritage discourse. Moreover, involvements of multiple stakeholder groups in heritage productions require careful understanding of the meanings and values various actors build into this process. This is in addition to the careful monitoring required of perceptions held by communities in their cultural (re)presentations during the transformative process of traditions. The debates and arguments on intangible cultural heritage bring further considerations on framing the study to review traditional craft practices in terms of how they are constructed, reconstructed and re-interpreted within global forces and as a cultural process. Not only does the study attempt to bring pragmatic examples beyond the authorised heritage discourse, such an approach also acknowledges the community approaches while emphasising the local. Therefore, a constructionist approach to heritage formed through a broad spectrum of temporal, spatial and contextual dimension is deemed appropriate. This present study therefore attempts to contribute to the larger heritage discourse in two ways:

Firstly, because heritage is dissonant and contested (Smith and Akagwa 2009) and has various cultural politics and identity issues attached to it, a comparative study that discusses both the Eastern-Western approaches to heritage production and how different people and groups negotiate this concept within their contemporary creative engagements is attempted. It also sheds light on Asian approaches to heritage practices, because the 21st century is labelled as the ‘Asian Century’ according to Aygen and Logan (2015), thus requiring an in-depth knowledge developed on such aspects.

Secondly, due to the lack of readily available and appropriate tools, methods and techniques to meet the demand of different stakeholder involvement in heritage management, particularly in ICH (Denes 2012, dos Santos and Müller 2012), the study

endeavours to propose participatory approaches to heritage management.⁴ Hence it aims to address one of the serious weaknesses of the ICH participatory paradigm which Bortolotto (2015) highlights as an emerging criticism regarding the UNESCO's 2003 convention.

2.12 Summary of Section B

This chapter section reviewed relevant literature in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the notion of heritage, craft and globalisation and its interdependent relationships. It generated a theoretical underpinning as to how the present study should be oriented and constructed within its three distinctive, yet related disciplines. Initially, the chapter section found a lack of consensus around the concept of heritage, and by analysing the varied definitions and their context of use suggested a constructionist approach to heritage. By reviewing the critical debates on heritage and craft as an intangible cultural heritage, as well as how globalisation works at different levels within these domains, the study argues the need for a comparative study within an international context. This is to facilitate an understanding of the local-global, East-West distinctions and relationships of heritage within contemporary creative engagements. The chapter also reviewed recent evidence to identify a methodological gap in the literature, and proposes that knowledge might be added by using participatory approaches to heritage management in this present study. This approach enables the voices of different stakeholders to be heard, and suggests tools, methods and techniques for community engagements in the research of heritage practices.

⁴ The available few examples suggest participatory approaches to heritage management within anthropology and museology contexts (Alivizatou 2012 and Denes 2012). Thus a gap in the literature exists considering interdisciplinary use of participatory methods for heritage studies and the applicability of those for craft practices within the domains of creative and heritage disciplines, including design.

Section C) Participatory approaches to craft and design interventions

2.13 Participatory approaches in design studies

In the past five to six decades, numerous approaches to design have been developed in order to engage with everyday practices meaningfully and emotionally (Sanders and Stappers 2008, Mattelmäki et al. 2014). The trajectory of thinking evolved from participatory design to user-centred designing and then on to co-creational design activities (Sanders and Stappers 2008). What started off as a means of increasing decision making to achieve workplace democracy was then coupled with technological mediations to include people, processes, environments, businesses and social institutions (Robertson and Simonson 2013). Those practices challenged the 20th century design theories and practices that were governed by industrial production at the time (Manzini 2016). Bannon and Ehn go as far as back to the Bauhaus and other modern design movements to imply the use of early participatory designing based on collaboration and interdisciplinarity, even though these were at times being criticised for initiating “undemocratic professional elitism” favouring “well-crafted functionalist modern designs for mass consumption” (Bannon and Ehn 2013, p38-39). Bannon and Ehn (2013, p39), citing Thrift (2006) argued about the ambivalence in using such methods when participatory design has become “a latest fashion in a further modern, market-driven, commodification process” leaving us to question whether such methodologies are still displaying coloniality and modernity of design in their approaches (Tlostanova 2017, p59).

The following table reviews different participatory approaches commonly found in literature:

Table 2: Participatory approaches commonly found in literature

The approach	Definition/description	Focus
Participatory design	<p>“a process of investigating, understanding, reflecting upon, establishing, developing, and supporting mutual learning between multiple participants in collective ‘reflection-in-action’. The participants typically undertake the two principal roles of users and designers where the designers strive to learn the realities of user’s situation while the users strive to articulate their desired aims and learn appropriate technological means to obtain them.” (Robertson and Simonson 2013, p2)</p>	<p>Emphasis is on participation. User as participant (Sanders and Stappers 2008)</p>
User Centred Designing	<p>“One (re-)interpretation of what User-Centred Design’s aim is...to explore combinations of ‘definition of use through design’ and ‘definition of use through use’ within the design process...and where the two typically are done by different groups of people representing different domains of expertise (typically people representing the design domain and the domain of intended use) (Redström 2008, p414)</p>	<p>User as subject (Sanders and Stappers 2008), Focus is given to ‘use’ rather than to ‘design’. (Bannon and Ehn 2013) People’s need and their interaction with specific objects are given focus, instead of giving attention to product form and appearance (Willis 2004)</p>

Co-creation	“...refer to any act of collective creativity, i.e. creativity that is shared by two or more people. Co-creation is a very broad term with applications ranging from the physical to the metaphysical and from the material to the spiritual, as can be seen by the output of search engines.” (Sanders and Stappers 2008, p6)	Co-realisation, co-construction and learning through sharing with the idea of creativity at heart.
Empathic design (Leonard and Rayport 1997, Mattelmäki et al. 2014)	“Empathic design has its roots in design practice. It is interpretive but, in contrast to ethnographic research, focuses on everyday life experiences, and on individual desires, moods, and emotions in human activities, turning such experiences and emotions into inspirations.” (Mattelmäki et al. 2014, p67)	An interpretive approach where empathic design methods seen as a way of improving designer’s abilities. It becomes a design attitude to develop sensitivity towards people while collaborating with them.
Emerging and dialogic design for social innovation (Manzini 2016)	“Emerging design is a way of interpreting design and designing that is not mainstream, but that is expanding and, for all intents and purposes, will be the design of the twenty-first century...[where dialogic approach is] in which the various interlocutors, design experts included, interact as they bring their own ideas and define and accept their own responsibilities...actors are willing and able to listen to each other, to change their minds, and to converge toward a common view; in this way, some practical outcomes can be	Breaks the power structures of expert mindsets. Focuses on social democratic goals and combines it with design.

	collaboratively obtained.” (Manzini 2016, p 52-56)	
Transition design (Irwin et al. 2015)	<p>“1) Uses living systems theory as an approach to understanding/addressing wicked problems; (2) Designs solutions that protect and restore both social and natural ecosystems; (3) Sees everyday life/lifestyles as the most fundamental context for design; (4) Advocates place-based, globally networked solutions; (5) Designs solutions for varying horizons of time and multiple levels of scale; (6) Links existing solutions so that they become steps in a larger transition vision; (7) Amplifies emergent, grassroots solutions; (8) Bases solutions on maximising satisfiers for the widest range of needs; (9) Sees the designer’s own mindset/posture as an essential component of the design process; (10) Calls for the reintegration and re contextualization of diverse transdisciplinary knowledge.” (Irwin et al. 2015, p 3-4)</p>	<p>Acknowledges integrating social and natural systems for sustainable futures, dynamic in terms of time scale, develop need basis designs based on identifying potentials and seeking collaborative opportunities.</p> <p>Focuses on ontological aspect of design and relations of design politics.</p>
Socially responsive design (Thorpe and Gamman 2011)	<p>“Explore [the] different role for designers in pursuit of the achievement of societal goals than their account posits; one that does not locate the designer solely as a facilitator but rather as a co-actor within a co-design process—sometimes leading as an expert and sometimes not. We consider this pluralism and adaptability of the</p>	<p>Acknowledges multiple actors and varied design agendas in delivering design for social change and sustainability. Suggests mindful applications of design strategies for designers.</p>

	<p>designer's role to be crucial and one of responsivity rather than responsibility, which is why we call this practice socially responsive design.” (Thorpe and Gamman 2011)</p>	
<p>Design anthropology. Gunn 2012, Gunn, 2013, Clarke, 2011a)</p>	<p>A field that combines anthropology and design studies where “Practitioners of Design Anthropology follow dynamic situations and social relations and are concerned with how people receive, create, and transform their environments through their everyday activities. This view challenges the idea that design and innovation only refer to generation of new things as being central to processes of social and cultural change... [which becomes] distinct ways of knowing and doing” (Gunn 2013, p xiii)</p>	<p>Transdisciplinary field, promotes holistic view, Focuses on processes and possibilities, accounts to temporality, associates between design and everyday life. Open for new approaches and methodological developments with consequences for knowledge production and is suitable for social, cultural and environmental concerns. Promotes intersectionality and challenges binaries.</p>

What is apparent in these approaches is the changing landscape of design moving away from individual design practice to making sense of the future with its co-creators (Sanders and Stappers 2014). This transformation changed ‘modern design’ principles (Dean 2016), allowing design to become an open ended discipline (Sparke 2016) where interaction, meaning and social understanding of the design process become a growing concern (Escobar 2012b). In other words, according to Escobar (2017b, p203), design studies attempt to move from the “functional and semiotic emphasis” towards the “experience and meaning” of design, and creating a holistic view in which human, cultural, social, ecological and material values are acknowledged (Gunn 2013, Irwin 2015, Bjögvinsson 2012, Reubens 2016). Notwithstanding the plethora of participatory methods available to design studies, the transformation of moving from designing ‘objects’ to designing ‘social-material assemblies’⁵ is still a major challenge to the design community (Bjögvinsson et al. 2012).

As Palmås and Von Busch suggest, collaboration and co-creation activities are challenging, where asymmetries of power become a common feature, especially when designers “run the errands of power, where the participatory design process gets used to create coercion and sugar-coat autocratic processes with a shimmer of ‘collaboration’” (Palmås and von Busch 2015, p 237). Hence it turns co-design into a rather ‘antagonistic process’ according to DiSalvo (2012), which not only inhibits democratic participation, but also gives rise to tensions and power intricacies to multiple stakeholder engagements.

Moreover von Busch et al.(2014) highlight the lack of participatory methods within practice based craft and design research, focusing on pragmatic examples. This is in addition to such methods being extensively used in design studies and to the proliferation of design scholarships published within the area of participatory design in the last 50 years or so (Sparke 2016). Further to this, Lee (2008) highlights one of the challenges in participatory design practices as the lack of art and craft based elements when such practices are currently being driven by engineering and service oriented needs of scientific design research. This is not surprising when Penny Sparke (2016) reminds us of the emergence of design methods in the 1960s as an attempt to systematise design via scientific methods. Arguably, according to Lee (2008) and Broome (2005), it questions the stability of maintaining the quality of life, with

⁵ Socio-material assemblies are referred to a collective of “human and non-human Things” following Latour’s expression as expressed by Bjögvinsson et al (2012, p102).

concerns about the sustainability therein using those methods. Scholars (Sanders and Stappers 2008, Kjærsgaard and Boer 2015, Blomberg and Karasti 2013) therefore anticipate a more sustainable mode of engagement which is more than participatory and more than user-centred designing. It is on the basis of this understanding that, this study turns its attention to ‘Design Anthropology’ as a plausible approach to understand the human, cultural, social, ecological and material values together with the innovation in the design process through collaborations, interventions and co-creation activities that lead to practice-based research and design engagements (Gunn 2013, Clarke 2011a).

2.14 Design Anthropology as a plausible approach

It follows that there is value to be gained from design anthropology addressing the issues identified in Section A and Section B, when the challenges of globalisation, global influences and the acknowledgement and acceptance of local knowledge in craft-design engagements become ubiquitous. When design has been criticised for creating “newness-*for-the-sake-of-newness*” (Papanek 1985, p42) or with that of “design’s more is more mentality” (Hunt 2011, p34), the “defuturing” caused by unsustainable conditions (Fry 1999), the status quo attitudes offered by design education (Fry 2015), which are also reflected in western development agendas (Clarke 2016b, Escobar 2012a) come into conflict with hierarchies and distinctions in place regarding tradition and innovation. It ascribes a lower value system to people or practices outside the Eurocentric epistemological foundations, hence offering a cultural imperialism within design practices (Tunstall 2016, Fry 2017). Reflecting this from a heritage studies perspective is what Smith (2006) coins as Authorised Heritage Discourse that takes its cue mainly from a western culturally elitist perspective. To evade Eurocentric dominance, design scholars propose participatory approaches that are socially transformative such as Transition Design and Design for Social Innovation (Escobar 2017a), with prominent importance placed on Design Anthropology (Escobar 2012b).

Similarly, in heritage studies, participation is what is encouraged by all means. However, in ICH management, participatory approaches are said to be lacking according to Denes (2012), Bortolotto (2015) and dos Santos and Müller (2012). Existing studies that propose participatory approaches for heritage management focus their discussions on anthropological and museology contexts (Denes 2012), community development and social inclusion aspects of research with a focus on policy (dos Santos and Müller 2012) as well as on curatorial practices through ethnographic means (Kreps 2012). Reviewing

how craft practices are used within design and heritage disciplines respectively, it appears both design studies based on collaborative and participatory methods (Chan 2015, Tung 2012, Palmås and von Busch 2015) and heritage studies (Kreps 2012, Varutti 2015, Sarashima 2013) share the common facets of 'craft', but do not adequately review the intersection of the two areas as in how they could benefit one another. They, therefore offer a limited foundation in terms of how these two disciplines (design studies and heritage studies) can become complementary for the craft-design interface. This overlap of subject areas is visible in the nascent decolonial literature as well, which now argues that "...design has the capacity to inform tactics of decolonisation within critical heritage discourses [while providing] a platform for participatory discursive action" to work as a threshold and not so much as democratic idealism (Rizvi 2018, p56 -57).

The use of design anthropology to review the above intersection offers an opportunity as a salient discipline which combines critical theories and approaches such as decolonial theory (Escobar 2012b). Providing a historiographical framing for contemporary design anthropology, Clarke (2016d) shows how the tensions between market-driven and social aspects of design influenced design anthropology's emergence in the 1960s and 70s via ethnological pretexts. One such example is the Italian design activist group SUPERSTUDIO who reoriented their focus to design based on the imperative of necessity without being driven by the allure of commodity, where they looked into the indigenous peasant material cultures to design products (Rossi 2013). According to Clarke (2016c, 2016d) the focus given to indigenous design has been considered as a way of counterbalancing the capitalist industrial design which came to light through anthropological methods and participatory approaches, as one such evidence being Papanek's *Design for the Real World* book published in 1971. Design's turn into anthropological and collaborative practices also relates to those concerns raised by heritage practitioners in terms of generating a holistic view in recognising tangible and intangible aspects of culture (Nic Craith 2008) and involving the local communities (Bortolotto 2010, Stefano 2012, Smith and Akagawa 2009). Similarly design anthropology scholars promote a vision that includes a "...holistic view of the human being, methods of analysis based on participation and in-depth cultural awareness...[while] valuing 'the local' and the specific..." (Clarke 2016d, p81-82). It then provides a degree of reflexivity to studies on craft and heritage to benefit from the dialogues with design studies.

2.14.1 Design Anthropological approaches as a method of collaboration in Craft and Design intervention

The impact design makes on culture is significant. Although culture being a situated part of design practice, "...by designing objects, technologies and systems, we are in fact designing culture of the future" (Otto and Smith 2013, p13). According to anthropologist Adam Drazin's argument, this is also the case where design is not a "politically or socially neutral space" but should be understood as "phenomena that mediate what kinds of relations individual people, citizens, consumers, and others have with governments, corporations and international bodies" hence design becomes a site of cultural production (Drazin 2013, p 36-37). Therefore, by designing new practices and knowledge systems, we generate a new culture which corresponds to the past and encompasses the social, cultural and political landscape within which multiple stakeholder engagements become integral. According to Garvey and Drazin (2016) design, anthropology, culture and heritage are closely related⁶. It requires exploring design as cultural phenomenon using design methods to ponder about culture to "culturally renovate, redeem and lend value to distinct traditions and heritage. Design knowledges and skills infuse the articulation of personal identities, so that people often see themselves as engaging with their worlds through design-informed paradigms" (Garvey and Drazin 2016, p3). This is reflected in Otto's case study examples of how temporality of design (past, present and the future aspects) significantly shapes heritage construction and creates cultural variability (Otto 2016).

The challenge becomes how to design with the culture and people in mind, where one designs the new based upon the past, so that it relates to the present and attunes to the future. When design anthropology engages with the future in an exploratory manner, it connects anthropology's cultural interpretation, contextualisation and holistic explanation with the systematic investigation of the temporality (the past, present and the future), with specific methods and tools available in design (Otto and Smith 2013). Hence design anthropology increases the opportunities for intervention and collaboration by avoiding the risk of "defuturing" in design that creates unsustainable practices (Fry 2011) and brings empathy and understanding to those involved and affected by design (Otto and Smith 2013, p4).

⁶ Such interdisciplinarity is explicit with the special issue published in the Journal of Design History (2016)

‘Intervention’ herein needs to be understood beyond the common perceptions of goal-oriented status with defined outcomes according to Halse and Boffi, where they suggest it as a form of inquiry serving the purpose of exploring and evoking alternative opportunities (Halse and Bofi 2016, p90). Also being described as “speculative intervention” in design anthropology, such modes of engagement do not necessarily offer the prerequisite of producing tangible outcomes, but engage within a dialogic inquiry as a form of collective effort (DiSalvo 2016). That is by being “grounded in lived experience [and] cultivated through a participatory approach” while asking the question “who is this work for?” (ibid, p149-50). This is important for heritage studies, as it engages with identity formation of those involved (Smith 2006) as well as for design studies as an expanded field (Garvey and Drazin 2016).

Interventions within craft and design are commonly found in cultural based product development (See 2.4 and 2.9.2). This shows greater influence on design and design professionals’ as well as cultural organisations’ direct and indirect involvement. It varies from commercial intervention to political and policy relevant interventions. In this context design anthropological approaches are useful to understand the life-worlds of designers and artisan mutually. The concept of design anthropology goes to the heart of acknowledging and engaging people with different skills and knowledge which is “imagining oneself into another person's world”, that is not to become the “other” but to finding ways of working together by embracing design thinking and refuting problem-oriented approaches (Gunn 2012, p1). If regarded from the typical designer-artisan intervention this might help create more of a level playing field for both the designers and the artisans exploring the physical, metaphorical and cultural values of the social context, instead of working within highly formalised, structured plans (Suri 2011, p31). It is hoped that adhering to each other’s value and knowledge systems and mutually working through the ideas in a dialogical process might contribute to a more progressive method of collaboration, a method that makes the design process more humane (Seemann 2015), decolonised (Tunstall 2013) and correspondent (Smith and Otto 2014).

Therefore within this research the role of design anthropology is taken into consideration, for example how and in what ways multiple stakeholders involved in craft and design engagements can benefit by employing culturally respectful design approaches and how it could contribute to the fields of design and heritage, also how stakeholders can manage the multiple realities in their design engagements especially in

cultural craft productions and contribute to participatory approaches to heritage management.

2.14.2 Developing an engagement model: Issues, implications and opportunities

The real challenges in practicing design anthropology are based on defining what the tools and methods of engagements are, ways in which to create contextual knowledge and ways of collaborating and intervening (Otto and Smith 2013). Otto and Smith also highlight the appealing qualities of design anthropology to suit the current design climate of resource, time and labour intensive situations (ibid). As design anthropology does not require long-term commitments, such as spending time on field work, one can be involved in multiple scenarios, helping to generate design concepts instead of descriptive data. Within this approach a more practical sense of engagements is initiated through an interventionist approach (Otto and Smith 2013).

Design Anthropology urges designers to think of design as a process, rather than working towards a defined outcome, and to work around the potentials and possibilities instead of focusing on the rationale and linear design process (Gunn and Donovan 2012). Thus it refutes the design process seen in most participatory engagements that of “gathering the right material, finding the right form and then building the thing” (Kjaersgaard 2013, p365). As a consequence, scholars who practice and write design anthropology suggest that to appreciate and focus on the process involved in the designing by rethinking the conventions in the design process to forge alternatives, that extends to socio-material and ecological relationships (Anusas and Harkness 2016).

Design anthropology also suggests becoming open-minded about the entire research process when measuring the success of the project beyond problem-solving (DiSalvo 2016). As Kjaersgaard (2013) suggests, the success of the projects should be reviewed by how some of the findings can be used for future possibilities, and not be judged by the success of the design solutions derived from the preconceived plans, thus be open for the “serendipitous insights”. Explicitly concerned about developing approaches based on cultural respect, Tunstall (2016, p279) says design anthropology provides methodologies to “respect other ways of being in the world...[where] the creation of preferred courses of action based on the mutual recognition of the intrinsic worth of all human, animal, mineral, fauna and flora creatures and the treatment of them with dignity and regard” also count.

Questions therefore remain as to how heritage and design projects should be developed as part of a process, where continuous transformation of ideas and materials change within the socio-cultural and ecological circumstances. Also how to develop processes appreciating possibilities for the future, rather than focusing on the outcome, or on solving problems in design driven projects? How can heritage discourses be acknowledged and integrated into these projects that benefits cultural bearers? How can participation be encouraged, and what tools and methods can be developed or used to support decolonial approaches to design and heritage in craft development discourse?

2.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed relevant literature in order to provide a background and theoretical underpinning to the study connecting craft, design, heritage and participatory methods as well as displaying their interdependent relationships. Initially, section A highlighted the definitional, historical and contextual distinctions between craft and design with debates on the dichotomies it created within local and global ties. Whether these are East–West, First world–Third world or Developing–Developed, section A showed how design might be considered as an authorised discourse over traditional craft; in return bringing its attention to craft and design interventions. Section A further highlighted the association of craft as an umbrella term; hence the research led to drawing a framework in conceptualising its area of study by exploring craft as a heritage practice.

Section B discussed the concept of heritage; defining heritage and tradition because the terms are often misunderstood and misinterpreted. It considered the criticisms around heritage discourse, particularly between tangible and intangible aspects, with the recent attention to safeguarding living cultural practices, as is in traditional craft. For that it reviewed the policy frameworks of cultural heritage. The study argued that it is important to discuss both heritage and craftwork in the realm of globalisation, as both have been shaped by global forces. It suggested the need for framing the research as a comparative study to discuss how the production of heritage happens within local-global or Western-Eastern divisions. It also proposed the need for designing community-driven participatory approaches to heritage management by including multiple stakeholders in the process as that is said to be lacking in heritage studies.

Section C therefore argued how participatory approaches in design studies could be considered as a plausible approach in safeguarding and managing intangible cultural heritage. It recognised that there is value in design studies, especially its usefulness in providing tools and methods to include multiple stakeholder views as that is the gap missing from heritage practices. Additionally, it showed how design studies and heritage studies can be complementary to each other in minimising their limitations.

The section reviewed commonly found participatory approaches and built the case for design anthropology in terms of providing a holistic view, connecting both the tangible and the intangible while raising cultural awareness and valuing the local. It also argued for overcoming the authorised notion in heritage which deals with power and asymmetry. Additionally, it discussed how design anthropological approaches could be plausible in addressing the authorised discourse in the field of design by showing that the cultural concerns are added to the interventions, when design is said to be driven by Eurocentric epistemological foundations. This required proposing methodologies for decolonising design and heritage in craft development discourse. In doing so, section C thus identified one challenge for this thesis, that of designing an engagement model for heritage craft and design interface. The participatory engagement model that shall be developed in this thesis will be well equipped to plug that gap, suggesting ways to connect craft, design and heritage studies. It would thereby try to minimise the “‘ongoing ruination’ and defuturing effected by colonialism, modernity and development and its intensification with globalisation”, when design practices in the Global North are said to be inappropriate for what goes on in the Global South as well as for the crisis in the North (Escobar 2017a, p39). In that sense, the engagement model that will be proposed in this research is anticipated as being able to serve both Global North and Global South projects.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The previous chapter proposed a conceptual framework to identify how a study of craft and design should be conducted, with emphasis on heritage and participatory design methods. This chapter therefore, discusses the methodological concerns of this research study as it explores the connections between local-global, when craft as a heritage practice meets design in its professional context and examines different knowledge practices entailed therein. The methodology was guided and shaped by the philosophical stance of the research, which in return informed the research design. The following section justifies the choice of research philosophies, methods and data gathering and analysis techniques in relation to the research's aims and objectives.

3.1 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders et al. (2012, p127) research philosophy relates to “the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge”. It deals with practical considerations the researcher has to make during the research process and the way in which the researcher views it. Therefore, it informs the research design from strategy to research methods to interpretation.

The research philosophies adopted in this study fits broadly within an interpretivist, constructivist and pragmatist frame in all. Such an overlap of different research traditions, classifications and methods is common in research, and while it can create a “tautological confusion” in research design (Mkansi and Acheampong 2012), scholars advise to choose the research philosophy according to the aims and the context of the research study, as there is no best single fit of a particular philosophy to any research (Saunders et al. 2012, p19-20, Ormston et al. 2014). Interpretivism is described as “a school of thought that stresses the importance of interpretation as well as observation in understanding the social world”, whilst constructivism emphasises “that knowledge is actively ‘constructed’ by human beings, rather than being passively received by them...[where] both focus on understanding lived experiences from the points of view of those who hold it” (Ormston et al. 2014, p13). This research pays attention to those meanings and interpretations constructed by its participants and to the socially constructed nature of those meanings. Meanings are mutually constructed between the researcher and the different social actors involved in the research (as participants), in

addition to various interpretations and understandings obtained through observations and the collected data. Not only were interpretations grounded based on the data provided by participants, but interpretations were also drawn from the researcher's exegesis relating to wider theories and subjectivity towards the collected data. A combined approach of interpretivism and constructivism was considered suitable, and therefore a qualitative approach to the research design was taken to obtain as much detailed information as possible.

The research, was conducted by a 'pragmatic researcher' (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2005). In as far as the study had specific research questions linked to different stages of the research process, the pragmatic approach allowed combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to best answer each question, and allowing to work with different philosophical traditions, rather than just one (Saunders et al. 2012). Reviewing the aims and objectives of this study also confirms why a combination of research philosophies and approaches were adopted to answer 'what' 'why' and 'how' questions, rather than 'how many' (Ormston et al. 2014, p3). Within this research the qualitative component is thus the largest regarding the overall research design, but towards the end, a quantitative aspect was strategically chosen given the practical nature of the study as it required gathering responses from a variety of participants in a short period of time.

3.2 Aims and objectives of the research

Aim 1: What are the different types of knowledge, material practices and experiences that are visible in craft and design engagements within local-global relationships and identify how they contribute to heritage discourse?

Objective a) to analyse a specific knowledge exchange project, b) identify who participates and how they collaborate, c) to identify the ways in which participants construct a heritage narrative in relation to particular discourses about craft and design.

Aim 2: Develop an understanding of key actors involved in craft and design engagements within local-global relationships, and their contribution to heritage craft practices.

Objective a) Observe and analyse a traditional craft community, b) a craft enterprise, c) craft projects conducted by higher educational institutions, d) and compare this within two cultural settings (India and Sri Lanka).

Aim 3: Develop participatory approaches to heritage management for work on heritage craft and design interfaces, and evaluate how design studies could work towards decolonising approaches.

Objective a) to propose a collaborative engagements model with multiple heritage actors by reflecting on the findings of the craft and design engagements studied, b) to propose plausible methods and tools, and c) design and test a model of a participatory engagement.

The next section describes how and why different research approaches were used within the research, followed by specific research techniques and procedures.

3.3 Research design

The research and data gathering were divided into three phases for a developmental research process, with the fourth phase of consolidating research findings into a workable model. The following section explains different phases adopted in the research design and data gathering and how it informed the subsequent research.

3.3.1 A Developmental path towards the research design

This research did not adopt a formal linear structure, which gets operationalised through clearly defined research questions drafted before the study begins and where final interpretation and validation occurs as the final stage of research. Instead, dealing with the research problems followed a dialogical, developmental path, where each stage would inform other phases of the research based on the findings of data and theoretical paradigms. This method of developing the research as iteration between the empirical and theoretical field is well acknowledged in research (Dowling and Brown 2012).

Relevant data gathering methods were organised through a bipartite structure to the research based on micro (individual, communal) and macro (national and international) levels of engagements or in other words moving from small to large, and back to the small again. This bipartite analysis corresponds to the conceptual framework as it examines the connections between the macro level influences in the cultural industry such as national and international heritage policies, design policies and their relationships to communities, institutions, professionals and businesses at the grassroots level. The research was designed to capture how these negotiate meanings and values

within different knowledge engagements. Such an approach enabled an understanding beyond individual factors to situate the research within the broader contextual factors of social reality.

3.3.2 Phase 1 of the research design

Phase one of the research process started with an externally planned knowledge exchange activity called reSIde residency, a Creative Scotland funded artist residency exchange project between India and Scotland. The project was observed to understand the fundamental distinctions, similarities, issues and opportunities of cross cultural craft and design activities. How knowledge exchange happens in these collaborative engagements was also considered and finally, it was examined how these practices contribute to heritage discourse. This involved participant observation of four makers, conducting in-depth interviews, and analysing their creative outputs including material work. Observations were made during December 2012 and throughout 2013 at various stages in Scotland. This phase of study followed an “instrumental case study” approach that advanced our understanding of some other phenomenon under study (or an external interest) than that of the immediate examples the case study discussed (Stake 2005, p445).

With this as its first step, the research was able to gain a “general understanding” of the relationships between local and global, between craft and design, and also to provide “insight” into the broader themes the study wanted to discuss such as who are the actors involved in shaping design and craft engagements, what are the precarious conditions these actors create and what elements can be considered as best practices for collaborative engagements. Stake (1995, p3) also mentions that “allocation of attention” when conducting instrumental cases, is quite flexible (as opposed to an intrinsic case, which only focuses on a particular case), and the researcher is able to select those contexts which are important and matter most to the research. Therefore, it enabled the researcher to select only those parts that were most suitable, ignoring such activities of workshops, exhibitions, public engagement etc. Moreover, the choice of an instrumental case study allowed examining how concerns of the researcher and relevant theories are manifested in the case study, which then allowed certain generalisations to be drawn (Stake 1995, p7, Stake 2005).

In this case study, the data was continuously interpreted by spending extended time with the participants and observing their activities and other networking events they participated in. This was to understand how participants interpret craft, design, local, global, tradition and innovation and how differently they perceived different knowledge practices. Key areas to observe in further studies for local-global discourse in craft and design engagements were then identified and formed the basis for the next phase of the research. It only worked as setting up an initial framework but did not provide hypotheses for testing nor did it offer pre-coded data for phases 2 and 3 of the research process.

The first phase of the research project being an externally planned activity, designed and organised according to the funding organisation's and project partners' requirements, a need arose to extend the understanding and connect with the reality beyond UK funded projects. The particular case study, although opportunistically chosen, however offered limited scope to identify how craft development happens on the ground as it was the main focus of this research. Cheek's (2005) assertion on politics attached to funded qualitative projects also partly applies to this research as well, because funding creates tension in terms of how projects are designed and undertaken, and will have consequences on its output and evaluation scheme. She says "any form of support for qualitative research work gave its unique demands on both the researcher and the research project. In particular, the amount of freedom that researcher have-in terms of both project design and the form that the 'products' of the research take-will vary depending on what type of support is received" (Cheek 2005, p387). Implications that might have arisen in this sense were mitigated against by looking at independent sites, while departing from facilitated and funded label.

As a result, a second and third phase of the research was scheduled in the form of ethnographic fieldwork in Sri Lanka (August–October 2014) and India (August–October 2015) in order to study how local-global relationships work in different craft and design engagements and to identify what these engagements are. It also tried to identify whether there are any recurrent themes that emerge when comparing to the residency case study.

3.3.3 Phase 2 and 3 of the research design

The second and third phase of the research design was undertaken as an ethnographic study. This mainly considered field research, interviews, observation of people at work and of their material culture. It tried to capture different involvements by traditional craftsmen in commercial and cultural activities, and when design is considered a professionalised practice. It included understanding who is involved and what reasons are they involved for, how people move in these networks and what they produce materially. This comprised determining the kinds and peripheries of engagements as well as knowledge relationships, as in whether those are professional, development per se, personal or otherwise. Different units of analysis included individuals, groups, organisations within each field work activity and are described and justified in the Chapters 5 and 6 respectively. Fieldwork was thus organised following the strategy of multi-sited ethnography and is explained below in terms of how it fits with the purpose of the research.

3.3.4 Multi-sited ethnography

This study specifically follows George Marcus's multi-sited ethnography as a research strategy, as its research works on local-global relations of craft and design where both design (Otto 2016) and heritage discourses (Smith 2006, Alivizatou 2012b) display a spatiotemporal dimension. In the earlier discussion of the literature review, it clearly showed how design, craft and heritage are linked to the work of globalisation, and hence attached to a phenomenon that is no longer confined to a single site. Marcus differentiates this approach from conventional ethnography and recommends it to support inter-disciplinary research explains, that multi-sited ethnography "moves out from the single sites and local situations of conventional ethnographic research designs to examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects and identities in diffuse time space" (Marcus 1995, p96). By juxtaposing, "a variety of seemingly incommensurate sites" he suggests "six" strategies to follow such as the people, metaphor, thing, story, conflict and life in order to examine their connections (Marcus 1998, p17). Since this particular research strategy has enabled to map associations "within, between, and beyond sites", according to Ryzewski (2012, p245) the sites can also be "tangible or intangible, they can be locations and complex spaces, or they can be ideas, mixtures, or

historical consciousness” with examples found on migration work, craft in global markets, educational studies and technology projects (ibid).

Heritage scholars also succinctly use multi-sited ethnography as a research strategy within ICH studies (see Alivizatou 2012b, Bortolotto 2015). When conducting multi-sited ethnography, Marcus (1998) suggests more than using it as a prescribed method, placing an emphasis on research imaginaries, and according to Hine (2007, p656), it enables to build the focus of the research according to the needs of the researcher. This flexibility was taken into consideration, when constructing the fieldwork of this research as it follows the “people”, “metaphor”, “story” and “things” of local heritage craft as expressed and understood within the global design industry, which elicits those distinct discourses and modes of thoughts, for example in people’s expressions, and in written, printed or displayed work as well as in the objects made (Marcus 1995, p 106-109)⁷. Marcus (1995, p97) also asserts when constituting sites within the so-called “systems” such as “modern interlocking institutions of media, market, states, industries, universities – the worlds of elites, experts and middle classes” are therefore multiply produced. In that respect, the cultural logic, which this study follows in the form of a global design industry which associates with local heritage craft falls into many of these systems perspectives mentioned.

Karen Fiss in her introduction to an edited volume in *Design Issues* called ‘Design in a global context: envisioning postcolonial and transnational possibilities’, further explains the way design cultures mediate and negotiate between the local and global by taking examples from different country’s contexts (Fiss 2009). In keeping with Fiss’s argument about transnationality in design and how it constructs contemporary heritage craft practices within the local, this study chose sites and instances where global reaches into local in various engagements in the craft development discourse. The bipartite analysis (micro and macro) also serves this purpose. The research therefore selected craft communities, NGO’s and craft enterprises, considered their relationship to national and international design and heritage policies, described their engagements with elite and expert classes and with universities where transnational design education had become omnipresent. In a sense, the field sites in Sri Lanka and India were carefully constructed because “in a world of infinite interconnections and overlapping contexts,

⁷ For similar research strategy see Alivizatou (2012a) in terms of using a combined strategy to follow metaphor, people, things and narratives together to study multiple translations of ICH in contemporary museum practices.

the ethnographic field cannot simply exist, awaiting discovery. It has to be laboriously constructed” (Amit 2000, p6).

Further, Hannerz (2003, p207) explains that sites need to be selected on the basis of the research design, comparative purposes of the research and its research questions which will help to bring a clear cultural comparison rather than selecting those sites with similar opportunities and characteristics. Similarly, when constructing suitable sites based on the research design, Amit calls to consider “conceptual, professional, financial and relational opportunities and resources” available to the researcher (Amit 2000, p6)—which this study also took into account. The rationale behind choosing the sites is mentioned in the next four chapters under the heading of ‘methods of data gathering’ to give insights on how craft development discourse is organised in relation to the local-global relations.

3.3.5 Phase 4 of the research design

The fourth stage of the research design required combining research findings of the previous three stages to formulate a guideline on how an engagement model should be designed to aid collaborative participation in craft and design engagements. After designing the model, it was tested and evaluated to get participants’ viewpoints to check its success as a workable model. At this stage a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was selected as most practical and suitable to the research design. The mixed model employed in this research follows what Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998, p19) describe as combining “quantitative and qualitative approaches within different phases of the research process”, i.e. including factor analysis of Likert scaled items from a survey to combine with open ended questions that are theoretically linked to the survey materials in terms of providing a comparative analysis.

The following diagram shows how the different phases of the research was organised and the way in which it informed the subsequent stages in a developmental path.

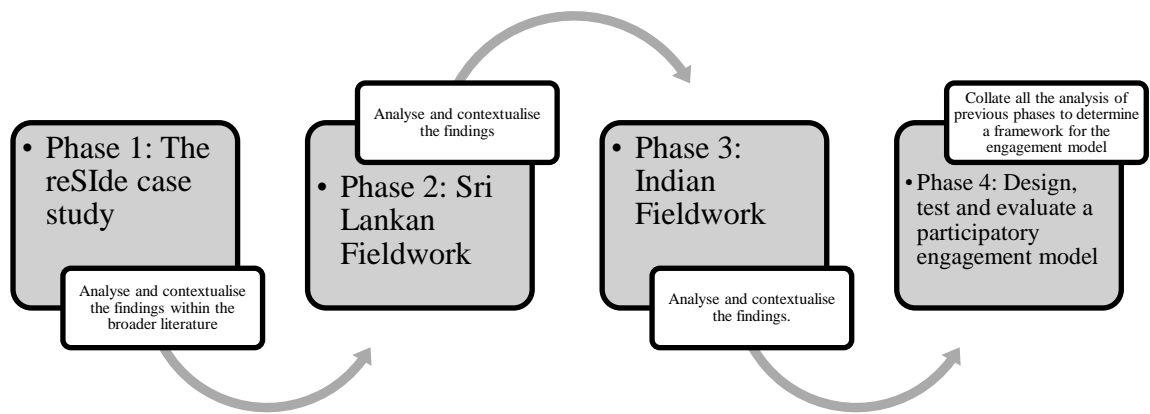


Figure 1: The iterative and developmental research design process

3.4 Ethics, Sampling, Data Analysis and Triangulation

Within the ethnographic fieldwork, respondents were selected mainly through purposeful, yet convenient sampling methods to suit the context of the research as well as those who were present during the fieldwork (Ritchie et al. 2014). Further, a snowball sampling technique was also used, as individuals were approached based on the potential of providing more information as one participant referred to the other (ibid).

Ethics approval was obtained from the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University, Scotland. Formal written consent was received from the participants where practicable, in addition to oral consent. According to Rose Wiles (2012, p27) oral consent can become an alternative method to signed ethics forms to avoid respondents be “off-putt”, or when respondents are illiterate or use a different command of language (ibid, p35). As Iphofen (2009, p74) notes, consent “should be gained in the most convenient, least disturbing manner for both researcher and researched”, therefore oral consent was deemed more suitable when conducting ethnographic work in the community settings and collecting artisans’ responses. In those cases where an interpreter was employed, a briefing was provided to the participants. Participants were anonymised unless they wished to be recognised and confidentiality was assured to the best of the researcher’s ability (Wiles et al. 2006). Due to the unpredictability of ethnographic research work, and implications that arise with regards to trust, values and

consent⁸ (Atkinson 2009, p21), the researcher was cautious about the responsibility she had during the field work and data representation. The researcher paid attention to gaining trust, and building relationships with the observed community groups and individuals, where gate keepers helped to maintain a non-coercive approach (Webster et al. 2014, p93) or contacting them prior to engagement in the field. This assured a “thinking ethically” approach during the research process (Miller et al. 2012, p4).

Phase 1: All the interviews were done in English.

Phase 2: The interviews were done in Sinhala (the main language spoken in Sri Lanka) in the majority of cases, especially when conducting the interviews with craft communities. The researcher translated the interviews, who is also native Sinhala speaker. A certain number of interviews were conducted in English, when the respondent felt he/she was able to communicate and express their thoughts in English.

Phase 3: The majority of interviews conducted with the craft communities were carried out with the support of an interpreter, translating from Hindi to English and some instances translating from local dialects spoken in the region. The interpreter at times was an independent person joined to assist the field work, or sometimes a professional who worked at the organisation the researcher observed, and who agreed on the basis of facilitating the interview. There were also interviews conducted solely in the English language when the respondents felt comfortable with the language.

Data analysis was performed from the first phase of the research process and continued at each stage as an ongoing activity, and finally a formal analysis was performed. A descriptive qualitative data analysis process was undertaken, following approaches described by Spencer et al. (2014, p270), which is a thematic analysis where abstraction and interpretation is used. Since qualitative data are often messy and fractured, the first step this research took was indexing and sorting data, which means collating and organising different types of data gathered such as field notes, transcribed data, visual data and archival materials. In this formal analytic process, the researcher performed a substantive and a cross sectional analysis in terms of interpreting meanings, develop conceptual and analytical categories, mapping linkages to establish comparisons and

⁸ See Atkinson (2009) for a thorough analysis of why it is impractical in ethnographic research to obtain ‘informed’ consents always. He notes that it is not to do with ethnographers’ intention on not wishing to do so, but mainly because of the nature of the research they undertake which is unpredictable and always emerging as the research progresses.

connections between key themes and then finally provide explanations (Spencer et al. 2014, p272-286). It enabled the researcher to locate the findings within existing theories and literature and link it with the ideas that discussed in the contextual review.

Triangulation in qualitative research offers different applications, such as a validation strategy, contributes to generalisation of the findings, and gain a deeper understanding of the research (Steinke 2004, p183). This research followed the protocol of triangulation proposed by Norman Denzin in his book *The Research Act* (1978), which is still a popular strategy that researchers prefer to use, such as Stake (1995), Steinke (2004), and Denzin (2017) himself. The first technique used was “data triangulation”, which means triangulating the data acquired from different sources, such as participant observations, interviews, observational notes, photographs, video and audio recordings and published materials such as press reports. They were included to capture multiple participants’ views that were common across settings. Secondly, and especially during the fourth stage, the “investigator triangulation” was employed, where a neutral observer was used to balance out the subjective engagements of the researcher when connecting with participants. Thirdly, methodological triangulation was used by accompanying at one point mixed methods combining both quantitative and qualitative data (online survey, interviews, video recordings, observing objects) and in other times combining archival research materials of the same empirical unit under investigation while increasing the confidence in interpreting interview or observational data to provide additional dimension to research analysis (Steinke 2004, p178-182 and see also Denzin 1978, p294-304).

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter mainly looked at how the study chose its research philosophy to guide the research design process. It described a broad framework of interpretivist, constructivist and pragmatic research paradigms mainly driven by a qualitative research design, but with a mixed method approach where the research questions required it. In doing so, the study adopted a developmental research path, where each stage of the research had specific approaches to data gathering such as case study, ethnography and online surveys. Specifically, it adopted multi-sited ethnography rather than using conventional

ethnography to study the local-global relationships in heritage craft and design engagements with respect to globalisation.

The next four chapters will document this developmental research path in detail and provide a comprehensive and a detailed analysis on how such local-global relationships are portrayed, discussed and interpreted in craft development discourse with a focus on heritage craft and design practices.

Chapter 4: The reSIde Residency

The previous chapter of this thesis discussed the research methodology in terms of adopting a qualitative case study approach to analyse the residency programme. This case study is the first of three subsequent phases of a developmental research process. Hence the next three chapters (including this one) of the thesis discuss what are the different craft-design interventions commonly found in local-global relationships, how craft and design mediates between these interfaces, who are involved and how they negotiate amongst these varied networks and the way different groups construct heritage to contribute to craft development. Each analytical chapter addresses a specific research question; hence the following chapter will present and analyse how participants of a particular craft and design project participate and collaborate (corresponds to research aim 1).

4.1 About the reSIde Residency

The reSIde residency exchange programme was initiated by the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University and funded by Creative Scotland's Creative Futures programme. The residencies took place between Scotland and India during autumn 2012 and spring 2013. As Europe's largest co-ordinated residency and exchange programme, the objectives of the programme were defined based on producing dialogue, intellectual and practical skills for "quality artistic production...[and by] reaching varied audiences through collaborative partnerships, [it] explore[s] key drivers of cultural economy in terms of locality, tradition and innovation" (excerpts from the evaluation report on reSIde residency, 2013 p17) ⁹. Therefore, outcomes were investigated in order to obtain further knowledge on relationships between tradition and contemporary craft.

Four participants had been selected from the fields of textiles and two from each country to participate in the residency programme. The aim was to allow them to explore and continue their practice for two separate four-week periods in the host country. (Phase one: August to October 2012/Phase Two: January March 2013). The programme was designed in such a manner, as to allow defined ambitions for Scottish participants and Indian participants to develop and extend individual practices. For

⁹ The evaluation report was authored by reSIde research team

example, Scottish practitioners engaged with academics and used facilities at the National Institute of Design (NID) in India and link with local projects and NGO's in Gujarat. The project offered access to Kala Raksha Vidyalaya in Kutch, an enterprise working with grassroots artisanal communities. Practitioners from India were encouraged to establish contacts and dialogues with student and staff at Heriot Watt University as well as access to facilities to produce their creative work. The first exchange of the four weeks was driven mainly by university links and the second exchange by industry and community arrangements. The programme was designed for deliberate overlapping during their exchange periods between the four practitioners and with other external independent organisations including, Creative Arts Business Network (CABN), Scottish Borders Council (SBC) Museums and Galleries Service, Borders Textile Towerhouse (BTT) and other industrial engagements. It also included community engagements as public engagement activities with local hobby groups and schools in organising craft workshops in Scotland, apart from those independent workshops the participants organised by themselves. In this way, the reSIde project had a secondary objective in strengthening partnerships with external bodies outside the project as pathways to impact and further dissemination of project outcomes with a wider public.

Amongst the tangible and intangible benefits aimed at the practitioners, one of the key attributes was to produce innovative work based on new cultural experience, with particular interest on how “new knowledge relating to the relationship between authenticity and contemporaneousness, and the relationship between local and global craft production” is gained. (Excerpt from the evaluation report of reSIde residency 2013)

For the purpose of this thesis, and to suit the context of the study, this research will only analyse the knowledge exchange focusing on the engagements of the four practitioners and their experience of the residency programme. Analysis and discussion of public engagement activities and knowledge exchange activities on digital media is published elsewhere (See Greru and Kalkreuter 2013, Greru and Kalkreuter 2014).

4.2 Analysis of Knowledge Exchange Activities

4.2.1 *Methods of Data Gathering*

Data gathering was done during December 2012 and throughout 2013 in Scotland. Participant observations were made at practitioner's studios, working spaces and at their exhibitions. To obtain their overall experiences about the residency programme and to gather information about their experience in India, in-depth interviews were undertaken as well as following social media updates on the reSide Facebook page. All participants submitted a reflective commentary to the project organiser (Heriot Watt University), and content analysis of this has also been used to discuss their engagements and experiences.

4.2.2 *Analysing the work of four practitioners and their outcomes*

The four practitioners came from different backgrounds and their production of work is as follows:

Lindsay Roberts is a Scottish textile practitioner, designer-maker with an education in textiles design. Her work normally focuses on a range of activities from knitting to creating handcrafted items. Her aim with regards to the residency project was to examine her own and others' practices, work with traditional artisans and translate her outcome in large scale constructions; "...to create big art pieces rather than craft by combining textiles and paper as visual art". (Personal interview October 2013)

With the first phase of the project dedicated to cultural exploration and gaining an understanding of the social context, Lindsay Robert's main influences came from rural Kutch, as well as through 'khadi' weaving, paper manufacturing and Islamic and Hindu symbols in architectural features. She worked with local artisans of 'bandhani'¹⁰ and 'ajrakh'¹¹ under their tutelage which she agrees transformed and influenced her focus on 'handwork' for future work.

The second phase of the project in India was committed towards making products. During this phase she worked with a resident dyer at one of the NGOs in Kutch and making samples using 'Kala Cotton' a local variety of cotton indigenous to Kutch.

¹⁰ A form of tie-dye method

¹¹ A form of block printing

Other experimentations included block printing and conversations with bandhani artists, batik artists in Kutch and a designer working with natural indigo in Ahmedabad.

Jeni Allison is a Glasgow based, design school trained textiles practitioner, with a background in knit and costumes. Her expectations of the project were to experience and explore another culture, practices and traditions, to produce work that is expanded and contextualised in a global context as well as gather stimuli for future work. Her work was grounded in practice-based research, mainly through ethnographic means of immersion into another culture. “I did research on textiles, people, cultures and techniques, looking at why people are doing it and how that affects the makers socially and politically.” (Personal Interview, June 2013)

The work she produced exploring the relationship between textiles and celebration was underpinned by attending the local ‘Navaratri’¹² festival in Ahmedabad followed by other independent research into performing groups. During the second phase, attending a mass Rabari¹³ wedding (including a Garba dancing¹⁴ event) as well as a Rabari religious fair further influenced her anthropological thinking into textiles and cultural practices (Evaluation report of reSIDE residency, 2013, p44). Jeni’s close association with Rabari women and learning their embroidery techniques and other skills such as natural and synthetic dyeing, bandhani, shibori and batik were significant. Output of Jeni’s work included performance pieces using these techniques and short film about her experiences into festival cultures where she described: “Performance, textiles and environment as a presentation of my research into the relationship between women and and their making in Rabari communities” (Personal Interview, June 2013).

Swati Unakar is a Bangalore based textile weaver, educated at National Institute of Design, India and now an academic at Srishti Institute of Art, Design & Technology, working closely with traditional artisans at her own studio and in outreach projects, who also sells her work internationally. Her expectations were based on individual development, exchange and dialogue with others by living and working in a different culture. Swati also employed an anthropological aspect to her research, by documenting traditions of wool weaving as narratives of makers with place-based significance to

¹² A Hindu festival continued for nine nights to celebrate Hindu deities

¹³ A nomadic embroidery community in Kutch

¹⁴ A form of dance originated in the state of Gujarat in India which is derived from the Sanskrit word Garbha meaning "womb"

explore how traditions are grounded in the contemporary contexts. Her practices were methodised via “journaling, sketching and painting” as a practice (Evaluation report of reSide residency, 2013, p31) as well as looking at prominent designers and contemporary artists’ work and more broadly exploring landscapes and architecture to capture its textural qualities for design inspiration. It also included documenting stories of artisans in Kutch engaged in diminishing craft practices like Kharad; a flat weave carpet woven on a simple loom using local sheep wool. The work produced during residency included textile experimentations, combining Merino, Alpaca, felting wool and high twist wool in combination with silk. This involved attempting the Jacquard weaving technique using the Scot-Weave CAD programme available at Heriot Watt University. Her outputs thus varied from making visual documentaries to making commercial pieces.

Murji Vankar, a Kutch based traditional artisan who carries on traditional weaving in his family. The expectations on the residency were grounded on the community’s needs, rather than on personal development with responsibilities in developing and contributing to traditional practices. This is evident when Murji says: “...[I] felt a tremendous sense of responsibility for [my] community and on behalf of the artisans who did not get selected. [I] felt the residency would become a means through which [I] might be able to bring change into [my] craft and this would impact everybody” (Evaluation report of reSide residency, 2013, p35). During the first phase, he did observations at studio practices, museums and archives, wool production mills, met artists and took photographs of landscapes and the surroundings which turned into his inspirations. He also learnt new techniques through the facilities available to him at Heriot Watt University. There were multiple outcomes, from creating products to actively sharing knowledge with extended communities in Kutch for rejuvenation of traditions. The outcome also varied from experimentation with twill weaving, alpaca wool, exploration into new patterns and motifs which led to creating a hybrid of products inspired by Kutch and Scotland. In creating the products, Murji had to overcome barriers in terms of language and culture, working conditions in studio practices, material and technical differences.

4.3 Reflections of the four practitioners on the exchange

Practitioners experienced dislocation, displacement but also familiarities between the two cultural contexts, as emotional experiences mingled with professional working practices. “The first two weeks were a bit disorienting. The silence, the difference in culture, the food, the prosperity, the systematic order of things; at the back of his mind, the pressure that there should be some outcomes at the end of the residency for everyone involved. He was afraid because he couldn’t immediately see how or what he could do” (Murji Vankar, evaluation report of reSIde residency, 2013, p36).

Nevertheless, relationships between members were forged as experiences and expectations were shared and compared. Also, coming to challenge their own practices and forcing that change, transported practitioners from their secured or comfortable position to a dynamic creative environment, which is discussed in detail below.

4.3.1 Reflection on maker practices

In their reflective commentaries, a key difference observed by the Scottish makers was a strong community of practice in rural India which integrates making into the daily routines of many rather than being a solitary pursuit.

“The time spent in Kutch was a huge contrast to the impersonal city. I had instant and continuing contact with people in their daily routines and with artists in their workspaces. It was here that I began to understand how artisan communities operate” (Lindsay Roberts, evaluation report of reSIde residency, 2013, p26)

Craft as a choice in the West and craft as a necessity in the East

The community aspect thus afforded a localisation of practice that went beyond the individual maker’s relationship to a material or idea, instead integrating wider daily routines into the object making. On the other hand, the Indian experience in Scotland was more about one’s own making as part of a self-elected group of specialists, the experience seen as a purpose and an opportunity rather than an inevitability. This is similar to having been offered a choice to practice craft in the West as opposed to a necessity and a means of survival in the East (Hare and Theophilus 2013).

“The purpose of the residency was individual development, exchange and dialogue with other residents, engagement with community, students, industry, and other artists as an opportunity to embrace the experience of living, working and learning within a different culture.”(Swati Unakar, evaluation report of reSIde residency, 2013, p29)



Image 1: People collectively setting up a warp in Kutch.
Photo courtesy of Swati Unakar

The residents elaborated on their traditions and exchanged experiences by reflecting on how interaction with others and the environment are part of practice. From an Indian perspective, the idea of local community and locality, experienced with all senses, was seen as missing from one’s context when away from home; the familiar surroundings of one’s local were equated with happiness, and weighed positively against the lure of the more prosperous global:

“I enjoyed the natural beauty of the land. I saw prosperity and meticulous infrastructure and small things made me aware of my own ‘Indianness’. In the silence, I saw an absence of people while life back home was grounded in people...people and children buzzing all around! I realised I needed that context to create. I appreciated that in India despite all the societal pressures, the

struggle for livelihood, the dirt, the noise, the absence of infrastructure, despite all of this, one could still create, one could still make the most of things and still be happy.” (Murji Vankar, evaluation report of reSide residency, 2013, p38)



Image 2:Swati Unakar's Bangalore Studio where she has artisans working for her
Photo courtesy of Swati Unakar

This may portray a degree of appreciation in one’s own “Indianness” which resulted in identity building for the Indian partners through traditional crafts. Swati Unakar also expressed a strong link to traditional wool weaving in Kutch besides her own experimental work in the Bangalore studio.

A community of practice vs. professionalisation

Interestingly, with regard to the community of practices, Scottish makers also positively highlighted the function of making as a conversation still being alive in India, although it seems to have largely fallen prey to globalisation in an era of modern design practices. Efforts are being made to revive such local connections in contemporary practices through the same design interventions: “The women artisans in particular interested me a lot, the way they use textile as a way to meet, as a way to create and a way to communicate was incredibly inspiring” (Jeni Allison, evaluation report of reSide residency, 2013, p44).

Apart from valuing one’s own ideologies, the residency experience also strike a chord with prevailing factors in their own culture. As Swati Unakar stated; “Eastern mentality

is strict. If you are in the Science stream you cannot take the Art stream...in the West [people] can suddenly change their lines. In India people are like blinkered horses...sometimes history can become a baggage and a burden. But after seeing Shirley [a Scottish designer-maker] I understood classicism could also be contemporised” (Personal Interview Swati Unakar, March 2013). The Indian artisan Murji, describing the same, commented:

“While [Murji’s] aesthetics were more structured and came from a common pool of the community’s design vocabulary, he felt the Scottish artists were freer in their explorations...He felt an appreciation for this freedom and...single-minded focus.” (evaluation report of reSIde residency, 2013, p37)

This indicates how design, whether in traditional or contemporary form, is realised in an Asian context. While Swati’s comment offers what is prevalent in formal education, Murji’s comment offers a community perspective on how tradition becomes restrictive once it extends to be a responsibility and a way of forming identity. Whether this was imposed by market forces, maintaining social customs or in negotiation with other makers (evaluation report of reSIde residency, 2013), it shows the tensions a traditional practitioner has when working towards contemporary work. While Swati implies tradition within ‘historicity’ and ‘classic’ where it needs to be flexibly adopted and appropriated, according to Murji, tradition is a continuing practice, which offers both prospects and limitations.

Design Education for artisans

It can also be assumed to a certain extent, that the way Murji interprets his own heritage is guided through educational institutions aimed at artisans, such as Kala Raksha Vidyalaya, where he is a graduate. As Murji constantly speaks of maintaining his ‘USP’ (Unique selling proposition) in his traditional extra weft weaving technique, one could argue like Frater (2002) does that he uses design language to communicate his ideas. Design education and management courses have shaped his perception on craft as one that is corresponding to market needs through new designs, while at the same time promoting his identity through the incorporation of ‘USP’ in his textiles designs is further confirmed by Kala Raksha Vidyalaya. According to them, such education helps

in developing design concepts and flair for entrepreneurship while design education contributes to creating ‘artisan-designers’.

When analysing the reflective commentaries of the four artisans, it becomes evident that their practices changed completely during the residency. While Lindsay Roberts focused on Indigo-dyeing, Jeni Allison acquired a researcher role where she attempted to connect with her background on performance and theatre. She also wanted to portray a politicised view through her textile work where she tried to demonstrate the rejection of traditions and social norms of Rabari women through her minimal designs. Swati Unakar gave her attention to developing her practice on using resources that are otherwise inaccessible for her design and material experimentation, whereas Murji Vankar attempted to make ‘hybridised’ craftwork based on his traditional methods and combined with those inspirations, materials and techniques he gained and learnt during his residency. Therefore, the work, that all four practitioners produced was varied and offer insights into differing ways of interpreting and acknowledging craft and design in their own practice.

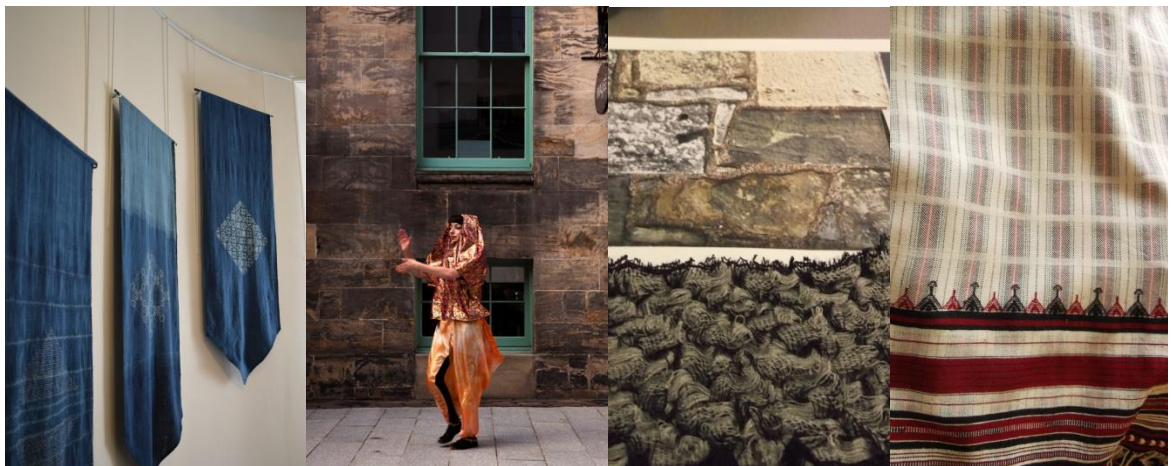


Image 3:Lindsay’s indigo dyed wall hanging pieces
Photo by author

Image 4: Jeni’s experimental work based on Rabari costumes
Photo courtesy of Jeni Allison

Image 5:Swati’s material experiments inspired from textured surfaces
Photo by author

Image 6:Murji’s ‘hybrid’ design experiments combining twill and his own extra-weft weaving techniques
Photo by author

The following discussion will therefore focus on how the residents expressed their views about craft and design, tradition and contemporary contexts.

4.3.2 Realisations on craft, design and tradition

Tradition as improvisation and Design as innovation

Although it has been agreed by many scholars to work beyond the distinctions, dichotomies and genres (Greenhalgh 2002), the reSIde residency offered examples of divisions between local-global, East-West and tradition and contemporary, but also evidence of how one works between these domains, while not confined to simplistic categorical distinctions. When Ravetz et al. (2013, p1) argue that one of the conceptual limitations of craft, which collaborations could minimise, is the “fundamental and mistaken opposition between innovation [creativity] and tradition [improvisation]”, the four makers also understood that creativity does not necessarily equate to pure innovation, but improvisational dynamics are also part of tradition. Thus, tradition is understood as being a creative mode (Hallam and Ingold 2007). It reflects how product development is understood as an organic development from within a community, deeply local and incremental, rather than practice being a space for the experimental and the innovative, where new products occur for the sake of producing something novel, or as a strategy to conquer new global markets.

This goes to the heart of the debates on how traditions survive and evolve, and whether contemporising and commercialising are antidotes to the improvisatory nature of tradition. When Jeni Allison was asked about how she understood and expressed the notion of tradition amidst innovation she said:

“...There is no destruction because the culture still exists. And if you are just going to replicate something that’s already there, then what’s the point? Learning the techniques and putting it in a different context is how cultures develop and survive...and how innovations happen—taking something that exists and, adapt and change according to your needs. I don’t think people should live like museum pieces or historical artefacts”. (Jeni Allison, Personal interview, June 2013)

When Jeni contends that traditions should not be viewed as being static, where continuous developments should occur, and that borrowings must take place—she also pays attention to the traditional societal structures as one aspect that inhibits development. For example she explains that crafts should not create restriction but instead should develop through the freedom of choice and flexibility, rather than born as

a result of entitlement. She says; “[in India] if you are a Rabari woman then you should be making this [Rabari embroidery]. Actually what if they want to make something else?” (Jeni Allison, Personal interview, June 2013).

The question Jeni presents about the scope of innovation within tradition questions generational practices and hereditary societal structures (which she identifies as a structural impediment to the evolving tradition) only becomes clearer through explanation offered by Murji Vankar. He offers insight into this discussion when he speaks of this improvisatory nature of tradition as part of continuity and innovation in the cultural practices and how as a traditional artisan he mediates between the structured and improvisation in his traditional practice, without disregarding the hereditary element.

“This is a difficult proposition for most of us, even more so for traditional artisans who seldom have the luxury of structured experimentation although he/she is a creator and may even be an innovator in his/her context.” (Murji Vankar, excerpts from reSIDE residency evaluation report, 2013, p35)

This may provide an example of how everyday design and innovation become an improvisation for traditional artisans; although it may not necessarily be acknowledged as an innovative approach to designing. In that sense, to Jeni, the improvisatory nature, which artisans achieve through their daily struggles with limited resources, may not indicate a true innovative approach. This may be because such design processes do not fit into the standards set by professional design practices where compulsory experimentation and exploration become key in every design attempt.



Image 7: Women doing embroidery during their daily chores in Kutch
Photo courtesy of Britta Kalkreuter



Image 8: Lindsay Robert's studio in Scotland
Photo by author

It is in this context, that we also discover a new-found demand for design education, which traditional practitioners like Murji value and consider as a necessity in order to compete in the commercial market

Necessitating design for market and revival needs

An example Lindsay Roberts provides also shows how a Kutch artisan takes this very home-based improvisatory textile practice and expands it into the global markets which oscillate between producing for local communities and tourist markets.

“we went to see an artisan who runs a boutique...[he] still uses his traditional blocks, [but] he also designed new blocks based on tattoos Rabari women have on them. He developed these tattoos and applied them. That was totally him. You know from start to finish he came up with the idea and translated and produced this lovely fabric.” (Personal Interview October 2013)

According to Lindsay, place-based production (made in Kutch) and authorship (made by a traditional artisan) transmits this view of tradition. The outcome is both marked as traditional and innovative at the same time, even though it is an outcome of an artisan who has gone through formal design education as she indicated. Lindsay being a western practitioner appreciated how artisans have progressed to develop their own

design repertoire thanks to the education provided by NGO driven design schools and benchmarked this with her own practice as a designer maker—where from idea generation to the production of the craft is executed by the artisan, which also highlights an emergence of an individual maker in the Indian traditional craft context.

As appreciation for tradition was repeatedly highlighted, Swati's acknowledgement of tradition as a dynamic process however implies two things as explained below. That it has the quality of improvisation, hence change should be accepted. However, the other aspect of the same statement reveals the way change is equated to contemporisation, which means that in order to survive one needs to change, hence the need to contemporise. "Tradition and culture are not static, so you have to change...there are artisanal communities still in India who refuse that change. So they are struggling...eventually that craft will die out." (Personal Interview October 2013)

A clear need for bringing contemporary designing to traditional craft is stated here by Swati, which also shows where traditional societal values are posing a structural impediment to the survival of craft. In that sense, design may be the new craft revival as espoused by Swati that necessitates design for market and revival needs.

The idea of sharing vs. individual making

Another realisation about craft and design was related to the way practice happens as a result of flexibility, adaptability, creativity and relationships. While Indian practitioners appreciated the individual thinking process in the West, the Scottish practitioners realised the importance of community and the concept of togetherness. It expanded the borders of product centric individual making while challenging the competitive worldviews of the ideas of sharing rather than copying to produce designs. This challenged not only what design education offers in the West, but also that craft offers a platform for collaboration.

"I don't think we ever share in the Western community. Especially in the textile courses, it's really competitive. If I want to be the best then I don't want them to use my techniques...But People can enjoy things in a more rounded way like in those communities." (Jeni Allison, Personal interview, June 2013)



Image 9: Jeni Allison and Lindsay Roberts learning embroidery from Rabari women in Kutch
Photo courtesy of riSide team

Swati's statement, being a university educated designer and an academic also revealed that individual approach to design is not only prevalent in the West, but also part of the Indian education system. She signals this as she mentioned design and art schools generating 'snobbish people'. While the Indian experience for the practitioners allowed appreciation of the community of practice by living, sitting and eating together, the Scottish experience provided other ways of working within like-mindedness but at the same time being individual, e.g. those witnessed in hobby groups like wool gathering events organised with local knitters in the Scottish Borders.

What is implicitly at stake here is the importance of a sharing culture for designers, but at the same time maintaining the designer's identity via individual expressions. Jeni Allison, although appreciated the sharing culture and supported that practice, was however critical about copying designs of the traditional craft as a way of interpreting it; which she thought was not a designerly quality. Therefore, she assigned an important market value to the designer—a quality that cannot easily be replicable and which promotes the individual. "I think if I just made a copy of Rabari costume I think it would have been unimaginative. And I think it's just easy to copy work. But as a designer, a creator, I think it's important to take what you have learnt and use it to make something new." (Jeni Allison, Personal interview, June 2013)

Comparing Jeni's statement with that of Lindsay's observation of the traditional block printer who used Rabari tattoos as a source of inspiration shows the way innovation is used to describe a departure from the structured communal approaches which indicated a repetitive nature and therefore, less innovative. This highlights identifying design as a progressive idea, which always works towards innovating, creating and imagining something new.

Jeni's opinion also raised concerns on collaborations contributing to the development of each culture. It clearly shows the independent nature in her design thinking and expressions to create the 'new', but is also contradictory to the very nature of where she drew her inspirations. Such practices may result in making new products and also find new uses for traditional techniques, but may not interfere with traditional Rabari or bandini techniques and may not infringe on communal design rights. Nevertheless, it may distance the practice from the essence of its original context. It will attract a new audience to share those practices which was visible in the two workshops she did in Scotland targeting public groups, but the way in which it echoed the past, present imagery and future is not evident as opposed to those experiences she captured immediately and onshore during her ethnographic immersion when she engaged with her new audiences in Scotland. This also has similar implications when reviewing the other practitioner's work. i.e. Murji Vankar's new alpaca blended materials and twill weaving, Lindsay Roberts' indigo socks and wall hanging pieces of tie and dye, Swati's high twisted yarn experimentations now sit in a new design space. One might argue that such collaborations could lead to dilution, contamination and loss of knowledge, which questions a true interpretation. However, it could also be argued as an indication of "contingent and generative rather than transmitting pre-existing content" which generates a new identity and aesthetics, thus challenge possessive individualism. (Ravetz et al. 2013, p9 and Kester 2011)

The varied expressions offered on craft, design and tradition suggest a diffuse focus amongst the practitioners. Although, it recognised tradition as both creative and improvised, but when analysing the Indian context, the right to innovation was drawn from the mediation between traditional contexts and global design needs. It is presupposed that innovation associates with developing new concepts, new material, techniques and colour ways (while being inspired by what already exists) and was envisioned as contemporisation. (See Murji's concept drawings which he has learnt as part of design education or Swati's Jacquard experimentations).

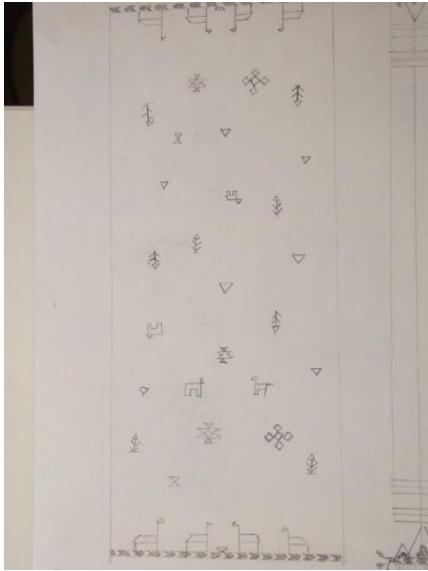


Image 10: Murji's design sketches (as part of his learning at the design school)

Photo by author

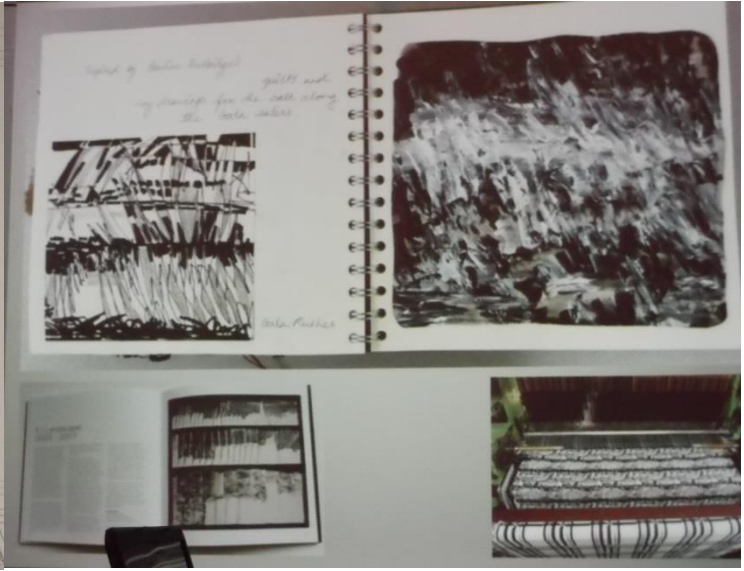


Image 11: Swati Unakar's Jacquard experiments (including sketches and work in progress on the loom)

Photo by author

However the residency also allowed experimentation in this overlap with an emphasis on making rather than testing the commercial viability for Indian practitioners. Therefore being able to work in this context of 'facilitated project' avoided the fear for failure and less pressure to proving one's identity in the making, cultural borrowing and interpretations between craft and design which were then more casually embraced.

In the East, craft is seen as a resource; both in economic and in cultural terms. In the Indian context, craft was attached to tradition while in the Scottish context it was more related to contemporary expression and leisure, and as such, detached from tradition. This realisation explained how craft in the West was provided an opportunity to be easily associated with all sorts of activities from commercial to hobbies, and art performance to activism with politicised agency. On the other hand and more generally, design was seen as the driving force behind change whether craft provided the platform, a coming together with the benefits of sharing and appreciating the design process. While the practitioners praised the design's progressive nature, the down falls of professionalisation of design were also mentioned such as highlighting the highly competitive nature in design education and design professions. Local-global divisions came to light when vocation (artisan/maker) and profession (designers, academics) became indexical with educational hierarchies (i.e. Communal learning, artisan design schools and HEI's). What came across more prominently was craft enhancing design's ability to engage in a humane process rather than providing a bourgeois identity amidst

a solitary pursuit (Kester 2011). It is useful to recognise the desirability of a knowledge exchange experience like the one provided through reSIde for creating blurred boundaries between craft, as well as design, tradition and innovation. This was evident in the way the four practitioners described their final outcome as a ‘hybrid’ and ‘an inspiration’ and not a replica of something else.

4.4 Collaborative Engagements

All four practitioners confirmed residency as a transitional practice, one that is driven by interventions and speculations without having defined paths, where change was evident. Hence it served as an exploration and evoked alternative opportunities which were otherwise not available to the practitioners. This was gained by overcoming cultural barriers, by being open to different circumstances, being grounded in explorations and developing an embodied experience. During the residency all four practitioners affirmed interdisciplinarity and inter-cultural dialogue were key in developing the embodiment of people, practice and materials. The embodied act of collaborative engagements experienced during the residency were not perceived as much as the engagement between mind and body during the making process (Ingold 2011, Gowlland 2016), instead it was aligned with what Stephanie Bunn expresses as, one that “provokes thought, enquiry and future actions in the practitioner...beyond the coming together of maker and material” (Bunn 2014, p164) whether it’s by virtue of practicing a craft or by being immersed in that culture of making.

“When I went to India I focused on making, but when I came back...I did lots of reading...I did not want to do anything superficial...to say ‘oh I have been to India’. I want to make sure that I really understand the people I am working with and they also understand why I was working with them...[to show] how women reject their traditions, [and] how textiles control the body [and] using textiles to send a message”. (Jeni Allison, Personal Interview, June 2013)

When collaboration is argued not to be a “one-way curatorial tourism but to explore ways in which meaningful legacies might be exchanged” (Hare and Theophilus 2013, p209), the reSIde residency has addressed how such legacies can be exchanged via individual practitioner development, in a way not to generate a curatorial invasion but to create equal and meaningful opportunities to the four makers (Hare and Theophilus 2013). This was ensured by allowing equal fees, subsistence and support and independence throughout the programme and tapping into the local opportunities at

each geo-location, which may not necessarily be the same but equal in terms of allowing immersion into the local context.

However, when measurements and impacts of the residency come to be defined by “what is left behind and...what is packed in baggage to carry home” (Hare and Theophilus 2013, p217), whether these be economic, social, ethical and cultural, the pertinent question becomes: “how is value [economic and cultural] sustained and communicated across cultures? Within the global superstore of made objects, craft, through its many guises, represents the mark of the hand, known or unknown: the value attached to that imprint varies hugely.”(Hare and Theophilus 2013, p217)

A concern raised by one of the Scottish makers is related to the above as in whether their collaborative engagements with Indian artisan was mutual or imposed through the residency experience and by those circumstances. When Lindsay said: “Other than thoroughly enjoying and being inspired by it...I was expecting to work with a block printer in the same manner, but I went on to commission the block printer to do the work to my design, to my standards; where I choose the blocks and said this is how it should be.” (Personal Interview, October 2013)

When collaborations were questioned as delegation of work or as acquisition of knowledge under an artisan’s tutelage, Lindsay also showed how individuals with different skill sets (not related to those held by artisans) could possibly create an impression of exploiting or violating one’s tradition that could easily be interpreted as ‘play’ to the other (which she wanted to avoid). “We are going to a guy who’s an expert in his field, that’s what he does. So how could I say: Can I play with your blocks? That’s quite insulting” (personal interview, October 2013).

Collaborations became adapted to local realities as is here expressed by Lindsay, but the residency also offered other examples of how different knowledge exchanges were mediated within different hierarchies and social-cultural differences. i.e. between industries, academia and wider making communities.

During this collaborative experience of the residency, the way one strikes a balance between individuality and working with others came into question with the prerequisite of ‘knowledge exchange’. Jeni Allison enquired whether and to what extent one could correspond to such mutuality when she said:

“Working with the artisans [specifically the Rabari women] was an unforgettable experience. It is however worth mentioning that the way the

artisans work is essentially they will get ‘commissioned’ to make pieces. It is much harder to encourage them to teach others their skills. Again though, perhaps thinking otherwise was naive.” (Jeni Allison, reSide residency evaluation Report, 2013)

Jeni’s comment sheds light on the way artisans have now adjusted to a certain way of working and deliberate knowledge exchange activities, such as those presented by the residency were hard to fit into, within the existing practices of commissioned piecework which clearly affects the knowledge transmission in the community context. Another important concern raised by Jeni Allison was the subaltern viewpoint between the West and the rest, in which the residency could form tensions around the way one negotiates between collaborators in their participation and representation. Such views also raise anxiety about the way one ensures identity while providing equal opportunities. The engagement also focuses on the intricacies and tensions practitioners have to overcome while working with multiple stakeholders such as project funders, organisers and other facilitators where engagements needs to act as ‘decolonised’, in order to avoid neocolonisation and the imperialism presented in design disciplines and their social engagements (Tunstall 2013), was also expressed by Jeni Allison.

“reSide is currently representing four artists work and as such I think it’s important that this work isn’t misrepresented...The main thing I am still weary of is misrepresenting the women I worked with. India, as a post-colony, has cultures which are very easy to parody, and this is something I, personally, am striking to avoid.” (Jeni Allison, reSide residency evaluation Report, 2013)

When the collaboration shows material engagements and tacit experiences, the way in which participants contributed to a collective dialogue becomes somewhat limited as the residency invested in individual development. Such approaches have deliberately avoided the conflicts between the heterogeneous practitioners that could possibly be an outcome when working in closed-knit projects, but it also lacks deep collaborations.

When reviewing the outcome it also indicates the importance of an open ended engaging process to allow maximum knowledge exchange. reSide did not specify what practitioners should be making or where their inspirations should come from. Therefore, practitioners were able to express their outputs via any medium, work between many interfaces, utilising modern to traditional technologies, while exploring creative

engagements between digital spaces (blogs and social media) and analogue spaces (workshops and exhibitions). It then varied between the productions of contemporary collaborative practices to consumption of those on digital media. This predisposed the content they produced; hence the content was actively chosen based on the level of engagements and who they associated with (i.e. content selected for social media, school workshops, community workshops, presentations for public, for workshops). Mostly the way the four practitioners collaborated in terms of sharing their developmental work, when they were not taking part in the exchange programme was through the posts published on the social media platform. There were conversations between the two Scottish and two Indian practitioners as they were given the opportunity to travel at the same time; but it did not move each other closer in terms of producing a common narrative or output. Individuality was hence retained throughout, without co-creation attempts extended in full capacity between practitioners or with their immediate community counterparts, which was outside the scope of the reSIde programme with the focus on individual creativity.

4.5 The construction of heritage by different members during the programme

It is important to review how the idea of heritage was constructed during and after the residency project. The residency exchange can be seen as an initiation for global, national and local communities to participate in heritage between cultures, disciplines and hierarchies. It can also be argued that it provided an opportunity to identify, interpret and manage heritage by constructing what is important for the communities/participants in a collective manner. But it also posed a challenge about how the residency could act as an imposed or an authorised project by sanctioning inclusion and exclusion of who should take part. This is due to its budgetary constraints and the intentions of the funding bodies such as Creative Scotland (2017) which "...supports the arts, screen and creative industries across all parts of Scotland on behalf of everyone who lives, works or visits here. [It] enables people and organisations to work in and experience the arts, screen and creative industries in Scotland by helping others to develop great ideas and bring them to life". How projects manifested in set frameworks, like those funded ones need further review showing to what extent diversity and flexibility are appreciated in promoting cross cultural and transnational dialogues rather than assigning an authorised discourse over their outcomes and participation.

Moreover, when practitioners had to be working with communities, non-governmental organisations like Kala Raksha Vidyalaya and higher educational institutions such as the National Institute of Design, Heriot Watt University as well as local bodies like the Borders Textiles Towerhouse, heritage can be, according to Kockel (2012, p15), differently constructed by and for different constituencies. In that sense practitioners had to negotiate what it means to participate in certain creative practices on a personal and on professional levels as well as amongst these varied project and institutionalised idea of what should be presented in the process of getting it qualified.

When strengthening cross cultural dialogues it is encouraging to build on commonalities rather than promoting differences, especially in the context of Asian and Western approaches to the heritage management being considered (Logan et al. 2015). In that sense reSIde like collaborative platforms can be seen as a way of enabling such dialogue through craft and design interfaces, where difference does not mean conflict but working on the connections. This can then become new strategies for interpreting culture within expanded boundaries, thus constructing and reconstructing what heritage should or could mean to both Asian and Western practitioners as well as participating in it. For example, while the Western practitioners appreciated heritage being a living practice, Murji Vankar appreciated the way Western countries valued heritage through museum and archival practices, a Eurocentric approach when he said; “[I] was fascinated by the way museums and monuments preserve heritage. [I have] a plan to create a similar museum for my community but that would mean involving other members to jointly preserve some of their pieces and stories.” (reSIde residency evaluation report, page 39)



Image 12:Murji visiting a museum in Scotland
Photo courtesy of reSide team

As expected in most residencies, such as in reSide, the outcome of the practitioners became “expanded and extended” with deeper and meaningful reflection on the differences, so as to inspire beyond cultural and geographic dislocation (Kettle et al. 2013, p189 and Hare and Theophilus 2013). This is especially the case when such experiences sit between the “notions of traditional and contemporary, a meeting place of artists and artisan, where the gaps are narrowed and the edges of design and art lose validity, where conversations and preservations give way to change in perception and process, where everything is on the move: producers, makers, users and promoters” (Hare and Theophilus 2013, p217). The residency also required that how practitioners could work within interests and traditions and justify their doings. This is elicited when Logan and others said we “need to enable people to better understand, have access to and enjoy their heritage in ways they choose” (Logan et al. 2015, p21) and those deliberate knowledge exchange activities, even though it appreciates the participation of community members in a collective way there is also a tendency to partake in the ownership of that culture or be considered as an intrusion. This is when the cultural bearer’s choice of participation is determined by the expectations of the residents. Similarly the implied sharing quality beyond individual developments gets questioned as in how it consolidates an active role in heritage debate in terms of offering a holistic representation. This is because it leaves us with a question about the identities of cultural bearers versus those identities invoked through new cultural explorations. This can be interpreted from Jeni Allison’s statement when she says:

“These age-old traditions are steadfast. Rabari women make both bride and groom outfits for weddings, and will often spend months or years on these pieces. However, divorce rates in the area are increasing dramatically, often instigated by women, who before marriage will never have met their husband. There is a feeling, amongst younger Rabaries, that marriage is a choice, however the textile traditions which precede it are not (Allison 2013).

When Jeni’s design intentions were based on these observations, how they relate to women’s identity is however partial in terms of appropriation, rootedness, and the nature of embodiment considered (See below: Jeni’s final design work which became a political piece showcasing women’s liberation through clothes as a response to the emerging social change).



Image 13: Performance in Scotland inspired by Garba dancing and Rabari costumes
Photo courtesy of Jeni Allison

Jeni’s focus here is on recognising people as those representing the heritage, rather than what is represented through material and objects which corresponds with Logan’s (Logan 2007) definition of intangible cultural heritage, as what “is embodied in people rather than in inanimate objects”. Questions pertained to how ‘the painstakingly intricate embroidery and bandhani work’ (Allison 2013) that are embodied in Rabari women, can now be passed on to an outsider in a skill sharing activity, and re-imagined by Jeni within a modern interpretation of textiles, dance and traditions affects

authenticity and the representation of those cultural traditions (see Akagawa 2015, p82-83). This needs further exploration which I will attend to later. In addition, significance was also given to places, artefacts and forms of behaviours as heritage, hence the work produced during the residency portrayed the recognition of heritage as an economic asset, a cultural property and a site, a social need and a form of identity creation; whether these were building new identities, rediscovering identities or reinforcing identities amongst members. The conversations between the necessity of survival (in the East) and having a choice (in the West), also raised concerns on whether commercial viability is ennobling cultural needs. The engagements of the four members confirmed how people could choose, emphasise or ignore aspects of heritage in direct response to their negotiations with a particular culture, showing what constitutes the structure for making meaning and the way it reconstructs what heritage means or does. Here the blurred boundaries between economic disparities, educational and vocational differences as well as social and cultural allegiances were important. Like the way gaps between past and present, rural and urban, local and global, collectivism and individualism, politics and ideologies are frequently mentioned during the residency, why traditions need to change or be preserved however were brought up in relation to new settings and as a result of the facilitated project.

In the production of designs or craft work in the ‘new setting’, heritage is considered to be a progressive expression between the local identities and global ideologies of economic, educational and occupational idioms. This then mandates mutual exclusivity of what’s important for the present based on the past, and accentuates a market commodity. Here how Murji Vankar mediates between his traditional knowledge and design school knowledge is relevant for a discussion. The new design philosophy Murji follows by purposely including his extra weft weaving technique into all his design work may be termed as “invented traditions” for he attempts to show “continuity [in his weaving] with suitable historic past” or by “quasi-obligatory repetition” (Hobsbawm 2003, p1-2)¹⁵. His designs are then perceived to be traditional that display his community’s identity, something he now accepts overtly. But this ideology of inculcating certain values, norms and skills purposefully to imply the continuity of the past is made available to traditional artisans like Murji via design schools. The

¹⁵ See Harrison (2011) as he draws our attention to practical implications when nationally “invented traditions” might also get nominated for intangible heritage registers, eventually creating issues around validation, valorisation and dissemination of heritage. This reminds us how local and national heritage practices are linked with the international heritage discourses, and the way changes in the local practices can have a ripple effect even on the international level, and vice versa.

“invented tradition” may then be a result of what Judy Frater (one of the co-founders of Kala Raksha Vidyalaya) might call “professionalisation of tradition” (Frater 2002), where artisans maintain a degree of traditionalism but also innovate; and are taught on how to approach it via systematic education (Littrell and Frater 2013). (See the colour wheel experimentation, which Kala Raksha Vidyalaya teaches their artisans as a way of stimulating adaptation of design thinking and practices to new global markets). Gradually it becomes more of a set of practices that are overtly practiced, than imposed.



Image 14: A traditional artisan learning about colour theories at Kala Raksha Vidyalaya, a design school for artisans in Kutch

Photo courtesy of Britta Kalkreuter

This came to be understood to the two Scottish residents, who were based at Kala Raksha Vidyalaya. Although they were working with traditional artisans, they were constructing their meanings and values not only based on those generational practices, but also within those invented “Artisan Designs” which is said to be contributing to “the cultural evolution of a stronger individual identity ... [which then] accesses intellectual property rights to raise income and respect above the level of manual labour” (Littrell and Frater 2013, p380). This was further explained by Lindsay Roberts.

“...We went to a boutique artist who has gone through Kala Raksha, and he’s done some really contemporary work. The way he applies new colour combinations is really contemporary but that’s totally his own. [Talking about

colour theories and designing patterns] I think it is quite new to them, forget about Murji and Daya Bhai who have been through Kala Raksha—but the older traditional ones [artisans], their products are very noticeably traditional. There is very little subtle colour and it's much bolder and less pleasing to a Western eye...I am not saying one is right and the other is wrong. But it can hurt those who have been through these design schools to have more knowledge [and may not be able to practice it if bound by tradition]. They may still choose to do things as it has been always, but at least they are now aware of how to adapt things” (personal interview, October 2013).

4.5.1 Transmitting values as embodied heritage in collaborative engagements

For the four practitioners, immersing into a different cultural heritage became an embodied practice when artistic, linguistic and technical skills are considered. Logan and others define embodied as a “way of understanding and dealing with heritage” (Logan et al. 2015, p5) and according to Taylor (2015, p73) “embodiment is what carries the message [or values], so acts as the medium...through which the values and information are transmitted”. This view point then questions whether the residency was an adequate experience to transmit the values and understand those artistic, linguistics and technical skills. When participation is between two different groups—one representing the East and one representing the West, the variation in their learning also differs. One can argue that embodiment can never be fully realised or transmitted because one's cultural phenomenon can never be fully presented to the other. To explain this, a phenomenological explanation on “appresentation” is provided, where it attempts to capture those not subject to a perceptual or sensuous experience (Marton and Booth 1997). This phenomenon results in providing a richer and more complete experience of the “whole” (Moon 2004) and according to Dant (2012), it is what creates awareness and the idea of sharedness. Tim Dant (2012, p438) explains: “if the other person was from a very different culture, for example one in which there were few cars, or few new and well maintained cars, then her apperceptions would be different and her perceptions would be less appresent for me. Appresentation depends on sharing a very similar stock of knowledge and, the further away the other's experience, the less likely the person will see things in the same way”.

This realisation is important about how value is embodied, especially when people from different cultures work together. “Intangible embodiment”, according to Taylor,

happens “without continuous physical embodiment...that communicates value and discourse” (Taylor 2015, p74). When Kearney (2009) views “heritage as an embedded concept that cannot be disengaged from the world and the people around it while establishing distinguishing links between the perceptual subject [human] and their distinct and owned perceptual objects [heritage]” (cited in Akagawa 2015, p82) embodiment becomes central to both tangible and intangible realisations of the heritage, which then has relations to authenticity as well as holistic interpretations of those cultures, and most importantly to understand heritage as a living-embodied process (Akagawa 2015). This is because in the communication process of encoding and decoding the message of heritage values between the “creators and consumers” it is rendered through the “noises” or the interventions that are present (Taylor 2015, p73)¹⁶. In return, the interventions would determine how much clearer or distorted the message (here values) would be communicated (ibid). In that sense, the relationship between the “creator and consumer” involves “a relationship between the creator of an object or a place or creative expression, and the one who experiences it. [Embodiment] refers to the experience of that relationship. What gives meaning to that experience *is what we do not see but what is nevertheless embodied* as the core value of the heritage to be transmitted” (Akagawa 2015, p82, emphasis added by me). Phenomenologically speaking this is what is appresented “in addition to what is ‘presented’ to us—that is which we see, hear, smell...[or even] talk” (Marton and Booth 1997, p99).

In this context, the reSIde residency can be argued as having given an opportunity to the four makers to immerse into and consume an environment and which developed an embodiment of the culture and people of the host country, where heritage and the individual were not withdrawn from each other, but subject to a holistic experience. The nature of reflexivity each member developed through an immersive experience might also warrant an opportunity to develop connectedness. Nevertheless, the output and the reflections also confirmed relatively different approaches for their choices of that experience based on their personal interests, knowledge and cultural backgrounds. As discussed in Jeni’s example above, we can see the way she understood Rabari women’s embroidery and costumes were not only based on artistic, linguistic and technical skills that were communicated and shared with her but also the contextual association she experienced in that environment by attending festivals where people use these textiles as

¹⁶ Taylor’s (2015) example is about conservation of heritage sites but it is equally valid to discuss craft skills that are embodied in the material object cultures where the encoded message gets transmitted during the making process.

a way of expression all of which shaped her embodiment. (For more details see Taylor's (2015, p73) communication model as it explains how the 'noise' will affect the message that is being transmitted and received eventually). In addition, how embodied experiences occur also confirms the way in which multiple heritage narratives are constructed via different mediums. This included what the traditional artisans in India chose to pass on to residents through craft skills, traditional dances, oral traditions and dress cultures, or the archival and museum objects indicated to Indian practitioners during the Scotland exchange programme in order to convey what is considered as heritage as well as what mattered most to the resident practitioners in their engagements with wider communities. All of these worked collectively. As much as engagements varied depending on their personal background, resources, opportunities, unforeseen circumstances and pressure, the inevitable and optional choices, outcomes were also determined by the way reSIde encouraged and promoted individual artistic creations.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter directly corresponds to the first aim of the thesis and its objectives: To establish an understanding of cross-cultural craft and design engagements. It required identifying how participants encountered themselves and with the wider community, insights on knowledge practices, how knowledge exchange works and finally how these practices contribute to heritage discourse. In doing so it analysed a residency project as a qualitative case study particularly looking at how those practitioners negotiated their relationships and hence produced creative work as a result. Most importantly the case study offered new insight about how craft development is understood by funded projects, which came in the form of knowledge exchange activities. In addition, through this analysis we found how the other actors contribute to the craft development discourse through NGO-led design school involvements and at times creating invented traditions to necessitate modes of preservation while responding to market needs at the same time.

The analysis suggested how facilitated projects could result in producing collaborations and cultural exchanges between groups which otherwise would not have the resource to do so, thus creating fresh opportunity. It also confirmed how such craft and design engagements would lead to multiple dialogues beyond the selected few to provide a stimulus among wider creative networks. However, it presented instances that those same projects once acted within institutionalised or elite frameworks could act as an

authorised discourse, sanctioning inclusion and exclusion of who could take part. It also showed how the aims of the project could influence the creative directions of the practitioners and how it required them to work within different constituencies; whether these were communities, non-governmental organisations, academia or the public bodies.

The work practitioners developed as a result thus took multiple directions which showed their negotiations between local and global, east and west, innovation and tradition, rural and urban, collectivism and individualism, survival and choice, economy and leisure, identity and expression, as well as between education and occupation. The process they engaged in during the residency was at times open-ended but also restrictive at other times. But the multiple negotiations allowed the participants to work on alternatives and serendipitously so their creative output informed change, pleasure with a sense of appreciation of what they came across as part of a cultural immersion. This resulted in developing different embodiments towards heritage and it confirmed how participants negotiated these varied meanings via consensus and dissonance on what practice, materials and tradition had to offer with respect to their personal creativity and experience. No singular embodiment was thus constructed, but mutual respect of each other's practices was established where the residency programme became a transitional practice and acted as a medium to transmit heritage values. A strong take on the idea of tradition was visible; where all participants acknowledged it in terms of an evolving process, hence improvisatory. But it also demonstrated how the need for change implied recognising design as traditions' only means of revival. This was particularly evident in the comments from the Indian side and is further confirmed when one of the artisan-designer from Kala Raksha Vidyalaya says: "[Design] is the way we must go...if we want our art to flourish" (Littrell and Frater 2013, p380).

Even though this chapter discussed relationships with craft and design, tradition and innovation within the contemporaneous, it did not explain how craft communities would respond to these changes on an everyday basis. Therefore, as a dialogical research process, this case study analysis proposed several considerations for the next stage of research. The next two chapters therefore discuss:

1. How do craft and design engagements work beyond facilitated projects?
2. As the findings of the residency case study are in agreement with Reeves and Plets (2015, p212) because those "who control the interpretation of heritage

control heritage narratives, and this matters materially”, it requires to identify who might control these narratives of heritage and what would be the outcome of material production and the intangible aspect of craft work in those engagements. (Through the residency case study, certain stakeholders who have direct impact on the heritage narrative were identified, for example educational institutions, NGOs, national and international development, art organisations etc.)

3. How does the idea of local craft and global design mediate amongst multiple associations, and how does it impact the craft development discourse and subsequently shape the heritage discourse?
4. What opportunity lies therein for collaborative practices, as this proved in the residency to be effective, nevertheless with challenges on how acknowledgement can be made when heterogeneous actors get involved amidst different cultures, disciplines and hierarchies.

Chapter 5: Craft and Design in India

The previous chapter discussed a residency programme between India and Scotland, and how selected participants negotiated their practices and knowledge in new environments while working on the intersection of craft and design. According to the proposed considerations of that chapter, the following section will review how craft and design projects work beyond facilitated and funded scenarios alike. Hence, the research chose India as one of its ethnographic sites and, as described in the methodology chapter, it used multi-sited ethnography in local-global encounters to identify the way heritage is constructed and who controls the narrative. This chapter will initially provide an overview of the significance of the craft sector in India and will also extend the discussion towards colonial and post-independent developments to comprehend changes in the social, cultural, economic, political and ecological landscapes of the Indian craft and design sectors respectively. Some of the discussions that appear in this chapter (the section under 5.5) have been published in Greru and Kalkreuter (2017).

5.1 An Overview of Craft and Design in India

Craft in India, according to Liebl and Roy (2003), is a “perennial paranoid”, a sector with enormous potentials yet shows inability to fully utilise those resources to address development. Irrespective of being a source for export market, poverty and marginalisation still remain problematic amongst Indian artisans. Asymmetries generated by the state and development agencies that identify and categorise craft (Liebl and Roy 2003), subsequently determine the distribution of resources, welfare and income of artisans (Venkatesan 2009). According to Venkatesan (2009) this results in creating power and agency which act as a common marginalising factor between the rural artisan and the utopian vision of the elite class on what counts as traditional Indian craft. Irrespective of such visions, many scholars (Ratnam 2011, Ghose 2012, Liebl and Roy 2004, Basole 2016) credit Indian craft as a source for economic development, for generating livelihoods, for addressing sustainability and labour issues, for offering cultural diversity and an alternative mode to industrialisations that strengthens and safeguards local knowledge systems. According to the Textile Ministry’s recent report in 2016, the textiles and apparel sector (including textile handicraft and handloom) is the second largest employment generator in the country which accounts for 10% of the

country's manufacturing and 5% of the entire GDP where cottage based traditional industries take centre stage (Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion 2016). According to Liebl and Roy's 2000-2001 survey (Liebl and Roy 2004), more than 8 million people were employed in the craft sector, or in the industry of "the imagination" as they termed it, with a turnover of two billion USD in the export market and a contribution of one billion USD towards the domestic market according to a USAID report (Barber and Krivoshlykova 2006). Compared to the 1991-92 Planning Commissions report this is a steep decline as it indicates 26.4 million craftsmen were employed in the traditional industries a decade earlier (Planning Commission 1992). However, with regard to the working report published by the same institution some twenty years later (Menon 2011), a gradual increase in the employment generation was expected to about 12.29 million during 2016-17, with an annual compounding growth rate of 18% in the export market alone when compared to previous years. However, this accounts for only 2% in the global export market (ibid) while the USAID report (Barber and Krivoshlykova 2006) mentions a 10% share claimed by Indian handicrafts of the world's total handicraft exports in 2002, which confirms a decline in shares in the export sector. Even within these constant shifts between production and exports, Indian craft has been considered "rare", "irreplaceable", a "living link to the past", which is in line with global market needs (Liebl and Roy 2004, p55). In this respect, design is also regarded as important.

Design considered by the state, by NGOs and development agencies as aiding the craft sector with strong international interventions (UNESCO 2005), has now become a vision shared by many artisans as well (Littrell and Frater 2013). Liebl and Roy argue "without intervention, the craft producers will continue to get the least benefit from any growth that takes place" (Liebl and Roy 2003, p5374). A common interpretation is that in order to compete in the global market, traditional designs need to be changed and adjusted (Ghouse 2012) and mainly by providing design and skill upgrades, as well as marketing and promotional activities through a "handmade in India" brand (Liebl and Roy 2003). Reviewing at the same time, the development of the handicraft sector in India reveals this outward approach as a seismic shift from preservation efforts in the 1970s that sought to cater for the export markets in the 1980s and 90s (Menon 2011). This hints at the position which craft occupies in a capitalist economy and warrants a brief review of the cultural trajectory from colonial to post-independent developments in India.

5.2 Colonial and Post-Independent Development

5.2.1 *Traditional, Institutional and Policy Framework*

Bayly notes that pre-colonial clothes in India acted as a powerful symbol, served a purpose, offered meaningful associations and assigned an identity to people based on status, class and gender through which craft came to be known (Bayly 1986). Even in colonial times, “crafts stood in for India as a whole [including its] economy, society, culture and politics” (McGowan 2009, p4). Certain scholars (Sandhu 2015, Berg 2013) demystified colonial rule as not the only force to alter Indian clothing, albeit agreeing on its deep influence on the Indian culture. Roy (2007) asserts that industrialisation and trade in late colonial times only affected a segment of the artisans, while the majority of artisans prospered as they strategically reaped the benefits of industrialisation by using imported raw materials with links to export markets. When agency and design were prominent features in the British colony (Mathur 2007), Venkatesan (2009) reports how the assigned values created differences in artisans, British officials and in the Indian elites while changing the landscape of craft in India. Although considered to be a period of destruction for traditional craft, when the British art school models marginalised the rural craftsman (Balaram 2005), creating an asymmetry between the “native” and the “progressive and superior” west (Athavankar 2002, p44), there are also prominent discussions on the revival of local craft enacted through self-reliance and endogenous methods such as Gandhi’s Swadeshi (self-sufficient) movement (Chatterjee 2005, Balaram 1989).

When craft became a cultural symbol in Indian nationalism and in the construction of heritage, McGowan (2009) however, argues the authority over craft was politicised and always related to ‘power’ whether by the British or by the Indians, and this convergence treated artisans as backward, and defined progress as an outside intervention. She further denotes that it created conflict between cultural versus economic needs, resulting in “market and tradition, heritage and progress” to be discussed always in conjunction (McGowan 2009, p6). Not only that, but according to Mathur (2011) the nationalistic movements like Swadeshi only reiterated the distinction between village craft and industrial design where she further claims that “Indian Nationalism”, even though it attempted to challenge colonial rules and industrial goods, was however limited to the very “conceptual frameworks that it repudiated”(Mathur 2007, p49).

The resistance to industrial production was not merely about boycotting the British rule, but also aligned with the British Arts and Crafts movement generating a “cult of craftsmanship” between primitive and modern (Mathur 2007, p29), and a utopia to celebrate the “living traditions of craftsmanship” (Mitter 1994). It is in this spirit that the cultural preservationist model appeared following the work of William Morris where scholars such as A.K Coomaraswamy, George Birdwood and E.B. Havell took the lead. According to Coomaraswamy the Indian craftsman was “an organic element in the national life” and the communal making was the basis of the society, where the peril of the industrial system and the British influence ruined hereditary processes and skills (Coomaraswamy 1909, p1). For those like Havell (1986/1912) the colonial influence was a destruction of the Indian identity. As Greenough (1995) notes, these ideologies were later adopted by post-independent revivalist figures like Jyotindra Jain, Pupul Jayakar, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay who then said “to understand Indian life is to understand the Indian handicrafts or vice versa” (as quoted in McGowan 2009, p5). Conversely, imperial politics, nationalism and post-colonialism were not independent features as Mathur (2007, p80) argues, but all attempts equally constructed the “global field” through the consumption and production of cultural goods thus shaping the cultural conflicts of design in India as seen today.

Referring to post-colonial times, it was the rhetoric of design that strategically developed the country’s craft (Scotford 2005) and the two categories: “craft” and “design” were eagerly utilised in building the nation state and were thus aptly endorsed by nationalist politics (Athavankar 2002). Jawaharlal Nehru, as the first prime minister of newly independent India, altered the vision of craft and design with his modernisation programme which resulted in inviting the two American designers Charles and Ray Eames to create the India Report (1958). The report is a landmark in Indian design history, for it gave a vision of how design activity should be appropriated to “help” craft in order to respond to industrialisation (Balaram 2009). The report borrowed from Bauhaus philosophy (Mathur 2011) and portrayed an endogenous approach, starting at the village level as recommended by Eames: to look into “those values and those qualities that Indians hold important to a good life” (Eames and Eames 1997/1958, p2). As a result the National Institute of Design in 1961 was established by the Government of India, serving the purposes of research, services and training. Its model has been adopted succinctly by many other design schools in India today, making it their pedagogic standard (Balaram 2005). However, according to Ghose (1995) and

Clarke (2016b) such developments only marginalised the craft sector—instead of promoting endogenous methods, it came in association with cold war politicking, USA’s public diplomacy and propaganda strategy says Clarke (2016b). Another crucial document, which came to shape Indian design, was the Ahmedabad Declaration in 1979, a memorandum of understanding between UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) and ICSID (The International Council of Societies of Industrial Design) with the aim of providing industrial design strategies for developing countries. According to Chatterjee (2005, p6) the declaration “...articulated a global mission [that designers] must work to evolve a new value system which dissolved the disastrous division between the worlds of waste and want, preserve the identity of peoples, and attends to the priority areas of need for the vast majority of humankind”. Design, which was proposed to be solving real world problems, however became part of a corporate strategy within the capitalist development programmes as a way of “rejecting the socialist paradigm [of] Gandhian baggage” in India (Balaram 2009, p61).

The discussion at the review section 2.3 is in line with the above mentioned developments and reflects upon the same implications created by a politicised design agenda inculcated through educational programmes (Ghose 1995, Mathur 2011, Clarke 2016b). Amid this design for development agendas, grassroots design movements emerged as a new role for design. They were attuned to the international design activism that sprouted in response to post-war industrial development.¹⁷ Clarke (2016b) asserts that such anthropologically driven “alternative design” methods were key in securing India’s design profession within industrial design strategies, amidst Cold War politics and soft power structures, though they have been criticised for creating a neo-colonial agenda for developing countries (Clarke 2016b, 2016c). According to Athavankar (2002), similar shifts happened during the three decades from 1970s to 2000, when design in the local Indian context was equally shaped by global trends, in return creating a bipolar landscape. Such dualism treated the traditional cultures as vernacular, associated with lower status much akin to the colonial view of “native”. He further claims, contemporary Indian designers have failed in addressing the two extremes (the global and vernacular), as their engagements have become a “synthetic

¹⁷ Examples can be found on those grassroots movements like Dastakar and Barefoot designer models in India (Ghose 1995, Balaram 2005) which attempted to address ‘real world issues’ driven by Papanek’s ideologies (Athavankar 2002). It encouraged the emergence of NGOs in supporting local artisans, promote design interventions and take up a humanist approach away from the corporate designer role (ibid).

search for inventing cultural markers that reflect modernity as much as native identity... [without really] rediscover[ing] the roots in the traditions and try[ing] to evolve new expressions of modernity rooted in the local cultural context” (Athavankar 2002, p55-56). Consequentially, the designer as “benefactor and protector of the ‘unmodern’ maker” were created, who now takes responsibility for reviving the Indian craft sector (DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber 2016, p82-83).

In summary, traditional Indian craft at present can be seen as an assemblage of communally driven traditions and professionalised practices. Operating between institutionalised frameworks and social hierarchies, the situation shows the contested nature of craft and design in the Indian context where policies and interventions come into direct contact with those who practice craft. The cultural trajectory from pre-colonial, to colonial to post-independent shows changes in the patronage systems, to the priorities of craft, and the emergence of design specific goals. Actors like the state, NGOs, design institutions, and political movements in turn shaped the discourse of craft and design in India. When post-independent developments favoured professionalisation of design, this came in the guise of aiding the craft sector with design as a development discourse. In return, nationalist ideology encouraged the promotion and preservation of craft in building identity in India. This official approach to design is further confirmed by looking at the country’s newly inaugurated National Design policy in 2007 (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2015). The recommendations include institutionalised frameworks of design councils, chartered societies and educational programmes where design intervention is encouraged to cater to global markets.

Even though the design policy is disparaged for not adequately mentioning the craft sector, it reflects the above mentioned declarations and links between craft and design (Balaram 2009). Today it also includes allied businesses such as the fashion industry where the Indian designers associate with the “older nationalist idioms” of revival and preservation of crafts while working for global fashion businesses, according to Sandhu (2015, p128). The following section of this chapter will demonstrate how the field work was constructed in order to capture these variations in relation to local and global, tradition and modernity, and from macro (international and national) to micro (community and individual) perspectives.

5.3 Methods of Data Gathering

Appadurai and Breckenridge (1995, p15) considering globalisation as a dialectic formation between the local and other structures, describe India as a “site” or “a spatial vortex, in which complex historical processes come into conjunction with global processes that link such sites together”. Accordingly, it was deemed an appropriate context for fieldwork in accordance with the study’s methodology of multi-sited ethnography. Adhering to the conceptual framework suggested in section 2.5 and referring to a cultural and historical trajectory of craft and design development in India, places, institutions, communities, individuals and organisations were selected for further observation and analysis.

Ethnographic fieldwork was carried out from August–October 2015 in Sanganer, Jaipur, Bagru and Ahmedabad. The research looked into the development of the Sanganer hand block printing tradition in Rajasthan, India, by examining their craft objects, the practice as well as the social and cultural context in which the craft resides. Research methods included interviews and observations of artisans at work, both at the domestic level and at manufacturing plants outside their houses, documenting life histories, artefacts and skill traditions. Observation and interviews with design and manufacturing professionals included examining the craft work on display (in museums, retail outlets, and workshops and in households). It included active participation with artisans at a local NGO in Jaipur at their design, printing and manufacturing centres, observing the entire process of making and selling craftwork for a period of 3 weeks. Another 4 weeks were spent at the National Institute of Design in Ahmedabad observing student projects, interviewing design graduates and academics there. Other design institutes visited were Pearl Academy in Jaipur, and the Indian Institute of Craft and Design (IICD) Jaipur.

The number of academics interviewed were N=9, design students N=11 (undergraduate level), designers (professionals and interns) N = 5, artisans (artisan-designers, artisan-entrepreneurs hailing from traditional families, artisans/ workers at production units) N=21, independent businesses (not run by traditional families) N= 4, allied sector artisans/makers (block makers and dyers) N= 4. Each interview was in-depth, lasting between 30 minutes to 2 hours. Certain individuals were approached several times in order to observe their work including meeting family members within the household. Discussions with several other makers (including women) and non-makers were also undertaken during the field work. Their insights have been taken into consideration to

formulate a deeper understanding of the field work data. Some of these interviews were undertaken individually, others in groups. Certain interviews were undertaken in English, but the majority of interviews with artisans were carried out in Hindi or in their local dialects. A translator was used in these cases. In the community context, artisans were keen to use their names; therefore in most cases I have acknowledged their statements, using their own names to fully credit them for the insights, and wisdom they showed during interviews. However, the researcher has used her discretion in certain instances to avoid using personal names or organisational names causing any distress¹⁸.

The following section reviews different craft and design engagements in a community context, and the involvements of higher education institutions in shaping the craft sector. While it shows how the idea of local and global works, other actors are linked to the topics so that an expanded view is provided by following the trajectory of locality of production compared to the global needs of consumption and craft development.

5.4 Community Context: Sanganer Hand block printing

5.4.1 Changes and Shifts in the Sanganer printing tradition: An analysis of historical context to present day printing

Just 10 miles south of Jaipur, in Rajasthan State, Sanganer has become a bustling small town with an area of 635.5 km², where nearly every household has a printing table or is involved printing in some way. Rajasthan is renowned for traditional craft practices with further block printing community hubs in Jodhpur, Balotra, Pipad, Udaipur and Akola (Bhandari 2005). Amongst these, Sanganer is renowned for its fine block printing on white cloth which involves not only the traditional Chippa¹⁹ members but many migrants who came to the town in search of jobs, heralding significant changes in the printing tradition.

With its identity now protected by the Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act in 2010, Sanganer hand block printing is said to have evolved in the 16th century with the influence of Gujarat and Malwa printing traditions (Chishti et al. 2000, Intellectual Property India 2009). It strongly depicts the Persian influence of the

¹⁸ See also Venkatesan (2006) and Bundgaard (1999) on similar ethical dilemmas they faced during their ethnographic work in India, where they had to work on a thinking ethnically approach during their field studies.

¹⁹ Chippa is the name of the community who undertakes traditional block printing

Mughal Empire where it is said to have flourished under the patronage of the Jaipur Royals (Ranjan and Ranjan 2007). As such, Sanganer printing was rarely confined to local communities, but very much exposed to global trade and colonial ambitions particularly via the East India Company as well as the demands of its changing patrons, where Edwards (2016) reports on those trade links which connected Sanganer printed textiles to as far away as Southeast Asia.

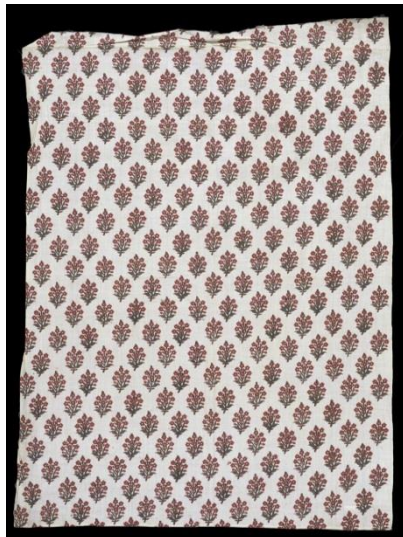


Image 15: Sanganer hand block printed textile displayed at the Great Exhibition of 1851, appreciated for its 'flat decorations' over the 'heavy, over-naturalistic designs' of British Victorian designs.

Source: V&A museum: 823A-1852



Image 16: A photograph of Jaipur, Sanganeer-Ka-Chopal taken between 1860-70s (the picture shows 'Haat wada' (market place) near Hawa Mahal where the printers took their products to sell on the weekends),

Source: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, CC0 1.0 Universal

This opening up of trade happened as artisans selling at the local Saturday market (haat wada) gradually entered the international trade in the 19th century, in turn bringing an influx of global design influences to the local tradition. Sanganer printing was characterised by different colours and motifs depending on whom it was produced for (royals, priests, local community) as specific prints and colour schemes acted as identification for castes until the mid-20th century (DeNicola and Wilkinson- Weber 2016). Traditionally, a strong take on community of practice was visible in the printing as Sanganer Chippas, along with Muslim Rangrez²⁰ dyers, the wood block makers and Dhobis²¹ who all worked together to produce a piece of cloth. Community interdependency and shared work relationships were based on religious as well as caste systems with Sanganer Chippas traditionally being predominantly Hindu (Liebl and

²⁰ A Muslim dyeing community

²¹ Washer men

Roy 2004). Caste and religion were thus integral to the artisanal making in Sanganer, and Sahai (2006) observed how caste and religion acted as a framework in pre-colonial India in establishing the artisanal structure in society. Bundgaard's (1999, p13) observation of Patta Chitra painters in Orissa on the other hand reveals that even though the families consider caste as an important element, businesses and locality also shape the craft. Thereby she assigns a value to those business networks with bureaucratic structures offering a social reality to the development of craft, rather than defining the existence of craft only due to its caste and kinship structures. This however is not to say that contesting views are absent when innovative business schemes meet communal practices. The following passages offer a discursive report on the formation of Sanganer printing, including several development activities. Early accounts by Sir George Watt mention how the intricate nature of block printing in Sanganer, the "very metropolis of calico printing craft" (Watt 1903, p247) contrasted with the intrusive design influences in the guise of innovation in colonial times:

The nature, feeling and colour reciprocity, as also the technique of printing, are all perfect, while the absence of machine regularity gives a charm that places these goods above and beyond anything as yet accomplished in Europe. It has been observed that it is the quaintness and harmony in the Indian textiles that fascinates, but the skilful treatment of the Sanganer calico-printers is quite as wonderful as the goods are beautiful. Few, if any, of the modern schools of calico-printing in India (or in Europe for that matter) have approached the primitive workers of Sanganer and sad, therefore, is it to have to add that such perfection is rapidly being swamped by the popular wave for novelty and utility. The designs have been stolen and imitated and prints at the tith of the old prices are being thrust on the markets that formerly afforded the means of existence for the Sanganer calico-printers (Watt 1903, p248-49).

Later, the Gandhian movement and 1947 independence also affected the Sanganer printing tradition as much as did industrialisation when chemical dyestuffs, screen-printing and polyester fabrics responded to changed local consumption patterns. The complex relationship between "artisanal" and "industrial" is not limited to a particular era. This was particularly evident in Margolin's observation (2011) of the first half of the 20th century, as well as in post-independent India, for which Edwards (2016) highlights as ethnic prints being popular during the "hippy-culture" of 1960s and 70s, and was a result of western fashion demands. Even a century after Sir George Watt's

writing about industrial interventions in Sanganer printing, changes to product, knowledge, skills, practices and tools of this craft continue to occur in line with increased production demands. Sanganer printing was based to a significant degree on the quality of the water and the mineral contents which are said to create unique colour combinations in the textiles.

A craft that used to be practiced on the banks of the river with the block prints smothered in natural dyes, is however now regularly challenged due to environmental pollution caused by chemical dyestuff used in the printing process. A switch from natural dyes to the synthetic chemicals occurred alongside the changed production processes to deal with increased demand. The low wooden table (pathiya) was transformed into a larger and longer table enabling the printing of several yardages of fabric at once where the printer shifted from a sitting position to a standing position as he prints. The artisan who used to perform the work in the household now seeks work in larger factories which produce 500-600 pieces a day and use division of labour. However, the mass demand of the export market for the Sanganer printers, according to Edwards (2016, p169), was an apparent “godsend” and was therefore appreciated.



Image 17: The sitting in printing table, picture taken in Bagru
Photo by author



Image 18 The long tables used in present day block printing, where several workers may work together as division of labour
Photo by author

5.4.2 Community of practice to division of labour: Industry structure and organisation in Sanganer printing

Early Sanganer printing—community of practice and kinship structures

The production of craft in early Sanganer printing was very much a domestic pursuit where men, women and children all worked together to produce textiles. Within this structure the knowledge transmission occurred as a generational activity, where much of the learning was based on tacit skill acquisition. What Sahai (2006) explains about the pre-colonial artisanal making in India, also relates to Sanganer printing.

“...artisanal production involved the use of family labour, using very little capital. Heredity was the chief determinant of an artisan's choice of trade...and an artisan's home became a typical workshop, with capital provided from the surplus over the craftsmen's consumption needs...[Knowledge] was gained by observation, experience, and oral guidance imparted by elders to youngsters. Male adults of a family of weavers, for instance, worked under the guidance of the head of the family, with adolescent boys permitted to help with the job, observe closely the co-ordination of eyes, hands, and feet, and gradually learn the trade” (Sahai 2006, p89).

In Sanganer, an 86 year old master artisan, Madhav Lal Udaiwal confirms this when he recalls how he learnt the printing tradition as part of a hereditary practice and under the master artisans’ tutelage, who was his father.

I have been watching printing at home every day, from my early childhood... Printing is an art that has been in the family for many generations—a special art in the family. My father was a very good, skilled artisan, an expert in his work. (Personal interview, September 2015)

The social relationships formed in this type of communal making gives Sanganer printing a special place, where printers still recall printing done specifically for the local communities, for courtly purposes as well as for the temple. The production techniques, motifs, colour combinations all had meanings and values associated with it. Certainly the prints produced for the local communities served as a non-verbal communication that depicted strong familial or social ties that were an important part of Indian culture and the dress code. Much of this production was small scale and required artisans’

active contribution and participation in the making process, where supply and demand continued to be manageable and to create satisfaction.

Recent developments—the exposure to the global fashion market

What remained very much as a communal practice, however gradually developed into a complicated industry structure. This came about due to many influences from the changes in local consumption patterns to the exposure to industrialisation and mass manufacturing as highlighted earlier. As local communities slowly embraced wearing synthetic fabrics the community interdependency for production and consumption started disintegrating. Chippas began producing for the growing needs of the global customer and the meanings and values associated with the prints started to change, as is evident in master artisan Raam Swaroop's description:

My father and grandfather used to print and the production happened in one place. They used to print Odhini²², Ghagra skirts²³, dupatta²⁴, lehenga²⁵, blouses and chunnari²⁶. We used to supply these to Rajasthani village women who were in different villages, and even outside our villages. Later on, in the time of Man Singh II (before the independence of India in 1947) we started selling abroad. We used to get orders outside the country even. They gave us the designs to be printed so we started making new prints. That's how the supply to abroad continued...We mainly did butis²⁷ and butas²⁸ and jaal²⁹ motifs and also sun bleach fabrics. And there were designs of elephants, horses and other animal prints. Animal prints were not mainly part of Sanganer printing. They were only done for the exports. (Ram Swaroop, personal interview, September 2015)

It seems to be especially the introduction of the screen printing in the 1960s that had a huge impact on the local printing tradition, where Ram Swaroop remembers a person called Ram Lal Das for introducing screen printing technology from Ahmedabad into Sanganer. Now a widely embraced practice, it has overridden the hand block printing tradition to such an extent that it has contributed to an attrition of artistic skills as part of

²² Women's veil cloth

²³ A long flared skirt

²⁴ Stole

²⁵ Long skirt

²⁶ Veil cloth

²⁷ Small floral motifs

²⁸ Large floral motifs

²⁹ Vein patterns

hereditary practice. Parallels of such stories can also be located elsewhere in terms of reproducing traditional work through industrial methods and causing a decline when cheap prints were introduced (Bundgaard 1999). However, caution is required not to over simplify such decline as a general phenomenon, but to treat it as complex by understanding the discursive formation between artisans and middlemen (Bundgaard 1999). One of the master artisans remembers how the increased supply and demand culture has impacted to shifts in local maker practices:

In the 1960s screen printing started here. That time it was very a lot less common. People opposed screen printing. But gradually people got used to it. Yes, screen printing has its own place and position, however hand block printing has its own characteristics and benefits. So it's always special. Earlier we used only vegetable dyes and we did not use any chemicals. But as the demand increased, so what do we do? We were helpless and had to use chemicals. We had no control over it even though my moral was to continue the traditional vegetable dyeing and printing techniques.” (Madhav Lal Udaiwal, personal interview, September 2015)



Image 19:Screen printing unit established alongside a block printing unit
Photo by author

The quality parameters of the printed textile changed, and required more options and a variety in design. So the integration of synthetic dyes to achieve qualities like colour fastness, a wider colour palette, and the easy colour production methods all replaced natural dyeing with effects on blocks. The small size 3” block was replaced by the 9” block to increase production. Earlier blocks all had a name assigned to them according to some meaning or symbolic value that they had, and this created a relationship between the printer and block maker. All motifs were derived from the locality and had a story based on local plants, flowers or local adornments such as the nose ring known as Ankhada. But today hundreds of blocks are made in the narrow and crowded lanes of Sanganer which then are placed under a printer’s table in a workshop and are only referred to by a number, not a name. Consequently the printers now categorise all the blocks into the basic genres of butas³⁰, butis³¹ and jaal³² patterns.



Image 20: Blocks lying under a printing table
Photo by author



Image 21: Blocks piled up on a rack in a printing workshop
Photo by author

All of the changes created significant and elusive shifts in the local maker practices, not only changing the craft as a practice or the objects they make, but also to the artisan, the community and the industry structure of Sanganer printing:

³⁰ Large floral patterns

³¹ Small floral patterns

³² Vein patterns

5.4.3 *Community sharing, Chippas versus non Chippas and design ownership*

Effects of labour migration

With the intensified need to meet the demands of the mass market great tension came to local community cohesion. The steadily expanding industry brought economic benefits and has provided a livelihood for the people of Sanganer who are involved directly and indirectly, but the development brought migration into the village as well. People coming from near Farrukhabad, Uttar Pradesh have become settlers and have become an integral part of Sanganer printing culture by introducing their own flavours into the repertoire of Sanganer tradition, but also by partaking in the now fragmented labour processes. Most migrants do piece work in a factory for daily wages. In Edwards' (2016, p169) reflection on the Sanganer printers' success story in terms of stating the influx of migration as "Farrukhabad's loss [and] Jaipur's gain", one local Chippa member raised his concerns regarding sharing traditions with people coming from the outside and establishing business, stifling and constituting severe competition for Chippas. He explained:

"There's sadness and there is a bit of happiness. I'm feeling sad because we are now using the synthetic dyes. But I am happy because we can do the production process quite fast. As the demand is high we can deliver it. It's like money and god. Money is not god but not lesser than god too. But I am worried because we are losing the tradition. I feel if we would have continued the tradition and these industries [screen printing] would not have emerged. The natural dyeing process, we have forcefully kicked it out from the market to fulfil the demands of orders. I'm not comfortable how other caste people have taken up our printing. These other caste people are not sensitive to our printing tradition and to our community as they think if they suffer; let them suffer. So they do not provide any means of help to us...the main Chippa people who used to do the printing have declined while other caste people have taken up our position."

(Ram Swaroop, personal interview September 2015)

Fellow Chippa members are more progressive and liberal about the migration and see printing as a more democratic activity shared with everyone to the benefit and growth of the industry. Knowledge, once bound to the community and the caste

system, is no longer confined to caste or class. Here, not only are new traditions introduced to the locality but the copying of their existing traditions and techniques also becomes a rather pressing issue for the traditional printers, especially because of the actions of the screen printing factories which, it is claimed, copy the motifs and designs to sell as cheap versions of block printing³³. This is in line with Scrase's views (2012) on design copying and how tradition may be irrevocably effected when: "global competition, copying and cheating on one hand, the inevitable disappearing of one's craft occupation due to 'natural attrition' and decline on the other" has a direct effect on the progression of traditional crafts (Scrase 2012, p123).

Effects of the fashion businesses

This was also evident in Sanganer when one of the artisans, Sanjay Chippa describes how the idea of design copying weakened the community relationships once endowed as part of a harmonious community practice: "...because of the work precautions also the work relationship [with Rangrez dyers] diminished. After the fashion oriented industry came into the business we had to keep the designs we make to ourselves as others might copy it. So eventually the whole process [dyeing and printing] started to happen in one place." (Sanjay Chippa, personal interview, September 2015)

The copyright concerns of the fashion industry here clearly affect the sharing practices of craft which were based historically on a communally owned and developed canon of motifs and skills. Printers are now conscious of who they work with, and blocks once owned by the community belong to external buyers or factories. New trade relationships follow as sourcing of fabrics depends on the fashion company's requirement, and printers are chosen according to their level of skills, speciality, reliability and efficacy. When such individuals emerge as important figures in the craft community reshaping business alliances (Venkatesan 2006), with special attention given to outsiders

³³ Although Sanganer printing has attempted to protect its tradition by registering under the Geographical Indication (GI) Goods Act which allows printers to take legal action against the infringement of products produced and sold under the name of 'Sanganeri Hand block printing'. However, during the field study we observed that not a lot of printers are fully aware of the GI, and how GI supports them in safeguarding Sanganer prints and how it boosts marketing and sales activities under the recognition of the GI tag.

recognised as entrepreneurs (Bundgaard 1999), it might be time to shift attention to the common view that Indian Society was inherently culturally driven (Fuller 1989 cf Venkatesan 2006). What might have then happened to those core relationships of people, material and ideologies which were bound up by kinship, caste systems and occupational relationships is worth reviewing. Examining Sanganer printing from that point of view, fashion buyers, designers and traders emerge as new mediators who forge new relationships replacing community driven and occupational kinships; sharing cultures and the collective identity of craftsmanship seems to be replaced by business alliances. Similar observations were made by Edwards (2016) where established business entities were infringing community rights when modern textiles parks were proposed to revive traditional craftwork and offer environmentally sustainable practices.

The example of Anokhi

A company trying to preserve some of the traditional community of practice is leading Indian retailer of block printed textiles Anokhi. It maintains long-term relationships with printers, attempts to balance heritage considerations, and as their website states Anokhi attempts to “maintain an open and honest relationship with [their] craftspersons [and] helps them to work in conditions of their own choosing and commits itself to providing them with sustained work” (Anokhi n.d.).

Even though the labour relationships and marketing promotes a commercial appeal there are also enforced strict ethics on design copyrights. Anokhi’s design director Rachel Bracken-Singh said:

“...we aim to provide work throughout the year for the printers we work with... but they are actually able to work with anybody else if they choose on other designs. We prefer not to let them use our own designs for someone else which has happened on occasions. (Personal interview September 2015)



Image 22: Anokhi's retail store in Jaipur
Photo by author

These new work alliances, based on own choosing, design ownerships and meeting the order demands also mean that the printers as well as buyers are free to move rather than being bound by lasting kinship. This becomes even more critical when printers have to produce for “criteria that evaluate[s] the viability of the design” and for the “rapid turnover of designs” which Anokhi produces targeting seasonality and capturing the “story” for each month (Kumar 2006). In this way, national and international designers contribute to grow Anokhi’s own design repertoire (Edwards 2016).

Within this scenario there are positive movements to understand the lives of the printers, their aspirations and agency within the constraints of design and an attempt to balance cultural heritage with commercial values. Anokhi insists that, “It’s important to know what’s behind the cloth...a symbolic relationship...how the techniques have been used. Who’s been printing them...[whilst acknowledging] you also have to make desirable products otherwise nobody will buy them. It can’t be perceived as charity or this is a traditional craft...the end product has to be something everybody wants to buy. (Rachel Bracken-Singh, Anokhi, personal interview September 2015)

In that sense, even though appreciating the ‘living culture’ embedded in cultural processes, Anokhi’s approach to product design finally emphasises the product, or the material culture more than the process itself. Anokhi’s emphasis on product rather than on process goes against Smith’s (2006, p3) assessment that it is the cultural processes, that identify the products “as physically symbolic of particular cultural and social events, and thus give them value and meaning”. The next section hence goes on to discuss the relationship between the maker and making, to investigate issues that have arisen due to the disengaged nature of the two where, objects or artefacts has the tendency to become mere objects with no values attached.

5.4.4 Artisan as a creator vs. artisan as a job worker and occupational displacement

Changes in labour, identity and social relations of the makers

Master artisan Prabhati Lal’s comparison of practices and identity within an interdependent community of practice on the one hand and for isolated pieceworkers on the other illustrate the effects of present day production on the labour, lifestyle and creativity of an artisan:

“The earlier relationship is better for the industry because everybody was specialised in that particular industry. So the work was defined. Rangrez had a different job, we had a different job. They dyed the fabric and gave to us. Earlier the dhobis were involved but nowadays they are not involved much. These days things are complicated and also a headache. Everything is urgent work now. But earlier nothing was urgent. We did work more leisurely. Even with little work we were satisfied that time. Now it’s all export orders and bulk production. Earlier we had an artist feeling; now it’s just a job.” (Master artisan Prabhati Lal, personal interview, October 2015)³⁴

Sanjay Chippa also mentioned community disintegration in work relationships and the effects on the occupational displacement highlighting with everyone doing everyone’s business and thus affecting the specialist skills and a compounding effect on the traditional knowledge. By referring to an Indian proverb he says; “*Dhobī kā kuttā ghar kā na ghāt kā*” which can be translated as “the washer man’s dog belongs neither to the house nor to the washing place” reminding us that those who do not have a fixed area of

³⁴ For similar views artisans expressed regarding tensions in commercial production and the competition it brought, and in return losing their peace of mind, see also Bundgaard (1999, p222).

expertise with regards to their skills might end up becoming a jack of all trades and a master of none.

“If you are perfect in doing something you should stick to that. If I want to become a goldsmith, then I have to learn it from the beginning. But now it does not happen like that these days. In our culture things come generationally. That time they [forefathers] had in-depth knowledge. Right now we don’t have that. Why? Because we are interested in the new developments...before community wise work was defined...and everyone was satisfied. But now everything’s got mixed up.” (Sanjay Chippa, personal interview September 2015)

A strategic adaption to the changing demands

This transformation of community driven craft towards a business oriented design and manufacturing approach is however accepted rather confidently amongst some new design businesses in Sangner: Brij Udaiwal who hails from a traditional printer family and now runs a successful business unsentimentally states:

Look! Nowadays it’s not craft, it’s purely a business. And we are producing tens of thousands of meters. So the relationship between the printers and us are purely commercial. (Brij Udaiwal, personal interview, September, 2015)

Udaiwal, who at the same time supported preservation and continuity of craft by establishing a museum continued; “Contemporary inputs are essential, but there is also a revival need for the future...Otherwise how can we show our future generation what was there before...A lot of languishing printing methods will be erased as there are no records. So documentation is important” (Brij Udaiwal, personal interview, September, 2015). Similar accounts of the contested nature of craft between preservation and continuity, aligned to global business needs was expressed by Edwards (2016) when she analysed the same business of Brij Udaiwal.

Hitesh, a young businessman also hailing from a traditional printer family said that he’s interested in managing the business and not in printing as a practice, so he oversees and runs a printing plant for other printers. The new generation of business minded individuals like Hitesh, see the traditional work relationships and the artisanal role as having been replaced out of a timely requirement because it was unfit for contributing to today’s printing industry. This fits with modern India’s ideology where caste diminishes

fast while the newly emerging professional class system replaces the old (Balaram 2011).

Yes, Chippas have been doing this for 300-400 years. But it doesn't matter anymore. The work only matters now. I don't mind who's involved in this and whether it's a Chippa or someone else. And I don't mind if anyone comes and learns it too. As long as I can get the right quality and order quantity that's enough for me. (Hitesh Sonawa, personal interview, September 2015)

While some entrepreneurs display an overt disregard for traditional identities, when others try to balance it via enabling both, the preservation and commercial success, these entrepreneurial roles might be seen as more important to the continuity of the tradition than simply enabling a sustainable printing industry. In that sense, achieving international recognition for products from as far away as Japan, the USA and the UK, irrespective of the maker's background, assigns contemporary craft a politicised agency that foregrounds the importance of economic viability of the craft to support the continuity of traditional practices, rather than 'born-into' entitlement delivered from the caste system. The more success a printer or an entrepreneur has gained in reaching national and international markets, the greater their authority within the community.

Women's role in Sanganer handblock printing

Regarding the significance of women in the craft, when certain crafts in India are strictly gender related, master artisan Ram Swaroop, remembered a master women artisan in his community, where a block named *Sundari Ka Aat* (Sundari's flower with eight petals) was created to remember her dedication and exquisite work in the 1950s. It shows Sanganer women printers as valued in contributing to the printing tradition rather than merely holding ancillary jobs. Being recognised as a master woman-artisan is unlikely to be found in present day Sanganer, indicating less recognition of the women's role in a design driven industry. Women are now largely kept at the periphery of printing while men dominate much of the professional business today, in sharp contrast to women's contribution of creativity and for production as described by Nandita Prasad Sahai (2006) in early modern Rajasthan.

“They did not live behind purdah³⁵ or within the confines of their homes since work took them out to the fields, to their patrons’ houses, and sometimes to the markets too. Cooking and rearing children were, of course, women's responsibility, but the sharp public/private dichotomy so marked in elite households, keeping feminine labour away from the professional realm, was not true for artisanal families” (Sahai 2006, p89).

Contemporarily, inside the piece work production of the mass produced block printing industry women have neither progressed to leave their homes and become successful business women, nor have they been recognised as master printers competing shoulder to shoulder in the now male dominated profession of Sanganer printing. It confirms Nic Craith’s (2008, p68) claim that “women as heritage bearers and heritage transmitters are hardly appreciated” in the 21st century (2008, p68). It is important to note that even though their levels of mastery have not been acknowledged in the present system, women’s contribution and dedication to the printing job cannot be underestimated as they compete with men in the printing workshops, showing diligence and precision in their printing work.



Image 23: Women at work in a domestic printing unit
Photo by author

³⁵ Veil

5.5 Agency, development and mediation in Sanganer printing

The above discussion on the role of the artisan and how it has transformed in current times provides a clear notion of the evolution of tradition and ways in which artisans have responded to it, often creating a “battlefield of knowledge” according to Venkatesan (2006). She further describes that “the paradigm of craft community embedded as it is in power relations, affects both local organising practices and ways in which it is acceptable for producers to represent themselves, and interact with the wider nation” (Venkatesan 2006, p64).

Not only has this affected the conceptualisation of community as a way of authenticating the social organisation of India, but also how individuality is constructed in response to these political, social and business relationships (ibid). Thus three different institutions were identified within Sanganer printing that have shaped and influenced the practice, community and individual makers and also the heritage discourse.

5.5.1 *Agency with Local Organisations: Calico Printers Co-operative Society Limited*

The co-operative society initiatives in India were initially developed to address rural indebtedness and as a way of supplying rural credit at lower rates in the early 1900s (Madan 2007). The Sanganer co-operative society was, however, later established by Maharaj Man Singh II in 1943, and its aim was to bring welfare to the printers in Sanganer, establishing their rights and a place for work for a small membership fee. The enterprise continued until the early 1960s with the support of Jaipur’s royalty, and was later adapted to the individual business needs of traders (Skidmore and Ronald 2009). As one of the staff members at Calico printers co-op revealed, the society had 215 registered Chippa members at the time the research was undertaken (in 2015), when it had been reported as plummeting to as low as 26 in its history (Russo 1999). The Calico Society was also dissolved and closed down in the early 1990s due to a mistrust issue and was re-opened by the UNIDO initiative of cluster development discussed below³⁶ (Sarkar 2011).

³⁶ Venkatesan (2009) also observes similar inefficacies and corruptions in other the co-operative societies in India.

The Calico Society now works towards the preservation and revival of printing traditions, while maintaining a sales outlet. A recent achievement is the application made to the Geographical Indications (GI) of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, in 2010³⁷. The society acts as the inspection body for issuing the GI tag to the printers, a form of a certification to ensure registered traditions are maintained. Another instance of active participation of the Calico Society is reported by Edwards (2016) as it campaigned to establish the place-based significance of the printing industry in Sanganer when a public interest liability was filed in terms of water pollution, and a court ruled eviction plan was put into place for closing down printing and dyeing plants. The society and its members successfully lobbied against the court order and made the case highlighting the importance of remaining in the same location in order for the craft to be called Sanganer printing.

Earlier involvements of the Calico Society with artisans are remembered by Ram Swaroop as he mentioned exporting to the UK through the Calico Society, an order given by the KVIC (The Khadi and Village Industries Commission)³⁸ in 1960s, where sourcing of raw materials for the printers was a task of the Calico Society.

5.5.2 Agency with International Development: UNIDO cluster development project

The UNIDO project was based on cluster development, where they identified those small to medium scale industries concentrated on a sectorial or geographical area to support them in order to compete in the ‘increasing globalised economy’. Cluster development focuses on generating successful interventions and networking opportunities for enterprises. With traditional industries proving to be successful in overcoming economic recession in the West during 1970s and the 80s, the cluster

³⁷ The UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) India Project, along with its partners such as Rajasthan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) and Rural Non-Farm Development Agency (RUDA) have supported the project seeking the GI certificate for Sanganer (The Hindu 2010). UNCTAD involves in promoting traditional products through GI certification in selected least developed countries, where GI acts as a trade-related intellectual property right under the WTO TRIPS Agreement with the aims of “preservation of biodiversity, traditional know-how and natural resources [while] leveraging on biological and cultural diversification” UNCTAD (2015).

³⁸ The KVIC is charged with the planning, promotion, organisation and implementation of programs for the development of Khadi and other village industries in the rural areas in coordination with other agencies engaged in rural development wherever necessary. See: <http://www.kvic.org.in/kvices/aboutkvic.html>

development initiatives have also been favourably seen for the developing nations (Sarkar 2011).

The UNIDO project ran from 1997-2001, and was considered the first initiative in the Jaipur area (covering Jaipur, Sanganer and Bagru), before any other policy initiatives of cluster developments had been carried out in the region. The aims of the project covered establishing effective linkages between different stakeholder groups, and the project reached out throughout the Calico Society. The UNIDO's intervention there related to training, organising workshops, marketing, credit, creating and strengthening of networks; infrastructure and technology related interventions were also included (Sarkar 2011) in order to improve export market potentials, market and design training, catalogue and web site production, participation in national and international exhibitions and trade. Particular emphasis was placed on design development and the National Institute of Design was involved in designing new product lines (Russo 1999) as well as design workshops and lectures by a European designer (Sarkar 2011). Other activities of the UNIDO project were based on 'soft' power strategies such as giving information, knowledge and skills on market and design trends through a resource centre with a view to developing a common brand identity. Other approaches varied from proposals to make common washing plants, establishing a formal consortium of exporters and ethnic industrial states called Shilpigram, develop industrial policy and support entrepreneurship (Sarkar 2011, Russo 1999, Narayan- Paker 2002).

Despite the evidence of such cluster developments being successful, in that they boosted sales in Sanganer hand block printing during the programme period (Narayan- Paker 2002, Russo 1999), interviewed artisans and businesses claimed this success was due to their individual initiatives mainly. Simultaneously, in the analysis of the Jaipur cluster development, Tamal Sarkar (2011) mentions instances of the inability of artisans to fully benefit from the design intervention programmes in terms of applying their new found knowledge to subsequent designing and export orders beyond the training events. This might indicate that the success of such interventions relies on the strong establishment support for such networks, the stakeholder negotiations and the ability to participate beyond the confined groups, according to Sarkar (2011). This raises an issue of continuing craft development programmes initiated by a top-down approach and implications they create at the grassroots levels.

5.5.3 Agency with NGOs: The role of artisanal enterprises

Another form of agency is attempted through artisanal enterprises where they promote fair-trade, sustainable artisan development and in particular initiatives that promote environmental sustainability. Edwards (2016), describing NGOs operating in the craft sector, asserts they have contributed to the revival of the craft sector since independence by helping to consolidate the earlier patronage system in some ways. The NGO that was shadowed in this research also describes its vision as following a business and production model based on cradle to cradle, and such artisanal empowerment through financial and social means is a common call in the Indian context (See Cummings and Ryan 2014). However, it also leads to conflict on “how the influences of the NGOs...might alter or interrupt the creative processes and contexts experienced by the artisans who are attempting to market their work in a globalised environment” (Cummings and Ryan 2014, p42).

Observation of the design, production and sales of the printed cloth indicated that the selected NGO operates much akin to a traders’ model, but with the aim of revitalising craft, undertaking printing conservations and enabling the artisans to achieve a sustainable livelihood. While the NGO works on developing its own design targeting the export orders, there are also circumstances where buyers provide direct orders, phrasing such attempts as ‘bridging the gap’ through cross cultural educational and artisan designer engagements. The NGO often benefits from the design interns it gets locally and internationally, where these are responsible for developing new designs and products including new motifs. When the design interns desire to learn the printing skills, gain work experiences in a rural setting, contributing to the social causes of empowering artisans, most of their engagements are reduced to producing CAD designs or prototypes for future design collections. The interns are generally given an organised tour around the printing and production units while basic knowledge on genres of Sanganer prints are described to them with a printed leaflet of terminologies included. During the three weeks of observation, the two international design interns (from the UK) worked on developing CAD drawing for block makers which would later turn into NGOs own prints while the other designer made soft toys out of excess printed fabrics (which get discarded in the production unit) working on a recycled project.

The NGO has its own printing plant in Sanganer to promote a decentralised approach that keeps printers in their environments, while the main business operations are run from Jaipur. A production unit comprised of sewing machines, a pattern cutting and a quality control section is in Jaipur and a dying unit is located in Sanganer (see the production process below, in images 24-30). The organisation has a hierarchical structure, where they have an appointed leader or section head for each unit. At the time of observation the NGO was making printed women's sleep shorts for an export order where the designs were provided by a foreign company with a simple criss-cross pattern to print³⁹. With a recent business venture advertised on their website in 2017, the NGO presented itself as a whole sale agent of Sanganer printed fabrics to Europe, especially to Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Although such initiations are promoted as 'collaborations' 'partnerships' and not as 'middleman work' while working with 'transparency', the business model is such that the NGO fixes the market prices once the artisans set their prices with the NGO, possibly indicating how businesses can set a higher profit margin, leveraging a higher price to the product, and the surplus adding noticeably to the earnings of the NGO and the European trader rather than the artisan. Also its business model only works with those employees working for the organisation and does not work at the broader village level.



Image 24: Dying unit in Sanganer



Image 25: Handblock printing unit in Sanganer



Image 26: Cutting unit in the production facility in Jaipur

³⁹ The NGO also has a strict confidentiality agreement where their designs or products should not be disclosed.



Image 27: Sewing unit at the Jaipur production facility



Image 28: Quality control unit, Jaipur



Image 29: Final quality check, Jaipur



Image 30: Pressing and packing, Jaipur

Unlike the other industry structures, workers are provided with monthly wages and most of them are permanent employees. They often work within the unit of the NGO and are less likely to be interacting or mobilising with other community printers or makers. In this scenario, the community element relate to a selected few printers and other allied workers who they engage with, at times employing people from outside the community; the dye master was i.e. not from Sanganer and hired in a professional, rather than on a traditional or communal capacity. Hence such development relies on the support offered by the NGO along with and the narrative of craft that the NGO generates which then focus attention on the identity and representation of artisans. On the other hand this approach guarantees a secure job with fair wages and ethical labour regulations. The women interviewed who work at the sewing unit were not related to any artisan families but painted a positive image of how such work at the NGO provides them with a livelihood to support their families, and especially to provide education to their children. Similarly the master artisan who undertakes the printing work for the NGO also praised the continuous orders he gets.

However another view is that these ventures enable “paternalistic welfare governance” under the guise of mediation where NGOs pride themselves on acting as “facilitators” as they free the artisan from the middlemen while establishing a direct link with the artisan and international markets (DeNicola 2004). Similarly NGOs often work closely with designers who collectively draw upon a distinction

between tradition and innovation. In her words, “this distinction between innovation and tradition carries with it a disconnection in economic, educational, spatial, temporal and embodied ideologies [that] serves to demarcate middle classes as an upwardly mobile and distinctly modern group.” Not only does it generate issues of labour detached from tradition and modernity, but “the narrative [also] identifies the dyad of old and new as a necessary move toward modernising tradition...while constructing a hierarchy based on difference” (DeNicola 2004, n.p.). These effects will be discussed in the following sections.

5.5.4 Effects on the local knowledge systems and practices

The observation of artisans in Sanganer revealed de-skilling and loss of traditional knowledge but also addition of new knowledge to local culture. While Evers and Wall (2011) highlight that contemporary abundance of knowledge creation comes at the expense of indigenous knowledge systems, in Sanganer we witnessed a rather pragmatic approach to informing traditions based on contemporary market demands. Gan Sham Ji, one of the master printers says “I am happy to go with the changes with contemporary designs but still practice it with the block printing technique...I get to learn things from the organisation [he works for]”. Tradition here becomes contested between the artisan’s ‘desire to maintain the identity’ and ‘design approval’ given by the design director or buyer.

One example of a clear loss of traditional knowledge is an age old technique which the Chippas used for final bleaching called ‘tapai’, a sun bleach technique which gives a final brightness to the Sanganer printed clothes (Intellectual Property India 2009). This required soaking the fabric in a special solution (usually cow dung) and a wetting process on the banks of the river for more than a week. Since this process requires time, space and a lot of water, it has been abandoned by many of the Sanganer Chippas in favour of chemical detergents. This special skill is now possessed by just a few and a scarcely practiced technique, only produced for state exhibitions and competitions to show the mastery skill levels by a few artisans. Showing their artistic skills as a national awardee through exhibitions can elevate an artisan to national and international levels, allowing them to take part in other training programmes and to interact at the global

level through relevant exposure⁴⁰. Artisans consider being a national awardee as a privilege and an honour in the local community context as it provides recognition amongst other printing members and as an accomplishment for skills and knowledge, even though such practice is practically absent from current commercial practice. The importance of winning a national award is remembered by Brij Udaiwal as he recalls one of his uncles, Radha Mohan Udaiwal being the first national awardee in Sanganer thus credited with reviving the current Sanganer printing after the 1981 flood which completely halted the printing processes for some time. Brij Udaiwal eminences:

“He was a school teacher but joined the industry after seeing the declining of Sanganer printing. He introduced new motifs other than those which were used only for traditional contexts. He expanded the product line for market based purposes.” (Personal interview, September 2015)

Even though certain printing techniques are considered an obsolete practice, the “controlled de-skilling” process such as the one witnessed in the case of the sun-bleaching technique in the face of abundant chemical dyestuff is a deliberate strategy of “choosing to devalue”, where “skills were withdrawn” to suit the emerging circumstances and market needs, therefore the skills are not lost, but strategically withdrawn by the artisans (Roy 2007, p978-980). According to Roy (2007), this type of switching of skills and adopting of new technology and materials still requires the work of a skilled artisan, and is partly about embracing innovation. His discussions, although largely based on the conditions of gaining an economic advantage, need to be discussed more lengthily in terms of mediations between the individual and the collective, and between an artisanal entrepreneur and buyers/merchants from outside the community. These complex relationships and their discursive formation between traditional and innovative needs are therefore discussed considering Sanganer printing as an example.

⁴⁰ The Government of India gives away a national award assigning a ‘master craftsman’ status and a cash prize to those craft work which can be called ‘masterpieces’ via a tough selection process with thousands of entries each year. It is regarded as the highest recognition given to any craft producer by the Indian Government. The board of judges consist of bureaucrats, museum staff members and experts from NGOs, where the selection is said to be based on ‘historicised’ craft production (Venkatesan 2009). See also Bundgaard (1999) on how the state and national propaganda place a pervasive emphasis on the past when producing artwork for the present clientele.



Image 31: A sun bleached fabric (on the right) along with a fabric done with synthetic dyes (on left). The sun bleached fabric is a Safa (turban) for men made particularly for the Gurjar community who used to work on animal husbandry. The fabric is a typical Sanganer print of Syahi-begar (red and black) pattern done with natural dyes. Photo by author

5.5.5 Economic Integrity vs. Tradition

Mass production, and new economic and trade models have transformed the once domestic production of Sanganer printing into carefully planned production lines with division of labour, following a model of supply and demand. Mostly this is for the gratification of external buyers, owners who require a supply chain and a production process much akin to industrialisation, to increase the production through effective time and resource management. Consequently, a serious issue of design ownership emerge, as these are now solely with the designers, the external buyers, or the factories, all of whom are becoming the new patrons and connoisseurs of the craft.

Design specification sheets: as a visual field and a contribution to a hierarchy of values

Innovation, design copyrights and protection of artisanal knowledge is not a recent phenomenon, but was also visible in the 19th century. Roy (2007) argues that it sparked conflicts between artisans at the community level when they adopted innovation which he believes, was however crucial for the continuity of traditions. Adapting to social, political, economic and technological changes he asserts, “required innovation in craftsmanship” and assigns importance to the individual maker (Roy 2007, p965). The shift of the printing process from the artisan’s imagination to the external clients, the designer or the factory owners, in Sanganer printing had ramifications for the artisanal relationship with materials, and the products they make, as well as their appropriation of traditional skills, meanings and values.

An example is how design specification sheets dictate the “way of understanding and dealing with heritage”, affecting those cultural heritage once embodied in working with materials (Logan et al. 2015, p5). Roy (1999) and others like Jain (1985) and Peck (2013) however mention that producing for external clientele following detailed design specification sheets happened even in the 19th century, and might therefore be considered it as a common practice that is part of an evolving industry and a knowledge system that flows according to Roy (2007). The key problem with this explanation is not about how artisans have been executing designs, translating those specifications as a form of a visual field that would perhaps warrant them to showcase their skills. Instead, it portrays a much more complex phenomenon that is bound with discourse of tradition versus modernity, one that deals with formation of identity, knowledge and class hierarchies between designers and artisans, which then decide “who are to ‘be traditional’ and those who are to protect and maintain that tradition, while deciding how best [and profitably] to present that image to a national and global market desirous of authenticity” (DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber 2016, p82). How entrepreneurs and businesses appropriate tradition, authenticity and innovation requires a brief review here, particularly of those who work as ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ to the community, catering to the national and international consumer demands.

The entrepreneurs in Sanganger utilising tradition and commercialisation in their printing businesses

The first concern is how ‘insiders’ of the community respond to this. When Roy (2007) describes artisanal entrepreneurship as a strategy that emerged in the wake of the 20th century, and its influx of global demand, assertion on individuality became an important attribute when compared to the previously held communal or family associations in craft making. This idea still continues to date, even more prominently when the passing down of knowledge as a generational activity is challenged, and also when the new generation favours opportunities of entrepreneurship over the practice of printing and eschewing, as earlier mentioned by Hitesh, the traditional skills of his printer family to gain an MBA in Operational Management.

The second concern appears when businesses deal with traditional and economic demands. Rachel Bracken-Singh, the design director of Anokhi explains as a designer and business women what it takes to promote traditional block printing in a commercial context, and describes the challenges she faces in terms of achieving authenticity in contemporised craft. The challenge to preserve and transfer the cultural values into commercial values without losing the cultural significance must perceive tradition as a rather open and malleable idea. Goods, ideas, people all circulate and share common expressions and can be seen as a sense of freedom when choosing creative expressions. Bracken-Singh explains why they cannot categorise their print designs sold to consumers as contemporary and traditional as follows:

“We don’t say this is a traditional print; this is contemporary print. Because how do you say that. How do you make that definition; how do you draw the line about what was actually traditional because it’s been produced for 200-300 years. Or when did it start being traditional? How many years did it have to be in circulation before its traditional? There are prints say for 1979-1980 Anokhi prints that were created. It has been reused by other printers in the last 35 years and continuously may be over the last 35 years is perceived as a traditional Sanganger print or traditional Indian print. So you know it’s a grey area in terms of what could be traditional and what could be not...There are also cross overs, which are now perceived as Sanganger, which may have been there for 100-200 years. But they are very similar prints printed somewhere else in Rajasthan or Gujarat. And you may see they are also 100 years old sitting here...Was that

inspired by that or that inspired that...There were a lot of moving around of textiles and inspirations coming from different places.” (Rachel Bracken-Singh, personal interview, 02 September 2015)

This may show Anokhi’s understanding of a pragmatic stance on the adaptation of cultural expressions to local and global contexts, advocating that ‘new’ becomes part of the repertoire of Sanganer tradition gradually, without the need to categorise clearly as new or old. Contrasting this to what is presented in their website however reveals other.

In a discussion of revival with the involvement of outside interventionists and entrepreneurs such as Anokhi in this case, Bundgaard (1999, p59-60) had drawn similar conclusions by referring to Orissan Patta painting on how the interventionists construct authenticity in traditions by means of a ‘salvage paradigm’. It means, the person “who wish[es] to save the authentic craft from destructive historical change” thereby creates a “pervasive ideological complex” which then drives the revival scheme undertaken. Viewed in this light, Anokhi has adhered to the “salvage paradigm” needing to preserve the traditional block printed tradition, when they saw it was dying at the beginning of the 1970s, and more recently in its museum which tries to “educate” people, including artisans, when the traditional printing techniques became “fragile” due to “modern manufacturing”. However Anokhi also has an active acquisition policy of contemporary designs displayed alongside historic textiles ⁴¹ which then shows at one point their attempt to accommodate contemporary within museological nostalgia.

Reviewing Bracken-Singh’s earlier comment shows Anokhi has in a way departed from authenticating the new based on the past by embracing contemporary expressions of Sanganer printing, and by including hybrid and brand new designs in its retail stores. In that sense, Anokhi has not greatly romanticised the craft when compared with some of the examples discussed by Bundgaard in Orissan Patta painting’s revival story. However, it does illustrate that the interest of Anokhi is not entirely free from a “salvage paradigm” in its business either, because it still operates within the revival scheme that continues from the past, following the Orientalists’ viewpoint, claiming it to be a general phenomenon like every other craft in the world which “faces serious challenges

⁴¹ <https://www.anokhi.com/museum/home.html>

trying to keep pace with modern manufacturing”,⁴² and is therefore in need of safeguarding.



Image 32: A contemporary block print design (natural dye) on display at Anokhi museum
Photo by author



Image 33: Live craft demonstration (block making) at Anokhi museum
Photo by author

The copyright issues

Another issue at stake here is about what happens to the ownership of the designs when they are being created and owned by Anokhi, rather than by the artisans. A swing tag of a pleated bolero purchased in 2015 will be used here to elicit Anokhi’s stance of considering both innovation and tradition within their business: The swing tag mentions, “...the print on the fabric is an original creation, of Anokhi and is protected under copyright laws around the world,” indicating that the designs are now authorised by intellectual property rights of global fashion businesses. Nevertheless, Anokhi in that same tag claims; “for over 40 years Anokhi has been well known [for] the ongoing revival of traditional textiles skills” which shows a “pervasiveness of the past within the present”, which attempts to stress the unbroken tradition where “the abundance of master craftsmen mystically [gets] in touch with the spiritual heritage of India” according to Bundgaard (1999, p39). Not only does this create a particular image of Sanganer printing by revival interventionists such as Anokhi, where artistic traditions are rooted in the past promoting pure artisanship; and as explained by Bundgaard “it is a

⁴² Op.cit., footnote 41

regional elite's hypostatisation of actual pragmatic choices and practices of local craftspeople...[with] the desire to emphasise the closeness of contemporary production with an unbroken tradition" (Bundgaard 1999, p40). This is depicted, when they promote both old and new designs as equally significant elements of an essentially commercial business. The discussion then helps us to conclude, first, that businesses that undertake both revival and commercial schemes such as Anokhi, exert an authorised discourse over traditional craft, partly adhering to the romanticised connotation of preserving and reviving heritage. Second, it brings to the fore the authorised discourses generated by the design industry (through international design copyright laws), which affect heritage discourse in return.

FabIndia

This awareness becomes clearer when large scale retail organisations like FabIndia operate with Sanganer printers, and this is therefore analysed in the following section.

FabIndia is renowned as; "India's largest private platform for products that are made from traditional techniques, skills and hand-based processes...linking over 55,000 craft based rural producers to modern urban markets, thereby creating a base for skilled, sustainable rural employment, and preserving India's traditional handicrafts in the process".⁴³

However, amongst this cherished vision, stories are often heard of constant design and production pressures to produce large quantities, with common ramifications of supplying to retail giants like FabIndia.⁴⁴

Hitesh explains the daily pressure that a 70,000 meters printing job he acquired from Fab India, has brought to his family business, while appreciating the economic benefits.

“...if we don't give the order on the deadline they ask for a 5% discount. After 15 days, its 10%. After 20 days-15% like wise. We have a lot of pressure to produce. After one month (if they cannot deliver the order) the shipment is cancelled. Also we can't sell this in the normal market even if it gets rejected. We have to keep the fabric in stock for six months to one year before releasing it

⁴³ <http://www.fabindia.com/company/>

⁴⁴ For an excellent assessment of the conflict behind the starting of FabIndia in 1960s i.e. on one hand to comply with government policy to encourage exports, making the products commercial and on the other reviving and supporting traditional practices, see Edwards (2016, p229), where the American founder, John Bissell came to India as part of a US-India cultural diplomacy project.

to the market... that's a lot of risk.” (Hitesh Sonawa, personal interview, September, 2015)

Amongst these pressures and market constraints to deliver on time in mass production contexts, there is a constant struggle of printers to adopt their domestic production technique and to match it to the demand of design needs such as quality, colour matching and producing for seasonal collections. (See similar implications reported by Edwards 2016) Showing a piece of printed sample fabric Hitesh says,

“Earlier, FabIndia wanted us to do this color. (Shows a fabric of lime green with a floral pattern) I did this sample earlier this year (in January). But now when we did it again this is the colour we got. (Shows a darker hue of lime green) So they rejected the order they were supposed to give us. Now they will give to someone else who can achieve the colour. For a project to start in September we start developing samples in January or March, This work is being done for the summer collection. So certain colours and certain designs are only produced for that season...” (Hitesh Sonawa, personal interview, September, 2015)

Although the story may portray a negative image of constant design and production pressures, Lokesh Ghai, design practitioner, educator and craft advocate with many years of experiences in working with artisanal communities in India provides a voice for the mutual benefits FabIndia offers by providing market links and contributing to sustainment efforts even with implications on large production quantities.

“FabIndia is an important organisation to work with. They have a market, a position. So why not work for them and in a way that is profitable for both. One of the problems with FabIndia is that they don't give credit to the artisan. Otherwise I think it's a good organisation. But again sizing (manufacturing quantities) is a problem there.” (Lokesh Ghai, personal interview, October 2015)

Anokhi and FabIndia, are not just examples of outside entrepreneurs and businesses who contribute to craft through its revival efforts, rather than operate for commercialisation of craft per se, they also shape the image of the craft by exerting influences on how it should be perceived by others in the society, including artisans. This image is not constructed in isolation, but rendered through the existing Indian

ideology about craft as shown by Edwards (2016) with the example of FabIndia, where they had to work towards the craft revival policy of the Nehruvian government on the one hand, and producing for the global export market on the other. Seeing artisans work towards these imagined contexts that are presented to them, and reviewing artisanal entrepreneurs such as Hitesh, shows adaptation to the changing circumstances and a pragmatic approach to accept the changes by gaining professional skills, rather than confining to traditional skills only. This can be seen as a successful artisan strategy to continue his tradition, and in line with Varutti's understanding of tradition, "as a transformative process...[that] brings to the fore the very nature of heritage as something inherently harking back to the past, yet also inevitably adapted and reinterpreted to make it relevant and significant in the present and in an imagined future" (Varutti 2015, 1038). Therefore, it can be said that the evolving nature of Sanganer printing as tradition is contested, reinvented and transformed through the screen printing, synthetic dyes, new trade relationships, state policy and the rising up of new entrepreneurs with their constant negotiations between cultural innovation and commercial innovation.

The analysis so far highlights that design can become an authorised discourse, especially when it is been enacted through design businesses, and the following section thus highlights the role of the design and designer in Sanganer printing, drawing its attention to the design institution's supported roles.

5.5.6 The design and designer in Sanganer printing

In contemporary Sanganer a multitude of designers bringing design influences to the local practices are visible. Designers outsource their designs to the local artisans, designers work as in-house designers who delegate and work with artisans, and finally artisans undergo formal design education from institutions like the Indian Institute of Craft and Design (IICD), acquiring design attributes.

Designers as outsiders

Amongst these vicarious designer roles, design conflicts can occasionally be identified. Of significance is the struggle for design communication in this craft-design interface, not least when a graduate of one of the elite design schools in India comes to work with artisans as an in house designer for a company which produces hand block and screen

printed textiles for the local market. The following conversation brings deep questions about how designers try to negotiate their design knowledge and professional practice with artisans.

The context here is the problem of colour bleeding expressed by two designers observed in September 2015 on a block printing job.

Designer 1: Who's saying there are no faults in this then I will show them the faults. If the print is still wet don't put another block on the wet print. Let the print dry first. Look at this—the colour is bleeding.

Designer 2: This looks like the fabric has been washed many times. This is the exact problem on wet on wet printing.

Artisan1: [showing the head block] This is the head block. There will be differences in the intensity of the print. This is not screen printing.

Designer 1: If you always tell me that this is hand block printing and not screen printing, then I will never come up with any products to tell you if this is right or wrong.

Artisan 1: Please listen to me also. In this process there is no machine. So there will be mistakes.

Artisan 2: Leave that [with disappointment]

Designer 1: Listen to me. I agree this is a manual process—so there will be mistakes. I can bring dupattas [shawls]...printed with such perfection. Then what would you say? If you always keep telling me this is always hand work, but the customer will not take this story.

Artisan 1 talking to artisan 2: Whatever she says you listen to her and let the outline dry.

Artisan 3: So what about the production then? It will take more time.

Dye master: If you give good quality then you will get more orders then more production. Then 'malik' [the owner] will increase your wages.

Artisan 4: it's actually the problem of the fabric quality.

Designer 1: Whatever the fabric you just follow the directions. Stretch the fabric and try to secure it with more pins. You have pinned it loosely.

What was observed in Sanganer is a designer as an imposer, to a certain extent, where design delegation is done by a designer. Meanwhile, only the manual job of printing is left to the artisan, who receives a design drawn on a piece of paper, colour palette

included. Bundgaard (1999, p153) also gives similar accounts, at times describing artisan–designer interventions as being much stricter than in the case of the above conversation. In her example, Patta Chitra artisans were brought into art colleges to work with teachers and students where designs were instructed and painters were expected to take suitable visual inspirations forward and follow design directions (themes, composition and colour schemes included) even after going back to their villages, which later emulated as one of the ideal models of their craft. The reality of the designer’s role in working with artisans, such as the ones shown in the above scenarios, irritates the set agenda of development agencies like UNESCO⁴⁵, and higher education institutions like Pearl Academy, Indian Institute of Craft and Design (IICD) and National Institute of Design India (NID) who promote the ‘designer as a mediator’, much akin to the common interpretation of the Eames’s conception of design bridging the gap between tradition and modernity (Mathur 2011). An academic at NID reiterated this point:

“...to a large extent we are telling our students...whenever you are working with the established craft tradition the first step is the humility to understand what their vocabulary, language and culture is. Instead of imposing your ideas on them you encourage them to arrive at solutions based on their vocabulary, methods, processes and techniques.” (Swasti Singh Ghai, Personal Interview, October 2015)

Reviewed against these concepts, and even compared to the instructed design workshops observed by Bundgaard (1999), the conversation between artisans and designers in Sanganer printing can still be presented as an example of bad practice with the way designers work in the craft sector. The designs, colour pallets and themes are strictly instructed by designers, where the artisans’ job is to follow that, but in the realm of a traditional artisan. This conversation between the designers and artisans in Sanganer also reveals mediation and the intentions of cosmopolitan tendencies of designers trying to cater to urban markets, where innovation becomes all important. While the artisan here is represented as a symbolic character in representing his work as continuing tradition, the designer plays an imposed role in terms of identification, production, and translation of artisanal knowledge and craft work as traditional, yet which is essentially modern.

⁴⁵ See the guidebook on Designers Meet Artisan published by UNESCO (2005)

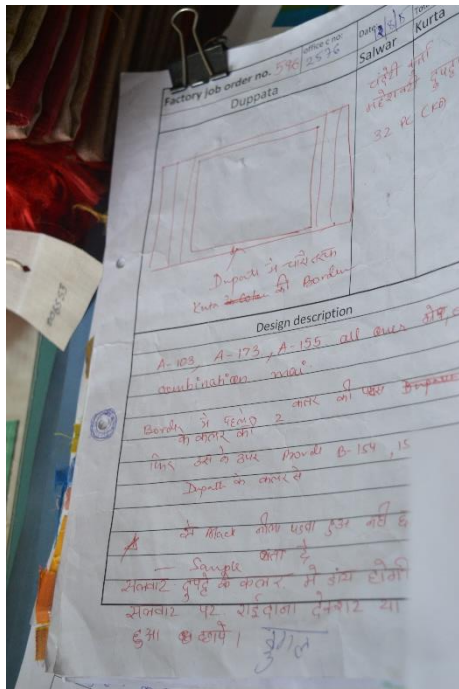


Image 34: Design specification sheets sent from in-house design department (in Jaipur) to the production unit (in Sanganer)
Photo by auhtor

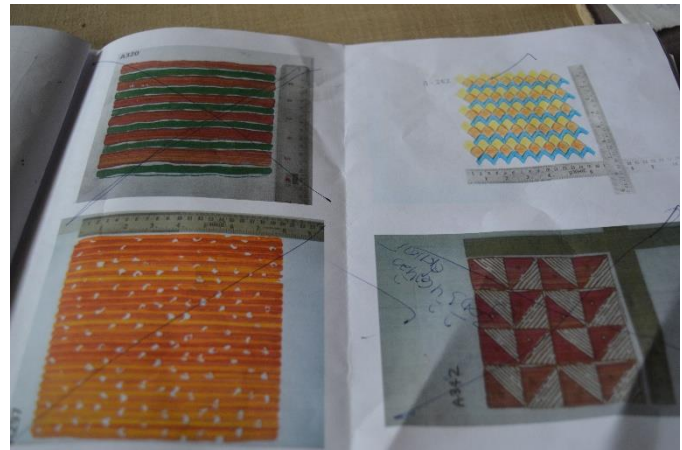


Image 35: The design sheets given to artisans to carry out the printing job by following the design repeat and colour combination
Photo by author

The emergence of artisan-designers

In addition there is a growing and emerging role in the new design landscape, when younger generation printers join formal design education to become designers, makers and entrepreneurs in a combined role. The success story of Kushiram, a young graduate of the Indian Institute of Craft and Design, Jaipur brings close attention to an attempt to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. His contemporary designs may not easily sit within the Sanganer repertoire of florals, with geometric patterns and the modern symbolic interpretations such as the automobile print design added. Yet, his designs may be called Sanganer printing, as the designs are being done by a traditional artisan (authorship confirmed), based in Sanganer (place-based significance confirmed) using traditional methods (authenticity confirmed), who also understands the complexities and intricacies of the printing (embodiment confirmed). Kushiram has demonstrated his creativity and the design inspirations more freely by looking at contemporary objects around him and certainly he attributes this surge of creativity to his formal design education.



Image 36: Automobile print design on shirts and bags
Photo by author

Such engagements portray how design education transforms and influences traditional practices to make it contemporary and market-led. Hence the following section reviews the role of higher education institutions and the educated designers, who then name, claim and identify tradition, heritage, modernity and innovation through their engagements.

5.6 Agency and narrative of heritage craft and design within Higher Education Institutions

5.6.1 The case of National Institute of Design (NID)

Design education in India was initiated by an act of cold-war cultural diplomacy through state interventions between the US and India which became possible through philanthropic funding available to Global South such as the Ford Foundation grant scheme (Wintle 2017). M P Ranjan (the late director of NID) remind us of the personal level relationships as a crucial determinant in the history of setting up the first design institution in India. Ranjan says:

“...when the idea was born [for a design institution] and will look at (sic) the various people and events that have helped shape its qualities and processes over the years. Pupul Jayakar met Charles and Ray Eames at an exhibition that she

had contributed to in New York where Alexander Girard was the designer and Eames was to photograph the show. They met and this meet (sic) led to the Eameses being invited by Pandit Jawarharlal Nehru to visit India and recommend a course of action for the setting up of a design institute in India. During this period the Government of India had commissioned a travelling exhibition to invigorate the Small Scale Industries in India with the introduction of design skills and concepts into their midst. The Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in New York was invited to assemble a special exhibit that toured India from 1955 at various locations. In 1958 the India Report was submitted to the Government and the National Institute of Design was set up at Ahmedabad in 1961 (Ranjan 2013).

Its education now focuses on architecture, communication design including graphics, film and audio, photography, typography and animation and industrial design on product, textile, furniture and ceramics, all inspired by the Bauhaus model (Mathur 2011).

In this section, their textiles course will be taken into account to analyse student engagements with the craft sector in India. In addition, other major craft and design institutions were approached to review how they engage with the sector respectively within student work and other outreach programmes they organise.

The textile course at NID is special in that it was initiated by Finnish textiles designer Helena Perheentupa. Much akin to the invitation given to Eames' (through personal contacts), and in relation to Eames and Eames preoccupation with the Indian 'lota' as "the simple vessel of everyday use, stands as perhaps the greatest, the most beautiful" (India Report 1958/1997), Indian designer Nelly Sethna invited Perheentupa (whom she studied with in the US) by sending a short telegram message saying "Will you come to India? There are camels on the streets and women carrying so many pots on their heads!" (Mansingh-Kaul 2014).

As one of the academics at NID explained, Perheentupa (in the 1960s) "...on a weekend would take a bus and go to the nearby craft clusters. The students also used to go with her. On a Friday evening they would go back and come on Monday morning" (Swasti Singh Ghai, personal interview, October 2015). According to Swasti, it was an attempt to incorporate the "richness of the local traditions" into the education system without it falling prey to the Bauhaus (industrial) model, which then led artisans to perform live

demonstrations at NID. It was in the 1960s that NID's textiles department introduced the craft documentation module to let students visit craft sector and "make suggestions on possible design interventions" (Swasti Singh Ghai, personal interview, October 2015). At that point Jyotindra Jain, a prominent Indian cultural historian and museologist was invited to advocate the anthropological importance of craft documentation for students.

Describing Jain, Greenough (1995) says, he promoted live craft demonstration inviting artisan to the Indian craft museum in New Delhi for a period of one month as the museum director there. Adhering to this, Swasti Singh Ghai also denotes his approach to cultural preservation and indicates it as one of the reasons to consult Jain for NID courses. However, Greenough (1995) points out strict preservationist dimension in Jain's approach to traditional craft, as he was skeptical about fusion of craft work, thus recommended practicing the craft in its traditional form without "uproot[ing]" the craftsman or "spoil[ing]" their techniques and without "alter[ing]" their attitudes towards sales", which otherwise he believed would lead to "a dangerous outcome" (Greenough 1995, p238). According to Swasti Singh Ghai, "not only [did NID have] people from textiles who put in what was needed from the domains of textiles, [NID] also had anthropologists [like Jain] who suggested it is equally important to look into culture and tradition. And that's how the structure was laid out...and soon became a formal part of the curriculum of product design, furniture and apparel design" (Personal interview October 2015).

Much later, UNESCO (2005) published approaches initiated by NID during a project led by Helena Perheentupa in 1975 as an example of a development and livelihood model of interaction based on community participatory approaches. The project was a collaboration between a rural village in Rajasthan, the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad and NID where the ultimate goal was to make artisans self-reliant and empowered. The project was to address those issues of "...age-old customs...with hereditary skills that seemed to have no future... traditional structures on caste, occupation and livelihood and gender, [so that craft was used as] the window of development opportunity, and designers emerged as the most effective and trusted communicators because they could work with their hands" (UNESCO 2005, p66-67).

As Ashok Chatterjee (then NID director) described, such craft projects were crucial in image building for NID "which had just come out from a major crisis, which had led to

questioning...on whether ‘design’ as a discipline was really relevant to Indian needs” (cited in UNESCO 2005, p67). Therefore those craft projects were promoted as ‘development projects’, which aimed to address the needs of the people ‘at the survival level’ through design. It was here that the need for ‘action’ experiments were realised as spin-off activities of design institutions which gave relevance to academia, and to work beyond traditional ‘consultant–client’ relationships in offering design services for craft development. NID’s design intervention was therefore featured as upgrading skills, technology and new product developments “without harming the artisan society...and as a means of introducing a whole new way of looking at the usable lives of the things they [artisans] produced” (Helena Perheentupa as cited in UNESCO 2005, p71).

These concepts were not only important to the development of the textiles course at NID in the beginning, but their relationship with craft, design, heritage and anthropology is the key to the argument of this study as well.

5.6.2 *Student experiences of craft documentation*

The B.Des Textiles Design programme at NID is a small cohort group of 15 students per year, and aims to “develop innovative and synergetic approaches to design for diverse sectors of the textile industry, markets and the social sector informed by an appreciation of the cultural heritage, socio-economic and environmental concerns that is developed through fieldwork and research” (NID 2015). The course covers the fundamentals of textiles design and varied topics such as textile fibres, weave structures, surface design, dyeing techniques, printing methods, sewing techniques, constructed textiles and basic inputs in garment design. On this programme craft documentation is considered in terms of providing “a deeper understanding of the cultural issues that impact design” and offers a methodological stance for field research.

The craft documentation is a two week project which the students undertake in their 5th semester; while called ‘Heritage Textiles Project’, the students can choose any type of craft form. The current course is designed by Prof. Aditi Ranjan (one of the first set of students of Helena Perheentupa) and is aligned to a product development module allowing students to “respond as designers [while providing] solutions” (Swasti Singh Ghai October 2015). It is discussed in the following section.

The B. Des Textiles Design student group was interviewed as they were studying in their 7th semester (equivalent to 3rd year). Students had spent 15 days or more in a craft

cluster of their own choice, to document the process, materials and lifestyles of the artisans in detail as a group project. During this process students only observe the craft and craftsman at work with little interactions and are not obtrusive. The next course linked to the craft documentation, is a nine week long module which is about prototyping and product development and is assessed on an individual basis. Students were interviewed by the researcher about both these modules to capture their views. The majority of the research interviews took place in groups where students were asked to discuss their experiences while showing evidence of samples they had developed (physically or on their laptops). They were asked to use ephemera, sketch books, photographs, documentary evidence, field work experiences and data including oral histories to aid the interviews by sending an introductory email prior to interviews via their course coordinator.

The course coordinator saw craft documentation as about getting students “sensitised” to ways of making as an encounter with a “living tradition and practitioners of it” (Swasti Singh Ghai October 2015). The craft documentation here provides seed ideas for the diploma project at postgraduate level, for final year undergraduate projects or as career guidance for graduates to work in the craft sector. The students are not given a specific brief but instead are instructed to “live there [in the craft cluster] for two weeks to know how they [artisans] think, how they feel about the craft and putting ourselves in their shoes” (Student 1, September 2015). How the ethnographic immersion works through the craft documentation was further described by one student as follows:

“We first started with the place. We saw the surrounding area. Then we went on to see the weaving. The weaving process was lengthy and we covered it step by step in terms of what takes place. Then we looked at the marketing aspects. We calculated their costs, and how much profit margins they get. And the amount of sales they get per month or year, which time of the year is seasonal. And then we assessed the scope for improvements and problems they have” (Student 2, September 2015)

In this process, the students assessed not only the cultural and social elements of the craft and its community, but also evaluated the market conditions, limitation of designs, and barriers artisans have in order to progress as successful makers.

5.6.3 *The interface of designer and artisan in student projects*

In the six student projects observed, students had taken varied approaches in their craft documentation. While some engaged in documenting the practice and material culture, one student group showed an active role by giving design orders to continue their engagements, even after the two week period. The majority of the students' evaluated the rural craft sector as 'needing help', 'in a poor situation', 'critical', 'unable to cope with the external markets' and 'declining'. One student emphasised that thanks to her education at NID, her awareness about craft was raised when she said: "at NID I learnt what craft is, its importance and that it is dying out and needs revival. It was eye opening for me" (Student 3, September 2015).

The student group who developed products with the artisans to be sold through their personal channels and via NID's own sales outlet also portrayed their deliberate intervention to promote the craft after seeing the poor condition of the artisans:

"[The project was] an initiative to promote sarees to increase sales of artisanal products. Right now the condition and situation of the village is very poor. They are not getting enough profits to sustain themselves" (Student 2, September 2015).

According to the students the most common limitations of the craft sectors were; poor marketing and publicity, no access to markets, limited design choices and artisans following the same design without innovations, as well as the caste system, gender issues and social exclusion. Students clearly identified that an intervention was needed but they mostly abstained from directly contributing to the craft. "In craft documentation we try to intervene the least...[because] the moment you intervene things change...so as students it was important what we alter. In a sense it is their craft. But we also realised it is important to do something about it and they [artisans] were quite welcoming the fact that we were *giving help*...to increase the sales or *make things more efficient and better*" (Student 2, September 2015, emphasis added by the author).

Modern designers and unmodern makers

Based on the identification of 'modern' taste and 'traditional' taste, heavily drawing on cosmopolitan vs. rural ideals, students here draw the distinction between design and craft. It also relates to the construction of class distinctions through reimagining the

context of traditional craft that an appeal for age old traditions to be brought back into contemporary fashion through design mediations, and that it is the designers' role to evoke that taste. According to DeNicola (2016, p299) it "only substitute[s] 'artisan' for 'indigenous' and 'middle-class' for 'Western' to see the parallel...[where] innovation is the realm of the designer, while tradition is the realm of the printer [or artisan]". This distinction was expressed by two students when they said:

"They have a notion in the village that these sarees are to be worn by the elder women...But if you see it from a perspective of the modern world we find them more interesting and aesthetically beautiful. It's a matter of a perspective...What we find interesting, they don't find the same...and it is very difficult to break a notion that existed for years especially in a small village" (Student 2, September 2015).

Similarly, it was perceived as the designer's duty to remind the artisan because, "they don't know their worth" (Student 1, September 2015).

The responsibility of the designer and the portrayal of the artisan as a symbolic character in the Indian nation

Another student brought a different angle to this discussion, when she said, "I don't think [artisans] need design inputs. I think they need someone to tell them that you are a symbol. You sort of deserve the rights that are associated with something that has a symbolic value. Because half of the craftspeople are doing it without realising how much they deserve. But what none of the artisans realise is how blindly they consume and waste materials, the dyestuff, how much they should make and what they should make, especially the carbon footprint. As a designer I take more of a social responsibility than a design responsibility" (Student 4, September 2015).

Choosing the traditional artisan as a symbolic character to generate a distinctive identity is not new, but has been imbued in the national-industrial politics of India as a post-colonial state and has been taken forward by the design institutions as well (DeNicola and DeNicola 2012). It is here, the designers, such as the above mentioned student, not only add value to create a symbolic identity, but they also take a leading role in translating that identity from a national level to an international level. Thus, a focus on

professional designers who work with the rural artisans can be seen as a useful way to understand how design interventions are seen not only as assisting the craft sector in terms of providing economic values, but their mediation equally define the social and cultural values of the artisans. The designers do this by assigning themselves a responsibility, and it is they who decide what to promote, which elements to promote and in what ways i.e. the sustainability agenda in the above example.

However, Tunstall reminds us that social responsibility is not enough; designers should also develop cultural respect because “culture demands respect, not responsibility, which sometimes means stopping the design process where it might be considered disrespectful” (Tunstall 2016, p278). She asserts ‘social concerns’ often follow the European models of religious, political, familial and economic institutions, around which the design industry is also built (ibid). In that sense to what extent the students critically evaluate their design process during their craft documentation and design development become questionable and is further examined through what design institutions offer in their curriculum.

While certain projects like the Katheru⁴⁶ saree project done by a group of three students enabled a direct engagement with the community, most of the other design projects lacked a consistent involvement beyond assessment needs and the archival needs of the project to be stored in the library. This is due to one of the ambitions of keeping a record of the evolution of the craft over the years by revisiting the same clusters, where student projects contribute to the NID’s library catalogue on craft documentation. While all students feel optimistic about their project involvements with the communities and how their design solutions would benefit them, students also realised that if they hand the designs back to the community it will make a ‘drastic change’ in the community context. Therefore they suggested such changes needed slow implementation as it would change ‘the identity’. Here, keeping the identity of the artisan became an important distinction (and is related to the above discussion of contributing the symbolic value as well), where the students imagine it being different from what a designer can and cannot perform. This assigns a different value to the student to act in a professional capacity where labeling of traditional and modern becomes part of constructing the heritage discourse, a way of legitimising craft and design interventions. Similarly in this view, what also happens is “the indigenous represents the desire for difference encoded in Western constructions of the Self” says DeNicola (2016, p299).

⁴⁶ A small village in Andhra Pradesh

Although students insist on avoiding delegation of work to the artisan in their encounters, instead highlighting a ‘human touch’ that carries ‘emotions’ while ‘bringing a positive outcome’ to the community, they however seek to convince artisans of changes to adopt in order to make a successful design. For example, students made compelling arguments that artisans needed to change their colour schemes and design aesthetics because ‘they do not know the trends’ happening outside the village and they are also ‘scared in experimenting’ (Student 2, September 2015). Students present themselves as ‘knowledgeable’ in these situations as one student said: “...they knew that we have the knowledge and whatever we say would be something which would be helpful for them” Student 1, September 2015).

The same student sees the assigned duty of an NID student in terms of how one should perform during a craft documentation, which she clearly distinguished from that of the other designer-artisan interventions. “Being a NIDian [sic], we are actually made sensitive about craft in India. Although it still prevails to a good extent, but it is dying and this is something as a student at NID we don’t want to see...we don’t want any craft to die”. The students’ view here illustrates the designer as the saviour of craft and contributing to safeguarding measures, where design education is also considered important to help students to “question or look at [the craft] with definite perspectives” (Student 4, September 2015).

There were also contradictory views held by students, where at one time they portrayed that traditional craft as historicised, that artisans had a mentality not to evolve with trends, and other times the same students portrayed [with appreciation] that the “past work” is more appealing as “artisans are very creative and [designers] should not put their creativity into the craft sector, but put the creativity in terms of how to grow it” (Student 1, September 2015).

Students took a craft idealist viewpoint where the designer should “not impose ideas”, instead should “gain trust”, “understand their state of mind” and “know the identity of artisans” while acting with “design sensibility”. How a designer contributes to this idealist viewpoint was then described by making people appreciate “what we [Indians] already have...[when] in India people are running towards the western world, not realising what we actually have in our own country...what we already have here [in India] is the reason what has been going on for centuries that had been done by our ancestors. And it is the same fact that it’s gonna [sic] sustain for many more years. And

which also has a value in itself. And it has been handmade which makes it more special’ (Student 2, September 2015). This displays a nostalgic view point of what craft could serve, refuting the modern designs of the West, rather antithetical to their previous comments on their need to cater to modern and global trends and consumption patterns. The work of design and craft here in general promotes the nationalistic idiom of post-independent India, and the discursive articulation of craft being considered as having a vernacular status with design offering the contemporary element. Another important view held by many students is that of ‘design responsibility’; a student explained “whatever we are making they will accept. So we as a designer should not lose the cultural aesthetics and values of the product. That’s why we decided we should not change the motifs’ (Student 5, September 2015). Acceptable design interventions are seen by students as change in the context of application and purposes without changing the techniques and materials.



Image 37: A section from a craft project that shows ethnographic documentation of craft work observed by students

Photo courtesy of Sushma Yadev



Image 38: The final product designs developed by students based on an ‘upcycle’ concept and combining techniques observed during the craft project

Photo courtesy of Sushma Yadev

In these documentation projects, students also encountered problems in defining what ‘traditional craft’ is and what it is not. One student discussed how she found it difficult to convince her classmates and some of the faculty members in selecting a craft ‘style’ called Shantiniketan batik, an “invented tradition” (Hobsbawm 2003/1983) that does not claim to be old, introduced by Shantiniketan⁴⁷ itself while adopting an Indonesian batik style. This bewilderment about what can be called ‘traditional’ was then resolved when one of her faculty members said “...if it is going on for more than 10 years you can consider it for your heritage craft project” (Student 4, September 2015).

⁴⁷ An educational institution in West Bengal that has been established by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore, which follows the old ‘gurukul’ style teaching, but also blends learning methods borrowed from the east and the west. (See <http://www.santiniketan.com/>)

Recognising the contemporaneous and the ‘liberal’ aspects of Shanthiniketan craft, shows a different set of indexical distinction between craft and design in the heritage textiles project. As the student described, “the way they have adopted batik in itself is design. Just because it came from Indonesia did not mean they took it the same way. It is an adopted style...[where] the motifs came from Alpana⁴⁸...So the use of batik and its expression and incorporation into the culture was not blindly following a tradition, but we understand it and consciously adopting it” (personal interview, September 2015). She compares such ‘liberal craft’ with other traditional craft in the Indian context and admires that it engenders a different set of aesthetics and a sense of freedom so that her analogy of traditional and contemporary craft in that matter changed.

“When I look at Indian craft, I have a lot of respect for that. But sometimes I really think its aesthetics are lacking. Take a look at Batik—it is like Japanese Wabi-Sabi which is the beauty in imperfection...Certain other crafts in India are so intricate and precise. Shantiniketan batik does not contain that intricacy. People have let go batik wild here” (personal interview, September 2015).

It was here the student commented on her conflict with the aims of the heritage textiles project as a romanticised project of craft, which also promotes revival efforts.

“I never liked the idea of heritage textiles project where we had to take the craft forward...I was questioning why do we have to think that we have to do something [for the artisan]. Why not let it be...Having respect for craft and that knowledge is a great thing. But I think somewhere the designers are thinking that we are the only one who’s doing good things...I see so many people at NID who are doing the craft based project, but what’s the outcome?...I don’t understand this reviving for the sake of revival. Is it that dead to be revived?” (Student 4, September 2015)

The student here brings our attention to a longstanding debate of a bourgeoisie identity created by the chauvinism of the designer, and which is enabled by design education (DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber 2016). It also highlights a division of mental versus manual labour or in other words creative classes versus labouring classes, where the former is performed by the designers (by offering design solutions) while the latter is in the hands of the artisan in terms of executing the plans of the designer (ibid). With regards to repeated revival efforts enacted by annual craft documentations, which starts

⁴⁸ A white colour floor decoration drawn with rice powder, a distinguish style to Bengal.

afresh each year portrays a cynical point of view where previous projects or learnings are not taken into account when considering the revival efforts of the Indian crafts according to DeNicola and Welkinson-Weber (2016, p93). This, on the other hand is an example of how craft revival discourse prevails in post-colonial situations, especially within design institutions, where artisans are considered to be key to the “moral Indian state”.

At these interfaces, while students become the ‘knowledgeable’ group, there are also indications that brief engagements are doing more harm than good. An example is the Sholapti project that two students carried out in Bengal. While they documented the craft of the master artisans, they acknowledged their engagements were minimised by the limited knowledge they had about the craft. “Once students don’t have the skill set especially in those cases where it requires mastery, then students tend to simplify the projects by default” (Student 6, September 2015). Therefore, the students’ project aimed to elevate those less-skilled people in the village by providing them with simple designs. The approaches suited those who did not want to accept a lengthy apprenticeship with a master artisan. Although acknowledging organising workshops to educate the low-skilled workers in the village is ‘hypothetical’, they suggested that they introduced something to the community that let those low skilled workers ‘think out of the box’ and move beyond the ‘one good success’.

The politicised nature of the craft sector was also highlighted by some students where they criticised the NGOs and elite class involvement. Although they see NGOs as a way of supporting the sector, one student said “it is a little scary...as it is very common in India that you start a brand promoting artisanal work, but there is also the pitfall of it becoming all money-money-money” (Student 6, September 2015). A different angle to this discussion was added by a third student, saying that when craft education collides with industry needs and their career developments where the aspirations of becoming a sensitised designer cannot be fully realised in an industrial and professional design context. “When we are here [at NID] we think this should not happen [to the craft] but after getting into the industry it is a different world. I had to take an educational loan so I have to pay it back. So I need to focus on a steady career” (Student 7, September 2015). In these circumstances, the revival and development needs of the craft via design mediation becomes only rhetoric once designers work within the capitalistic environment, forgetting the empathic behaviour they were taught to have towards craft.

Another aspect of politicised craft was brought to attention where students see the craft sector as a means of bringing social inclusion to the society by breaking the existing caste system. Two students remembered their engagement with a basket weaving community in Bihar who are removed from the society, being labeled a ‘scheduled caste’. They suggest that craft could act to empower society and a medium to interact with the others: “people are accepting the craft, but they are not accepting the people. They will consume the goods but will not allow these people to be within the social system, and that’s what we want to change” (Student 3, September 2015). They claimed they empathised and wanted to actively engage with people even though they were pressurised not to associate with the scheduled caste by fellow villagers. How they built empathy was explained by the student: “when you see and feel the condition they live- you feel very emotional. Their living condition was very poor where the children were on bare skin.” Even though they empathised, their actions however were based on market-led scenarios when weaknesses and threats were turned into opportunities and strengths. “We did a SWOT analysis. These we mapped together because when we were designers we had this thought that we are designing for them; keeping them in mind. We also did local market research including urban and rural market sectors” (Student 7, September 2015).

In these interventions students appreciate ‘collaborations’ and elaborated in interviews that collaborative mediation is the ideal way to work with marginalised artisans who cannot overcome the social and economic divisions otherwise. According to them, community relevant design is important, but it works on the students’ assumption on what capabilities artisans hold as they come to judge what artisans can do and cannot do. This is because “what I think [as a designer] and what I want from them will all be very different from what they make. Because our perceptions are different. Instead of interrupting their ideas or work and fully [changing] them, we should allow change [to] happen in the community. When we designed we did it by keeping them in mind. We know their skill levels and how much they can do” (Student 7, September 2015).

Of significance here is how feedback is given by the faculty members. Students at times feel constrained to what extent they can experiment and innovate while making the products “community relevant” and “culturally appropriate”, adhering to the “community aesthetics and vocabulary”. A common expression of all student groups was “keeping the artisan in mind” which they saw as a responsibility. This at times has dampened students’ design ideas and concepts. One student explained when he wanted

to do a series of furniture designs from bamboo basketry techniques, the faculty staff told him “ you should not think about making furniture that they have not tried out yet [in their community context]” (Student 8, September 2015). Another student, also expressed how his designs were rejected for lack of innovation: “The design I did for the craft community used existing bamboo winnowers. I combined two of them to make a bag out of it. But the faculty told me you have not done anything.” This resonates with what the academic explained in terms of how they educate the students to achieve the ideal designer role with responsibility towards culture, craft and the artisan while “bridging the gap”, and at the same time producing a commercial piece that suits the urban market, that are innovative.

“As a faculty the role that we have played is—every time a student comes up with a design solution we get them to reflect the set of skills the artisans have and we make sure the design solution is not compromising on that...For immediate benefits we should not get them [artisans] into a deskilling process. For that we set them a certain set of parameters...we have put down certain USPs of the craft, in terms of material, skills, people’s ability and aesthetics. And these criteria were kept in mind when any design solutions were arrived at. And when you are extensively compromising on any of these then the design solutions were not really taken ahead” (Swasti Singh Ghai, October 2015).

According to Swasti the faculty staff’s attempt is “not to freeze the product” but “more or less freeze the approaches taken for a product development” so that designers would not introduce radicalised design solutions. They also suggest that students need to approach the artisans and organise workshops to determine the viability of their solutions where students do not offer “frozen solutions” but “approaches”, so that artisans could take them forward. An example of how she advocates students on cultural appropriateness in their product is explained below:

“For an example there was one student who has worked in Bihar with the basketry groups. And she said this technique is good and this is their USP (unique selling proposition) and I want to do a product of a door hanging like a ‘toran’⁴⁹. And we [the faculty staff] said ok you do a toran which is a good idea, but in their culture they don’t have this kind of toran where the idea is more from Gujarat. But it is a concept which would please the urban market because it

⁴⁹ a decorative door hanging

is a different take on the toran. But we said the story behind how you do the toran—the little birds and all the things you want to put in is not just going to be a visually pleasing element, you need to find a story from their own culture and you need to see who are the participants of the story...so the toran tells a story. And what exactly those elements going to be—you suggest from their culture, but again you would evolve it when you have a workshop where you would go back and sit with the artisans...And we [NID designers from urban sectors] tried to introduce a few modern elements from the contemporary which they will be able to connect. So that it will not be far from their [artisan's] culture” (Swasti Singh Ghai, October 2015).

These attempts of contemporisation of artisanal products are as discussed as above: bridging the gap of urban and rural markets, providing a sustainable livelihood to the artisans, introducing added solutions to commercialisation of traditional products and particularly to mediate between artisans and the state as revival activists of craft. Therefore, NID's approach fits in with the national and regional elite discourses of craft ideology in India that promotes a preservationist model which overlaps with commercial needs (See Bundgaard 1999, p166-167). Similarly, drawing on responsibility to revive the craft, the designers mark a difference from the artisans which is built through several distinctions such as class distinctions, the creative urban thinkers vs. rural labour work where design education becomes a central theme that mark these differences in the tropes of craft development—within which collaborative design interventions take place.

Irrespective of the varied efforts of artisan and designer collaborations NID has initiated and introduced for students over the last 50 years, Swasti also mentioned that “we have not really come up with such models that smoothen (sic) a more frequent and a sustained design input to these craft clusters...in terms of how participatory are we, I have a question for ourselves. Because at the end of the day why does the whole ideation process gets undertaken only by the designer. Ideally it should happen both ways...That is still an issue.” This is regardless of empathy, humility and understanding artisan's culture, which have been part of “NID's DNA” and vocabulary from its inception.

5.7 Chapter Summary: Construction of heritage between multiple actors

The findings in this chapter confirm Nic Craith's assertion that, "...heritage is a contemporary rather than a historical resource. It is a modern process ... [It is not just] the transmission of intangible heritage from one generation to the next but [the] constant recreation by communities in response to their environment...and in theory everyone is welcome to participate in the process of transmission...[but it also comes with the] thorny question of ownership" (Nic Craith 2008, p67).

In this chapter, varied examples discussed from community, policy, development, business and educational contexts confirmed how multiple actors change, shape, create and recreate heritage. It also highlighted attempts by communities to retain their identity and concerns for ownership of their craft while trying to fulfil the requirements of multiple actors from businesses, research, design, government and international officials. While it becomes a concern to "harness the economic potential...without exploiting the heritage bearers or the tradition itself" and benefiting the community without profiting the management or the middlemen (Nic Craith 2008, p69), the examples discussed in the chapter explained that such balance is not easily achieved, and occur within asymmetrical relations of power and agency.

The chapter then discussed varied relationships of craft and design through power, agency, identity and representation in the Indian context. Following Bundgaard's (1999, p7) affirmation that traditional art or craft trading at national and international markets, "undergo different evaluations rooted in distinct regimes of value"; this chapter highlighted the cultural exchanges between local-global, generating and contributing to distinct and different value systems. Illustrated through colonial and post-independent development, it showed how the social organisation is affected on collective as well as individual levels. It further went on to show how the interventions were realised in these relationships, where design was introduced to bridge the gap between tradition and modernity for the craft sector, addressing economic and development concerns. Not only did these identifications create dichotomies between rural and urban, modern and traditional, designer and artisan, old and new; but understanding of craft and design in India also became a continuous construct between local and global or the western needs and ideologies imbued in globalisation, nationalistic idiom, international development, poverty alleviation, preservation of heritage, education and sustainability. The chapter also described how design acted as an authorised discourse, affecting the living

traditions of craft practices, much akin to the Authorised Heritage Discourse, which Smith (2006) coined which is based on creating a ‘global hierarchy of values’ where design and design education associate with the local artisans as “socially and economically subordinate to contemporary global capital”, which in return disempowers artisans by taking a western culturally elitist point of view (DeNicola and DeNicola 2012, p787).

Discussions were aided by the idea of the “salvage paradigm”, “elite’s hypostatisation” of craft, and following the ideology of craft and design in India, where the former was mainly presented within a preservationist and revivalist scheme of continuity, and the latter emulating a modernist perspective. Though it was repeatedly highlighted that design is needed to revive and safeguard craft, it also appeared that craft has always provided the platform for design to rupture, negotiate and question its approaches and stance in the Indian society. It confirmed what Venkatesan described as “craft in India is a heterotopia”, attempting to realise a particular utopian vision of traditional Indian craft, which is “an applied abstraction...often comes in the form of development initiated by the state or by the non-governmental agencies” (Venkatesan 2009 p266-268) as well as educational institutions. The connections were made explicit through different narratives of craft, design, anthropology and heritage discourses by linking them to macro and micro perspectives and by talking about artisanal work. It moved from the global and national level (macro) to community and individual levels (micro), and then moved back to the macro level again.

In order to do that, the chapter discussed the evolution of the Sanganer hand block printing industry where multiple actors come together to shape the heritage narrative of this traditional practice. Not only did this show the authorised discourses of heritage and design, with constitutive effects of national and international agencies, businesses, NGOs, educational institutions, it also showed the remarkable adaptability of the Sanganer artisans to negotiate between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’, ‘heritage’ and ‘progress’, accepting degrees of contemporary and global culture as part of living heritage in order for tradition to continue. This highlighted particular artisanal strategies as they manage and mitigate contesting priorities and interests of cultural and commercial innovations in order to carry out their traditional practices. It showed the pragmatic choices and approaches artisans take as they construct their heritage, allowing tradition to become a transformative process. It found Sanganer tradition as being “enforced, reinvented and transformed, denied and contested” in line with Varutti (2015, p1038), through screen

printing, synthetic dyes, new trade relationships, state policy and the rising up of new entrepreneurs.

Particular interest was paid to the role of higher education institutions and the education of designers as they labeled tradition, heritage, modernity and innovation through their engagements in different ways. It exposed the role that third level education plays in shaping the heritage narrative from policy to practice levels, when the role of universities and the need of heritage education are considered important (Logan 2006). The example of NID's approach to combine heritage, craft, design and anthropology provided a line of argument for this study, highlighting the requisite of treating heritage as an interdisciplinary field (Nic Craith 2008, p69). NID has to a certain extent been successful in combining the heritage sector and design education amidst industrial design strategies, particularly to make design relevant to a country when its relevance has been questioned, making it humane as it deals with national and international ideologies about heritage craft. The discussion also indicated that its innovation and commercialisation were never free from the early romanticised connotations generated by Orientalists, and the post-colonial political and industrial legacies which talk about preservation, safeguarding and creating a national identity while addressing development.

In craft development discourse, collaboration was found to be promoted by different actors, particularly those in design intervention. However, student engagements, development agency approaches and artisanal enterprise involvements revealed such mediations to be confined only for craft to be treated as vernacular with design offering the contemporary and modern element to connect with global markets. The findings finally questioned the lack of participatory approaches in heritage craft and design engagements and confirming the premise of this thesis study, namely to include multiple actors who control the heritage narrative and give voice to the marginalised artisans due to the authorised notions of heritage and design. This was found to be vital because different actors (both external and internal to the community) shape the structure of the craft, making negotiations subjective to the relations made by government, development agencies, local NGOs, businesses, designers and educational institutes and most importantly the community and the artisan. The findings of this chapter, corresponds that to in Bundgaard's (1999, p6) study as she also suggests that "one particular art world can be the centre of not one but several discursive formations as well as strategic practices".

In order to explore and validate these relationships, to find how heritage is constructed and who controls the narrative, the Sri Lankan craft sector will be discussed in the next chapter as it provides a comparative study that also shows colonial and post-independent developments transforming the local craft practices amidst a global design industry. It will follow the discourses similarly, as is discussed in this chapter in order to review how local-global mediation works there.

Chapter 6: Craft and Design in Sri Lanka

6.1 An Overview of Craft and Design in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka has long been connected to the world through networks of trade. Romain (2016) argues Sri Lanka has been overlooked with regard to its influence in the formation of South and Southeast Asian art, even though it has made a significant contribution. This is irrespective of Sri Lanka's presence in early commerce and cultural contributions to Southeast Asia (Wade 2009, Lakdusinghe 1997). When Jones (2008) describes the influence of material culture through British intervention, those influences affecting material culture and languages can also be traced back to as far as Indo-Aryan invasions in South Asia, that changed cultural traditions including craft (Erdosy 1995). However evidence also shows the presence of textile production (spinning and weaving of cotton) by indigenous people even before the Indo-Aryan invasion of the island in 543 BC (Pararajasingham 2006) which shows an extended use of craft in early ages.

In 2011 the export value of the craft sector contributes 45.7 million USD (Export Development Board 2012) and has a total workforce of 1.2 million, where both men and women make an equal contribution to the labour force according to a 2012 survey (Department of Census and Statistics 2015). The Sri Lankan design sector too focuses on contributing to a global industry (Gopura et al. 2016). The internationalisation of design not only contributes to design services by adding value, but has also created "design cities" with a distinctive creative class as can be seen from regenerating Colombo as a "designer city" (Knox 2011, p233). Moreover, this process uses national and regional cultures like traditional craft to cater to a global industry where craft is also said to be offering solutions to the unresolved problems of the global fashion industry (Dissanayake et al. 2017). Hereto, craft and design in Sri Lanka cannot be treated as separate sectors but need to be constructed in relation to their global ties. In doing so, and for the purpose of this study, this chapter charts the colonial and post-independent developments, particularly focusing on British interventions to produce a detailed account of the conjoined development of these two sectors in Sri Lanka. In addition, such a framework provides a platform to discuss the development of craft and design in Sri Lanka in tandem with developments discussed in previous chapters.

6.2 Colonial and Post-Independent Development

For most of the last 500 years Sri Lanka was under the rule of European powers, first the Portuguese (1594-1658), then the Dutch (1640-1796) and finally the British (1796-1948). The consolidation of European colonialism brought about significant social changes, “for it saw the end of the kingly line...with the attempt to create a modern colony” (Sivasundaram 2013, p5). It was the British who gained control over the entire island in 1815, creating a unified territory of governance, and Sivasundaram (2013) argues that the colonial transition was different and complicated in Sri Lanka where repeated migration, trade and colonisation altered the indigeneity of the people. According to Sivasundaram, the “colonial discourse” of the British was different in Sri Lanka (colonial Ceylon) even though it displays parallels to British India, where Ceylon became “a different laboratory for forms of state-making, following a separate chronology and leaving a different legacy, for instance in relation to ethnic identities”(Sivasundaram 2013, p14). Rogers (2004) argues the difference is due to variations in administrative rules and intellectual traditions of the British Crown as the governing body as opposed to the British East India company.

The Highland-Lowland dichotomy and the hybridised cultures

The British relationship to the Kandyan kingdom in the highlands was special, not only because it was the political and religious heartland of Sri Lanka as the last kingdom, but it also shows the way the British constructed their idea of the authenticity and indigeneity of Ceylon through the pre-industrial and romanticised connotations they associated with the Kandyan culture (Jones 2008). Arguably, this British concept initially did not replace the indigenous knowledge, but it showed “complex parentage” and “recycling of inherited traditions” mixing with colonial science, Sivasundaram stipulates (Sivasundaram 2013, p194).

Social, cultural and political changes therefore shaped the colonial and post-colonial developments, with regards to how craft and design is considered and seen in the Sri Lankan context, and Jones describes that local craft traditions in Ceylon influenced nationalism as way of developing a local cultural identity (Jones 2008). As in the Indian context, where rural ‘village’ craft was seen as the epitome of national identity (Balaram

2005, McGowan 2009), the idea of village was important in Ceylon (Brow 1999), however it was craft in the Kandyan region that came to be associated with the authentic and indigenous (Jones 2008). According to Sivasundaram, this inception still prevails when Kandy is regarded as the “‘indigenous’ heritage in contemporary Sri Lanka” rather than that of the coastal or lowland regions (Sivasundaram 2013, p10). Such assumption not only affected the British partitioning strategies and islanding discourse, while recasting people’s identities as a way of prioritising them (i.e. Sinhalese Buddhist as the ‘true Ceylonese’) (Sivasundaram 2013, Wickramasinghe 2006) but it also validated and justified the need for colonial interventions to safeguard the declining traditional art and craft practices in Ceylon as part of their civilising mission (Jones 2008).

The British viewed those art and craft practices in the lowland and coastal belt as ‘hybridised’ through prolonged Portuguese and Dutch invasions, therefore claimed it did not represent the native culture (Jones 2008). By locating the artistic expressions of the local craft in “a national golden epoch of distant past that was now lost...[the Kandyan craft] was clearly separated from the present, from the modern, and could therefore be safely considered as authentic relics of an ancient and spectacular indigenous culture” (Jones 2008, p387-88). Additionally, Jones asserts that not only did this create a debased craft tradition in the country, but also gave the opportunity for the British to consider themselves as the only revivalists of declining traditions. This further marginalised the craft sector by firmly locating crafts as a vernacular activity of the past and deprecated local production to stabilise British power (ibid). This not only created a distinct political and cultural division between lowland and highland Sinhalese that resulted in identity creation and representation based on tradition and modernity (as well as geographic locations) but even extended definitions of what was worth safeguarding as museum pieces and creation of ‘invented traditions’ (Wickramasinghe 2006).

One such example was gazetting “Reli Kamise or shirt with frills” for the Kandyans, where the British declared it should not to be similar to that of the European Dress, thus resolutely advising a non-western attire for the Kandyans on the one hand (Wickramasinghe 2006, p62). This manipulated the cultural identity and the representation of the Western lowland-elite-class Sinhalese on the other hand by allowing a bourgeois hybridity to emerge through a garment called “trouser under the cloth”; trousers worn under the traditional sarong (Pieris 2013, p7-8). This confirms

Sivasundaram's (2013) connotation of "complex parentage" where appropriation of western and eastern elements both came to shape colonial and post-colonial developments in response to modernity and nationalism, where education and material culture such as clothes and architecture, were useful strategies and expressions (Pieris 2013).

The Design Schools in Colonial Time

Further, the need for revival altered the idea of preservation and as a result introduced design education to Ceylon by following the British Art School models. The extent to which the British idealised their utopian vision of authentic Ceylonese craft is illustrated by Jones, referring to an advertisement in *The Ceylon Times* published when they selected exhibits to be displayed at the Great Exhibition in 1851. The advertisement shows the nature of prescriptive attributes defining "Ceylonese craft" based on a notion of authenticity that required Ceylonese products to be created by natives of Ceylon and only to use "strictly Ceylonese" ornamentations and patterns (Cited in Jones 2008). Jones further linked the development of art and design schools in Ceylon to the introduction of scientific drawing schools like the Colombo Academy in 1835 and also the establishments of such Industrial schools as part of the Wesleyan drive to eradicate poverty in the country while improving traditional skills. Describing an 1876 Education Report, Jones shows the way the British assumed native artisans lacked innovation, hence industrial designers were expected to introduce design to the local students as a means of improving native taste (Jones 2008). Coomaraswamy in 'Medieval Sinhalese Art' criticised of this "old-fashioned South Kensington school" model of allowing the learner to learn drawing without necessarily acquiring the knowledge of traditional methods (Coomaraswamy 1908, p68).

Other industrial and design schools were opened in Kandy in 1854, in Cinnamon Gardens Colombo 1859, and by the early 1900s a number of industrial schools that focused on weaving, carpentry, lacquer, pottery, stone and wood carving were opened in Rajagiriya, Piliyande, Horetuduwa, Nugawela, Kadgannawa, Leliambe and Waragoda. These acted as a way of disseminating the British government policy and involved the elite class as supporters of traditional craft, where the British administration became the

new patron, as opposed to the royal patronage that was visible in the Kandyan region (Jones 2008).

Orientalists' involvement with Ceylonese Arts and Crafts

The same Anglo-Ceylonese geologist, art historian and philosopher Coomaraswamy generated a cult of craftsmanship in Sri Lanka based on the tenets of the British Arts and Crafts Movement in response to industrialisation and the decline of traditional practices as he did in India. He wrote:

“Of English influence on purely Sinhalese art, the less said the better. It has been characterised, from the English side, by almost complete indifference to indigenous culture, the result of an ideal of purely material prosperity; the destruction of indigenous crafts by the competition of cheap machine-made materials [and] the neglect of surviving architectural tradition and capacity for building; and by an entirely false and unnatural system of education, the result of which is to make the ‘educated’ strangers in their own land.” (Coomaraswamy 1908, p255).

Further, reviewing some of Coomaraswamy's work also reveals his preoccupation with the Kandyan region and the idea of preservation inculcated through a romanticised view of mediaeval art and craft⁵⁰. Writing an open letter to the Kandyan chiefs in 1905 Coomaraswamy asserts:

“Is it not worthwhile to preserve even one memorial of the steady competency of by-gone Kanyan artists?...Even if the painter to be Kandyan, who sees to it that he uses the right colours in the right way?...For instead of the traditional home-made colours with their quite richness, are used cheap paints bought in the boutiques, and these put on with little or no care and taste” (Coomaraswamy 1957, p4).

⁵⁰ His seminal work on Sri Lankan arts and craft was published as *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, Romain says the book not only provided a detailed account of the 18th century Kandyan art, the impact of British governance on art and craft practise in colonial times and a classification system of art and craft genres, but it also provided the framework to analyse Sri Lankan art and craft in relation to Indian subcontinent. Romain also describes how Coomaraswamy's analysis created a division between Kandyan Sinhalese as protectionists of the traditional culture while the Low Country Sinhalese were regarded as adopters of European cultures (Romain 2016).

Such influence not only generated a nationalistic movement within the country, alongside the Buddhist revival needs (Jones 2008, Scammell 2000) but it also introduced a view about preservation as a way of maintaining cultural continuity (Pieris 2013). His work is still considered the standard for museologists and curators to identify and classify Ceylonese or Sri Lankan art and craft (Romain 2016). Too much focus on the Kandyan region, whether by the British or national revivalists like Coomaraswamy, has resulted in the developments in the low-lands being overlooked. However, Roberts highlighted their worth in his report on the contribution of low country itinerant artisans engaging in other entrepreneurial activities during Portuguese, Dutch and British colonial times, in which artisans utilised their traditional skills to successfully take advantage of colonial expansion, while departing from stigmatised caste-based occupations (Roberts 1982). Of significance for this study is how the ideology generated about vernacular designs as a nationalist cultural identity, at times associated with caste-based divisions, changed since independence. This ideology affected the institutional and policy framework organised in the colonial and post-colonial contexts which has influenced formation of various types of identities in Sri Lanka (Rogers 1994, Wickramasinghe 2006). The next section will also look at how the elite class attempted to involve revivalist efforts in traditional crafts as well⁵¹ (Jones 2008, Robson 2008). Pararajasingham (2006) notes one such example of how Buddhist-Sinhalese revivalist went on to set up Industrial design schools in Ceylon, with the 'Hewawitharana Industrial School' opening in Rajagiriya, Colombo in 1912 with the generous funding of an elite Sinhalese⁵² as opposed to those British technical school models which taught both technical drawing and craft training (De Silva 1981).

The work of both the British and national craft revivalists in Ceylon conveyed that Kandyan art and craft was seen as the epitome of traditional work, to be emulated in the eyes of both groups but in different ways. While the British believed the revival would be possible through the introduction of art school models in Ceylon (Jones 2008) revivalists such as Coomaraswamy not only illustrated a strong traditionalism, he also suggested that the revival of Ceylonese art and craft would only be viable if connected

⁵¹ While Coomaraswamy identified the Westernised Ceylonese middle class responsible for the decline of traditional craft (Jones 2008), Coomaraswamy (1957) also considered the Kandyan elites an integral part of the preservation of the Ceylonese craft including heritage buildings, due to the power and influence they held.

⁵² These Schools were influenced by Indian models, particularly the Gandhian movement. While the British treated high caste Kandyan as the authentic Sinhalese 'as the guardians of the admirable qualities of tradition' the Low-Country elite group also organised to prove their worth as opposed to the feudal Kandyan chieftains (See Wickramasinghe 2006, p55).

to its Indian roots, for he believed “Ceylon from the standpoint of ethnology and culture, is an integral part of India” (Coomaraswamy 1913, pv). Buddhist Sinhalese revivalists enthusiastically borrowed nationalist ideologies from India as they shared such views (Wickramasinghe 2006).

6.2.1 Traditionalism, Nationalism and Modernisation in craft and design in Sri Lanka

The traditional societal structure of Sri Lanka can be explained by historical developments that date back more than 2500 years, recorded in *Mahavamsa* (“The great chronicle”⁵³), when the Buddhist-Sinhalese civilization started with the introduction of Buddhism to the island. Alongside this, different art and craft guilds from North India were established⁵⁴. Coomaraswamy, referring to *Mahavamsa* notes the early association of the arts and crafts in Sri Lanka with royal support, and later links such patronage to the organisation of traditional crafts in the Kandyan region, where he explains the divisions and the organisation of the sector consisting of feudal or state craftsmen, district craftsmen, temple craftsmen as well as manorial craftsmen (Coomaraswamy 1909). Where the feudal craftsmen were supported based on land tenure as service to the kingdom, De Silva (1981) describes a system of labour specialisation enabled through endogamous castes, where the village level operated on a barter system, as noted by Coomaraswamy in his observation of Kandyan craftsmen where single caste villages were a common feature.

“In Ceylon if a man wanted a new cloth he gave cotton from his clearing, and a present of grain to the weaver. Sometimes the craftsman was paid in this kind of way whenever his services were required, sometimes he received perquisite only on special occasions...” (Coomaraswamy 1909, p6).

⁵³ A canonical religious text that depicts the early history of Sri Lanka covering genealogy, legends and heritage tales. It is at present day considered to be the central charter when describing the Sinhala nationalism and its authenticity. (See Wickramasinghe 2006, Wickramasinghe 2003)

⁵⁴ However an earlier presence of textiles production is also reported in Sri Lanka before the arrival of Indo-Aryans. (See Pararajasingham 2006, Tennent 1860) The Indo- Aryan arrival was dated back to 543 BC and the introduction of Buddhism dates back to 288 BC.

Post-Independent projects affecting the local craft sector

As described in the previous section, the organisation of arts and crafts in Sri Lanka was later determined by colonial rulers, especially the British, and there was an exchange of knowledge between colonisers and colonised that was both competitive and collaborative. Even though Sri Lanka gained its independence from Britain in 1948, the institutional set up and policy framework continued to reflect colonial precedent. Winslow (1996) sums up such development, including structural adjustments, and relates it to the craft sector in terms of how macroeconomic policies affected identities of artisans and other social and cultural aspects of the craft community she studied. Her review is important as she identifies how the decline of the ‘Big Three’ plantation industries (tea, coconut and rubber) introduced in colonial times resulted in the nationalisation of the economy, the regulation of private enterprise in order to balance the income and expenditure of a burdened economy, and the promotion of frugality and local production alongside import substitution policies (During 1956-1977). In 1977, a widespread reversal of previous policies began with the ‘opening up’ of the economy. The economic liberalisation programme led to privatisation, access to international markets, free trade zones and large international donor funds to run projects in Sri Lanka. However, Winslow asserts both the new and old economic policies became controversial after scrutiny from international aid groups⁵⁵ made it clear that the policies contributed to a growing disparity between the rich and the poor. Sri Lanka in return was categorised as a Third World country (Winslow 1996, See also Winslow 2003).

Sri Lanka is now categorised as a lower middle income country, with a population of 21 million. The World Bank reports a shifts towards service oriented businesses which account for 62.4% of the gross domestic product (GDP) while manufacturing accounts only 28.9% followed by agriculture at 8.7% of GDP. Although poverty still remains a challenge, the country has progressed in surpassing most of the United Nation’s millennium development goals set for 2015 with the aim of achieving global competitiveness, export-led economy and an inclusive society (The World Bank 2017).

⁵⁵ in the 1970s and 80s the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) structural adjustment programmes were initiated to assist third world economies and led to how globalisation was enacted through international aid and Sri Lanka adopted the IMF’s recommendations for growth. (See Winslow 1996 and Lynch 2007)

Industrialisation strategies and the construction of ‘foreign’ and ‘local’

The garment industry programmes initiated as one of the industrialisation strategies during the 1977 reforms, continued even in the post liberalisation era of the early 1990s. This led to a debate on localisation and globalisation, in terms of how one should engage with development without losing cultural distinctiveness to the homogenising effects of globalisation (Lynch 2007). In postcolonial nations Lynch describes;

“...the dominant response to economic and cultural globalisation is often cultural fundamentalism: local people conceive of entry into their nation of foreign goods, people, ideas, and commodities as a threat to revered cultural traditions. The struggle in Sri Lanka has been not simply between the foreign and the local, but between a foreign and a local constructed...[where] economic and cultural interests are tightly woven and mutually constitutive, but as subjects act on and make sense of their worlds, they often cannot reconcile these interests and instead experience them as deeply contradictory.”⁵⁶ (Lynch 2007, p23)

Therefore, rather than an actual conflict between ‘foreign’ and ‘local’ within the economy and culture, there is a conflict between locally constructed perceptions of what ‘foreign’ and ‘local’ mean.

The development of the craft sector can also be understood based on how desire for foreignness and attraction to localness is constructed between tradition and modernity, between nationalism and westernisation as a result of colonial, post-colonial and globalisation strategies. As Lynch outlines, when contemporary Sri Lankan villages associate with discipline, tradition and morality, a division is created between urban and rural, the East and the West, and spiritual and moral values are seen as not being fully compatible with development and progress (Lynch 2007, also see Kemper 2001). Consequently, achieving a balance between these distinctions is not only an important

⁵⁶ The idea of localisation and globalisation in colonial times as part of industrialisation can also be understood when Wickramasinghe describes of how the locals, both urbans and rurals responded to modernisation with the introduction of the domestic sewing machine to Ceylon by Singer in 1877. Even though the sewing machine acted as the “‘coup de grâce’ for traditional weaving” when it reproduced products through replications instead of creating unique products, she discusses the vernacular understanding of Ceylonese about industrial goods as an untroubled encounter to the mechanical and material modernity. It also shows the way material culture providing a reimagined context about colonialism, authenticity and transnational relationships about consumption on commodities. Ironically Singer sewing machine was also part of the nationalistic movement in India as well, when Gandhi made an exception for its notable use irrespective his ban on the western machinery. (Wickramasinghe 2006, p4 and Wickramasinghe 2014)

discourse in terms of how they subsume each other but also relates to postcolonial industrialisation strategies (Winslow 2007, Lynch 2007). When such development programmes were inaugurated in light of the above distinctions of nationalism and westernisation, to some degree promoting the rhetoric of rural traditional village as the epitome of traditional culture in Sri Lanka, this not only showed the extent to which the Buddhist nationalistic revivalists' idea of precolonial village structures continued in post-colonial times (Lynch 2007), but also demonstrated how the Sri Lankan elite imagined the rural and urban divide treating the former as morally superior to and more authentic than the latter (Winslow 2007).

Such views relate to the discussion of this study in terms of how these dichotomies affect the craft and design sector in the country today, and to what extent such discourse constructs the idea of heritage. Winslow confirms that one needs to take both colonial and post-colonial developments into account when reviewing the development of village craft in Sri Lanka (Winslow 1996). Relating to that, she suggests that taking both political and economic developments in a conjoined context to assess Sri Lankan craft is also a valid method. Such longitudinal assessment on change shows how the "village life improves...[or at one point declines, when] the cumulative effects of the past join with the people's present aspirations to set for what comes next" (Winslow 1996, p702). Such studies illustrate how communities also construct the heritage discourse as a result of their negotiation with past, present and imagined futures (Smith 2006). Such continuous change according to Winslow can then be argued to be the result of "a process in which 'tradition' and 'modern' are continuously intertwined and reconstructed despite perpetual dichotomous rhetoric from all quarters" (Winslow 2003, p44).

The development of political ideologies and policy frameworks targeting craft and design during colonial and post-colonial Sri Lanka can be seen to work in response to the above, as a mutual constitutive relationship of "local ways of being foreign" and "local ways of being Sri Lankan", but not in a simple opposition of tradition/modern or local/foreign (Kemper 2001, p92). Pararajasingham (2006), reporting on the evolution of the Sri Lankan textiles industry pays attention to several of these political and policy initiatives which could also have been argued to influence the craft sector, such as the handloom industry, within the dichotomous rhetoric of traditional and industrial-modern. There, industrialisation and domestic-rural production can be seen to work hand in hand, both in complementary and contested ways. The first textiles mill established in 1888

by the British was later developed in post-independence Sri Lanka with the establishment of the National Textiles co-operation in 1958 and the Textiles Weavers' Co-operative society. These models promoted both handloom and mill production within the industry. The handloom sector was nearly always considered to be a development activity for the rural villages emphasising that production of textiles in villages using handloom should be seen as an occupation rather than as a craft and it was initiated under the Department of Rural Development and Small Industries.

However such activities were also aligned with nationalistic thinking and borrowed much of their influence from Indian nationalistic movements promoting local traditions. For example, the Buddhist nationalist revivalist Anagarika Dharmapala sent the first textiles technology student to India in 1912, and similarly the Indian spinning wheel 'Charka' was introduced to industrial design schools run by Sinhalese revivalists. Such nationalistic thinking in the textiles industry also included promotion of natural dyes as part of its rejection of Western methods (See Pararajasingham 2006). Thus nationalist revival was not purely a movement that opposed all things foreign and Western. Far from it, the textile industry in Sri Lanka developed through a tension and collaboration between local, nationalist and traditional on the one hand and Western, more outward looking and modern on the other.

Post-independence, state interventions also promoted local production processes. It is evident that irrespective of whether a government was pro-socialist or pro-capitalist, governments resulting from a two-party system that has been in place since independence have promoted local production as part of decolonisation. The then Prime Minister (Mr) Dudley Senanayake (1965-1970) of the governing pro-capitalist United National Party, even though outward looking, at the opening of the one thousand handloom village programme in 1966 announced: "It is a sign of national independence for the public to show a keen interest in local textiles; self-sufficiency in food and clothing. It is our hope to see a people who will completely take Swadeshi [locally produced] textiles in preference to the foreign product" (cited by Pararajasingham 2006, p102). Elected on promoting a pro-socialist political ideology, the following Prime Minister (Mrs) Sirimavo Bandaranaike (1970-1977) implemented her policies based on the nationalistic principle of "wip[ing] out of all vestiges of colonialism and

imperialism”⁵⁷ (Karunadasa 1990, p53). As Pieris (2013, p184) argues what emerged as “vernacular discourse” in Sri Lanka was hence shaped by politics of identity as much as by strong Euro-American influences and is further examined below.

First World-Third world relations: Cultural and Industrial Projects

In the 1960s and 70s, the U.S. cultural diplomacy and propaganda strategy as part of cold war politicking came to shape local industries in Sri Lanka. Despite the political climate in 1960s Sri Lanka leaning towards socialism, the conflating agenda of national politics became visible as they approved the American Small Industries Exhibition in 1961. The exhibition promoted industrial design strategies with capitalistic modernity which the U.S. wanted to introduce to developing countries as part of an exercise to encourage more positive attitudes towards the West’s capitalistic modernisation and a rejection of socialist state-centred developments. The 1961 exhibition which had toured in India (1958-1960) also went on tour in Ceylon, giving live demonstrations of US technology in various industrial processes along with a portrayal of the improved American lifestyle. A new potter wheel and kerosene fired pottery kiln was displayed as “the newest tools of this age old trade” which the exhibition organisers wanted to promote as “appropriate technology” for the Ceylonese context. The American organisers hired local demonstrators while American “experts” schooled the locals on their consumption habits, for example encouraging them to eat Western food through the exposition of “Wheat Kitchen”. The product designs were an amalgam of American values and South Asian needs and considered an act of cultural diplomacy deployed through industrial design, and in return building an American way of life in Ceylon (De Silva 2015).

⁵⁷ Also see Wickramasinghe (2003), which provides an account of the contradictory and incongruent views and acts of national politicians in promoting nationalism as a way of defying colonialism but the way they got endorsed in Westernisation polity.

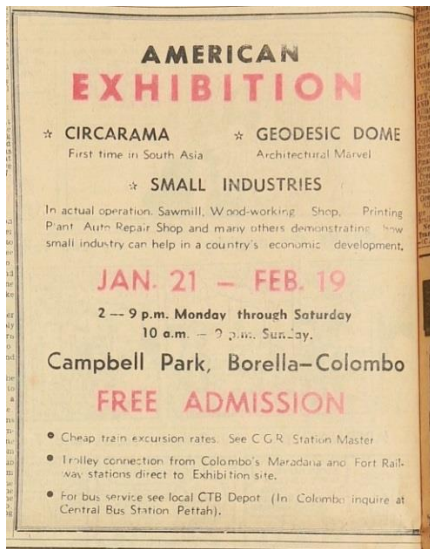


Image 39: An advertisement of the Small Industries Exhibition on Daily Ceylon Newspaper 1961, page 10

National Archive, Sri Lanka

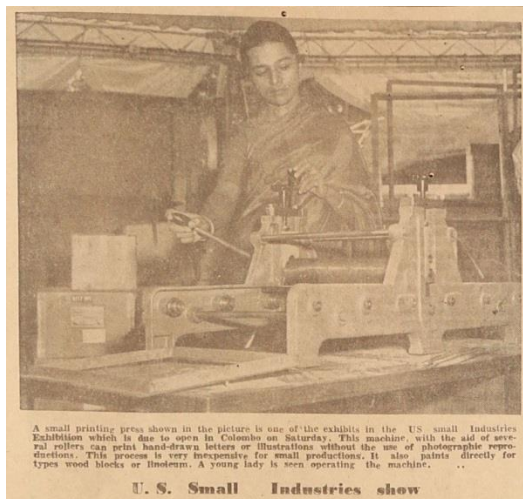


Image 40: A picture of the small printing press displayed at the exhibition, The Ceylon Daily News, January 16, 1961, page 9

National Archive, Sri Lanka

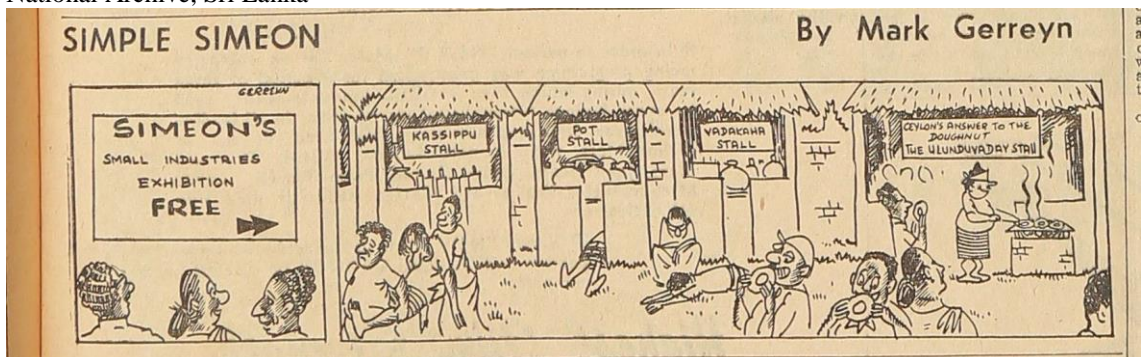


Image 41: A cartoonist illustrated how the locals would have appropriated the Small Industries Exhibition with irony and sarcasm, Ceylon Daily Newspaper, January 31, 1961, p13

National Archive, Sri Lanka

According to Anoma Pieris (2013, p158) these national and international exhibitions acted not only as presenting “avant-garde design experimentations” or “futuristic utopias” but were also considered a representation of “vernacular along neoliberal lines”, a way of influencing rural communities to acknowledge urban ideologies. Another example of similar industrial design changing local attitudes towards modernity was the 1965 exhibition, which was largely funded by Russia. Also seen as part of cold-war politics, it had participants from nine countries including East and West Germany, Poland, Israel, Czechoslovakia, America, China, India and Pakistan. The exhibition, according to Pieris (2013, p166), depicting a mixture of western models and solutions for local needs via industrial designs, or in other words; “modernity as technological progress...an expression of humanist ideals through concrete technology”, did not however include anything relating to “ethnicity, religion and cultural specificity...in the embrace of these concrete giants”.

Indigenising strategies and the promotion of vernacular designs alongside modernity

How industrial design affected Sri Lanka can also be seen in parallel to the development of architectural trends of the 60s and 70s⁵⁸, when a new generation of architects attempted to rectify the identity crisis that had been caused by modernistic ideologies and professionalisation. They did this by means of indigenising strategies, and promoting vernacular designs and artisanal cultures later in the 80s (Pieris 2013). Interestingly Pieris (2013, p169) makes similar observations in India where “return to traditions” was achieved through heritage conservation via the establishment of craft museums and the rejuvenation of local cultural practices at urban festivals. By the same token, returning to local cultures in Sri Lanka was achieved by idealising ‘the village’ which became an official priority, described by Pieris(2013) and Brow(1999) as taking place through such village awakening programmes as ‘Gam Udawa’ (1978-1993) launched by the United National Party government. Brow (1999) also connects Gam Udawa to Coomaraswamy’s idealisation of an essentialist village community as an initiative that reflects a similar ethos. Such indigenising strategies therefore not only

⁵⁸ Pieris (2013, p167) describes the European model of education offered at The School of Architecture reviewed by RIBA (Royal Institute of British Architects), in the 1970s as being about reassertion ‘(of those)colonial relationships whereby British scrutinised and validated the professionalisation of post-colonials’. In return what emerged were local students re-appropriating their education to suit more local needs as ‘professionals’.

promoted local cultures, but also shifted Colombo-centred exhibitions and development schemes in the post-independent era to the village level. However, in Pieris's terms (2013, p174-79), it underscores a second purpose, where Gam Udawa projects aimed at "disciplining the rural periphery" or converting rural peasants into "citizen- subjects" by educating them about modernity. (One way of accomplishing this is discussed later in this chapter in reference to how industrial design interventions were promoted at such events as Gam Udawa exhibitions to uplift local craft practices at the village level.)

It is apparent in all this that the idea of craft and design became a contest between tradition and modernity. Intended to promote nationalism in traditional Sinhalese culture, it was also employed by industrialisation and westernisation schemes. This emerged within the nascent institutionalising sphere of craft and design in post-colonial Sri Lanka, and was reflected in the diverse initiatives of councils, educational institutes, marketing and tourist boards, state agencies, international agencies and those efforts undertaken in the private domain by the elite class. This becomes even clearer when reviewing the establishment of institutional frameworks for craft and design and is examined in the following section.

6.2.2 The Institutional Framework for Craft and Design in Sri Lanka

The State mediation and Elite Class interventions—An official discourse

Based on the principles of the preservation of Ceylonese identity and authenticity, the Arts Council of Ceylon was established through a parliamentary act in 1952, with one of its objectives being "to preserve, promote and encourage, the development of such arts and crafts as are indigenous to Ceylon" (The Government of Ceylon 1952, p3)⁵⁹. The revival was important to national identity, and as explained earlier the preoccupied vision of generating an authentic traditional culture was not only endorsed by national policy, and by craft idealists such as Coomaraswamy, but also through the elite class involvement in post-independence Sri Lanka. One such example is the work of Mrs.

⁵⁹ Ironically, the Act was drafted a year later after establishing the Colombo Plan, a commonwealth initiative to promote economic progress via trade loans, technical assistance, and education to support South East and Pacific Asia. It also resulted in organising an exhibition in 1952 as Colombo Plan Exhibition to promote autonomy of Ceylon by drafting plans for defence, agriculture and development but in ways of aligning with the former colonial administration (See Pieris 2013).

Siva Obeyesekere, a former elite parliamentary member, president of the World Craft Council (1992) and the Craft Council Sri Lanka, and an important revivalist of Sri Lankan craft. Said to have found her inspiration to revive traditional craft in Ceylon after meeting Indian craft revivalist Kalamadevi Chattopadyaya in 1961, Obeysekera established the main retail craft outlet called 'Laksala' as a government initiative in 1964 (Gunawardena, 2005) and it still operates today. She went on to receive the prestigious Kamala Samman award from the Craft Council India in 2003 for her contribution to the development of craft in Sri Lanka (Gunawardena 2005), which was also referred to as 'philanthropic' work due to the empowering initiatives she led (Jayasekara 2015).

This shows how cultural traditions were presented at the macro level within the political domain, consequently promoting craft within networks of state patronage, and thus affecting the mundane and everyday value system of the people who engaged with it. All of this demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of national cultural identity; the mixture of the vernacular and modernity which ordinary people had to adapt to, based upon official discourse. As Bundgaard notes (1999, p162) it carried, "an elite hypostatisation" especially during the mid and late 20th century, creating a particular image about craft in Sri Lanka that was abstracted from the pragmatic choices of the craftsmen.

The Kellers' Report

Crafts that were strongly associated with nationalism were promoted as part of heritage tourism for development reasons during and after the 1960s. The State of Ceylon invited Mr. and Mrs. Dale Keller, two American interior designers, to conduct a survey on Ceylonese crafts and advise the tourist board, and the government on how to incorporate and promote crafts within the tourism industry. Mr. J. R. Jayawardena, then Minister of State and Tourism, who later initiated the open economic policies in 1977 as the president of Sri Lanka, wrote a foreword for the survey report mentioning the newly established Tourist Development Act of 1968 as an elaborated vision on how craft as a cultural resource should be made part of tourism to generate a "unique Ceylon atmosphere" "a national identity" and as "products made in Ceylon" (Keller and Keller 1967).

Jayawardena's aim was;

“...to carry out a survey of cottage industries, materials and cultural resources of the Island in order to better utilise in the furnishing and décor of hotels, and to advise on the greater use of local materials for the building of new tourist facilities...special emphasis was placed on the necessity to safeguard and ensure a national identity for the products of this country by identifying materials and techniques which are unique to the country and exploring ways and means whereby production could be increased while conforming to the highest standards of quality and individuality” (Jayawardena quoted in Keller and Keller 1967, p ix).

The influence of Dale and Patricia Keller's report, despite apparently being an unexplored document thus far in the Sri Lankan craft and design historiography, unlike Eames and Eames's India Report, cannot be underestimated, as its recommendations came to affect how craft was promoted as a cultural activity, a nationalistic ideology, a profitable venture and a source for development in later institutional and training programmes in the country. It may even be possible to argue that the report might have paved the way for design to emerge as a modern concept aiding the craft sector. As well as describing such activity within the Sri Lankan craft in the 1950s and 60s, it is worth mentioning the parallel modernist movements emerging in the country at the time. 'American' style houses that followed Marcel Breuer's exhibits at MOMA, New York in 1949, and 'Tropical Modernism', a wave of architectural designs which were inspired by those modernist and avant-garde aesthetics in Europe and America, were also noteworthy (Pieris 2013, p123-27). Similar to the Indian context, where intra-cultural design transfers were prevalent as part of cold-war cultural diplomacy, such as when NID designer Singanapalli Balaram received a Ford Foundation scholarship to study at the Royal College of Art (RCA) (Clarke 2016b), in Sri Lanka, it was the architect Valentine Gunasekara who upon receiving a Rockefeller travel grant went to America where he met Louise Khan, Charles and Ray Eames and other prominent architects and designers. Having been introduced to systematic drawing and pre-fabricated design kits, his subsequent architectural designs informed a change in Sri Lankan lifestyle as a way of liberating the newly educated women in the home, while promoting American values as modern aspirations he had witnessed when abroad (Pieris 2013).

Reviewing this against what the Kellers presented in their report, the interior design duo instead criticised the imitated work of local craftsmen claiming to achieve a ‘European look’, which they argued to be generating ‘false western standards’. Instead they requested to integrate Ceylonese temperaments—tropical hues with a new vocabulary of colours based on the inspirations taken from cinnamon, saffron, mango, hibiscus, jasmine and frangipani which the Kellers thought to represent ultimate ‘Ceylonese-ness’. The lack of design input was repeatedly highlighted, and it was made explicit that design needs to be incorporated to advance the vernacular, or under-developed, craft sector in order for craft to progress.

Of significance here is how the Kellers’ report promoted the idea of contemporary craft and design as being a “well balanced and integrated design synthesis...[creating] an awareness of new way of life” (Keller and Keller 1967, p87). Compared to the early colonial views on revival efforts through design institutions, post-independent projects such as Kellers’ also advised on establishing institutional frameworks such as the Ceylon Handcraft Board; this included a craft centre, a design centre, a training and production centre and a marketing centre. Their advice was to include a modern craft element within the Ceylonese craft sector, while displaying a permanent collection of historicised craft, accompanied with extensive research being based on Coomaraswamy’s book of Medieval Sinhalese Art. It shows how the Kellers were influenced by Coomaraswamy’s romanticisation of Ceylonese craft. At the same time they encouraged contemporary work as in what was sellable in the new tourist markets, where as the Kellers repeatedly insisted on an improved quality of craftwork. This again exhibits the dual nature of approaches concerning crafts in Sri Lanka, with the emphasis on preservation on one hand and modernisation aspect of craft on the other.

To Kellers’, the craft was declining in Sri Lanka and they sought to create a “renaissance of Ceylon Crafts” where design was seen as bridging the gap between modern consumer tastes and traditional handicrafts (Keller and Keller 1967, p114). They claimed the decline was due to the irrelevant use of traditional craft, rather than the lack in skills and knowledge of artisans, when they said “...we often heard the term ‘old fashion’ used in a derogatory sense of the handicrafts; but it should be remembered that it is the usage of artefact which is out-dated and not the craft skills which produce it. Craft knowledge and technique are well capable of being reapplied to the manufacture of goods relevant to 20th century needs...” (Keller and Keller 1967, p115).

The Keller's report is advocating preservation of cultural heritage encourages the use of indigenous aesthetics for commercial purposes and promotes a nationalistic identity through craft as a prerequisite (which the State wanted to achieve); it also linked to tradition and modernity conflict. Indicative of this was the desire to cater to the global tourist market. This can be understood when they describe their rest-house plans for the tourist sector. Decorated with Ceylonese crafts, they asserted rest-houses should be made in a "truly rural style and not [an] American Motel Modern"⁶⁰, where such vision was handed down to the Ceylon Handcraft Board whom Kellers suggested to associate with "La Vie Ceylan" ideology. This represented the "vitality of contemporary craft" while trying "new ideas to stand behind standards of taste and quality", for that they said it needs a chairman with "maturity, wisdom and taste" while other members could include craftsmen and businessmen (Keller and Keller 1967, p118). Kellers' idea on 'taste' here can be defined when they endorse one of the contemporary studio artists, Barbara Sansoni as a figurehead to look upon when comparing the standard of quality and design. They wrote, "[Sansoni's] understanding of weaving technique is most sophisticated and her designs show discriminating taste...We feel that her superior knowledge and experience in the field of textiles should be utilised on a much broader scale" (Keller and Keller 1967, p8). In this respect, the Kellers' opinion of quality and taste, could therefore be ascribed to modern contemporary designs and studio practices, as much as their discussions of rejuvenation attempted to ensure that traditions continue within a modern-design context.

Setting up of the National Design Centre

Kellers' recommendations cannot be considered arbitrary, when configuring the establishment of the current institutional framework for craft and design in the country. No documented evidences exist to suggest that the Keller's report was directly resulted in setting up the institutions, but it did add to the Parliamentary Act of 1982⁶¹ in

⁶⁰ Similar references can be found on how architects of the period promoted revival of the vernacular. Pieris (2013, p146-47) citing Jayewardene (1986) says those architects drew from recent past as well as distant past by connecting "those living traditions...which the orientalist disparagingly described as 'decaying', 'domestic' and 'popular'". Those architects like Bawa and Plesner turned it to a 'timeless tradition', where cosmopolitan ideals were transposed to indigenous environments; an analogy drawn between a Rolls Royce set against a batik wall hanging.

⁶¹ The Act also got enacted during President J. R. Jayawardena's time in office, who was the minister responsible during Kellers' visit.

formulating the National Craft Council and its allied institutions such as the Sri Lankan Handicrafts Board and the National Design Centre (NDC)⁶². The purpose of such an act was the “promotion, development and fostering of handicrafts including traditional handicrafts and for the improvement of their quality...” (The Government of Sri Lanka 1982, p1). When the Sri Lankan handicraft board became responsible for the promotion, sales and marketing of handicrafts nationally and internationally, the National Design Centre was responsible in undertaking design functions for product development, market development, introduction of mechanisation to improve efficacy in process and material development, research and documentation along with training and production facilities.

John Ballyn, a UK industrial designer trained at Central School of Art and Design London between 1988-1990 provided consultancy to the newly set up National Design Centre in order to bring design expertise to the crafts sector. Appointed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in Geneva (to the Sri Lankan government), Ballyn’s role as a design advisor was to equip the design studio in Colombo, and the workshop in Katubedda for ceramics, wood, bamboo, rattan and leather with a foreign technical advisor each. Ballyn’s role required to recruit trainees (who were graduates of art colleges in Colombo) and setting up a management system, to work with craft producers around the country and assist with product development, while improving production technology. The need to introduce design for the craft sector at the time in Ballyn’s words was “to improve product quality, to ensure design function as it was integral to the product, to provide designs best suited to export markets, bearing in mind the extreme difference between craft producers’...[and end users’ design preference when] ‘fashion trends’ dictate. [It also required to] introduce product diversity while maintaining the traditional techniques of manufacture [and] encourage makers to innovate with their own product ideas” (Personal communication, June 7, 2017).

Other design activities included conducting training programmes, and making sketches for new product developments to aid those training programmes, where he also had to report back to the ILO’s Chief Technical Advisor. Being inspired by the design education model of the National Institute of Design (NID) in India in 1980s, and after

⁶² Interestingly the National Design centre commenced its operation in 1983 in Katubedda under the 1982 Act, in an area suggested by Keller’s in their report (1967) when they wrote such institution should be established at Velona (The premises of NDC today) so that direct applications of the design can be effected. Their suggestions referred to the design centre that was already under the Department of Small Industries which was at the time trying to promote craft and design in Ceylon.

his consultancy at Pakistan Design Institute 1973-78, he considered NID a sound model with a great deal of hands-on design activity, in turn disapproving of the existing design college system in Sri Lanka. He added, “[In Sri Lanka] colleges of design exist of varying quality⁶³. In many respects it might have been a more effective use of aid money to significantly upgrade design education infrastructure within the existing system...[Where] qualified designers could then be promoted to manufactures in all sectors by government departments for export. They could [also] be hired as consultants.” Although this statement encourages professionalisation of design and creating ‘designer stars’, Ballyn also notes “one has to consider the relationship between citizens, designers and governments”. He stated “I have yet to find a nation where the citizens welcome the involvement of governments in their lives” (Personal communication, June 7, 2017) and thereby seeks to explain the failure of authorised notion of design in shaping the craft sector in Sri Lanka.

How ‘design’ became an authorised discourse espousing politicised agendas of state parties and international agencies while using design for development is clearly visible in Sri Lanka. Ballyn adds, “The ministry for Industry and Commerce imposed the protocol on standards of daily operations. Not all of these protocols are compatible with free operation of a design unit providing services nationwide...[and] the design process itself required authorisation for each stage, being signed off as complete by head of the section.” This also included compulsory participation of NDC at state exhibitions like Gam Udawa or the village awakening scheme. While adhering to the state priorities of providing integrated rural development, vocational training to encourage self-employment and promotion of cultural programmes to assert self-reliance (See also Hennayake 2006), NDC went on to present their work showcasing how design can aid the craft sector. Hennayake (2006, p148) following Hobsbawm and Rangers (1983) describes the exhibition culture of village awakening programmes as an ‘invented tradition’ which locates modern development within indigenous beliefs. In that sense NDC’s design displays targeting local crafts can certainly be argued as contributing to “contemporary vernacular” within a “metropolitan taste” as Pieris describes based on what were presented in such national exhibitions schemes (Pieris 2013, p180) .

Mentioning how authorised discourses are enacted by strict hierarchical top-down approaches and ways it affects even the grass root levels via NGOs or craft enterprises,

⁶³ What Ballyn notes are those art colleges, and they did not qualify as ‘design schools’ therefore did not get included in ICSID’s world directory on design schools which was developed based on worldwide surveys undertaken during 1978 -1981. (ICSID (1981)

Ballyn reiterates: “My work in enterprise development for handicrafts involved employment by almost every level of development agency in use today. International, bi-lateral, national, NGO, and individual company contracts. My view of much development activity is that it is still based on a male-dominated, top-down, hierarchical process. Major agencies deal with national government administration, who hand it down through the committees and departments to district and community level. The end recipient rarely has any say about what they are about to receive, yet are supposed to be grateful to receive what they are given... Major agencies and their staff have little opportunities for these kinds of adventures, so their knowledge of life for crafts producers is limited, often restricted to statistics in proposals” (Personal Communication, June 10, 2017).

Design for Development agenda in the Sri Lankan context

The setting up of the National Design Centre and Sri Lanka’s involvement in industrial development at global level elicits further how industrial design targeted local craft practices and why. With the identification of design over the last 50 years as an important attribute for developing scenarios in peripheral countries outside the West, craft-based product contribution is valued aside industrial manufacturing, as the case in Sri Lanka according to Coward and Fathers (2005). Sri Lanka being recognised as a country of interest for industrial design is evident in the history of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design as parts of its discussions on setting up ICSID-Asian co-operative design university (ICSID 1979a) as well as Sri Lanka’s mention in the case for industrial design protection for developing countries (ICSID 1979b). Even though Sri Lanka did not appear as an active member state in ICSID’s working groups 4 which aimed at developing countries, its presence in UNIDO-ICSID meeting in 1979⁶⁴ (Balaram 2009, ICSID 1978) indicates the country’s acknowledged recognition of design for development. (Further it needs to be constructed based on ICSID’s consultant status with UNIDO with the memorandum of understanding between the two institutions signed in 1977) Similarly Sri Lanka represented as a member state at several of UNIDO’s industrial development board meetings and general conferences between 1975-1983 (ICISD 1982, ICSID 1983, ICSID 1975) therein welcoming development

⁶⁴ Delegates were invited separately by NID India, on behalf of ICSID (1978) and UNIDO (1978c) where the target audiences were mainly industrial and planning ministries of developing countries. While UNIDO financially supported a member from each country, an open invitation was made available to other individuals and design organisations of any capacity to attend the event.

schemes with appointed senior industrial development field advisors in place for country operations (ICSID 1980). Direct active involvements between ICSID and UNIDO in its' Sri Lankan missions are not explicit in ICSID's history; however John Ballyn, (who became the design consultant at National Design Centre later) was a representative member (as part of Pakistan Design Institute) at the ICSID working group 4 meeting held in Vienna in 1973 (ICSID 1973).

Design becoming part of the development agenda, especially in the craft sector was also related to cold war ideologies in Sri Lanka's classification as a Third World country. The asymmetric categorisation of First world and Third world according to Margolin is the new labelling of former colonies "...[where] the tainting the transfer of aid and technical assistance with propagandistic overtones" were launched to ameliorate poverty (Margolin 2007, p111). This statement remains true when analysing the country industrial development profile of UNIDO for Sri Lanka in 1978 as they concluded "Sri Lanka's industrialisation efforts have significantly contributed to the progress that has been made in the country during the last 15-20 years in providing social services and redistributing income...[but to achieve development goals like providing employment and improving standard of living] requires expanded exports and/or foreign assistance as well as progress in import substitution" (International Centre for Industrial Studies, 1978, p iii-iv).

UNIDO's recommendations called for an "export- led industrial development" strategy for Sri Lanka, denouncing the previous uses of "indigenous resources" which proved unfit to the new development strategies, indeed suggesting an outward approach where domestic materials and local inputs were reoriented to industrial needs (International Centre for Industrial Studies 1978). Industrial strategies introduced to Sri Lanka therefore worked towards re-orienting the artisanal industries, in other words the establishment of industrial estates to promote small-scale artisanal enterprises, where skill improvement and management training to artisans was provided.⁶⁵ (See UNIDO 1978b)

Some authors recognise design education and training programmes provided for artisans and run by National Design Centre in Sri Lanka as alternative models for design for development, addressing local needs via design (Coward and Fathers 2005). Nevertheless, when analysed how such activities were inaugurated in Sri Lanka, it

⁶⁵ Part of funding for the establishment of industrial estates came from United States Operation Mission. (UNIDO, 1978)

shows the ‘alternative’ model of design for development is still a construct of international development goals set by developing agencies and nationalistic needs of local governments in return for what may be portrayed as a Euro-centric foundation in its operation. Therefore, design and craft relationships in Sri Lanka have never been isolated projects, but the result is that the way in which these relationships deploy heritage and development concurrently may still be in the service of colonialism and enforced modernity.

The idea about craft and design in present day Sri Lanka

A similar case presenting itself in recent initiatives led by the present and previous governments of Sri Lanka to promote craft and design in tandem with traditionalism, modernity and industrial needs. When The Mahinda Chintana-Vision for the Future manifesto (2006-2016) emphasised, “The art and culture in a country should be able to reflect its past glory as well as focus on the future of the society. Many in our country may have feared that our country’s culture and arts would have been damaged by the speedy amalgamation with global cultures and values. However, what happened was that our local culture was strengthened as a result of the challenge” (The Department of National Planning 2010, p179). Following on from this vision, “upgrading, expanding and strengthening traditional industries...to make them a dynamic and vibrant economic sector...[and] to contribute to the GDP [through] added value products” became paramount to the ministry’s goals for the craft industry. It was also said such traditional industries are required to have a “renewed look” as well as “protection and promotion”, “growth and development” amidst globalisation and liberalisation trends (Ministry of traditional industries and small enterprise development 2013, p i -v).

The present government also promotes traditional craft in a contemporary modern context. The Prime Minister, (Mr) Ranil Wickramasinghe addressing the national craft exhibition in 2016 said: “We are planning to introduce new tech to the Sri Lankan crafts sector...Not every Sri Lankan completes their higher education in full and many of them want to take up other avenues of skilled livelihood such as arts and crafts...We want to modernise this sector as well’ (Daily Financial Times 2016). The minister of Commerce and Industry, who is responsible for the crafts sector, also added his concerns on bridging the gap between craft and design: “I am not just talking about

computerisation, laptops and smartphones here. I am talking about such technologies as 3D printing and laser-operated design setups for us to make the craftsmen up to date and take them to global design and delivery levels” (Daily Financial Times 2016).

Analysing the state and international agency interventions so far indicates a few concerns for this study on craft and design in a post-independent and globalised context: Traditional craft is an important attribute to the identity of the country, to its economy as a development activity, but design and technology are needed to make it relevant to global needs and it should be discussed in an industrial context. Grounded in the country’s ‘glorious past’, craft is also seen diminishing and thus needing protection, revival and upgrading. The Prime Minister’s speech also indicates a divide between professionalisation and occupation, between the educated and the not so educated where craft becomes a vocational qualification delivered through governmental and non-governmental organisations all over the country (see Dundar et al. 2014).

In summary, reviewing the narrative of late colonial and post-independent developments in Sri Lanka reveals how the idea of craft and design developed in this island country became a contested domain. The section discussed how the colonial heritage affects the construction of identities of the people and material culture there, and how communities negotiated modernity as opposed to the rhetoric of traditionalism promoted by the nationalistic ideology as a pledge to rekindle with the past⁶⁶. During colonial times, revival efforts were altered by colonial and national revivalists. While the former conceived the relationship of craft and design as improving the native taste, eradicating poverty and providing development opportunities, the latter considered the relationship of craft and design to defy industrialisation while using vernacular design as a nationalistic cultural identity. Moving on, even in post-independent Sri Lanka craft was perceived as a utopia for cultural identity. It can be seen, such discourse mediated between both corporation and competition under different orders of knowledge of the coloniser and colonised, the local and the foreign and in later categorisations of First World and Third World. Development became a necessity, while identity building became an important concern within that. Development of the craft was hence always associated with ‘power’ whether it was for the colonial officers, the national revivalist, for the post independent politicians or for international development organisations.

⁶⁶ Wickramasinghe (2011, p20-21) rightly points out this relationship of such hybrid cultures, with concerns on authenticity and heritage in Sri Lanka and affirms when the “present centred cultural practices” gets validated through a historicised process, it then engages with “the production of identity, power and authority in the colony and post-colony”.

Hybrid cultures were openly rejected in national debates, but in hindsight they were acknowledged.

Therefore, a desire for foreignness and attraction to the localness is constructed between dichotomies of tradition and modernity, between nationalism and westernisation, rural and urban, professionalisation vs. vocation, between spiritual and moral values vs. development and progress. Subsequently it showed how such discourse might affect the way heritage is constructed between tradition and modernity, a “dichotomy imposed by colonialism, both transforming tradition and creating specific, local modernities”, where different social groups “creatively” re-appropriated them (Wickramasinghe 2006, p7). These imposed cultures were further taken up in post-independent development agendas which emerged in policy and institutional frameworks of craft and design, showing how it linked with cold war industrial design strategies as well as those design for development needs that rendered a confliction between nationalistic needs and industrial necessities within a politicised agenda. Further, the disposition of design in Sri Lanka showed how it could work as an authorised discourse enacted not only by the international agencies and state parties, but how those regulations, standards and policy initiations are even changing the way grassroots craft enterprises appropriate and use design within the craft sector, thus altering the uses of heritage⁶⁷.

The following section of this chapter will demonstrate how the field work is constructed to capture these variances in relation to local and global, tradition and modernity from macro to micro perspectives.

6.3 Methods of Data Gathering

Ethnographic field work was carried out from August–October 2014 in Talagune Udu-Dumbara, Kandy, Dambadeniya areas (especially in the villages of Polwaththegedara, Maharachchimulla, Rangallepola and Galatharaya) and the research looks into the development of different types of craft development activities in the village contexts in Sri Lanka. During the ethnographic study artisanal work were observed examining craft

⁶⁷ This is irrespective of having no single intangible cultural heritage element on the UNESCO representative list even though the state parties recognises the importance of natural and cultural heritage with 8 world heritage sites, 1879 of national protected sites, with one endangered languages recognised in Sri Lanka (UNESCO 2013).

objects, the practice as well the social and cultural context in which craft resides. Research methods included interviews and observations of artisans at work at domestic level and within craft enterprises. It included documenting life histories, artefacts and skill traditions while observing the craft work on display in museums, workshops and at households. Students and staff at the Department of Integrated Design at University of Moratuwa were approached to discuss a specific project they had recently finished in Dambadeniya, as part of studying enterprise development projects and communities there. Interviews were conducted to understand designer-artisan intervention projects. Other institutes approached to discuss the development of craft sector in Sri Lanka included, the National Craft Council, the National Design Centre and Ministry of Traditional Industries and Small Enterprise Development.

The number of academics interviewed were N=3, design students N=8 (undergraduate level), artisans (artisan-designers, artisan-entrepreneurs hailing from traditional families, artisans/workers at production unites) in Talagune N=5, in Dambadeniya = 7. Government Officials in ministries and councils N= 6 and development enterprise staff = 3. All these interviews were in-depth, lasting between 30 minutes to 2 hours. Certain individuals were approached several times to observe their work. It also included meeting their family members at their households while some of these interviews were undertaken individually and in groups. Informal discussions had with family members and with fellow villagers are not quoted in the analysis, but their views are considered to form a full picture of the field research. Further, development officials' comments were taken into consideration to formulate a deep understanding of the field work data while aiding the triangulation process when certain data showed biasness. Some interviews were undertaken in English, but the majority of the interviews with artisans were carried out in Sinhala, with translation done by the researcher herself. To adhere to ethical protocols, all respondents are anonymised, especially when their identities can be revealed within a small community environment. Pseudonyms are therefore given as necessary.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ See also Bundgaard (1999) in her work with the Patta Chitra painters in Orissa, India, and Venkatesan's (2006) work in a South Indian mat weaving community who also report a similar issue. Both authors retained using the name of the place they undertook the ethnographic work in their publications, but avoided using individual names of artisans.

6.4 Analysis: Craft and Design engagements

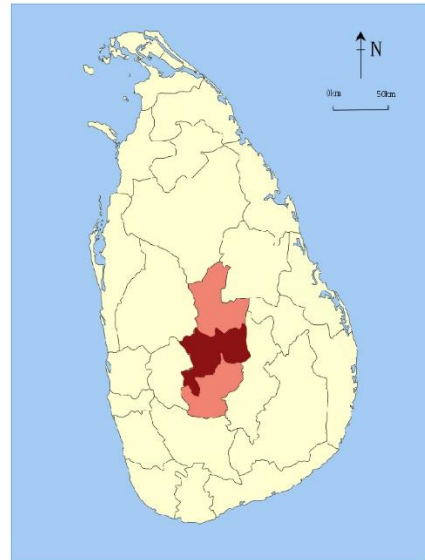
The following section reviews craft and design engagements in a community context as well as an example of higher education involvement in shaping the craft sector. It shows how the idea of local and global works, and how other actors are linked to the topics of agency, mediation and development discourses, with an expanded view provided by following the trajectory of locality of production to the global needs of consumption and development.

Selecting the communities to observe as part of the ethnographic study, was led by the idea of local and global. The research paid attention to select sites which would add insight to the distinctions discussed in the previous section of the chapter.

6.5 The Community Context: Dumbara Textiles Weaving

Dumbara Textiles Weaving is said to be an age old traditional weaving practice indigenous to Sri Lanka. While many of the weaving traditions show an influence from the Indian subcontinent, especially with South Indian weavers of the caste ‘*Salāgamayō*’ settling in the coastal areas, Dumbara weavers of the ‘*Beravāyō*’ caste were confined to the country’s highland (Lakdusinghe 1997, Coomaraswamy 1908). The community is existent in Talagune, Udu Dumbara in the heartland of the Kandyan region (see figure 2). When the distinction was made between low-land and high-land in the previous section, a greater value was showed to be assigned to the Kandyan arts and craft, amongst it was more authentic claims than hybridised craft present elsewhere: hence Dumbara weaving becomes a potent example to investigate. Not only has the region and the people there become the custodians of the Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism, Kandy was designated as a World Heritage Site in 1988 by UNESCO, and is therefore considered the cultural capital of the country (Daskon 2010b).

- Legend
- Central province (Nuwara Eliya, Matale and Kandy districts)
 - Kandy District
 - Divisional Secretariats



Source: Wikimedia.com



Figure 2: Map of Talagune, Ududumbara



Image 42: The landscape of Talagune
Picture by author

Coomaraswamy provides a detailed description of the weaving in Talagune a little more than one hundred years ago where the weavers produced napkins or towels, clothes for men and women, aprons or bathing drawers for men called *diya kacci*, shawls, mats, and sheets for the locals as well as for the Kandyan Art Association.

“The weaving of homespun cotton cloths was once universal in the Kandyan provinces. It is now done only at Talagune (with a few other places). At Talagune, the industry still flourishes a little; two families have looms, and a number of the village women are skilled in spinning. The villagers themselves still use some of the cloth made, but the industry would hardly survive were it not for the demand for *ętirili* [sheets] made through the Kandy Art Association. The weavers, as we have seen, were of low caste and had other duties to perform besides weaving” (Coomaraswamy 1908, p233-234).

Coomaraswamy also went on to elaborate on the weaving process used there, a pit loom called *aluva*, where the allotted materials are stored in a room and weaving took place on a platform of the outer veranda of the weaver’s home called, *al-pila* (Coomaraswamy 1908).

The early cotton cloth woven in Talagune is different to that of the *Salāgamayō*'s cloth (low-land caste), where they did gold-woven muslin for royals and nobility (Coomaraswamy 1908). The quality of the early woven Dumbara cloth was described as:

“The Sinhalese cotton was of very different quality; no muslin was made, but the best stuffs were thick, soft and heavy like the finest linen. The craft is preserved in only one village. There are many simple traditional designs, some geometrical, others of flowers, animals or very elaborated strap-work, like that in Keltic manuscripts, or such as one sees at Ravenna. The geometrical patterns are all shuttle-work: the more complex designs are tapestry as in the Dacca muslin” (Coomaraswamy 1913, p196-97).

Although the early type of *aluva* pit loom is no longer used at present day, weavers still remind of using similar ones until 1980s. Now all the weavers use a treadle loom to make the production efficient, but the weaving techniques used in manufacturing the cloth still fit in with Coomaraswamy's description of shuttle work and tapestry like weaving, although the quality of the yarns are different as weavers now use machine spun (sourced from outside markets) instead of hand spun yarns.



Image 43: The chief weaver named Tikirati in Talagune
Source: Coomaraswamy's Mediaeval Sinhalese Art 1908

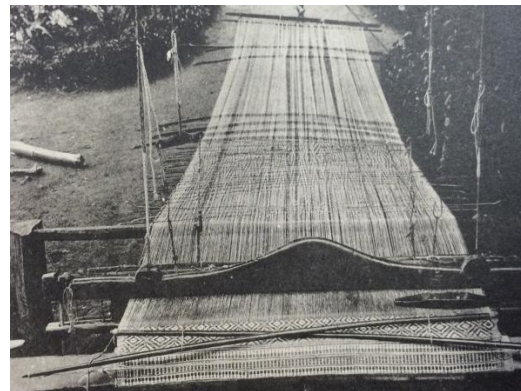


Image 44: The pit loom
Source: Coomaraswamy's Mediaeval Sinhalese Art 1908

6.5.1 *The traditional community of practice*

There is a strong tradition in the Dumbara community, even though it has been influenced by links to external buyers and middlemen, of a domestic purpose and utilitarian need of everyday wearing. Only confined to a few families (about 6 in total at present day) almost all the residents belong to the Beravayo caste, which is said to have been practicing drumming as well (which is no longer done) and are Buddhist. These families are related to each other and bound by kinship. Although said to be associated with the lower caste, the weavers are no longer confined to this as a caste based occupation, instead practicing the craft now as a dignified livelihood away from a low-status occupation. However, the stigmatised caste based occupations have altered their lives as explained by one weaver:

“Our *Ge*⁶⁹ name was ‘*Yakdessange*’. Our father changed it because we were looked down upon. So when we were named he omitted that”. (Personal Interview September 2014)

Changing their names to evade the low-status identity is done to mask the social stigma, especially when sending a child to school or getting a job, but it did not mean to look down upon the craft as something to leave behind. Instead the weavers of Talagune are proud of their traditional practice. Unlike some other craft practices in Sri Lanka (i.e. Winslow’s (1996) pottery communities) the elders encourage their children to weave and involve in the craft.

The skills acquisition of this craft happens generationally and there is little or no systematic teaching. A 73 year old master artisan explained this further; “I learnt this from my grandfather. It is not that I purposely did it. I was just hanging around the loom and by watching you get to know how to do things. When the grandfather moves away I sit there and weave too. One should not be afraid to deal with the yarn. Only by practice you can master this.” (Personal interview, September 2014)

As women and men both weave with no gender bias, the women usually carry out the weaving activities amidst their daily household chores and raising children. A master weaver remembered a story of his great-great grandmother, who was recognised as weaving for the kings’ service. In the early days, weaving was not their full time profession; people also worked in rice cultivation. These weavers have grown their own

⁶⁹ House or family name in Sri Lanka that is associated with caste system

cotton with the entire process done within the village, therefore spinning and dyeing of the yarns all undertaken at the weaver's household. Now the artisans rely increasingly on outsourced yarns, which artisans think is making the life easy, as it saves the time and resources.

Now exposed to external markets, and having changed the once informal activity into a rather professional context, weavers still recall making things for their own consumption⁷⁰. An artisan talked e.g. about how a child blanket which he made 30 years before for his new born child still affords him fond memories of making and a sense of appreciation of his own craft. He stressed how craft practices were endowed with emotional attachment as work stayed within the community. Many weavers remembered the hardship they encountered in the 1970s and 1980s before renewed interest for this particular craft emerged, and the craft flourished thanks to new market demand, rekindling their interest to carry on the craft. Memories of a much harder life before then were recalled by the elderly craftsmen interviewed who told of weavers taking up many menial jobs to supplement their income from craft, and later weaving one off pieces and selling them to the nearby villages in the area till mid 80's before "catching up with market". All the artisans interviewed saw improvements compared to 30 years ago and affirmed they have prospered a lot ever since: "We have come up a lot lately".

⁷⁰ Adopting to external markets and new technology is viewed sanguinely, and is regarded as a common phenomenon from as early as 20th century in South Asia (Roy 2007)



Image 45: A master artisan showing a blanket he did for his new born child
Photo by author

6.5.2 Identity issues: Traditional Weavers vs. New Comers

Such memories of economic hardship in the community seemed to enhance people's appreciation of current design interventions as they are believed to be important for the progress of the community and the craft itself. Current practices are geared towards producing commercial craft products which are sometimes produced in large quantities according to market demands. Those families who inherited the traditional weaving have now formed their own production workshops where they hire other village women to come and work under them. Direct and indirect employment has been provided to about 60-70 people in the village, however at the time of the research, artisans confirmed about 15 women were engaged as workers for daily wages where they produce piece work while working under the guidance of the craftsman. They are not skilled craftspeople, but purely doing a job as labourers. Although finding such workers is now becoming harder, as the garment industry has attracted most of the village girls to the nearby town, the weavers see this as a continuation of social trends when they say:

“Women went to the garment work, and men went to the army.”⁷¹ An interesting aspect of this working model is that the craftsmen keeps some of their vital craft knowledge as trade secrets, which they do not wish to pass down to these workers. Becoming a guarded craft practice, it thus becomes impossible for the majority of makers of this craft to grasp and learn the traditional techniques while the craft knowledge remains confined to the family.

One of the owners of a workshop explained his concern about it.

“I have not passed every bit of knowledge about this craft to the people who work for me. If we are given the due recognition, that it belongs to us then if there is a necessity I can share it with others. But it is not the case now. We need to protect our identity. What I suggest is that if somebody wants they can always learn weaving and do it as a business, but they should not try to do Dumbara Weaving.”

Here Dumbara weavers assign themselves an important identity within the village society where they have gained an authority over the non-traditional weavers. One artisan also explained how their new social status claimed through entrepreneurial acumen has given them an opportunity to dismiss the earlier oppressive caste system.

“This is a traditional craft associated with a caste system. So it is also passed down to us in the same manner. The problem is those who belong to somewhat higher casts do not like to come and work under us. These days the young generations do not care about those divisions, but the elders influence them. The elders have told many times: do not go and work under such people, it is not worthy of you to do that. I know they want to join our workshops but there are many taboos that have developed around it...In our grandfathers’ time we were down cast a lot by the system. But the way we have emerged out of it does not appeal to many of the other villagers. We have gained a place in the village society now and we do not need to kneel in front of those high caste people. We have earned that dignity through this craft.”

⁷¹ A common expression in the Sri Lankan village context which Lynch (2007) also observed in her ethnographic study on Sri Lankan garment industry. This expression is irrespective of the fact that sons of the artisan families have also joined the forces during the war time, while there are veteran army personals engage in the craft at present.



Image 46: Village women working under master artisan in his workshop in Talagune
Photo by author

Another artisan confirmed his resentment about the non-traditional, new makers in the village, who have approached them in search of a job, but emphasised how it has created design copying, and stealing their traditional identity away from them.

“They come to us in good faith. We have provided them with work, we taught them how to weave, but once they learn a thing or two they start to move out thinking now they can also practice it by themselves. They expect us to pay the same amount we would get from our buyers. They need to understand we are also doing this to survive. Most importantly we are not discriminating them. We pay fair wages. But there is this nature that people are never content with what they have. They get the feeling that no matter how much we work, the other person is earning this much, so we should also get the same. [Showing a wall hanging he did for a buyer] Look I get paid around Rs. 10,000 for this piece. The buyer can sell it to a higher price. But I do not have a problem with that as long as I get paid for the effort I put in. When they [the women workers] leave our place and also steal our designs, it hurts us sincerely... when they eventually start claiming they are the ones doing ‘Dumbara rata’ [patterns] then we have to do something about it.”

Another artisan told that he is not afraid of these new comers for they will not have the patience and commitment as the traditional makers do. He said many have tried in the past and have failed. One master artisan even remembered similar attempts in the early 1970s by government people.

“I remember some people from the design section of Velona⁷² came those days to meet my grandfather and two other uncles. They took many photos and took notes on how to do this, but I think they failed in reproducing it.”

The extent of the impact of relationship between weavers and piece workers are not limited to design copying and labour work, but it also altered the role of the artisanal weaver. Here, craft communities have separated out the roles of planner and maker of product in a division of labour associated more with industrial scenarios than artisanal practices. In this process the weaver might still get involved at certain stages of the making, while mainly monitoring the production line. As in much of post industrial revolution making, they will first design their work on paper and then commission others to take the drawing into weaving. Knowledge here is no longer expressed through making even though in the very recent past craftsman still had the sole responsibility for weaving the entire piece of fabric as a design evolving on the loom. The weaver then was designing through making, whereas now the delegation of the making to several people working concurrently fixes his ideas in stone before they have been realised.

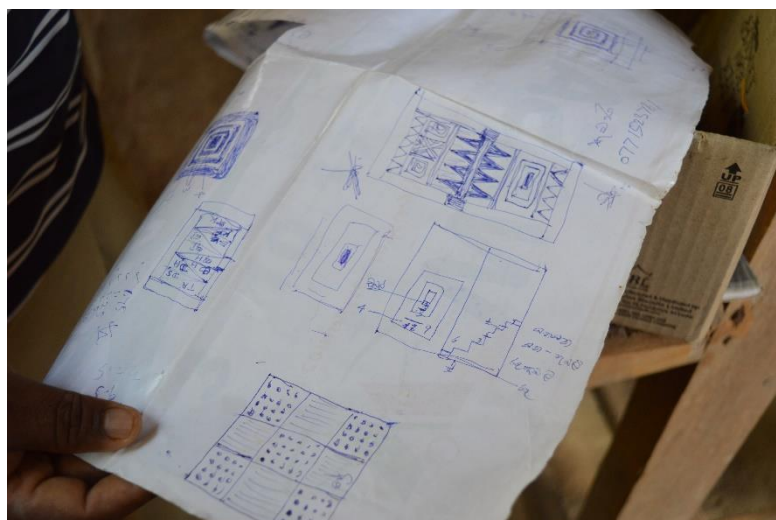


Image 47: A design drawn on a paper by the artisan that shows the pattern and the colour ways
Photo by author

⁷² The Design centre of the Department of Small Industries earlier mentioned in 6.2.2

Most surprisingly these work relationships have created issue in the village, as the villagers have approached government authorities asking to train them. The craft council has set up training programmes under the master-apprenticeship scheme and have asked one of the traditional members to teach others. This has created division between the family members of Dumbara weaving who revile training a person saying he has disregarded the value of this craft, and has taken an easy path while becoming a training person for the government. Similarly, weavers contend related efforts by fellow villagers trying to make it a common practice shared by all.

“There came similar proposals in previous years too. What I have understood so far is that by making this craft a commodity, you do worse than doing good. We have informed the relevant government officials and we said please give us the due right so we can practice this craft in self-autonomy. We told them we cannot let go off this craft out of family tradition. That is our only identity. We are not saying this on pure selfishness or in a narrow mind. We are the one who must protect it. What will happen when everybody starts practicing it? When they do not know the real value of the craft, it will be sold for *‘thuttu deka’*⁷³. It will rot on the pavements without any value at all.”

The master trainer, of this apprenticeship scheme who is also a traditional weaver revealed its own issues in terms of why the programme failed. He had worked as a weaving demonstrator at the Small Industries Department during 1989-1994, prior to taking the new post as a master trainer for the Craft Council in 2001. He explained that the village women eventually were not able to take their learning forward as the craft is not “inherent to them naturally” as much as it would have been within a family. Out of the 30 women he has trained for a period of 4 years, none has taken up weaving or emerged as a competent weaver. These women were provided with looms with the support from the Craft Council, but the looms were finally taken away when women did not progress as expected. One of the government officers also confirmed the stifling issue around the same weaving cluster, but in terms of the development of craft he affirmed that this craft needs to be passed down to those interested for that it will not diminish. For craft development officers making the craft available to a few members is a risky strategy, as it shows lack of commitment to improve the village level. Such strategies (which might change when governments change) have made traditional

⁷³ A Sri Lankan expression of saying there is little or no value at all. Thuttuwa is an early monetary value used in colonial time.

weavers lose faith in government programmes, instead they rely on businesses with outside buyers and dealers. One artisan explained those unsustainable strategies;

“There are a few [government organisations] who would organise a one or two workshops in the name of improvement. Such a useless thing, no value at all. Whenever a government officer or an outsider is coming to visit the village, they [people running the craft workshop at the village] collect a few random girls and display them as weavers. Most of them come to that training facility, just to sign their names. The resources and money they waste on such things are good for nothing. Do not misunderstand this as jealousy [in terms of sharing their knowledge with others], it is not.”

The artisan’s intention of claiming it not as jealousy, but rather as protecting their identity and rights is justified by Roy (2007). Referring to Indian case studies he says: When products rich in craftsmanship were commercialised, the intellectual property embodied in these goods acquired market value. And yet neither the power of a patron nor legal rights protect such property. The pervasive threat of “free riding,” in this case the threat of being copied without credit rather than some form of primal emotion, included countless masters to hide knowledge (Roy 2007: 974-75).

The picture portrayed so far about conflicts between artisans and non-traditional makers, between individuals and collective groups, resisting and rejecting some of the development activities and the fear of dilution of their traditional practices as well as the quality of the products, while guarding their knowledge as trade secrets resonate with Roy’s (2007) observation of the Indian craft scene at the turn of the 19th century, which he says was not specific only to India but a universal struggle in order to get streamlined to innovation. Such is the evolutionary nature of craft that it revolves around mediations between the ‘individual’ and the ‘collective’ according to Roy (2007). His refocused attention on the ‘individual’ in terms of adapting to innovation and economic changes, and thereby provides ways to analyse the artisanal strategies Dumbara weavers also adopted, at one point individually in their negotiation with outsiders and at other points as a collective endeavour. These deliberate artisanal strategies are discussed in detail through different craft and design interventions in the following section.

6.5.3 *Different interventions in Dumbara Weaving*

Increasing prosperity and economic stability have allowed the weavers to negotiate their value and ownership of the craft, as described from a combination of factors. Certainly in the past these weavers have benefited from government initiatives, especially in the 1960s and 1970s when they shifted from the pit loom to treadle looms. One of the artisans even remembered going to a government training institute to learn the new techniques. Such transformations have altered their craft practice in a positive way, as new technology allowed the artisans to weave efficiently. Even though at times they reject the development efforts and social welfare schemes, the past efforts show how they have also reaped benefits from those mediations. This imperative dualism of accepting some development efforts while rejecting others are decided on the benefits it brings to individuals or the community there. An example is how artisans remembered the government efforts in helping them to emerge when the weavers were literally unknown to the rest of the country and the world. A master artisan explained how they went on to demonstrate their earlier pit looms in one of the SAARC⁷⁴ exhibitions in Colombo some 30 years ago, which drew attention to their practice. While another master weaver said, they have been supplying to the Kandyan Art Association even in the early 1970s.⁷⁵ And in recent times, artisans in Talagune have received sewing machines to make finished products and training courses for new product development from the National Design Centre; nevertheless they opposed the training schemes organised by the National Craft Council for village women some time ago. This is much akin to observations made by Winslow (2003) in a Sri Lankan pottery village, for craftsmen had effectively carved out their strategies by taking their own initiatives, albeit they were not given a choice to initiate what's best for them in those mediations. Amidst adapting to the existing conditions while trying to achieve the best depending on circumstances, the rescue efforts are coming more strongly than ever before. Recently these artisans have even made their case to regional officials and have made a proposition to claim the ownership of the craft, in which they were successful even though there are no Geographical Indication System (GIS) in place to protect and safeguard crafts in Sri Lanka.

⁷⁴ The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation

⁷⁵ Coomaswamy (1908), also mentioned of the role of the Kandyan Art Association for he said that if it weren't for those etirili sold at the centre, Dumbara Weaving would not survive.

6.5.4 Design Interventions

Outsiders taking an interest in Dumbara Weaving: The weaver's account

It is significant how Dumbara weavers mediate with the external buyers and designers, and how they negotiate their heritage craft practices. Different families are clearly assigned to different buyers and designers and they appreciate their long-term relationships expressing heartfelt gratitude about them.

Two families were drawn into the discussion: Gunapala (pseudonym) family and Sumanapala's (pseudonym) family. The Gunapala family has prospered due to a particular designer who approached them in the 1990s, changing the circumstances of that family everafter. Gunapala, the master artisan and father of three sons and a daughter, all now involved in weaving, with two of the sons, Chaminda and Kamal (pseudonyms) being full time weavers and businessmen.

“We were doing only the traditional designs back in the days, and then [a certain] designer approached us. He introduced us to the new designs. He gives us the design he wants to do and we follow it. It was those orders that helped us to alleviate the hardships we were undergoing those days. We were able to get inspired from those designs and make our own to take a new path.” (Gunapala, September 2014)

His son Chaminda, added;

“[The designer] sir is the one who introduced us to modern designs. He marked the designs on the paper, gave the required measurements so we can then decide what is required from our side and we can take it forward from there onwards. We learnt that technique and we also started to combine our old motifs with new designs...It was his designs that compelled us [as second generation] to join weaving as well...I even did another job, but I quit and joined the family business. [The designer] sir conquered the international market, when we were only confined to a local area. He took our products, our name and our identity to a global scale. We owe him a lot for that”

The relationship between the designer and the artisans is special, for he has given his commitment to give orders only to them, and in return his designs were not to be copied

or sold elsewhere. The mutual understanding has benefited both parties, for it has given the designer the recognition allowing him to display his art work internationally, while providing a sustainable mode of livelihood for the Gunapala family.

The other success story comes from the Sumanapala family, who has started producing for a renowned art gallery and shop in Colombo in the late 1980s. The business also is sustained on mutual understanding and strict work ethics between the artisan and the seller. He mentioned how he started his business with the retail shop in Colombo:

“I met the owner of the shop on a roadside, when I was coming home from the temple. We were not doing well as a household that time. I saw them like tourists afar and thought I might be able to sell a piece to them to earn something. Then he asked me if they can find any Dumbara mats⁷⁶. I said I have only textiles. Those days I was working on some pieces for Laksala [The state souvenir shop]. I was doing only plain cloths those days. He told me these are rubbish, as they are not authentic Dumbara designs. I then explained him that it's too expensive to make the original pieces, and nobody wants to buy them in the local village market. I showed them the blanket I made for my son. Then they were content and said this was what they were looking for, the authentic *Dumbara rata* and he gave me an order immediately. That's how we started working”. (Personal interview, September 2014)

Comparing how these two design scenarios—when one gives the design, the colours and motifs with precise details, the other gives colours and a graph with marked areas for artisans to fill in with their own traditional motifs accordingly. Both these families appreciate the two approaches, and consider it as a way to practice their craft forward.

Not only do their comments reveal how artisans negotiate with designers and buyers, but it also shows how the idea of authenticity, traditionalism and modernity is built within these relationships. This resonates with the earlier chapter, when businesses authenticate the traditional work, following a revival scheme that takes it cue from the past, and placing it within an unbroken tradition that revolves around “salvage paradigm” and “regional elite's hypostatisation” (See Bundgaard 1999, p39-40). While it has given the two families clearly different and defined paths, to make contemporary craft and traditional craft respectively, it also provided them a design territory within their community kinship structures with marked identity. Another aspect is how the

⁷⁶ Referring to another mat weaving community.

production of ‘old’ and ‘new’ work shows the way weavers quickly adapt to developments to reap benefits. Both families appreciate each other’s work as they do not cross the respective business alliances, hence do not compete as some other family members do, who blame each other for acquiring the opportunities they were supposed to have. A common statement made by most of the artisans during the field work was their complaint about design copying, not only by the non-traditional weavers but also the traditional weavers who have not gained reputation as the more established families. At the same time, the artisans interviewed also mentioned outsourcing their work to other family members when they cannot meet an order, and at times coming together to seek justice for the common good like protecting their tradition and safeguarding it against the development activities that may disfavour them.

Traditional and modern Dumbara designs

This safeguarding and protection does not seem to occur with their designers or buyers, for weavers are more open to acknowledge their input. They clearly distinguish ‘traditional Dumbara rata’ from ‘modern designs’. To all of them, including the Gunapala family, what they produce for the designer, is not ‘traditional Dumbara rata’.

“What we produce for [the designer] Sir is not ‘traditional Dumbara rata’, they are modern designs instead. We have our traditional art within us, so whenever someone asks us to design something based on traditional we can always do those. If there is a demand for such traditional motifs, then of course we will do it. There is no harm done from modern designs to traditional practice, and vice versa. We will never lose our traditional practice. There is no way that it will disappear in the future. I have the skills so do my sons, if they are lacking something there is always room for me to show the correct thing.” (Personal interview, September 2014)

His son added, “Look! We know our tradition and we carry it with us in our heart. Even though we may not have done it in textiles form [as they are engaged with producing modern designs], we could have graphed it in a book so that we can always continue whenever we want.” (Personal interview, September 2014)

One example of working for designers in a rather unsentimental way, without considering too much about whether they practice traditional Dumbara rata or not also

becomes evident in the work they have produced for an Italian designer, Luciano Ghersi, who is said to have discovered Sri Lanka in 1992 “as a country of culture, arts and humanity”. He has worked with the Dumbara weavers in 2011, as “the Italian was impressed” about the local weaving tradition (Wanasundera 2011). A master artisan recalling his experience when working on that project explained, “He asked us to do it this way and that way, so we did. It was pretty easy.” Not only did Ghersi learn Dumbara techniques from the artisans in Talagune, he also conducted a workshop to demonstrate his contemporary technique of rug and tapestry making using mixed materials. Reflecting on such skill sharing activities (although using plastic and metal work were not acknowledged as suitable methods for Dumbara weaving) and also sharing his general impressions on why artisans need to evolve, the artisan further affirmed his intentions about moving with the changes and modern developments: “We should not always be reliant on the past; this is the fault in many of us. When we see a design, whether it was an easy or difficult one, we should try to achieve it. That’s the kind of feeling we need to have, to somehow do it, and not give up on it so easily. We should make it an opportunity to learn’.

Interviewed artisans also mentioned the tensions when working with external designers and buyers about the strict work ethics they have to follow. While most of the external buyers supply the dyed yarns leaving the weaving job only to artisan, the artisans recalled such conflicts often happen in their business deals when there is a mismatch between the requirements the buyer provided and the craftwork. “There are times no matter how much we try to achieve the given designs, they tend to blame us.”



Image 48: An external work undertaken for a designer
Photo by author



Image 49: The new designs developed by artisans
Photo by author

Cooperation and conflict within community and the design copyrights

Within these design interventions, other designers who approach the artisans on a one-off basis and student designers who come on research trips every year to get their graduate collections made are very common in Talagune. In these circumstances, to summarise most families' reaction, one artisan said "we direct them to a particular family if we are busy", implying that established artisans are interested in more serious work, so that one off work is left to a certain family. For three of the families, this particular artisan even though related to each other is a 'headache' for he/she copies from them. One of the artisans said "It is hard to keep anything away from them; they keep copying whatever I do. Because they can also produce the same motifs and are Dumbara rata, the designs would appear similar to mine, but they will never be able to achieve the quality I do. So there is always a difference." For those families who have departed from the traditional work to engage in modern designs, and have developed a repertoire, such family squabbles do not matter. One artisan who has succeeded in supplying his designs to the hotel and tourism industry said, "There are disputes between the families, like everywhere else, but we have now developed an understanding where we could settle things by talking to each other." However, copying of designs by fellow artisans' has become a serious and a business-critical issue, as copy

rights of their designs need to be maintained when supplying for external buyers. The community has become rather fragmented by the issue of who supplies what to whom, as exclusivity, supply and demand change the way in which craft is passed on as a form of communal knowledge.

The emerging role of Artisan Designer

Design interventions, whether long-term relationships or one-off cases, have shaped and altered the repertoire of Dumbara Weaving. Despite these outcomes, the artisans welcome the designers to the community as they perceive them as yet another opportunity to progress, as well as an opportunity to learn something new, which they have not been previously exposed to. As one artisanal-entrepreneur revealed, “there are two sides to new designs. I think it is up to the person to decide how to use it. One should not forget the old, while combining the new. We should take the market opportunity while balancing the old and the new.” The same artisan also explained how he approaches the design development—“I usually get inspirations from the previous work I have produced. Most of the time I combine those with new ideas that come to my mind. As soon as something comes to my mind, now I have made a habit to draw on a piece of paper, and then I add colours and give it to the workers to produce it.” It seems this new role of the ‘designer’ acquired by the artisan has been rather adopted from working with designers and external buyers and has been an improvised character within the new economic models they work with.

It may also be the reason why these artisan-designers are lingering on the newly introduced designs by changing certain elements. While it described inserting Dumbara rata, particularly the zoomorphic designs is an activity of drawing, a piece of art that used to evolve on the cloth but evolves on the paper now. Such embodiment has also been elevated with digital technologies where computer aided designing is coming into the design development process. The artisan said, “I ask my son to do the designs on the computer now. [As he does not know how to do that] I show them how things need to be done, and they put different colour ways and draw me options on the screen. I sent my son to the computer class to learn to draw things. Anyway, computers are essential things these days and kids also like to learn it.” It is encouraging to witness within this community that young generations are keen to practice the craft and take on their fathers

and grandfathers footsteps. In fact it displays a very contemporary adaptation of craft, steeped as much in global market pressures as in local realisation of opportunities, and while some traditions might come to an end, new traditions with some chance of longevity in real economic situations are being forged, not least powered by the possibilities of digital knowledge. Artisans encourage their children to learn the weaving, and this is now an option for them. For example, a daughter of one artisan was a competent weaver, but she was studying the science stream at school in search of a better job, while hoping that weaving would provide a resource if one day she wants to join the family business or that her educational targets fail.

Design interventions in the name of Co-Creation

There are other times designers have gone on to the extent of using artisanal work at the behest of co-creational activities while using technological mediations which are far more distanced from the community's recursive technological adaptations. One such example is the London College of Fashion wearable technology project to make an interactive massaging shoe using Dumbara weaving. Such vision for the project is said to have started on the basis of “rejuvenate[ing] Sri Lankan artisanal fabrics...to increase sales and at the same time...to update these textiles to make them more attractive to a contemporary consumer...[This is due to] the diminishing consumer demand for Sri Lankan indigenous fabrics...[and] the loss of know-how and skills in traditional fabric production, the loss of heritage and the limited capacity for artisans to provide for their families and sustain a fair standard of living” (Buckley and Sabreen 2017: 121).



Image 50: An innovative massage shoe by Thushara Sabreen, as part of MA Fashion Entrepreneurship and Innovation
Source: Show-time, London College of Fashion

It can be seen that design interventions works in multiple ways for the Dumbara craft sector. It can bring benefits but also show how embodiment of their traditional skills and practices might be affected when artisans are pushed towards embracing designs and technology beyond the interests of the community's social system (see the contemporary work of the designer in image 50). This is irrespective when new introductions are said to be done on the basis of revival and safeguarding needs, but dampening the true meaning of what designers meant by revival showcasing precarious outcomes. This is evident when comparing a traditional Dumbara weave said locally to be more than 100 years old (and more accurately dated in comparison to a textile mat with similar motifs which found its way in the V&A collection in London) to current work for global markets, where neither colours, shape, techniques or motifs have passed the test of time—or evaded the temptations of commerce.



Image 51: An old piece of work that is said to be more than 100 years old, which carries traditional motifs
Photo by author



Image 52: A Rectangular mat (etirilla)

Source: Victoria and Albert Museum, London, Date: ca, 1900

Precarious outcomes of design interventions

Precarious outcomes can be described in two ways: Firstly, in stark contrast to the traditional values and meanings associated with this craft, design interventions via international designers, external buyers or other middlemen has delimited the constraints of traditional craft in terms of visual language and techniques. Design in certain cases are no longer linked closely to naturally evolving communities, but are instead part of a system of planned obsolescence where differentiation through exclusivity rather than a lasting link to the maker's culture is key. Secondly, in creating innovative design work, tradition is the realm of the artisan, which needs to be revived through contemporary and innovative schemes directed by the designer. The above description showcases the "pervasiveness of the past" adapted in the design process to salvage the loss of heritage (Bundgaard 1999, p39), but what is questionable is whether designers or the officials are the ones entitled to speak about the loss, the revival, and the capacity to contemporise by extending their expert knowledge claims about design and heritage, rather than those held by artisans. It is worth further discussion how, with these 'old' and 'new' pieces referred back and forth in artisans' daily craftwork, they and others construct the idea of 'Dumbara heritage'.

6.5.5 Constructing Dumbara weaving heritage

The production of authenticity

Interviewed artisans used several angles to describe Dumbara Weaving. The most trusted and confirmed source for them is Commaraswamy's Mediaeval Sinhalese Art book, with some artisans even keeping pictures from it to show to the visitors. The way they describe includes oral traditions and myths surrounding it, with the most acknowledged story connecting to the indigenous groups of yakshas (demons) and sorcery, where it says the weaving was learnt from them. While the oral mythologies were used to connect to the indigeneity, the documented history gives them credibility and importance to talk about the craft in terms of material culture, process and consumption. These two ideologies were put into context by one artisan: "Out of all the textile weaving practices in the country, Talagune is the birth to all [links to the indigenous story]. It is the only one with a national identity, when everything else

introduced is foreign [comes from Coomaraswamy's expression of authentic craft]". Further to this, the work displayed in the museums was important to these artisans to demonstrate their history. They have aptly endorsed the work displayed in Kandyan Museum and the archival textile materials at Colombo Museum, where they not only recognise the idea of preservation, but also sees a capacity to connect to the earlier King's service with evidence. The collection of historical evidence is now important to the community members to show to the visitors, including buyers and educational institutes who come in search of authentic textiles craft. As one artisan remembered, such history was of no value to them some 40 years ago, but now it has become far more important as the artisans now even go to the museums to verify their work. A traditional weaver put it this way: "To be honest, we were not so keen to learn about the history of the craft earlier. We never wanted to ask it from our grandfathers either."

Revival efforts

Similarly, the abandoned pit loom tradition has now become worthy, when two families said, they wanted to build a loom as a display unit to explain to visitors as everybody comes to Talagune asking for it. Another artisan maintains a pit loom, but only set it up if visitors ask him prior to their visits. Even though the pit loom is of no value to them in commercial term, for educational and marketing purposes, the revivals of abandoned practices are worthwhile. Interestingly, such a loom found its way across 50km from the village to the Kandyan Art Association where it was on display purely targeting the many tourists who come to Kandy City. However, during the field visit in 2014 it was not in operation. Instead, a Dumbara mat weaving demonstration took place for passing tourists.



Image 53: Pit Loom
Source: Kandyan Art Association

Artisan's response to the national and international concerns of handicraft

Another occasion for considering the age old techniques is when artisans apply for national craftsmanship awards and exhibitions. A master artisan has recently won a lifetime achievement award from the government for the service he has rendered to the arts and craft. Similarly, several other artisans in the village also have won awards from the National Craft Council ceremonies. This also includes receiving UNESCO Award of excellence for handicraft in the year 2004 given to a wall hanging piece (UNESCO 2013). Although they appreciate the honours and exposure they receive by attending the award ceremonies and exhibitions, one artisan revealed how sceptical he was with the selection process in most of these competitions and award ceremonies.

“I once submitted two pieces to an exhibition. One was strictly based on traditional ‘Dumbara rata’ and the other was new designs. But in the final event, I was awarded first place for the new design and not for the traditional one. Even these people who judge don’t know what real Dumbara rata is.” (Personal interview, September 2014)

The statement of the artisans is interesting here, as it reveals the usual perception of national award ceremonies held by artisans, in that they realise competitions require

producing historicised craft that is deemed authentic, and quite different from commercial production. For example, the National Craft Council mentions: “The artisan’s success largely depends on pride in his vocation. Being commercially successful does not necessarily bring pride; recognition and respect is what counts. To encourage artisans to continue their tradition, [excel in their] work, and contribute to the community, the National Craft Council presents awards, prizes, medals, and certificates in all fields of creative work to honour quality, merit, and excellence in creations” (National Craft Council 2013). In the above instance when his new design was awarded the first place, he was amazed and amused at the same time, for he knew that such competitions favoured traditional designs. In an interview conducted in October 2017 with one of the panel of judges revealed the selection committee consists mostly of academic and museum staff (almost 90%), which becomes a chaotic process of “shouting out at each other” in terms of how the craftworks are being selected as the items get displayed in a large hall, therefore “an absolute hotchpotch”.

In between producing work for exhibitions, artisans also undertake special orders where national identity and traditionalism become an important subject to display. One artisan described how they were commissioned by the government officers to decorate the foyer of a Colombo conference venue when the Prince of Wales visited Sri Lanka for the Commonwealth Summit in 2011. Similarly, they were approached in 2007 to reproduce pieces that were in the archives of the Colombo museums, along with other contemporary pieces to be displayed at the SAARC Museum of Textiles and Handicraft in New Delhi (from 7th December 2007– 6th of March 2008). The exhibition convened by a curatorial team led by Prof. Joytindra Jain⁷⁷ called “Textiles Traditions of South Asia-Past and Present” was envisaged by inviting each member country to send “a representative collection” of textiles tradition of both “museum quality pieces” and examples of “living traditions”, including a live craft demonstration (National handicraft & handlooms museum 2008, p3). The Sri Lankan authorities selected Dumbara textiles to represent Sri Lankan identity (amongst a few other crafts) and included an archival piece, a reproduction of a 19th century textiles piece (interestingly the artisan inserted his name and place of production in Sinhala language on the border of the textile), and a contemporary piece that emulated a designer’s work but was said to be inspired from their “own environment”. In these circumstances, when both national and international heritage propaganda supports a particular image for ‘museum worthy

⁷⁷ The same curator of the National museum of New Delhi and the anthropologist who worked with NID at the initiation of its craft module mentioned in chapter 5.

pieces' that promotes an authentic past and one for 'living traditions' that might support rather contemporary adaptations—we see how artisans quickly adapt to these requirements, to strategically promote their identity and craftwork to pursue their own goals (both collective and individual) for an international audience. This example also highlights the part played by international and national heritage institutions in shaping the social process of production, evaluation and reception of craft work at different levels (local, national and international) with certain power relations which legitimise how, and what they come to recognise as craft.

Outsider's Evaluation of Dumbara Weaving

The construction and re-construction of Dumbara heritage also takes place outside the village level, when government officers, museum and exhibition curators, designers, buyers, retailers including the magazine and newspapers describe Dumbara craft practice. An example is how one of the designers describes his work with Dumbara weavers as 'reviving and modernising', and the way it has achieved international recognition. This is irrespective of how artisans view the produced craftwork for the designer as modern, and not traditional.

“Returning to Sri Lanka [after serving as a UNICEF consultant to Guatemala on a project reviving Mayan Indian weaving] he began developing a new aesthetic in tapestry design and began a long-standing relationship with traditional weavers of Thalagune Udu-dumbara, the oldest weaving village in Sri Lanka. He has drawn from visual forms deeply rooted in local traditions, infused them with a modern aesthetic and taken the product to an international market through personal exhibitions at the leading design museums such as Deutsches Textilmuseum in Krefeld (1995) and Norsk Form Design Museum in Oslo (1998). He also adapted the design aesthetic of his hand-woven cotton tapestries to develop a range of products including floor carpets for Editore of Langenthal, Switzerland and industrially knitted fabrics for the fashion industry. For many years the MOMA Design Store in New York carried Tilak's tapestries. As Pierre Restany, the renowned French critic wrote in the catalogue of the Deutsches Textilmuseum Krefeld “A chronicle of Sinhalese history parades in his language of modernity. Tilak has become one of the masters of

contemporary textile art without renouncing his roots, but rather, by actualizing their specificity" (1995)." (Samarawickrema n.d.)

The text clearly illustrates that Dumbara weaving is in the 'oldest village', 'rooted in tradition', depicts 'Sinhala history' and is therefore follows a romantic imagery. At the same time it has a new aesthetic order introduced by the designer, has been modernised, and hence warrants participation at international level (which otherwise would not take place), where the designer becomes the 'master' of contemporary work. Not only does this add to the "pervasive ideological context" of authenticating the new based on the past, defined through a selective geo-political and historical paradigm⁷⁸ (Bundgaard 1999, p59), but it also shows the temporal dimension of heritage (Smith 2006). Such expression is not however constructed by the artisan, but by the designer and the press.

Not only does the idea of heritage and tradition become ambivalent in these descriptions of designers' work, modernising and reviving indigenous craft here has also become a priority when the retailers heroically announce: "Revived by Dominic Sansoni in the early 1980's"(Barefoot 2017). This equally promotes as important identity, nationalism and historicity. "The Dumbara weaving products are produced with a family of Sinhala weavers using traditional Arabic designs that the family's been using since the seventeenth century. This beautiful range includes cushion covers, bedspreads, table runners and wall hangings" (The Island 2014). While the newspaper calls it 'traditional Arabic designs' none of the artisans seem to relate to that. Not only do such descriptions create a rather ambivalent and a confuse status about Dumbara weaving, in hindsight it caters to that romanticised vision of village craft, still surviving in an idyllic homogenous context in Sri Lanka's Kandyan region as expressed in the writing of Coomaraswamy. Interestingly, contemporary designers have also linked Dumbara Weaving as a way of promoting ethical fashion and have taken them to run-away fashion shows (The Sunday Leader 2010).

The government officers also understands as reviving when they introduce upgraded equipment (a spinning wheel with an electric motor), new product developments, and conduct training classes to the common villagers under master-apprentice schemes. In these situations the construction of Dumbara heritage is taken keenly on by outside agencies wishing to develop and revive the craft. At one point they situate it as out dated thus needing revival, while at other times it becomes a successful commodity not

⁷⁸It is also said that Samarawickrema's work appears to take a direct cue from Coomaraswamy's work of Mediaeval Sinhalese Art (Seneviratne 2012).

only to extend the reputation of the designer or retailer but also to give a livelihood to the artisan. Therefore, Dumbara weaving is never a construction by just the weavers themselves, but also a collaboration of various interest parties as well as what has been written about it.

There is also the authoritativeness of the development officials in selecting what to design, who they work with, and how the safeguarding should look like. As one of the government officials of the craft development sector revealed: “When we were conducting a baseline survey in Talagune there were so many people who were doing weaving individually and were not attached to traditional families. We told them to register with us as a craftsman so that when there is some funding available they can also apply for the equipment. That way you can give an opportunity to the others in the village to practice the craft. Anyway, those people never approached us after that.” Such attitude by officials reveal their mission of developing the village sector and making the craft available to all, when he continued, “the real intention for us was to protect the tradition in the village”. At issue is how safeguarding efforts of the government officials become different to what artisans expect from the government. The systems and priorities of the official heritage clearly depart from the communal values of heritage here. This type of “serious speech acts” of government officials determining traditional and modern parameters for crafts continues with their authorised vision about craft which is different from that of the actual problems of the craftsmen. This is not limited to Dumbara craft, but can also be traced elsewhere in Asia (see Bundgaard 1999, p157-160).

The weaver’s construction of Dumbara Weaving

Weavers never construct the heritage only based on what they weave, instead they consider the past, present and future needs to make opportunistic and strategic choices to describe what Dumbara weaving means. Because of this, one can never have an authentic Dumbara textile, for it is subjectively constructed for different purposes by different groups and individuals. The romanticised and nostalgic picture of Coomaraswamy’s description of Dumbara weaving of the Kandyan region, has lately been adopted by others to fix a condition for Dumbara weaving as an important craft worthy of development and revival. Weavers used this notion as a supportive

mechanism when they describe the progress artisans have made thus far. During the interviews with government officials, Coomaraswamy's book was always brought to attention to describe 'traditional craft', while at the same time they drew the institution's concern to ensure the sale of craft. This resulted in a policy at both the National Design Centre (NDC) and the National Craft Council (NCC), which favour innovation over tradition, somewhat at odds with their vision statement of 'preservation' (National Craft Council 2013). The National Handicraft Festival catalogue in 2014 mentions; "The National Craft Council has focused on producing innovative handicrafts. The Council is committed to introducing handicrafts that could win the market at the same time blending tradition and novelty while safeguarding dimensions of tradition. It is time to produce novel handicrafts with creative perspectives, while training the craftsmen in line with the philosophy of the Council"—which is "Nurturing and Preserving Traditional Handicrafts for their sustainable existence" (National Craft Council 2013).

When Daskon observed Talagune weaving community in her 2007-09 study, she summed up that its weavers have shown resilience towards social, economic and political vulnerabilities of national and global trends, for they have used the cultural traditions as a means of a resource to build livelihood strategies. Such multipurpose adaptive systems like cultural traditions, she argues, provide cultural resilience to achieve a community's sustainability goals (Daskon 2010b, Daskon and Binns 2010). But Daskon's observation and portrayal of the village life shows active resistance to cultural changes, through which villagers have "'managed' to cope with the changes through their cultural tradition". In the meantime she says such adaptations have not altered their "traditional way of life", irrespective of her acknowledgement that traditions are "an ongoing, dynamic and natural process" (Daskon 2010b, p1094). Instead the analysis in this chapter shows that it is not only the cultural traditions that provided adoptive strategies offering resilience, but that it is also tradition's transformative, adaptive and evolving nature that supported livelihoods. It is a choice to them, whether to promote, ignore or alter traditional practices depending on circumstances, and deciding in which cases one wants to maintain kinship structures and in which cases egalitarian and communitarian values matter most. Indeed it is worth acknowledging many perspectives of culture and the ability of the tangible and intangible nature of cultural capital to contribute to development goals, as Daskon argues in the case of Talagune Dumbara weavers (Daskon and Binns 2010, Daskon





2010a, Daskon and McGregor 2012). However, such activities are not simply about what weavers hold in the community within them, but are built in relation to what is at stake. Her observation on the village culture may nevertheless portray a rather romanticised view, with significant uniformity in portraying self-sufficiency, strong family ties with ancestral connectivity which are aligned with Buddhist precepts while achieving progress, happiness and prosperity (See Daskon 2015 p43, Daskon 2010b p1084). In contrast, the discussion about Dumbara weavers in this chapter exposed a rather contested domain where craft is not a utopia but a heterotopia as Venkatesan (2009) observes in a South Indian craft⁷⁹. In this way, it is also similar to what Handapangoda et al (2016) observed in the Sri Lankan traditional mask industry where both tradition and modernity are redefined and reinvented all the time. Hence, the practice of Dumbara weaving takes place in a network of different associations like “the material, human resources, its messiness, hierarchies, inequalities, complications and differences, the colonial past and anti-colonial movements and the ideological, pragmatic and other concerns that drive various people” (Venkatesan 2009, p268). These all construct Dumbara textiles heritage.

6.6 Agency, development and mediation of craft enterprise: A Talipot Palm craft community in Dambadeniya

Many craft development projects exist in post-independent Sri Lanka, and this section of the chapter will discuss one such project related to a basket and mat weaving community in Dambadeniya area. Aligned to the development agendas of uplifting the village economy by tying up with global markets the example shows how development work altered the community’s production and social system. The study villages that are located in Kurunegala District departs from the traditional communal textiles weaving village in Talagune, which sits on the periphery of development projects and is situated in a transition area between highlands and low lands.

⁷⁹ Bundgaard (1999), writing about the contested nature of artisanal work in India, says harmonious co-operative spirit has little to do with village life, as competition has emerged as a main characteristic there.

Legend

-  Kurunegala District of North Western Province
-  Alawwa DS (Maharachchimulla, Galatharaya)
-  Narammala DS (Dambadeniya, Polwattegedara, Rangallepola)
-  Divisional Secretariats



Source: Wikimedia.com



Figure 3: Map of Alawwa, Sri Lanka

The particular example offers insight into how enterprises were built with national development goals using local resources and practices. It has experienced a craft and design intervention by a local university, and this allows us to locate how the accessibility of agency, development and mediation organises within multiple stakeholder projects. The example of craft development as an enterprise project reflects another trend when the state's neo-liberalisation policies curtail social welfare schemes to allow people to "self-help" by giving them access to the market, often said to have aggravated an unequal system (Wickramasinghe 2006). Wickramasinghe also elaborates on how the non-governmental sector emerged in 1970s Sri Lanka, mushroomed in the 1980s, and included international and national level organisations, operating with the state and also as small scales community based NGOs (ibid).

6.6.1 Export Production Village Concept and Dambadeniya Export Production Village (DEPV)

The concept of export production villages was introduced in early 1980s as a direct result of the 1977 economic liberalisation strategy by the Ministry of Trade, and as a public and private sector partnership project (Kahan 2007, Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri 1999). Developed as an alternative development strategy to aid and amend the traditional mainstream development policies it tried to minimise the policy weaknesses while enhancing peoples' capabilities (Ratnayake 2015). Its main focus was to develop a direct link between international markets and rural villages in order to work at the "free play" of market forces, with the export production village scheme established as "a trading house of producers at grass-roots level to introduce rural export-oriented products (agricultural and agro-based cottage industry products) into the highly competitive international market" (ibid).

The Dambadeniya scheme was set up as a People's company under a company act in 1981⁸⁰ (Ratnayake 2015, p42). As Ratnayake (2015), Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri (1999) mention the multiple objectives the export production village concept entailed in its inception included maintaining the traditional socio-economic village system via an endogenous approach which paid attention to utilising traditional livelihood practices and technologies to attract foreign exchange earnings directly into the village to minimise the involvement of intermediaries. Further the project promoted a self-

⁸⁰ In 2007, the People's Company was transformed into People's Liability Company (PLC) (Personal Interview with the officials of DEPV in August 2014)

reliance approach to face open economic conditions and not to become dependent on state or foreign aid. It also had the parallel objectives of improving the entrepreneurship within small scale producers while making their production efficient when the rural sectors are said to be lacking knowledge on market development. It supported the national export diversification and expansion programme of the government, by affiliating the village scheme to the Export Development Board (Kulatunga 1993). The Export Development Board served as the marketing arm for the village production units which included conducting feasibility studies to provide technical advice (Ratnayake 2015). As a public-private partnership the development scheme involved private consultants, and public sector agencies, subsidised by the government in most cases (Kahan 2007). However as a People's Company, Ratnayake (2015) asserts, it involved a more balanced power structure, representing a community's traditional and newly emerged business groups connecting them to the government and private sector in return. Even though arranged by a hierarchical organisational framework, such a participatory approach to endogenous development was effective as it represented the community and its gate keepers, thus reflected upon the people's real needs according to Ratnayake (2015). The export production village concept was considered a novel approach to export-led rural development amongst the many development initiatives used in post independent Sri Lanka (Kulatunga 1993).

The project scheme on the one hand drew on the rural and urban divide which industrial development created, when the majority of the industrial development activities aimed at the urban and semi-urban sectors targeting non-traditional productions (Kulatunga 1993, International Trade Centre 1992). After alienating four-fifth of rural populations by the 1980s despite numerous attempts by earlier state parties to promote the village economy, strategies to uplift the rural community became a priority through the export development village schemes according to Kulatunga (1993). According to the International Trade Centre's report (1992, p1), the concept of rural export development was promoted as a "miracle of the newly industrialised countries" and served as "political objectives" in maintaining the democratic institutions which they thought that certain developing countries struggled with.

The company structure consists of at least 50 shareholders as the minimum number to set up an enterprise, where no single owner could acquire more than 10% of the company shares with a nominal value of a share price of Rs. 10/= (Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri 1999). It included different product sectors like agricultural (vegetables,

fruits and spices), agro based (fibre based products) and manufactured and assembled goods (handloom and reed packages). DEPV in the present day is mainly producing packing boxes using talipot palm leaves for the tea industry, which has been successful over the past 30 years or so. The enterprise extended its product range to produce handicrafts but the tea packaging boxes remain the main source of income generation for the villagers.

There are mixed reviews of the export production village concept: Ratnayake (1991, 1999, 2015) views it as a successful model providing self-reliance and endogenous development, bringing economic benefits to the community, While Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri (1999) see flaws in the approach, highlighting irregularities in stakeholder relationships where marginalisation of the workers through division of labour occur. It made the villagers reliant on limited production capabilities, resulting in a danger of getting caught between buyers. There was also criticism of organisation of women's work in the village, emphasising the effects of subcontracting work and concerns about outsourcing labour (Jayaweera 2002) and making those women enterprises only a survival strategy, when all other means of professional occupations fail (Samarasinghe 1993). Nevertheless, such subcontracting as a means of stimulating economic growth and a mode of poverty alleviation has been acknowledged positively when the Sri Lankan Export Production Village concept was considered to be a valuable example and a strategic initiative for international development (see UNESCO 1997, International Trade Centre 1992, Hull 1998). This is despite the Export production Village concept being rather a short lived experience in the Sri Lankan context (CENWOR 1991), except for the stand alone success made by DEPV centre.

Thus far scholars have only looked at the Export Production Village scheme from the development and economic standpoint (Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri 1999, Ratnayake 2015, Kulatunga 1993) or from a labour and gender studies perspective (Samarasinghe 1993, Jayaweera 2002). This study draws on their findings, but locates within a heritage perspective in terms of how communities have responded to these development initiatives with regards to altering their traditional practices. The study will include an evaluation of designer engagements for new product developments in a recent co-creation project organised with the village community.

6.6.2 *DEPV as a craft enterprise in the present day*

The success of this enterprise model thus far is reliant on exporting packaging boxes to the international market, mainly Europe and Japan, especially tea packaging boxes. Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri (1999) mention that this success is reliant on a private buyer called “Stassen Exports”, who used to be the main exporter until recently. Currently DEPV has several buyers and it makes other craft items for the local market. At the time of field work in August 2014, DEPV had 21 centres where supervisors and producers worked within a hierarchical structure managed by a board of directors with 3800 shareholders including 1200 registered makers. The board of directors consist of representatives of different organisations involved as well as those members who are elected from the registered craftswomen list. There are several village production centres and each centre has a supervisor and several producers. The supervisor, also known as *‘palikava’* (Sinhala translation of supervisor), is also an experienced woman maker with additional responsibilities for organising the production, training the women, assuring quality of the products and solving managerial issues or reporting them to the main office. Although, these producers do not call themselves ‘artisans’, instead introducing themselves as ‘producers’ (or ‘box makers’-*petti hadana aya* in an informal sense in the village), the enterprise introduces them as *‘nishpadikavo’* meaning ‘women producers’. In this research the reasons for acknowledging the box making activity as a craft practice and the recognition of makers as craftswomen are justified as follows. The export production village concept of Sri Lanka is endorsed within the handicraft sector as an international example (see Hull 1998, UNESCO 1997) and it fits within the UNESCO’s definition of artisanal products, that is “predominantly made by hand or with the help of hand tools”⁸¹ (UNESCO 1997, p6).

⁸¹ The full definition adopted by UNESCO in their 1997 symposium is: “Artisanal products are those produced by artisans, either completely by hand, or with the help of hand tools or even mechanical means, as long as the direct manual contribution of the artisan remains the most substantial component of the finished product. These are produced without restriction in terms of quantity and using raw materials from sustainable resources. The special nature of artisanal products derives from their distinctive features, which can be, aesthetic, artistic, creative, culturally attached, decorative, functional, traditional, religiously and socially symbolic and significant.” (UNESCO 1997, p6)

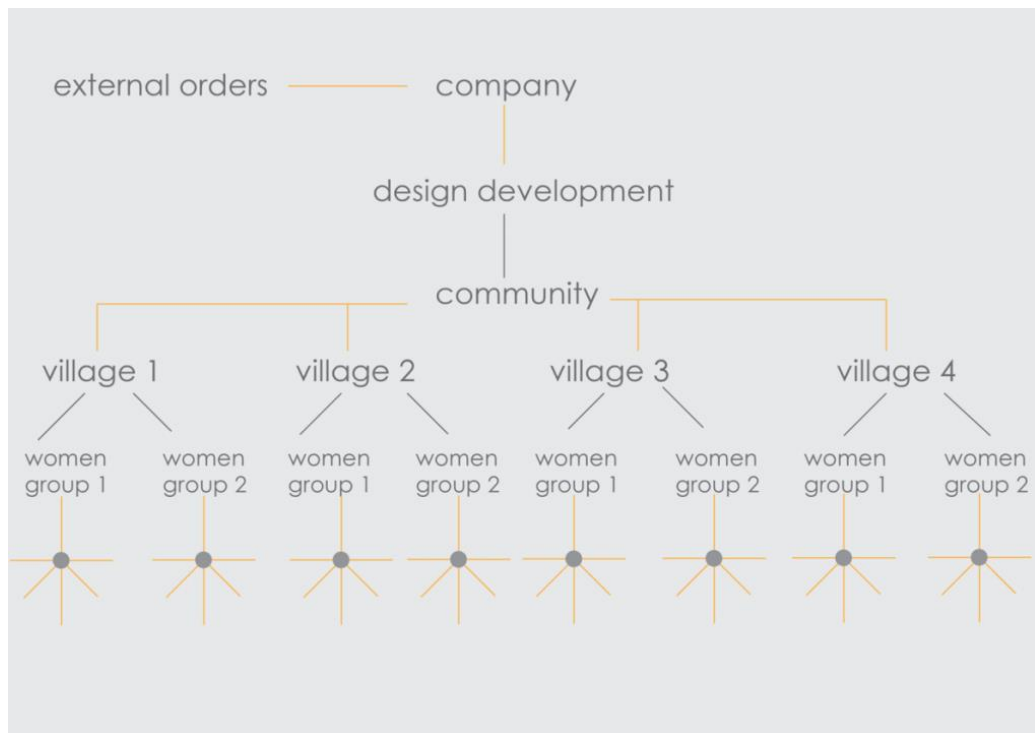


Figure 4: The business model of the craft enterprise

Ratnayake (2015) argues, part of the success of the DEPV is due to the very traditional nature of those craft practices utilised in the inception of the program, as they are unique to the area instead of introducing skills and knowledge via formal education or training. Therefore the strategies were derived from those existing traditional weaving practices using local materials and employing similar techniques women used in utilitarian object making of talipot, rush and reed. As Ratnayake (2015, 1991) explains, the idea was to turn the domestic production into market oriented needs.

Clear economic progress was made in the last 30 years, albeit with certain fluctuations. The orders have flourished as quantities as large as a hundred thousand tea boxes a month were produced, with the company making profits through economies of scale. This model of business has allowed a division of labour with designated job roles like the ‘supervisor’ and ‘producer’ in the community context. Moreover it has adopted a supply chain allowing the company to monitor the production line more effectively and efficiently. Considered mainly to be a women’s enterprise with 98% being women in 1990 (Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri 1999), men’s contribution is not being formally acknowledged as registered members; the current women are the daughters of the first generation village artisans who joined the enterprise at its inception. As the survey by Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri showed in 1990, 49% were between the ages of 20-30 where only 14% were over 40 years of age, it was mainly the young generation of the

community who joined the DEPV and learnt basic weaving skills while disengaging from the traditional communal making. The enterprise affirmed that the training of young women contributed to the sustainment of the craft, who otherwise would not be a maker at all, benefiting here a large group of people.



Image 54: Samples of designs developed by the enterprise on display
Photo by author

Working on the principles of the “spirit of village life” (Ratnayake 2015) by keeping the labour within the village and preserving the domestic lifestyle through flexible hours, DEPV’s business operation certainly invoked the village as the “moral panopticon” which Lynch (2007, p141) describes was perennial to the rural-urban divide of Sri Lanka often associated with the free trade zones and factory production being set up outside villages. But the way labour was organised in the women’s work resulted in de-skilling where DEPV members became processors of material rather than independent producers (Weralupitiya 1990 cited in Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri 1999). Meeting a group of women in one of the collection centres, who gather every week to hand over their production to the main office revealed the attrition of skills, the lack of awareness of their own tradition and making cultures when they engaged in mass producing packaging boxes for well over 30 years. Some of the women belonged to the original

1980s groups. However, they all acknowledged what they are doing in the community is based on traditional roots as they said:

“This entire box making concept is new to the village, but making different things from palm leaves and rush is a traditional industry in the area.”

Even though they are aware of their inability to recall the traditional methods, they seemed to be less troubled by that as their survival and economic needs served as a precursor to safeguarding means of cultural heritage. This can be elucidated only by reviewing the traditional making practices of the village.

6.6.3 Traditional making practices in the village

In the Dambadeniya area visits were made to the villages of Polwaththegedara, Maharachchimulla, Rangallepola and Galatharaya. The first three villages were visited as they were linked to the enterprise, while Galatharaya was known for making traditional ceremonial fans for monks as they carry out their independent businesses. The visit to Galatharaya was to compare the different making setting to what is practiced in the other three areas (see figure 4).

Talipot material in the village context was used mainly for domestic purposes, and villagers revealed it not to have aesthetic means, but rather serving utilitarian needs like using its leaves to thatch their houses, covering the fences, to make baskets to carry water as well as to make sacks and baskets to carry things, or to weave mats to dry their rice paddy as the majority of the villagers are agrarians. The leaves of this tree are the most useful where it could grow large to a diameter of 3 to 5m or even larger than that (Chandran 1996) where the tree has a life span of about 120 years. The material is inextricably bound to the common life of villagers, and the historical recordings go as far as back 1681, when the British writer, Robert Knox describes talipot.

“Tolipat...is as big as a Ships Mast...being cut into pieces for use are near like unto a triangle: They [people] lay them upon their heads as they travel with the peaked end foremost...A marvelous Mercy which Almighty God hath bestowed upon this poor and naked People in this Rainy Country! One of these I brought with me into England” (Knox 1681, p117).

Later Coomaraswamy (1908) also mentions its defined use to write manuscripts and use it to make ceremonial processional fans.

Meeting a 90-year-old villager near Maharachchimulla gave the researcher first-hand experience of listening to his stories of what used to be associated with talipot palm leaves. A farmer by profession, he still works in his paddy field at the age of 90. His small thatched house was made with talipot leaves, inherited from his grandfather and approximately 200 years old. His lifestyle depicts what it was like using the abundant materials and making products for day to day use which requires skills and knowledge handed over to him generationally, as a domestic pursuit. It was part of the village's making culture to use a wealth of knowledge on using natural materials to make products that had both meaning and purpose, with both production and consumption remaining in the village. At certain times talipot leave strips are combined with other materials to improve the quality of the product, i.e. rush and reed.



Image 55: A farmer explaining about the uses of Talipot materials in everyday life
Photo by author

Mat weaving was a domestic pursuit which is practiced only by a few women in the village today. Rather than confining themselves to a particular material or skill, women in the village appreciated a variety of making practices. They have applied skills learned from one craft to another as part of self-explorations within their domestic activities. Therefore mat weaving has become a common practice in most houses, where weaving skills are not only used as a technique for talipot palm weaving, but also for more refined mat weaving using rush and reed, and vice versa. For these women, weaving is a stable feature in their life, using the abundant materials available. Mat weaving was more of a leisure activity for women in the villages even some 30 years ago. Meeting one of the daughters of a recently deceased artisan who had been popular in the area for patterned rush mat weaving, revealed that her mother liked to weave as a way of ‘showing off her skills’ to other village women where her skills and knowledge would be honoured in women’s gathering. In other words, this type of making activity was more of a homely means of practice where skills were passed within the families and friends and not confined to an area or a family. Different weaving patterns and techniques were copied and shared, borrowing and developing from each other’s practice. When a woman joins a family after marrying, these new wives either shared their knowledge, or learnt it from someone in their new environment which was assumed as a way of blending into the new life.

Especially in mat weaving using rush and reed, certain motifs and patterns have had a meaning, either inspired from nature or influenced by religious stories which people were familiar with in day to day lives.

“ This is a sample I have kept for a long time which shows the ‘*vankagiriya*’ with animals like the hare, peacocks and deer that you can see in the forest (‘*vankagiriya*’ is shape of a maze that has an association with a Buddhist story popular in the local culture).” (A village woman, personal interview, August 2014)



Image 56: The ‘vankagiriya’ with animals like the hare, woven in rush
Photo by author

Creativity and functionality was at the core of their making culture in all the different types of trading villagers engaged with. The villagers used talipot leaves to make coarse sacks and mats which they used for cultivation activities. Locals have used *Kodiya* to carry freshly harvested rice stalks. *Maagala*⁸² to dry the paddy and *Pata Malla* is used as a sack to store the grains. Whether women did it for sales to earn an extra income, or did it on behalf of someone else for friendship or in exchange of labour, women contributed to traditional weaving in an improvisatory manner. The mat weaving therefore expressed a kind of “domestic political integrity” (Bunn 2012). A woman in the village explained this: “One of my sisters did mat weaving. I got interested in this while watching how she wove. I think I was 12 or 13 years old that time, so I went to a neighbouring house and learnt from that *nanda*⁸³.”

This indicates more informal knowledge sharing where practices have been used by women as a way to meet as well as way to work together. The products they made through such means not only gave them a sense of content, but also offered pleasure, patience, endurance, pride and a great satisfaction and problem solving.

⁸² Maagala is a long woven mat made from talipot leaves, it is very coarse, unlike the mats made from rush and reed. It is basically used for hard use especially to air dry the paddy

⁸³ ‘Nanda’ is a Sri Lankan colloquial term that is used to address elder women and has the meaning ‘aunty’.

“I did this *maagala*. It takes about a month to finish weaving. You cannot do it at once, you have to finish it little by little. We make this by ourselves and we use it for our own purposes. Talipot palm strips are very coarse, unlike the rush. So we only weave either in the morning or in the evening when it is damp due to dew. If you try to do this in the mid-day the leaf is so dry that you can even get cut your fingers on the sharp edges.” (A village woman, personal interview, August 2014)

The same artisan also keeps collecting woven pieces of different patterns in the hope that it will become useful to her children one day if they want to start weaving (they are not interested at present) or that she could teach someone else later. There, sharing becomes a democratic practice without being confined to community or a family. The idea behind preservation and continuation of local practices can also be understood with how she perceived living traditions.



Image 57: A *Maagala* mat alongside a heap of paddy at a household
A photo by author

“All the mats in our household are now destroyed. I remember I wove an intricate design with all the 12 months mentioned in a pattern, I even put the year I did as 1979. It got torn apart. Even the ones my mother did I think she threw them away when it could not be used anymore. She would not have

expected them to be in demand or worthy. So now I keep weaving little pieces here and there when I get the time hoping that at least it might help the children one day.” (A village woman, personal interview, August 2014)

Here, the artisan is mindful of forgetting and loss and its impact on revival. It also shows what locals expected from a living tradition in the way of continuation by recreating the work, when it becomes old and fragile. They used to create new artefacts rather than keeping old ones. But now, the circumstances have changed, and women have started collecting things that are deemed to be in danger of disappearing. Therefore the erstwhile quality of craft as ephemeral is changing into a keepsake, like the way the daughter of the deceased artisan keeps her mother’s intricate woven mats well preserved even though she has never had the need or interest to learn it from her mother.

6.6.4 Craftswomen as ‘producers of box making’ (*Petti hadana aya*)

Economic integrity and nostalgia

Craftwork in the present day is not a ‘hobby’ activity, but a necessity. Within their economic circumstances, making boxes is important for survival “to earn something to survive the day somehow” a craftswoman said. This concept is shared amongst most women and certainly has led to them becoming independent in the household rather than solely relying on their husbands’ earnings. Women value their autonomy which they appreciate over pursuing a leisure activity. Enquiring about how women perceive traditional mat weaving with regard to the new culture of tea box making reveals their sentimental regret and is explained in the following conversation.

Woman one: “All of our mothers did know about weaving *maagal* mats. But our generation does not know about it much. We-daughters know how to make boxes (laughing). Now see there is this dying method called ‘*pathangi pewima*’⁸⁴ in those days. Now we do not know a thing about it”.

Woman two: “What is that? I do not know about such a thing?”

⁸⁴ Pathangi Pewima is a natural clouration process that uses chips taken from local tree bark which is said to be given a reddish brown colour

Women one: “It is an aged old method people in the time of our parents used. I sincerely do not know about it”.

For these women producers, fine mat weaving brings nostalgia. One of the producers in the weaving centre explained a mat she saw recently done by an elder woman in the village, was ‘a marvellous piece’, an ‘unbelievable work’. She also added, “We don’t know whether we lost the skill of such refined mat weaving because of tea box making or our sheer ignorance”. Another woman reacted to her statement saying, “We joined the enterprise in 1986. That was when they introduced pasting the woven mat onto a card board to make tea boxes (earlier boxes were sewn together). Well, ever since we were doing that, we never had to think of anything else really.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

An elder practitioner raised her anxiety in a peevish voice about the present day women as they have only taken up weaving to make packaging boxes. She showed her resentment towards a less embodied practice but acknowledged that it has now become part of the village culture, and during busy periods she even contributes by taking subcontracts from the nearby enterprise women.

“A lot of these people in the village nowadays are used to making these boxes and they are never interested in learning anything else. It was different in our times. We learnt how to make mats, baskets and all those things.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

The production process and the division of labour

The women who work for the enterprise receive direct orders with specific details on what to make and how to make them from their in-house designer with a block. The designs were given to the supervisor of each production centre, with allotted raw materials. Allied businesses have also developed, like sourcing talipot shoots from other villages. Despite the usual organisational structure and individual making at home, women have also formed new relationships. When women are landed with large orders they get together and share their work. Such working methods may be recognised as concepts of value added time management or optimum solutions to manage large production orders by increasing efficiencies (still working as home makers) while allowing the organisation to trace back who made what through the coding systems

implemented. The same system has however put-up barriers for the makers to progress and develop as ‘artisans’, as the business model has largely been reduced the makers to petty commodity workers. Still, women appreciate the flexibility and sharing labour as they can collect their allotted supplies and sit back at home and make things leisurely while attending to other work or get together and enjoy working as a group if required. As one enterprise woman said: “We earned a decent living by making these boxes, we are much concerned about staying at home and working while we look after the kids and do all the house work. We can do all these things and still earn something to support the family. This is more important to us than going elsewhere to work. We can be with our children and at the same time carry on our traditions.” Interestingly what she means by tradition implies the using of talipot as a natural material and making boxes using basic weaving techniques. This perception of village tradition was confronted by an elderly artisan:

“These days not a lot of people are working on intricate designs. They think dying a few strips of leaves and insert one of them in between a three sets of strips and repeat that pattern is a design. That’s a design for them but not for us however”

But she also pondered,

“There is one good thing that happened through making boxes. That is most girls learnt how to do at least basic weaving. But they can’t do what we weave. You need a lot of knowledge to do something like this. Inserting a strip of leaf is not enough. You have to have a mind of patience with good attention. If you miss one strip, the whole pattern goes wrong and has to start from the very beginning.”



Image 58: Women at a collection centre, handing over boxes they made to the enterprise staff
Photo by author

Villagers' adaptation to the changing economic structure

How economic needs are enabling much as cultural needs is put into context by one of the makers, when she explained about the changing economic structures, and the way villagers have adopted to the change.

“There should be someone to buy the stuff we produce. All that matters now is the market for us. To keep the tradition or whatever, all we need to have is a definite market to supply in the first place. We will carry on with this in any difficulty, but someone should be there to ask-can you do this [to give orders].”
(Personal interview, August 2014)

Women perceive this type of making activity more as an additional rather than stable income to the family. Asked how they would sustain it if the orders become lesser every day, a woman described the way she would subsist. “That is a problem. But we hope we will get even a few orders at least from the enterprise or from a private buyer. (Because it has happened in the past too) We have managed ourselves to survive somehow thus far, and we would continue to do so. There is work in the paddy fields and we sometimes grow other crops. So there is work to be engaged with.” Addressing Samarasinghe’s (1993) question about women enterprises like those export production

villages, in terms of whether they are the “last frontier or a new beginning”, the study confirmed it is neither of them to these women producers. Rather it is a means of survival. In that sense, the targeted outcomes like invigorating entrepreneurship in the village level is the least important to them. Another enterprise producer who is in her mid-50 explained why the box making activities or any other mat weaving activity is less appealing to the young generation, not even as a ‘last frontier’.

“I also have a daughter who is still schooling. She does not like to get involved in this. Even when they are at home they are not interested in learning this. Because you cannot earn enough for the efforts you put in. Children these days would like to do a job. At least go to a garment factory. Who likes to stay at home and do mat weaving these days?” (Personal interview, August 2014)

Another woman whose daughter and her-self both worked for the enterprise also raised the current plight of the box making industry. The daughter who is well educated (only missed the entry to the university by a few points) joined the enterprise as a supervisor in the area, but was compelled to leave and now become as a garment worker. Such occupation was more promising than working for the enterprise when the mother and daughter could not sustain their lives with the limited orders the enterprise is getting these days.

Moreover, the new techniques and processing of materials introduced via the enterprise to improve the quality of the materials and expedite the making process has in a way contributed to the entire craft making in the village, other than box making. The bleaching process by using chemicals in addition to the natural bleaching process using papaya leaves, or the introduction of basic, simple tools to aid the making process, have added to the cultural acumen of the village. Women, even the older generations acknowledge such knowledge is important to smooth the coarse effect of the talipot leave and make it more useful to mix with other materials making it beneficial to all. In that sense, the new making scenarios, as a whole may have been rejected at face value and viewed with suspicion by the older generation, but they also acknowledge certain benefits it has brought and sharing practice when there is a demand because it contributes to their household prosperity.

From mat weavers to box makers: Changes in women's identity in response to market demands

Of significance for this discussion is how the changes in women identities as 'mat weavers' is transformed to become 'box makers—*petti hadana aya*' or '*nishpadikavo*—producers'. Mat weaving and other forms of woven practices like basket making are considered to be idealised in a domestic ideology, with close relationships to the environment. At present the maker's role is perceived less as a traditional or cultural one but a more as an economic asset. This example of women's work not only portrayed a gender perspective on craft making, but it also indicated how development activities were instigated using traditional and cultural elements of the society while aiming for global export markets. The evolving nature of traditional woven products in the village context can be clearly altered by the introduction of development schemes in the village. For example, the elderly makers ponder about their artistic ability to make refined mats, when only some of younger generation makers value the economic stability brought by making basic woven boxes, because many other young villagers prefer to work in the garment industry.

These new identities of women as 'producers of box making' is an example of how stakeholders perceive their craft work differently. Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri (1999) explained how the main buyer Stassen Exporters considered it as a charity work for the poor workers, even though the talipot products generated a 90% of a value addition to their final product with a significant profit margin. Similarly, for the Export Development Board, to the management of the enterprise and other officials, these women producers were an employment generation and a marketing scheme where Ariyabandu and Chandrasiri (1999) describe power inequalities between the authorities and the rural 'uneducated and helpless people' making them 'powerless' in their negotiations.

Amidst these divisive gendered cultural identities as '*petti hadana aya*' the women have been actively constructing their weaving practice mindful of various traditional making practices in the area, while engaging in a new practice. In this new practice, women pay homage to veteran artisans in the village, while clearly departing from their work. The enterprise not only attributes group or individual identities to the workers through organisational hierarchies, it also generates a village identity and legitimises the

women's production as traditional work unique to the area. It shows not only the identity of the person or the community producing it, but also the significance material culture in defining the village identity in the rural-urban divide (as something that is not available to the urban citizens). In the talipot box making, the rural village maker is symbolically and imaginatively constituted as the backbone of the economy. In that sense, each village maker is the quintessential representative of the national identity which the state wanted to acquire through development plans. When the new identity of '*petti hadana aya*' or box makers became part of a 'received idea of heritage' (Kirshenbaltt-Gablett 1995) via development projects to promote traditional village culture, artisans instead defined who they are (as box makers, microenterprise workers) and what they are not (the traditional weavers) through their negotiations with the enterprise, the state and private sectors. This expression held by women then answers one of the questions this thesis attempted to expound: who controls the heritage narrative, and how do locals appropriate and construct it.

Adding to that, the construction of meaning and values of heritage as a cultural process (Smith 2006) is not limited to those communities, enterprises, buyers, the state and non-governmental organisations; it is relevant to higher education institutions and especially design institutions. Therefore the following section describes a student co-creation project and how designers and academia contributed to heritage discourse.

6.7 Agency and narrative of heritage craft and design within Higher Education Institutions

Industrial Design for Third World Countries

Recommendations for Industrial Design for peripheral countries or third world, developing countries were made as early as 1975 with the support of ICSID, UNESCO, UNIDO and other international funding organisations (Papanek 1983). Industrial education in Sri Lanka was targeted at different sectors, i.e. textiles education was developed with the generous support from UNDP and UNESCO with diploma courses at first (UNIDO 1978a). Early recommendations also included the need for a design centre for the textiles industry (UNIDO 1978a) with other industrial development initiatives of scientific and management education being added (International Centre for Industrial Studies 1978). In the beginning it was those textiles and technology

programmes set up in the 1970s that later expanded into design education. In the year 2001, at the University of Moratuwa started offering B. Des Fashion Design and Product Development degree course and with several other state and private institutions offering design education at national level. University of Moratuwa also offers design education within the Department of Integrated Design (DID), Faculty of Architecture.

Combining heritage with industrial design: an alternative strategy to move away from Eurocentric Epistemological Foundations

The involvement of design institutions in constructing the heritage narrative of the country can be traced in the educational programme offered at Department of Integrated Design (DID) and is discussed in this chapter. The department's mission involves: "To incorporate a pragmatic and socially responsible approach to undergraduate and postgraduate teaching outcomes while providing design consultancy to inspire and serve the needs of the society through contemporary and traditional modes of thought, technology and media, while promoting the integration of different design fields." (Department of Integrated Design, n.d.). It offers studies in a variety of design disciplines including, media and communication design, lifestyle design and product design where students can choose a variety of disciplines like fashion, ceramics, furniture etc.

The mission of design education offered at DID is on 'social responsibility', 'addressing needs of the society' incorporating 'traditional mode of thoughts' as well as an industrial design ethos. This links back to what Papanek (1983) suggested for the developing countries within ICSID's working group even though his proposal was not initially acted upon. When attending western design schools he said,

"Many of these students [of developing countries] become seduced by a high technology, throwaway ethos of design education and praxis now prevalent in the metropolitan regions...Frequently stylistic or personal idiosyncrasies cultural, scholl-based or professorial are imposed on students and their own rich cultural and social heritage is ignored. [It then tends] to form an elitist self-perpetuating group. This group serves as base for a sort of 'professional imperialism', restricting its services to a small power-group that has also studied abroad, with

continuous demands for foreign ‘experts’, and closer links to similar power-groups abroad” (Papanek 1983, p61).

Instead, Papanek suggested the design school models in developing countries needed to avoid these by having meaningful links with the community and working on local needs. Such schools should not be imposed by foreign culture, but should be sharing the ‘hopes and aspirations of developing countries’ he added (Papanek 1983, p63). In that sense industrial design schools re-focusing their attention to local heritage practices like craft, may be argued an alternative design practice for the Sri Lankan context—an attempt to make design relevant to the local context.

6.7.1 Student experiences on craft documentation

It was a second year craft project that was taken into consideration in this analysis, where groups of students travel to a local craft community and study their social lives, craft traditions and collaborate with artisans to produce commercial products for a particular clientele. This study programme has been operating with other external agencies such as market consulting agencies, which have left the project mid-way, making collaborative design projects more challenging in terms of keeping all the stakeholders engaged. For their 2014 programme, the community craft identified for the student projects was talipot. The study programme itself is an experimental course according to the lecturers interviewed, as they develop future programmes based on the feedback they receive from previous years, with this particular type of course work running since 2012. It is designed not solely as a collaboration between students and artisans but is also a negotiation with other external stake holder groups like craft enterprises and buyers.

In response to the previous year’s craft project with a different community, the design department has identified the need of an intermediary institution to facilitate and extend the collaborative project beyond the project life cycle which they thought would provide a structural platform for collaborations. For this reason, they have approached DEPV enterprise discussed above and their craftswomen.

The craft project called “Adjoining traditional crafting”

The aim of the “Adjoining traditional crafting” is to ‘introduce design intervention for the grassroots level of once adorned craft industry... [Where students] actively engage... to revive this precious inheritance by manoeuvring its usage...by merging the traditional skills and technologies with innovative design concepts...’ (DID 2014, p8-9).

The students involved as part of their second semester final project were encouraged to work within groups as well as individually. Even though the project has a significant portion of studying rural craft sectors and product designing, it is a competitive module which poses distinctive transferable challenges like working in groups, working and collaborating with external parties and negotiating design and traditional requirements and meeting the market and design trends that get tested via competitive assessment modules. What students learnt during the 1st year and the 2nd year through different types of design modules like design principles, historical and contextual design, marketing all come into play when students apply such principles to a traditional craft context for product designing.

The aim of this project as explained by one of the lecturers is to give students the opportunity to explore and link their knowledge on design and context, design and technology, design and market areas more comprehensively within a single project. But the project itself is also a design and market intervention that aims to uplift rural craft communities, generating income and enhances livelihoods through designing. Students are e.g. required to go and find potential buyers, and mediate in the process.

During the project students were anticipated to apply skills in problem solving, innovative technology and design ideas to suggest design possibilities and make prototypes that would reduce the monotony associated with craft, hence benefiting the grassroots artisanal making. (Project brief of Adjoining traditional crafting project, 22.02.2014)

6.7.2 *The interface between artisan and designer*

Design's turn into Anthropology

The outcome of this projects was to produce a packaging solution using ‘design and design strategy’ as part of sustainable designing. Innovation as well as maintaining and conserving the traditional knowledge and uplifting craftsmanship are grounded. Through design strategies, the project tends to favour design over craft, and how this is averted to a certain extent is explained below through design's turn into anthropology.

Students were required as part of their curriculum to observe the lifestyles of artisans, the products they make, the traditional practices still prevailing and to learn the basic techniques as well as any tools available. They document the work over 2-3 weeks followed by a product development project working with the artisan, followed by producing an “Avant-Garde” design collection for the fashion show which the student does during a semester's period. Students were interviewed to capture their views on the craft documentation and product development. The majority of these interviews were individual, where students were asked to discuss their experiences while showing evidence of samples they had developed physically or digitally. Students were asked to bring sketch books, photographs, and documentary evidence to the interviews and share their experiences. It emerged that, the “Adjoining traditional crafting” project relied on employing an anthropological approach to designing and has allowed the students to experience the community craft while being part of that culture. As one of the lecturers stated,

“It is hoped that through a strong design intervention and value addition, those skills and knowledge vastly disappearing in traditional crafts can be improved and uplifted ...If we allow the students to walk into the village while wearing the designer hat, they will never understand the true situation. They have to be part of that community. Then only they will understand what is expected from them as a designer. Because they always have this label on them as The Designer granted to them via the university education – and with that they should be able take advantage and use that power to do something useful to the society. While using that strength they need to identify what they can really do to these people while understanding the sweat and emotions of the artisans. They must understand what they give back to the society. They must understand how

to incorporate the aspect of human relationship within the process of design.”
(Personal interview, August 2014)

A student described how he grasped this concept and used it within their design process: “All I wanted to find was what is within that environment of culture. What is amongst those people that might go from generation to generation as oral history or as believes. Because that is what they transfer to the new generation.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

However the same student who wanted to enjoy the exploration of traditional skills passed down generationally replied how he went against it when engaging in the design process, when innovation took precedent.

“Within this task a lot of our students have experimented on colours, materials, weaving techniques. Those artisans have a skill they have mastered for a long time. I did not want to find about it anymore. All I wanted to do was to find something new something they have not touched before.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

Drawing on the ethnographic immersion, another student focused her attention on the rural-urban divide and showed her nostalgic reference to the village culture for she wanted to get sensitised to that environment. “I grew up in an urban area. Village is a completely new environment for me.” This is indicative of many modern or cosmopolitan tendencies students displayed in relation to the traditional village life. However, not all students in this study programme come from urban settings, but being in design education already makes them part of a distinct class system of creative personnel that caters to the values of the cosmopolitan groups rather than those values held by rural villagers.

Craft in the minds of the designers

Intense experimentation of continuously doing, planning and acting upon in the design development process was visible when looking at students’ sketch books. Balancing the concepts of collective learning and their individual design approaches collided in most cases. For example one student said:

“I wanted to experiment a lot on the material. I wanted to know every little thing I can do about it. So I played with this material a lot...there was a lot of thinking behind my design. It was a long process. There was a sketching process, experimentation process and so and so forth” (Personal interview, August 2014)

Comparing their approach to artisanal work, students realised that tacit embodiment that artisans experienced of their materials and practice were different to that of students. At times it became evident that the embodiment artisans had towards place, materials, social and cultural values mattered less to the students as they believed it is the artisan’s job to transmit that between themselves whereas the student designer only needs to associate with more explicit details of the design.

“Whatever these people are practicing at the moment is something that they have been continuing for generations. We must think of doing something else by looking at it. These days we have internet so there are other ways to get information and update on what is happening in the world. We must use that and develop something new other than the usual thing craftspeople do.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

A majority of the student designers ‘accused’ artisans they worked with of ‘not thinking out of the box’ chiefly associated with the ‘same old methods of producing the packaging boxes’ even though they acknowledged their knowledge about the material and handling as impressive. They claimed, the artisans were ‘too lazy’, ‘not experimental enough’, ‘restrictive and unimaginative’, ‘lacked innovation’, ‘backward’ ‘outmoded’ and ‘relied on one good success’.

“These people do know a lot of things. They hold many hidden knowledge inside them like, they know you can’t tear the palm leaves in every direction. There is a specific direction you can tear otherwise it strays at the ends. Although these people know about it they never try to explore anything beyond that. They always stick to that same rule.”

Partly they blamed this observation on due to the repetitive nature of the box making that has been taking place for well over 30 years. Like one of the lecturers said, it was hoped that through student intervention artisans would be enlightened on the new design possibilities. “I think the intervention we expected was a success. The students have given the artisans a chance to think how other forms of new designs can be created. Artisans are the one who hold the knowledge. With students work artisans were able to

see how the usual folding technique can be applied elsewhere.” Clearly in this scenario a distinction is made between the designer and artisan, where the former is the one to direct the artisans about new possibilities and the latter holds the knowledge to execute it.

Another lecturer added how ideas of preservation and innovation are encouraged in the student projects.

“What we tell students all the time is try to use the techniques that are already in the craft, we tell them to preserve the material quality while maintaining the skill levels the artisans already have. We ask them to develop designs without harming the original form. We give them the design freedom but they must apply in a meaningful way.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

A student explained how they achieved the revival of tradition in the community: “We tried to use the techniques they have been used to make baskets and mat weaving in the past...they did not like the designs we gave them as they were too complicated but eventually they enjoyed working with us...when they came to see our exhibition they said they were intrigued. They were convinced that they could do more than making tea boxes”.

All the students identified the need for an intervention but they also realised they had a responsibility to manage. “I did not want to do a drastic change to the village craft through my designs...So I had to compromise a lot on market need, the value of the craft, the skill levels of the artisans, the contribution made to the artisans.” (Personal interview, August 2014)

Students also made a distinction between their creativity and designerly thinking against artisan’s tradition, while producing an image of an unprogressive maker. It also submitted that tradition is stale, while design renders innovation.

“What the craftsman doing all the time is following something. When someone says do it like this—then they follow that direction. What I understood as design is that—to think innovatively, to think its applicability by evaluating options. But I don’t think the craftsmen do that. There can be differences in their skill levels, but what they are doing is carrying out those tasks they have been doing for a long time with little changes...The designer’s role is completely different. A craftsman tries to put all their efforts into one place and try to make an item that

looks good. But design is not like that. We do not employ all the techniques and everything into one design...we think of every aspect of design before executing, because there is always a purpose on why we use that type of fastening method or this type of colours in the design, what is the consumer taste...there is no such analysis part within the craftsman...They would focus on surviving and have no time to think about innovating.” (personal interview, August 2014)

Here artisans are far removed from the designer’s ability to analyse the market or assess the products’ suitability to cater to a global clientele. Hence designers are problem solvers where their designs serve a purpose. Artisans on the other hand are seen to be over-aestheticised design and are not innovators. Within this narrative the artisan is relegated to an unmodern maker. Such distinctions between the creative class and the village makers not only emerge due to the educational hierarchies, but also because of the identities the village women have gained as petty commodity workers or the ‘*petti hadana aya*’. According to the students, their design education offered through institutions legitimises their intervention to revive the tradition and uplift the village maker. It is important to note that village women also expect such mediation from the students, for they consider their designs to have the capacity to influence a buyer to place an order with.



Image 59: Students carrying out craft documentation
Photo courtesy of Shyamal Sanjaya



Image 60: Students observing techniques of weaving from a village artisan
Photo courtesy of Shyamal Sanjaya

6.7.3 Co-creation with artisans and designers: A failure or a success?

Students found that the existing monotonous box making culture inhibited a true engagement with the artisans for it was hard for the artisans to be convinced to step out from the usual process. This disappointment has led students to either try their designs on their own or take their designs outside the community in order to box tick

collaboration. The interviewed students confirmed their idea generation was an individual process, for they have taken sketched ideas or prototypes to the artisans to make. Co-creation happened here based on those pre-conceived ideas, and reduced to negotiation on what is achievable in terms of technical and material constraints. Utilising ethnographic understanding of the social and cultural processes of craft documentation however became challenging to students during the design process. This was experienced by one student when she said: “At the end what we did was delegating a work to the artisan.” She also elaborated her process of making:

“I sketched a lot, came up with ideas. Gave all the measurements. And I just sat with her (the craftswoman) and watched how she did the weaving...if I did not sit with her and guide her she just tried to do things as she wanted it to be.”

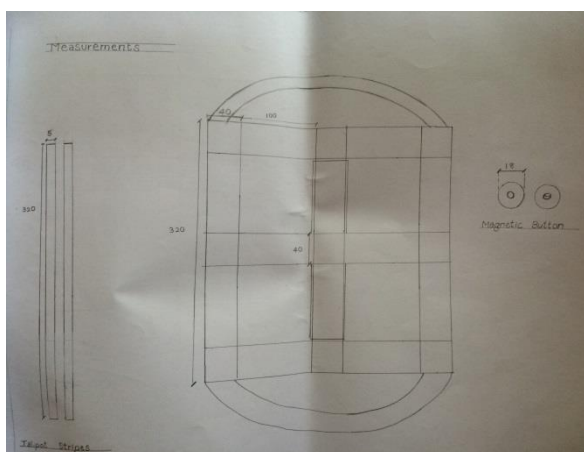


Image 61: A detailed drawing with measurements of the final product from a student's sketchbook
Photo by author

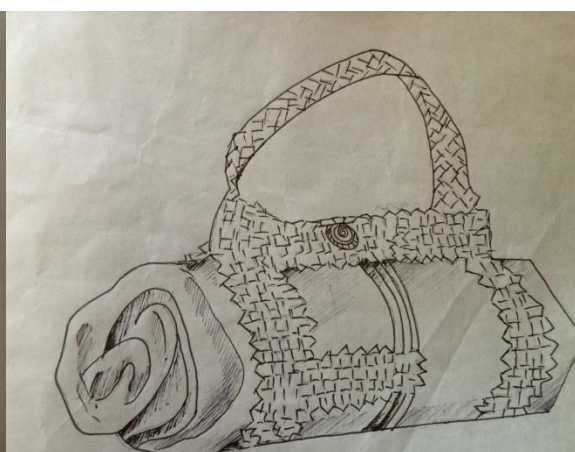


Image 62: A final visual of the product to be given to artisans to follow directions
Photo by author

Students also realised during co-creation activities, that serendipitous ideas are important and that accepting and letting go of their pre conceived ideas is equally valuable. Another student added: “when I told my artisan that I want 6cm * 10cm woven mat, then she just kept on weaving it as large as 20 cm. Then I asked her, aunty could we now try to weave upwards from there. Then she said to me, no no child you can't do it like that. Because she never believed me. I had to wait till she realised it on her own. I think it is better that they experience it all by themselves rather than we trying to convince them what is right and what is wrong. Then things become easier between us to communicate. I think what went wrong with me was that I gave them the measurements...what I understood was I cannot forcefully do anything. I have to let them continue their thing and then I adopt my design accordingly.” Skepticism over revival needs was however expressed by one student, when he said “we must do

something rather than saying the crafts are diminishing. But the concern is, are we really eliciting their craftsmanship here through our collaborative projects?”

Their co-creation activities however were scrutinised by one of the lecturers, when a student said, “One of our lecturers complained after we finished the project that we completely destroyed the essence of craft by giving them designs. He even said what we did was like giving away relief donations to someone. Because those people will now wait till the next batch of designers come to village to give away designs to continue their craft.” But students disagreed: For them their intervention was similar to what the enterprise designer does and “what already exists in the village”, as in the changes the development enterprise brought about.



Image 63: Final student work at the exhibition
A package design for the spa industry, Photo by author



Image 64: Final student work at the exhibition
A fruit basket designed for the hotel industry, Photo by author

Controversial aspects of Co-creation

Ownership of the designs also became indexical within these student projects, and emerged when students anticipated to claim their own designs by obtaining copyrights. This was different when the craftswomen in the village saw their work as a liberal activity hence had no intentions of guarding their design rights. The enterprise did bring another aspect to the copyright issue, when it criticised that during design interventions the students ‘steal the knowledge’ of artisans.

“We shared everything we know about this industry with the students. The patent rights we have got for some of our products are now completely lost here. Because we can easily lose them if someone changes it even by changing a colour” said an enterprise official. (Personal interview, August 2014)

When much of the copyrights and other forms of intellectual property rights such as geographical indications (GI) tend to provide protection for indigenous rights and their traditional knowledge (DeNicola 2016), the instance here shows the way enterprise officials relate to ownership as design rights (and possibly in favour of the community) without necessarily promoting the local knowledge system⁸⁵. For them, creativity driven by the cosmopolitan aesthetics was important, however when seen from the domain of design copyrights, the enterprise's claim is much akin to the students' claims for copyright intentions of getting patents for material innovations and other design elements-which they however produced as a co-creational activity.

Apart from the issues designers pose through their urban intellectual creativity when they associate with local knowledge systems of the rural makers and global trade laws, students also revealed how co-creational activities become even more challenging within educational system, especially when they have to work towards assessments. "Crit pressure had a huge impact because our lecturers changed the designs many times. So I had to approach the artisans like 10 times to do the changes accordingly. So the time given to us within the project, all these project requirements, external client briefs actually impacted on my relationship level I had with the artisans." What this statement divulges are the real challenges of co-creation in a multiple stakeholder project. Another student said, "I was more concerned to finish my work [than really concerned about collaborating]". When some believed co-creational design processes are creating more problems than solutions to the community, others asserted: "I personally liked this project because I am not someone who would like to design something and have my label on it. I like working collectively."

The heritage narrative constructed by HEI's

How heritage gets constructed in these projects is important to this discussion. It emphasises the role HEI's and particularly design institutions play as part of the heritage industry. For the design institution it was a way of connecting with grassroots activities, revive the craft by updating obsolete practices, but sustain the craftsmanship. Note the selection of words used to introduce the craft programme at the beginning of this section as "once adorned", "to revive the precious inheritance" which not only

⁸⁵ Geographical indication is not enacted in Sri Lankan case unlike the Indian example discussed in the earlier chapter.

placed the craft as a past activity, but also portrayed as one that is declining and needs revival through design interventions. Here design institutions acted for instrumentalising heritage and ensured that through their interventions, those practices which are in danger of disappearing will now survive “by adding the value of pastness, exhibition, difference and where possible indigeneity” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995, p370). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett further says such cultural curricula (in her example Maori weaving taught in school) may be questionable in terms of tampering with traditional knowledge transmission processes once being acquired into the educational system. Although attempted to minimise the divide between the rural traditional making and the urban intellectual creativity of the designer by promoting a level playing field via co-creation, one should also see how design institution as a cultural centre, offering cultural curricula “...are not only evidence of heritage, its continuity, and its vitality in the present. They are also instruments for adding value to the cultural forms they perform, teach, exhibit, circulate, and market” (ibid, p373-74). Hence it needs an assessment on what design institutions produce as heritage, how they produce a particular narrative, and how value is added or lost in this process.

In this context, for the designers it is about bridging tradition and innovation, and making it relevant for contemporary needs. For the external buyers it was about using student packaging designs to promote the “Sri Lankan culture and identity” amongst the tourists and international markets through sustainable materials. Like one student said, “to protect the craft we must make it a marketable product’. The academics of the design institute also tried to construct the idea of heritage and what it is not through what students designed. Students mentioned repeat rejections of their design ideas during their assessment when it did not match the community’s aesthetics, their skill sets and design repertoire. Students explained that their idea got rejected when they wanted to experiment with extracted fibres, or combined it with other materials and technology. To the academics this was far too removed from the community’s heritage practices for it then did not expose the community’s uniqueness, for it did not “add value to the existing assets [of] the subsistence lifestyle” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995, p370-71). Their recommendations to students hence contained the requirements of valuing pastness, the difference, and indigeneity (ibid).

For the village women – the designs offered by students were a means of promoting their skills to a larger touristic and export market, where the final exhibition was a means of reminding the rural villagers (who were brought into the Colombo exhibition

venue as an organised tour), as one artisan puts: “it was amazing to see our own work on display like that, I could not even believe that we did them. I sincerely hope we could get a few orders through that” (personal interview, August 2014). The exhibited pieces of a successful design intervention scheme (including the fashion show of the avant-garde design collections) provided an “interpretive interface” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995, p377). To explain this further, for the urban class audiences, this provided an “imagined” rural context being appropriated into a rather contemporary and modern context (temporally). For the rural villagers an understanding how an “obsolete” heritage craft can be transformed via the power and agency of industrial designers was offered. Finally it showed us how design can become a pervasive ideology when constructing a particular heritage narrative, and why design institutions were keen to draw on co-creational activities to restore a living link to the people who practice the craft. At times this may have been a box-ticking collaborative attempt at certain point when reviewed through the students’ experience.

6.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter looked at the late colonial (British), and post-independent developments affecting Sri Lankan craft and design sectors. In doing so, it discussed how the discourses of modernity and tradition became a muddled scheme, creating complex circumstances through attempting to define society, economy and culture, which also laid the foundation for identity creation based on authenticity and indigeneity. While the idea of village culture generally became important to create identity and indigeneity, the lowland-highland dichotomy strongly contributed to this distinction, and as a result transformed the ideology about craft. This impression was gained also in studying post-independent Sri Lanka and is still evident in the development schemes of the present globalisation era.

The chapter therefore illustrated the organisation of craft and design in Sri Lanka as a long-contested domain, between the coloniser and the colonised, between the foreign and the local and between First World and Third World. Such discussion was grounded in the examples of various development activities entailed in post-independent Sri Lanka including state mediations, nationalistic movements and structural adjustment programmes which also linked with cold war industrial design strategies. Development of the craft here was always associated with ‘power’ and ‘development’ whether it was for the British officials, the national revivalist, and the elites or for the post independent

politicians and international development agencies. Craft in the Sri Lankan context was therefore a discursive formation between local communities, national and international organisations, experts, elites and educational institutes. They were invested in the sweeping narrative of tradition and modernity, between nationalism and westernisation, rural and urban ideologies, third world and first world, between spiritual and moral values vs. development and progress, as well as occupation vs. professionalism. In that sense, the construction of heritage in Sri Lanka is not a single opposition of any of the above divisions, but an assemblage of everything.

Similar to the previous chapter, this chapter also discussed varied relationships of craft and design through power, agency, identity and representation. It elaborated on how globalisation, nationalistic idiom, international development, poverty alleviation, preservation of heritage, education and sustainability were tied up into the rhetoric of craft. Design became a necessity to revive and upgrade the craft, and to make it contemporary. This ideology is not a post-modern phenomenon, but was conceived by the British, later visible in the Kellers' report, within international development projects, in institutional frameworks, and recently in the Prime Minister's statement about modernising craft.

Similarly design is enacted as an authorised discourse as explained by John Ballyn, the former NDC consultant allied to industrial development needs. It then acknowledges "the nonarrival of a postcolonial condition [where] it exposes the indivisible relation between modernity and colonialism" even in the post-independent design projects (Fry and Willis 2017, p1). As the examples showed, design education and other professional practices are still being embedded in a Eurocentric epistemological foundation—hence it sets the background to enquire about a decolonial condition for the Sri Lankan heritage craft and design interface. This understanding of a decolonial situation therefore required to be powerfully presented as "a creative and dynamic reflection and realisation of the people's forgotten and discarded needs, wishes, and longing that would be inevitably linked to the local cosmologies, ethics and systems of knowledge seen not as the dead and museumised past, or as a conservative fundamentalist dystopia, but as a living and breathing present and promise for the future" according to Tlsotanova (2017, p55).

To further review this from a community context as in how the grassroots have responded to the complex relationship of heritage craft, design and development

interface, two craft communities were approached; Dumabra textiles weaving and talipot craft making in Dambadeniya, where the former discussed as a guarded practice confined to a group of members, and the latter craft as a liberal making activity enjoyed by all villagers, but as a domestic pursuit. The organisation of the talipot craft making group as an enterprise project and a development activity also brought comparisons to the independent artisans of Dumbara weaving, who enjoyed a sense of autonomy and a progress in their craft as they sat on the periphery of development activities. Both examples however indicated how the heritage of Dumabra weaving and talipot craft making is constructed by multiple stakeholders, and efforts and strategies artisans used in constructing their identities within these varied relationships. The examples further illustrated the multiple nature of heritage and how tradition becomes a transformative process of things getting lost, and things getting revived during that process when different actors of heritage control the meanings and values. There, no uniformity was portrayed in cultural productions as it varied all the time.

The chapter also reflected on a designer-artisan intervention where design projects were endorsed in the past, promoting the difference and indigeneity while connecting with an imagined future, therefore in the attempt of producing something new always. It showed how higher education institutions, particularly design institutions became “an instrument for adding value” to those heritage craft practices which were obsolete and not economically productive (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995, p374). The co-creational design activities and the final exhibition provided “the interface” (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995, p374) to connect traditions with modernity between rural artisans and urban cosmopolitan designers, through which symbolic meanings and other messages of development and social innovation schemes get encoded to the heritage production. The production of heritage in this “interface” displayed how demanding such tasks were, which questioned whether it acknowledges a true participation of the artisans and the grassroots when they shared meanings with designers. However, the discussion, carefully acknowledged the important role the designer played bringing social innovation through their creative inputs to the local communities, where artisan-designer engagements were required and not seen as yet another imposition of euro-centric values, but one that has potential to work towards decolonising design and heritage by establishing a living link with the local ethics and knowledge systems.

Finally, the varied projects discussed in the chapter, whether they were design, development, marketing, or exhibition pieces, always attempted to accommodate the

local within modernity, within the global in order to re-present the vernacular in contemporary Sri Lanka. Wickramasinghe will be quoted here as this research also found that:

“Sri Lankans appear to be more and more...‘willing consumers of modernity’. Rather than feel threatened by these [urban cosmopolitan] ‘intrusions’ into Sri Lankan cultures, many have followed indigenous paths that combine yearnings and fears. If a global cultural system is emerging it is one made up of paradoxes and resistances...[Where traditions get] created and recreated, [while certain aspects like caste] become irrelevant and wither away” (Wickramasinghe 2006, p330-33).

Such approaches do not portray a linear determinism of purely borrowing global or international elements into the local, but it is a co-construction which causes issues and opportunities alike (Wickramasinghe 2006, p330-33). This was evident when reviewing the status of craft and design in Sri Lanka in relations to local and global ties which this chapter highlighted through artisanal narratives and designers’ work, while assessing the involvement of international agencies, the state, craft enterprise as well as design institute’s participation in craft development.

Chapter 7: Designing, testing and evaluating an engagement model for participatory heritage management

This chapter corresponds to the 3rd aim of the thesis, that is to develop participatory approaches to heritage management and to determine decolonising approaches to heritage craft and design interventions. Section C of the Chapter 2 focused on the relevant literature related to a myriad of participatory design methods that have emerged in the last 50 years or so. It proposed using design anthropology to support collaborations and participation as a way of accepting other value systems and cultures, and eliminating any unequal circumstances during the process of borrowing. It suggested there is a value to be gained from design studies which offer methods and tools for engagements. It was anticipated that such interdisciplinarity would help fill a gap in existing practices, connecting craft, heritage, design and anthropology. To establish how, why and in what way design anthropological methods can be attuned to the findings of the case study and field work data, a summary of key findings from chapter 4, 5 and 6 are discussed below.

7.1 An overview of the findings from earlier research work to build the case for collaborative participation

The findings are categorised into key themes alongside power relations, identity dialogues generated, perception of tradition and heritage within those varied networks and relationships, and kinds of knowledge exchange. This work also identified best practices and limitations in existing collaborative and participatory approaches to heritage management, focusing particularly on craft and design engagements.

Table 3: An overview of the findings

Categories	reSIde residency case study	Fieldwork in India	Fieldwork in Sri Lanka
Context	A knowledge exchange activity between four practitioners from Scotland and India. It analysed subsequent engagements and encounters with different actors who also works in heritage craft-design interfaces in India and Scotland. The study also analysed opportunities and limitations in cross-cultural collaborative projects.	Identifying key actors involved in craft and design engagements within local-global relations and how do they contribute and shape heritage craft practices. Analysis is done on community context, craft enterprise, and educational context.	Comparing and evaluating craft and design relationships based on similar categories to the Indian study and present parallels and differences on how the local- global relations work and the way they contribute or shape heritage craft practices.
Divisions/ dichotomies experienced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community of Practice vs. Individual making • East-West/ Local-Global/ Developed-Developing • Rural and urban (village as authentic vs. the impersonal city) • Craft as vernacular vs. Design as innovation • Tradition (both as continuing practice/ improvisation as well as structured and strict) vs. innovation as being associated with the new. Occupation (generational or informal knowledge practices) vs. professionalisation (having gone through design education with a focus on individual development). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community of practice vs. division of labour. • Traditional making vs. industrialisation • Local needs vs. global consumption or industry needs • Professionalisation (designers) vs. occupation (artisans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional making vs. industrialisation • First world-Third world • Professionalisation (designers) vs. occupation (artisans) • Local needs vs. global consumption or industrial needs. • Tradition vs. innovation
Identity Dialogues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian-ness vs. Scottish roots • Different imaginaries of indigeneity (e.g. attachments to regions with placed based significance, the use of endogenous practices and emphasis on subsistence orient production, the presence of customary social practices, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chippa vs. Non Chippa (caste based identity) • Modern designers vs. unmodern makers (Artisan vs. Designers) • Village tradition vs. cosmopolitan ideals/ Rural vs. Urban • National identity (Indian-ness based on self-reliant methods) vs. Westernisation and industrial development needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village tradition vs. cosmopolitan ideals/ Rural vs. Urban • Authenticity vs. Hybridity also linked to geographic significance of Highland vs. Lowland • Traditional makers vs. new assigned identities (piece workers, petty commodity workers, entrepreneurs)

	<p>Capturing and presenting subaltern viewpoint and decolonising creative representation.</p> <p>Traditional artisans bound by tradition vs. Scottish makers are liberal or ‘freer’ in their maker practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional artisan roles vs. emerging roles (piece workers, entrepreneurs, artisan-designers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern designers vs. unmodern makers (artisans) • National identity vs. Industrial development needs/Westernisation • Local people carve out their own strategies to redefine their identities in response to the universal or dominant views about development, progress and growth.
Ideas about tradition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tradition can become innovative but is also structured and restrictive. • Improvisatory nature contributes to the continuity of tradition. <p>Tradition is grounded in ‘historicity’ and ‘classic’ but needs to link with innovation if it is to continue (as something harking back to the past).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tradition getting contested via colonial, post-independent and industrial developments • Community interdependency, shared work relationships providing a framework for traditional craft. • Tradition changes over time and adapts to social, cultural, political, technological and economic demands of the time. • Knowledge transmission occurs as a generational activity. • Design as an authorised discourse acts behind traditions’ transformation, and in response grassroots strategies also emerge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonial and post-independent developments alter nationalistic view point. • Development projects show colonial precedents and conditions of modernity in post-independent projects that get associated with establishing power • Embracing pre-industrial romanticised past as authentic tradition/ Village as morally superior and authentic • Tradition and modernity is a contestation between a desire for foreignness and attraction for localness (a multiply constructed idea, not a simple opposition or acceptance) • Tradition as a transformative, adaptive and an evolving process (local realisation) vs. preservation of traditions as a way to maintain cultural continuity (official idea).
Knowledge exchange and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dislocation, displacement and also familiarities occur in an exchange when working between different cultural settings. • Exchange programmes challenge participants. Generate new identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge exchange happens between local and international agencies, designers, craft enterprises, fashion businesses and via design schools. • State mediation to promote ‘authorised heritage’ through national exhibitions and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflating agenda between national politics vs. Euro-American influences for development and industrialisation (macro level knowledge exchange) • Communal knowledge exchange, both as guarded and liberal practice (Micro

	<p>and aesthetics and create a shared culture challenging possessive individualism through previously unarticulated practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exchange activities allow immersing into a different culture and develop embodiment towards that culture, it allows people to appreciate and acknowledge cultural diversity. Also affect how meanings and values get communicated. • Dangers of infringing ones' culture through deliberate and prerequisites of knowledge exchange activities might also occur. • Knowledge exchange activities can create blurred boundaries between craft-design and tradition-innovation, a way of overcoming perceived divisions. 	<p>heritage policies are prevalent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development agencies involve in capacity building, forming policy and regulations for safeguarding and economic development via heritage practices • HEI's and NGOs develop collaborative design and development projects to connect with rural artisans • Design also stimulates an authorised discourse, and in response alternative design strategies emerge • Communal knowledge exchange happens both as guarded and liberal practice • Local-global knowledge exchange happens between macro level (national, international) and micro level (community or individual) with consensus and dissonances. 	<p>level), also responds to macro level development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design as bridging the gap between modern consumer taste and traditional sector. • Design interventions producing precarious outcomes as well as possibilities (International, national level interventions and institutional involvements like HEI's and NGOs included) • Design is implemented as an authorised practice—a modern appropriation, thus affecting the heritage craft practices in return. • Design for development agendas (including those focusing the craft sector) get celebrated within the 'colonial matrix of power'
<p>Varied networks and relationships identified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicised nature in participant selection.(i.e. Facilitated projects) • Working within vocation, professional and other educational and social hierarchies. • Intricacies and tensions when working with heterogeneous actors or multiple stakeholders such as project funders, organisers, facilitators, communities. • Relationship with material, people, place, memories and emotions, ideas and legacies, including spatial and temporal relations like connecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New trade relationships, technological innovations, business entrepreneurs focusing on global supply and demand also occur (Local-global relationships vary from endogenous to authorised relationships) • Design interventions create possibilities as well as precarious outcomes: from co-creation and collaborative efforts to a system of planned obsolescence where differentiation through exclusivity become key • Craft taking place as result of colonial and modernity's consequences, hierarchies, inequalities, ideological and pragmatic movements.(Spatial and Temporal dimension 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorised influences via institutionalised processes for craft development, i.e. educational and development policy, heritage policy. • Craft development at the centre and periphery (Relationships with the state, international and private sectors including individual buyers and designers) • Official heritage narrative generating a synthetic and sanitised view of the past. • New trade relationships, technological innovations, business entrepreneurs producing for global supply and demands

	<p>past, present and future needs of design and linking traditional spaces of making to performance, activism and hobby like contemporary spaces. Also connecting individual, communal and businesses spaces</p>	<p>of networks are prevalent, these are not linear but entangled and a mesh like structure within social, economic and individual scale.)</p>	<p>contribute and shape the heritage narrative.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design interventions create both precarious and positive outcomes: from co-creation and collaborative efforts to an activity of sales where traditional elements are only presented as visual elements, while co-creation make the process appealing. • Craft takes place in a network of different associations like “the material, human resources, hierarchies, inequalities, complications and differences, the colonial past and anti-colonial movements and the ideological, pragmatic and other concerns that drive various people. (Spatial and Temporal dimension of networks, not linear but entangled and a mesh like structure)
<p>Constructin g heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple ways of articulating heritage: (the Indian way/Eastern ways and Scottish ways/Western ways/ Rural and Urban or as an economic asset, a cultural property a social need and a form of identity creation) • Importance of intangibility, where relationships are made between people and things. • Inter-cultural dialogues and collaborations as key to develop a sense of embodiment towards people, practice and materials. • Collaborative efforts offer new strategies for interpreting culture within expanded boundaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social memory, community relationships, experiences, stories, identities, skills and techniques are embedded in the material culture of craft. Therefore, both intangible and tangible elements are integral to talk about heritage. • Cultural preservationist models vs. community’s appropriation about change • Constructing heritage as a spatial, temporal and contextual discourse (institutional bodies, geographies, different practices, colonial, post-independent, modern and vernacular etc.) • HEI’s and NGOs role in instrumentalising heritage • Institutionalised policy frameworks suggest a top-down approaches (National state involvements, international agency and other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructing heritage and authenticity through indigeneity, place based significance, connects memory and remembering, with material culture, process and consumption. (Spatial, contextual and temporal construction of heritage) • Heritage is a collaboration of various interest parties like designers, businesses, press and other media including HEI’s (how heritage is instrumentalised) • False consciousness of the past and criticism of nostalgia depicted in official discourses, and in sales activities of heritage craft. Such discourses assign new identities and classifications about

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple heritage actors differently constructed heritage by and for different constituencies. This affects the presentation and representation of their creative outputs. • Appropriation, rootedness, and the nature of embodiment of cultural bearers' vs. partaking ownership by outside actors can happen within knowledge exchange activities. 	<p>institution involvements) vs. endogenous methods (community appropriation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different heritage actors choose, emphasise or ignore aspects of heritage in direct response to their negotiations with a particular culture. 	<p>participation in craft and design differently for artisans, designers and development officials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The systems and priorities of the official heritage (stewardship) depart from the communal values of heritage, and opportunistic and strategic choices are adopted by artisans to claim, name and identify their craft in response to official discourses and as grassroots approaches. • Craft offering negotiation with memory, pleasure, patience, endurance, continuity, pride, satisfaction and problem solving—therefore craft provides 'pluriverse' possibilities that accepts many views about being in the world
Opportunities or best practices identified.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborations and participation can become useful methods to share ideas and develop a sense of embodiment towards each other's practices. • Build new affective relations. • Cross-fertilisation of ideas. • Implicit value creations • Articulate deeply personal aspects of the making in constructing heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community driven participatory approaches exist. • Design's turn into anthropology inaugurated through HEI design modules as an alternative design strategy to appropriate local cultural values within industrial design strategies. • Ethnographic immersion allows embodied learning • Shared ambitions to work towards common good such as addressing sustainability issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Craft development can be improved through the involvement of multiple stakeholders. But this needs to act beyond hierarchical and social barriers. • Imbalanced power hierarchies, irregularities in stakeholder relationships can marginalise the grassroots • Anthropological concerns in design interventions offer humanising approaches to the design process through active participations and shared ambitions. (Occurs through an iterative design process) • Collaborative opportunities offer exploration of new ideas that can be mutually beneficial to all groups.

Key limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If not managed properly, collaborations can also lead to knowledge spill overs and diffusions affecting or disfavours its original knowledge bearers. • Collaboration was limited when having stipulated project objectives to invest on individual development. • Making engagements decolonised can be a challenge when politicised design agendas are in place • Deliberate knowledge exchange activities can be problematic to get included within existing commercial and cultural practices in terms of assessing their usefulness in the long term. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicised design agendas inculcated through educational and institutional programmes create authorised discourses/ professionalisation of design • Engagements during design interventions are limited to passive observations. Ethnographic immersion and design process are separate activities. • Communication across divisions, boundaries and hierarchies for democratic participation needs more attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design interventions can also occur as less embodied practice, or as box tick collaborations. • Co-creation is deployed on the pretext of designer's idea generation and concept development and lacked discussions in the front end of the design process in terms of determining how the artisan could also contribute to the design process rather than makers only.
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Key considerations for the proposed participatory engagement model may be summarised as follows:

1. There is a need to increase all stakeholder participation to achieve sustainable heritage management.
2. There are plural ways to conceptualise heritage, and outcomes have multiple associations. There are different inheritances, and legacies associated with it from discipline wise, professional and informal ways. It encompasses both tangible and intangible heritage, including accumulated knowledge, practices, skill and institutions across temporal, spatial and contextual dimensions.
3. There is a need to work across hierarchies, divisions, and also across institutional boundaries. Strengthening knowledge exchange and participation beyond the immediate heritage activities need to be expanded to include direct and indirect contributors to the broader cultural heritage discourse.
4. Heritage can be confirmed as "... 'Complex' and bound up with intermeshing of ideas, language, building, objects, people, memories and emotions" (Bashforth et al. 2017, p88). Complexity in the nature of heritage management needs to be acknowledged. Therefore, the heritage sector needs to be understood as an interdisciplinary and collaborative field of enquiry.
5. Democratic participation is required for heritage management. This needs to correspond to working beyond divisions and power structures as well as authorised discourses as a decolonising strategy in order to challenge and depart from Western modernity.
6. Embodied learning is integral to heritage management.
7. Grassroots strategies (or community orientation to heritage) need to be identified and supported within authorised heritage discourses, requires therefore a holistic representation of both tangible and intangible that connects cultural spaces, processes and products along with people and their embodied knowledge.
8. Design can act as an authorised discourse that takes its cue mainly from the Eurocentric epistemological foundation of the North, but alternative design approaches can provide a counter narrative, thus offering useful design tools and methods to increase participation that also promote decolonial approaches to both design and heritage. This is to better capture how knowledge is constructed through interactions and dialogues that acknowledge local imperatives, needs and capabilities through a process of "critical selection and social innovation", without a total rejection of design (Fry 2017, p25)

9. Design's capacity to support the 'pluriverse' or in other words an embracing of 'a world where many worlds fits' (Escobar, 2017b) needs to be integrated to craft development, for such discourse needs a departure from the colonial and capitalist modernity which gets intensified through globalisation (Escobar 2017a) where many of the binaries and divisions are built into the craft and design interface as a result, i.e. urban and rural, innovation and tradition, modern designers and unmodern artisanal makers etc.
10. Design engagements need to break out from disciplinary boundaries, institutionalised categorisations that might favour certain views based on knowledge, authority, gender, assumptions based on class distinctions, etc. Design engagements, therefore should foster 'pluriversatility' and should include design methods, tools, interactions, design languages and approaches to enable futuring (Fry 2012, Fry 2017).

7.2 Framing the study

The purpose of framing the study is, however, not to propose that all studies focusing on craft, design, heritage and anthropology should fit into such a framework, but to envisage that overlaps do exist and can be acknowledged through interdisciplinary research.

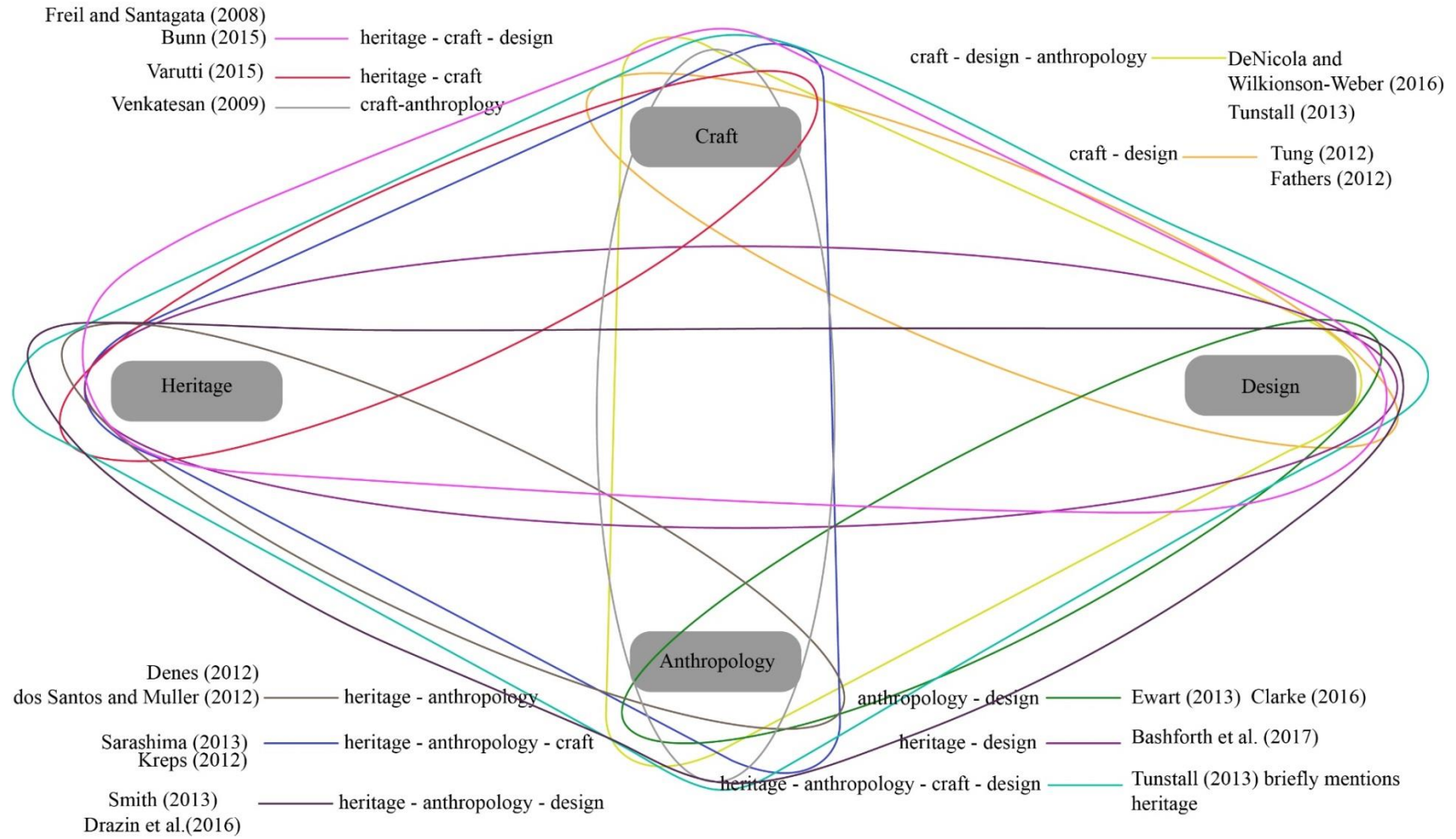


Figure 5: Overlapping of study areas

7.3 Designing an engagement model

Some of the discussions which appear under this section, have been published in Greru and Kalkreuter (2016); in the proceedings of the Cumulus international design conference-Hong Kong.

7.3.1 Overview of the Charrette

A variety of methods, tools and techniques have been suggested to facilitate collaborative environments (Sanders and Stappers 2014, Visser et al. 2005), and for this research, it was found a charrette was best to explore the collaborative knowledge exchange between ‘heterogeneous actors’ (Emilson and Hillgren 2014, Bjögvinsson et al. 2012). Design already extensively uses the charrette model especially in architecture and urban studies (Condon 2008, Roggema 2014), but it is widely used in other disciplines like in conservation projects (Kilbane et al. 2017) and in environmental research (Hackett and Rhoten 2009). Similarly, applicability of charrettes is well acknowledged in community planning and development projects which require public, private and community participation (Lennertz and Lutzenhiser 2006). Its applicability has been tested in both developing and developed countries as well as in rural and urban contexts, meaning it is far from being merely a Western engagement model (Roggema 2014). The concept of charrette derived from the late 19th century Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris, where a cart, in French a *charrette*, was pulled past to collect students’ work. Failure to put the drawing into the cart would mean zero marks, therefore it required students to produce their work quickly, and add last minute touches to the work and even on the cart (Condon 2008).

In its present day use, according to the National Charrette Institute, charrettes provide intense, collaborative and holistic approaches that involve all affected stakeholders in the planning and decision making process (Lennertz and Lutzenhiser 2006). Condon (2008, p1) expanding on this view, describes a charrette as “a time-limited, multiparty design event organised to generate a collaboratively produced plan for a sustainable community”. Roggema (2014) suggests that charrettes can be useful in terms of supporting tacit knowledge exchanges, which promotes inclusive approaches to design, while departing from institutionalised practices or those top-down approaches. This understanding is useful and aligns with the findings of the earlier fieldwork, which

propose a participatory heritage management model to overcome authorised discourses, encourage democratic participation and knowledge exchange activities that include tangible, intangible and embodied heritage, and create sustainable heritage communities by involving multiple heritage actors in the process.

As described in section 2.13, using participatory methodologies for craft and design research is also said to be lacking in practical examples, as is practice based design and craft research itself (von Busch et al. 2014). An opportunity was thus identified to explore a heritage craft practice (Scottish basket making) and its interactions with design in the context of current heritage debates, as Scottish basket making is understood as a vernacular craft practice, “made by the people for the people”; a craft and a trade, where innovation coincides with tradition due to its improvisatory nature in the age-old making process (Bunn 2015, p24). Thus, it is “an open system” that provides room for “experimentation, change and development...not a cognitive ‘dead end’ ” (Bunn 2016, p135). In other words, it offers potential to engage with heritage as “...past memories to negotiate new expressions and identities” (Smith 2006, p2).

To do so in a charrette meant going beyond the standard trajectory of a consultation tool merely focusing on consultant-client relationships producing more user-friendly design solutions (Smith 2012, Howard and Somerville 2014), to a rather exploratory method of engagement amongst varied parties all invested in practices of making, heritage and design. The charrette format had been identified as a platform for engagements to connect possible stakeholders in the heritage industry, and was also an appropriate model when using design anthropological methods in a retrofitted manner with topical and methodological overlaps. Design anthropology for example, can deal with politics of inviting in multi-disciplinary teams, tackle temporality to connects past, present and future of design acts, support knowledge exchange and inform policy making on a collective term (Lindstrom and Stahl 2016). Moreover design anthropology can have a positive impact on value systems and cultures and can try to eliminate unequal circumstances in the process of mutual borrowings (Tunstall 2013, Tunstall 2016).

The charrette was held as a one day activity, inviting participants from the heritage sector and creative disciplines. These included makers, designers, architects, textile engineers, curators, anthropologists, academics and design students. Bunn (2016, p133) describes that basket weaving has foundational relationships with textiles practices and is also known as a unique category of textiles, therefore a community of textiles and

design practitioners were considered to be suitable to also contribute to heritage basket making. Bunn's definition of basketry does not comprise making baskets only, but it also include making mats, ropes, traps, screens, thatch and other related artefacts made from plant materials (Bunn 2015, p25). Hence it supports the diverse activities creative groups could undertake, thus not requiring them to become professional basket makers but to explore an overall 'basketry' practice. The aims of the charrette were to: a) observe how multidisciplinary groups co-create by exploring heritage craft practices within a contemporary design context, b) provide an opportunity to monitor and evaluate varied approaches to design processes, and c) test whether an idea of shared design cultures empowers choices and design directions with people, material and the object cultures. These objectives adhered to what Lindstrom and Stahl (2016, p184-186) describe as the strategy of 'design- after design'⁸⁶, which departs from making design decisions before use (project-time). Instead, it focused on generating ideas during use (use-time), in other words designing for open-endedness with curiosity. It also suggested to identify the community or the public 'as co-emerging with its objects', where pre-figured inclusion or exclusions were avoided by allowing anyone with an interest to participate (unlike in the ReSIde residency project of the chapter 4 which had elected participants). Undertaking the charrette as a public engagement activity also supported not framing heritage making activities beforehand, instead allowing participants to understand the issues and possibilities at hand on-site, even though time and resources were limited.

7.3.2 The basket- making charrette format

The session involved 23 participants who were recruited on a voluntary basis using an email flyer with a description of the charrette, distributed via local creative and arts development organisations⁸⁷, and word of mouth through private and professional networks. The pre-requisite for selection was a general interest in Scottish basket making, a background in creative industries or an interest in heritage. The reason for such an approach was to get insight into how multidisciplinary groups including the

⁸⁶ Roggema (2014) describes this as 'let it flow' effect when describing characteristics of design charrettes.

⁸⁷ Creative Arts and Borders Network, <http://www.cabn.info/>

‘community’⁸⁸ (Sarashima 2013) of basket making would interact, contribute and negotiate specialist meanings and values to a wider audience.

The 23 participants were divided into 5 lots, and each team comprised of five or four members. The researcher distributed participants in order to get maximum insights into how different stakeholders might work together in the charrette format. Information on the particular charrette format was sent out to participants some time prior to arrival to ensure initial understanding of what to expect on the day. Two facilitators gave structure to the charrette by maintaining and ensuring activities were kept within the set time frame.

A neutral observer documented charrette engagements throughout, considering dynamics between team members as well as engagement with the facilitators and the basket maker.

The charrette was started off by one of the facilitators offering a brief history and rationale behind the format, followed by a demonstration of basic basket making techniques by the invited Scottish Basket maker. Liz’s background as a maker as well as an educator enabled her to first share objects, materials, techniques and narratives of her craft theoretically, before practically instructing participants in two of the most basic techniques of Scottish basketry, namely coiling/twining and weaving, using willow and rush.

Participants were given the opportunity to explore a variety of materials, like rush, willow, rattan, cane and straw, through which Liz Balfour expanded on the idea of ecology; growing and using natural materials, constraints in preparing and using the material in the making process which become a collective endeavour between nature, material and human relationship. She further explained tensions around skill sharing, and using craft as a livelihood as well as in a utilitarian context, importance of collaborations with others by drawing back to the historical practices of Scottish basket making and contemporary issues and opportunities of present day making.

⁸⁸ In heritage discourse, the idea of ‘community’ is considered integral where an inclusive and a collaborative approach to heritage management is promoted including the multiple stakeholders’ viewpoints that encourages a bottom-up approach (Stefano et al. 2012). Sarashima (2013, p138) recognises producers, practitioners, consumers, policy makers, the state, educators of heritage craft practices as its community- considering both the “‘lifeworlds’ of the practitioners of the cultural form and appreciators of that cultural form”. Hence, the community is not the just its makers, but all contributors or else its public who shape the social, economic, cultural and political aspects of the environment where the heritage craft reside.



Image 65: Basket making demonstration by Liz
Photo by author

She also drew the attention to the relationship of craft and design, as one that is interconnected, when she said; “*Kishie* is my all-time favourite. It is as good as any beautiful thing you could ever design. It is almost like engineering; because it is for a certain use...The special thing about basket is you are making the shape at the same time you are making the actual weaving...we are making a 3D shape here” (June 2016). (For a parallel assessment see also Bunn (2015) who considers the potentials in Scottish vernacular basket making to assess the relationship between craft and design, not as much as strict dichotomies that have been portrayed in industrial contexts, where intentional designs distance the maker and making, but as corresponding disciplines). Following on from this practical engagement, conversations were directed towards contemporary heritage discourse between place, artefact, behaviour and process in response to a short lecture on design innovation by Britta Kalkreuter, who is an academic in the field of design studies. The lecture looked at themes such as tradition and invention, localism and international markets, culture and commerce.

Only at this stage was a brief given to the participants, and it asked teams to design an object that reflected heritage and tradition that was inspired by what participants had seen, heard, and experienced regarding basket making practices during the charrette, with outcomes required by the end of the day. The brief was open-ended, and did not contain any specificity on what participants could or should make or how they should do it. Providing “just enough information” was intended to prevent “decision paralysis”

that might result from too much information, while not making the project become a “bad proposal” by giving too little information (Roggema 2014, p19). Participants were given generative tools (Sanders 2014 and Visser 2005) including drawing material, flip chart paper, post-it-notes and coloured pens to create two-dimensional visual maps to three-dimensional artefacts (if desired). Participants were able to use actual basket making materials and related resources, including willow, rush, fabric, wool, strings, wires and papers from the start, so as to materially enable the context of basket making to meet contemporary design experiences of the participants.

During the actual design activity, each teams’ interactions, conversations and phases of design were recorded on multiple video cameras. To further verify and triangulate these digital recordings, facilitator notes, comments and observations from the neutral observer were collated. Upon completion of the workshop, an online survey amongst participants was undertaken to capture their attitudes towards this co-creational making experience surrounding heritage. Later in-depth interviews were carried out with volunteers from three groups to further deepen the understanding of their charrette experience. Once during the design activity, and again on completion, members were asked to present their ideas in a plenary session to the other teams. The format of a quick presentation during the design session ensured to capture ‘on the moment’ responses and allowed the researcher to evaluate how the design process changed over time.

7.4 Testing and evaluating the engagement model

Each team adopted different approaches to the design and making process, and outcomes produced were also quite diverse. However, all teams developed valid concepts and discourse towards what they believed could be transformed into a tangible output in response to the brief. For the purpose of this chapter’s focus on the procedure, rather than the outcome, of a design craft charrette, the online survey will be analysed as to the overall reception of the charrette, with a comparative analysis of the workings of three teams analysing three completely different approaches to team work and resulting nature of output.

7.4.1 Questionnaire responses

19 out of 23 participants responded to the online survey, making the response rate a very respectable 82.6%. The online survey consisted of 8 five point Likert scale questions, with 2 open ended questions providing more qualitative insights. Chart 1 provides the overall response rate to the Likert scale questions. (See chart 1)

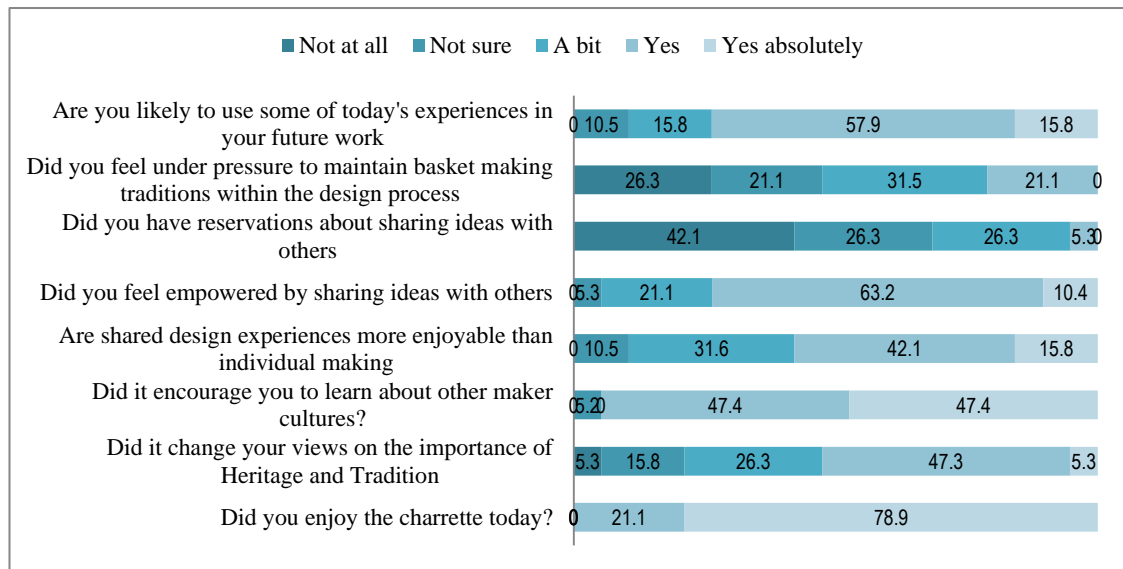


Chart 1: A summary of the Likert Scale data

The analysis and comparison of the data indicates that all the members had enjoyed the charrette experience with 52.6% emphatically changing their view on the importance of heritage and a 26.3% changing it at least a bit. An overwhelming 94.8% stated that the charrette encouraged them to learn about a new maker culture. A clearly identifiable outcome was that the vast majority of participants enjoyed the collective design experience as opposed to the individual maker cultures that is a common reality in designer maker practice, assumed and advanced in most design education (Fry 2015, p418). While 73.6% agreed to an empowerment by sharing and engaging in collaborative design activities, 31.6% of respondents declared definite reservations in sharing their ideas with a further 26.3% undecided.

This overlap between about a quarter of charrette participants experiencing empowerment through ideas sharing yet having reservations to do so offers insights not just into the behavioural barriers to collaboration for professionals from the design field, but also for the power of the craft or making process to overcome these in practice. Almost four fifth (78.9%) of respondents said the collaborative experience inspired their design process, and three quarters (73.7%) mentioned the inspirational nature of stories

and narratives shared by the basket maker as influential to their design process. Almost five sixth (84.2%) of participants mention material experimentations as one of the most influential factors in their design process. This was further evident in the answers to the question: What is that one thing you will take away from the charrette today: Collaborative experience (36.8%) was here closely followed by experimenting with new materials (31.6%), a new skill (21.1%) and other (10.5%). Making related aspects (material and skill) were therefore mentioned by over half (52.7%) of the participants, with just under a third (31.6%) rating collaborative experiences more highly.

Individual responses by each participant (a total of 19) about the most inspiring aspect of the design process, cited experimenting with new materials, new skills, narrative experience or collaborative experience. Shown in a radar chart, these provide useful interpretations, particularly in terms of where there is overlap concerning where the best experiences are achieved, and the possible inter-relations of such factors. It can be seen that material and skill relationships almost overlap with one another, and with collaborative experience to a larger extent. The stories and narratives shared by the basket maker created varying degrees of embodiment, and the radar chart, shows that the interdependency between stories and narratives is less likely to be related to individual and collaborative maker experiences. This might highlight an issue about craft training courses, when officials direct development courses, without necessarily knowing the reality of how culture and craft operate or are organised⁸⁹. The individual responses also reveal how the tangible material experience and intangible experience of skill sharing along with embodied knowledge are inter-related, with high dependency between the two indicators of skills and materials. Regarding the two factors namely, a) the relationship between material and skills and b) tangible and intangible elements - 5 out of 19 respondents reported an exact overlap, with only limited variations in remaining cases, indicating a strong collinearity. This gives confidence to argue quantitatively, seeing tangible and intangible aspect of heritage not as much as separate entities, as defined in policy or at institutional levels, more as interlinked and experienced holistically.

With specific reference to person no. 12's responses, it can be seen that there is a negative effect on the overall experience when one does not enjoy co-creation activities. Generally, when there is a high confidence level in collaborative experience in the

⁸⁹ This reflects with discussions raised in chapter 5 and 6 where government officials, NGOs and other craft development authorities organise design development courses and other skill building courses expecting that artisans would understand their ideas quickly and follow those directions.

design process, people also develop a positive experience towards skills sharing and material development. However, it must be noted that to fully claim such a relationship, an iterative regression analysis and correlation coefficient for each item should be carried out. In return, what has been attempted in this analysis is only to provide a synoptic description of multiple attitude measures.

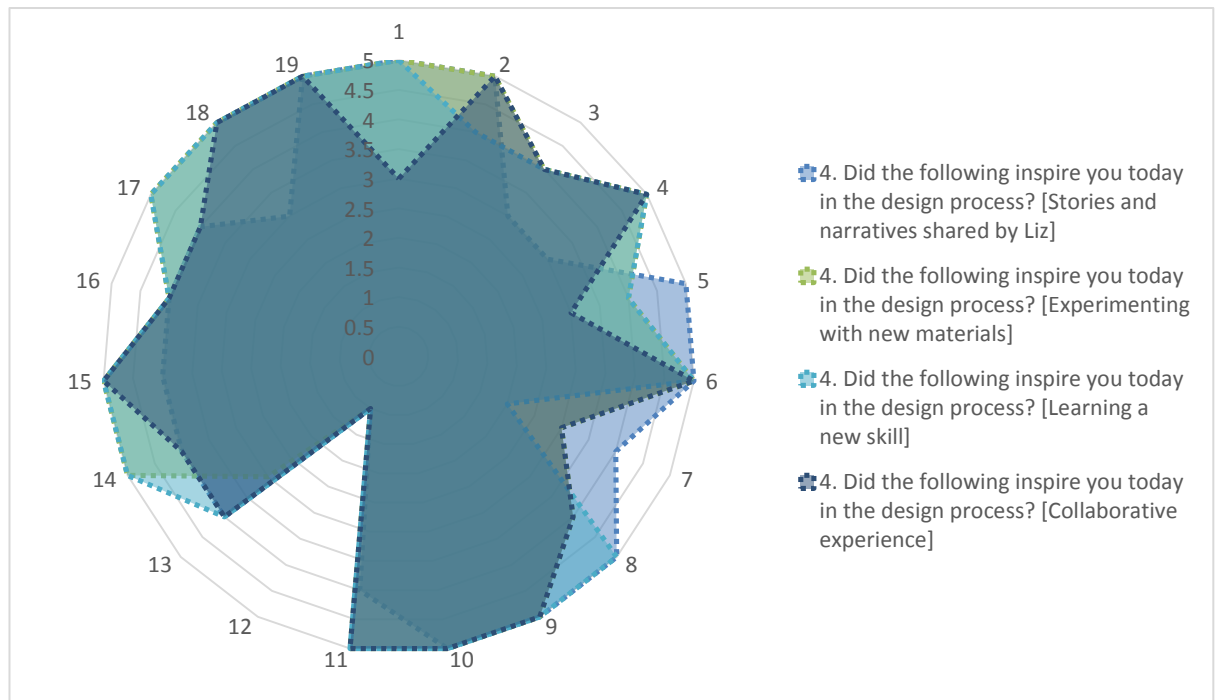


Chart 2: Rada chart showing individual responses by each participant about the most inspired activity of the charrette

In summary, the results from the charrette therefore shed light on what craft could provide “as an approach, an active attitude, and the ways that one goes about things...[and the] ability to challenge perceptions” (Marchand 2016, pi). The outcomes offer insights for design in that we can see working through material as a bodily practice, a way of problem solving from “moment to moment”, (Bunn 2013) proving that “design lies in the act of making and in makers in action” (Bunn 2015, p39). The results promote the idea of sharing with people, materials and environments (ibid), showing how craft can be an “open system” (Bunn 2016) and a generative toolkit for the design process. Much akin to the aims and objectives of using generative tools to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas (Sanders 2000); the collaborative craft making experience generated narratives, stories and ideas that were driven by material and making.

In order to analyse the varied approaches to idea generation in the basket making charrette, in terms of interacting with people, materials and ideas, the following section

will compare the work produced in the teams. Mapping their activities through detailed observational notes and video footage promises to improve our understanding of their entire design process, and demystify the complex interactions between collaborative craft and design.

7.4.2 Observations and comparisons of team activities

Teams self-named their groups when the facilitators only provided the initials. The groups therefore were named as ‘Krafty Kollektive’, ‘Links’, ‘M for’, ‘No boundary’ and ‘Oak’. The members of each team represented the following backgrounds and also a brief description of the output of their charrette.

Team Krafty Kollektive (KK) - An academic practitioner in textiles design/professional maker, designer maker (knitting), fashion designer (PG design student), and textiles weaver (UG student)

The design output was based on Scottish heritage, with all makers of Scottish origin. They made ‘pockets’ to carry their everyday things such as their phone and lunch. (Discussed later in detail.)

Team Links – Design lecturer, textiles weaver (undergraduate), interior designer (undergraduate), weaver (post-graduate student), and sustainable management student (PG level)

The team made a multi-purpose basket along with other improvised items using willow and rush. The team took on the sustainability theme, using natural materials, as they said, ‘so you will not leave anything behind’, i.e. without any waste materials. Instead of focusing on a refined idea, what the team attempted was to explore the special qualities of materials, how materials behave and how one expresses one’s ideas and making while dealing with the constraints of the materials at the same time. One member expressed this as “being in that moment, where you shape your idea at the same time of weaving” (Martina, June 2016) as well as the idea of locality. The ability to mend, which basket making offers, as opposed to the throw away culture, was also highlighted.

Team M for – Weaver and interior designer (PG student/designer maker), writer on craft, printer (undergraduate), and textiles engineer (weaving).

The name team ‘M for’ was chosen to represent the following Ms’: making, makers, me (as contributing for collective ‘us’), mechanical, and memory. The design process was disrupted with one member joining after some time into the making activity thus re-orienting the original ideas of twining (in basketry) they had. The new dynamic in the group then envisioned heritage as being more place-based and memories associated with the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University, as the school is located in what was once an old weaving mill. They therefore tried to mimic a textiles loom made out of basket making materials. As group members expressed, their making became ‘mechanical’, and they were challenged to think of the use of materials and techniques beyond the immediate basket making activities, and to structure and visualise a different dimension of creativity.

Team No Boundary (NB) – An academic practitioner in knitting, curator in arts development and management, textiles Weaver (PG design student), knitter (PG design student).

The team made a multi-faceted receptacle and discussed at length later.

Team Oak – Architect, curator in museum practices, mixed material practitioner (PG student), fashion management (PG student), textiles weaver (undergraduate).

The team made a single object, a hanging piece and vessel at the same time. It focused on traditional weaving techniques and materials which combined both natural as well as synthetic ones like wire. They attempted to re-appropriate traditional materials for new purpose, presenting a more ‘design-led’ idea. (Discussed later in detail)

7.4.3 Mapping the design process

The emphasis of the observational note taking had been on key stages and on type of knowledge exchange activities, while the video captured all activity during the day. When transcribing conversations, attention was paid to the turns taken by each member in order to understand dominant discourses and dominant roles emerging within teams. The information and the context of conversations were complex and fragmented as team members at times moved around the room, especially to look for materials and sources of inspirations. We were able to capture these movements and conversations via multiple cameras around the room. Following the initial analysis of the online survey, two members from each team were approached to further probe their experience of the

charrette and to capture in-depth knowledge of their personal experiences in terms of group dynamics. The interviews were useful in filling in gaps from the video and observational data and to triangulate the data sets generated.

7.4.4 Observations and comparisons of the team activities

After the demonstration of basket weaving techniques and materials by the Scottish basket maker all members got back into teams and further discussed the ideas and material experimentations they had already started. Teams “No boundary”, “Krafty Kollektive” and ‘Oak’ were selected on the basis of well legible video and notes based observational data being available on their charrette activity, and because its members were available to be approached for further interviews after the charrette.

7.4.5 Analysing the team Krafty Kollektive (KK)

Team KK initially approached the design process purely through material experimentation, but soon moved on to understand and utilise the specific background of its members. Collectively, members of the KK team tried to dissect the brief to gauge what it was about: “...getting inspired from basketry, but it does not mean that we have to make a basket as such, but utilise the materials and anything else that’s given. So it doesn’t matter what we create at the end right?” (Lindsay)

This led the team towards an open ended approach to designing, while moving away from an object-led design approach from the beginning. The members decided to refrain from solving a problem, preferring to design an object that has a function and could be utilised for problem solving later. After this discussion they moved their attention to ‘heritage’. Some members grappled with the concept of heritage and what it actually meant to them, but soon their conversations regarding other’s backgrounds suggested the significance of place-based heritage and identity, as all four of the members were of Scottish origin. The conversation, then moved towards building relationships with their life transitions in relation to place, and particularly the idea of rural and urban. They soon connected with the idea of ‘personal heritage’, having lived in large cities as well as growing up and moving back to rural settings. Each member also explained what heritage meant to them in their own discipline. The fashion designer contextualised heritage as rustic, rural as a concept harking back to the past as opposed to modernisation as she explained: “I was looking at the traditional rustic founding (sic)

and compare it with the stylistic city, anecdote.” (Ruth) Later, Collette explained how she tackled heritage when she said; “I think I have heard the word so many times and in different uses...I found heritage a hard concept. I think it has got so many strands to it so you can go down different ways, for example heritage about country, heritage about materials or heritage about making” (Personal interview, July 2016).

The heritage discourse on place-based, personal heritage, the old and the new, here directed their design process towards representing ‘contrast’, ‘change’ ‘scale’, ‘utility’ and ‘function’ that could represent their transitions and reflect a urban–rural divide. The next stage of the design process usually requires planning and making (Austin et al. 2001), but a decisive decision was taken by all members to omit the planning stage and move on to the hands-on making as they suggested ‘design alters (sic)’, thus should be informed through spontaneity and experimentation.

Progress towards the eventual team output was in actual fact, generated as much through discussion as it was through practical experimentation, as their diverse backgrounds as weavers, knitters and fashion designers led to the idea of designing distinct components/containers or ‘pockets’, that echoed their wish to contrast urban and rural, and addressed desirable futures through multifunctional, multi-purpose and ‘endless uses’:

Lindsay: “But urban to rural we can cover using contrasting materials...Add something metallic or something that has different feel to it.”

Collette: “Inside moving urban to rural you could carry things in it, not necessarily a basket but you make something that’s like kind of an urban back pack, something contemporary...or do we make something that can transport—that need to be in both environments. So we have like a big bag that’s got an iPad or iPhone and it also has something that you might need for your rural picnic”

Lindsay: “Like a tool bag?”

Collette: “So are we making lots of pockets that would become a bag?”

Ruth: “Yeah utility”

Beth: “Yeah everybody loves pockets...If we make a lot of components of things then we can bring it together later.”

The tangible outputs of making components of different sizes were then linked back through discussion of Scottish heritage of different consumer goods like tartans, short breads and oat cakes; in their own words ‘cheeky Scottish heritage’. During the making process the team adopted an iterative approach of considering what can be achieved through materials provided, but guided the formation of actual objects equally by conversation on heritage aspects.

Only during the making phase did each team member take an individual approach to designing as they concentrated mainly on their own contribution to the final piece. Observing each other’s designs at this time allowed transforming their individual ideas and skills into a collaborative design process as a whole. As one member introduced origami folding while another used techniques ‘invented on the spot’, problem solving as a co-creational activity emerged as a key outcome. Throughout these individual stages of their project, and during final assembly of the collaborative output, the team used material explorations, at times supported by the professional basket maker, as the key way to progress their work. This was expressed by Collette: “we wanted to make things to put our tools, and we went over to her stand (where the artisan’s baskets were placed) and she had amazing spiral holders. And then we were like ‘Oh my god this is amazing’, that’s exactly [what] we are making. That sort of things excited us and it almost confirmed that you can make little holders to carry things” (personal interview, July 2016).

When reviewing the dynamics of their own team, the interviewed members reported that they were able to communicate and work well because they displayed a ‘like-mindedness’ to the design process. Collette further expanded on this idea: “We were all from creative backgrounds, where we were all from textiles and design. May be that’s why we never discussed the baskets. Even though coming from different angles we were quite comfortable in working with materials. Nobody was too worried about things being too perfect. Whereas may be if you weren’t used to being a designer and taking risks...things would get more agitated...[and] I do not know what it would have been with different nationalities too (as they were all Scottish)” (personal interview, July 2016). Although ‘like-mindedness’ was favourably seen within the team, team members also expressed certain divisions they have experienced during or before the event. These distinctions were highlighted by Collette when she described craft and design, professionalisation through education vs. occupation or formal vs. informal: “The maker (Liz Balfour) was really interesting because she [made a point] of not being a

designer, and [of] being a maker instead. And I was like, really? Look how amazing you design things (sic). I really wanted to know why she wouldn't class herself as a designer. She's so much in control of what she makes. She really can make anything. So I thought was it because she didn't study design and that she doesn't have qualifications?"

Another point she reiterated was the disciplinary divisions. She emphasised, "In fashion generally, you would draw everything and then you would make it later. There are not a lot of experimentations with hand. So may be the three weavers amongst us realised that this is a weird material (rush and willow) and we don't know how its gonna respond. Even if we draw a really elaborated design I don't know we would know enough to actually make that...2D to 3D is generally a big thing in design, in between fashion and textiles. In fashion design generally you draw, you sketch, and then you basically try to make that look into a 3D form using fabric or other materials. Then you are not driven by the textiles but by the drawing, whereas in textiles it is the opposite" (personal interview, July 2016). This division between textiles and fashion was also noted by the fashion designer, Ruth when she said: "we all realised there were 3 weavers and then me. When it came to the technicality of weaving definitely its them (personal interview July, 2016). Ruth described that because of this disciplinary division and her fashion design background, the space that was given for individual exploration was quite enjoyable and triggered her independent working capacity. The other aspect she emphasised was the ability to collaborate without any 'control freaks' in the team encouraged participation.

Reflecting on the design process (in post charrette interviews) two members said it coincided with the brainstorming phase of the actual design process in an industry context, but it was also different to that of its developmental nature. For example, Collette explained: "suppose in a design studio where you are one of the team, and you are kind of asked to go on and do research on your own, what is going on in this area if it is to do with packaging, colour or materials. And you bring it back to the team, kind of what we did in the charrette where you would discuss and take it forward...[but on the other hand] what we produced was just a draft. None of them were refined; none of them were developed... [In an industry context] you will have so many drafts, so many prototypes, and you refine it" (personal interview, July 2016). While Collette paid attention to the design process, Ruth focused on how heritage became a commodity in an industrial context. "It is particularly interesting to see [heritage] from a branding aspect. People are saying 'Oh heritage is selling well. It is really popular and has

become a much desired object’ or whatever it is. So now they are jumping off to any little ounce of heritage they can get to become profitable. It does come with a historical aspect, where heritage always has a connotation of history...But heritage to me is a very personal thing. Always modern and updated, regardless of whether it is perceived in the public eye or in tradition or craftsmanship” (personal interview, July 2016).



Image 66: Team members exploring ideas individually
Photo by author



Image 67: Different products made
Photo by author



Image 68: Members coming together to combine different ideas
Photo by author



Image 69: Final product display
Photo by author

7.4.6 Analysing the team No Boundary (NB)

Team NB initially approached their design process by exploring the properties of the materials of rush and willow. Each member tried different ways of coiling and twisting rush and this influenced the other members to explore more of the material possibilities in terms of forming shapes. The brainstorming and idea generation phase took the longest in their design process as all members collectively tried to visualise how the design could be linked up with the characteristics of materials. Much of the discussions were thus material driven and the project driven objectives also directed their approaches to design. One of the initial decisions for the team members was to ‘keep us

all busy' and this influenced towards a type of design where everybody's contribution was valued equally as part of a co-creational activity, but also towards a plan on how to divvy up the work. From the mapping of ideas in the initial stage of the design process, the group members derived key ideas to explore. They debated whether to create a merely aesthetically pleasing object or whether to incorporate function, and soon the ability to actually make any planned object, and the limitations of the materials, became key concerns for further investigation.

“So you have sort of a base of these components rather than actually having sort of vertical things that you could join together (Trying to visualise the object to others)” (Louise)

“Yeah, I think the shape may be dictated by what we made at entry.”(Angela)

”Yeah and then you could bring in other sort of materials to see how it joins up and opens.”(Lindsay)

“Then it kind of goes against this? (Showing the mapped ideas)”(Angela)

“No it can't because we don't know what it is yet.”(Lila)

“I think you don't know how it is gonna (sic) go until you try something.”(Angela)

One of the concerns that emerged in the discussions was how to connect the 'open-ended' design possibilities with heritage discourse. When closely observing the entire conversation it is apparent that heritage discourse was always at the periphery of the discussion in Team NB. It was implied that heritage should not be something that needs critical attention, but it would organically develop within the design process as it progresses, irrespective of the fact that the team consisted of participants of multicultural backgrounds (Scottish x2, American and Brazilian).

“It is possible that it fixes all the elements like culture, heritage, tradition and function and different parts of the world when trying it all together. So it integrates all as a component. I think we can then link it to heritage.”(Louise)

In the conceptualisation phase of the design process, the team continued to have lengthy discussions around time limitation, availability of materials, properties of materials, functionality and the usability of the object. Once the process of idea generation became complex and conflicting, the members soon moved to draw their ideas as 2D sketches.

This seemed helpful for the team members to visualise their ideas and develop 3D prototype paper structures. The 2D sketching and 3D prototyping triggered conversations between members as they all considered this process as quite useful in suggesting new possibilities based on developmental sketches.

Lindsay: “I think we kind of have a hybrid approach. Make a plan and then start working on it and then decide to may be revise the plan.”

Louise: “It’s an interesting process isn’t it?”

Angela: “Yeah, I think it came together nicely.”

This extensive planning of the design allowed team NB to develop making approaches to the design development process that did not yet involve craft materials.

Team NB’s understanding of heritage and tradition were largely based on the material culture, specifically with regards to being inspired by natural materials and using traditional Scottish basket weaving techniques. Connecting traditional uses of materials to a contemporary design was thought of as a way of connecting the past to the present and the future use of heritage. Being ‘planners’, as they called themselves, their designs were driven by process:

“So we planned to a certain stage and tried to come up with the most effective and efficient process, how to make in a way that we all felt that we all needed to be making at the same time. And however that might happen. We were also open to being led by what happens along the way...evolving and changing as we go through” (Angela)

The final object they made was a “multi-faceted” and “changeable” receptacle, which can be folded as a container and also used as a wall hanging. (See image 3) In their design process, they were adamant to not use synthetic materials, and wanted to maintain the ‘authentic’ uses of natural materials. During the process of designing, problem solving was at the heart of their discussions as one stage would dictate the next stage of the design phase and also be part of iteration. When constructing the petal shapes of their vessel they struggled to find the solution to the base of the vessel but soon decided to move on finishing the petals and then decide how to design the base on the outcome of the petals.

With regard to the group dynamics, ‘all team members were equally engaged in every step of the process, every one’s opinion seems valued and considered’. (Neutral observer comment) While analysing the video documentary it can be seen that planning dictated their process at an early stage, but it also gave confidence at the execution phase as the members could relate to the possibilities of the outcome. ‘Inevitability’ created an excitement within the members and this spontaneity was much appreciated by all. All members contributing towards making a single object brought cohesion into the team to keep up with each other and also to communicate more effectively on each attempt they made. It also gave opportunities to explore and bring members’ own skills and knowledge of their respective discipline to add value to the design, e.g. when employing knitting as a closure to the vessel. Team NB also maintained a close relationship with the expert basket maker to review the techniques used to realise their intended design.



Image 70: Members collectively brainstorming ideas
Photo by author

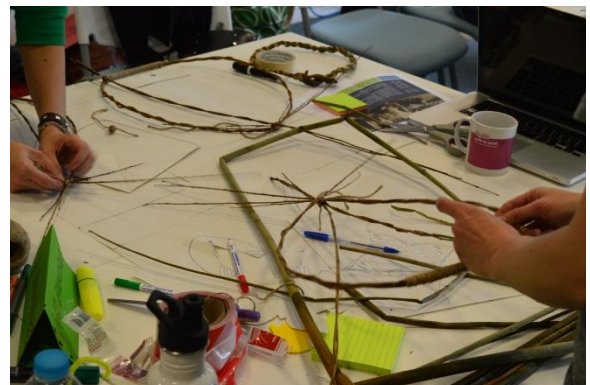


Image 71: Members collectively building the frame
Photo by author



Image 72: Constructing the shape together
Photo by author



Image 73: Presenting the final design
Photo by author

7.4.7 *Analysing the team Oak*

Team Oak approached their design process by brainstorming around the idea of “build”. They suggested using a variety of techniques, but agreed to take willow as their base material and combine it with materials like rush or other. They decided the final output should create “interesting form and pattern [while] concentrating on sculptural aspect of making”. Team members explored the material constraints, especially how they would behave when plaid two, three or four strands of rush together. The material explorations was explained by one member as, “how the materials transforms your making is amazing...how strong it is now [when made] and how weak it was before [as raw material] was quite unique” (Silvia, July 2016). In terms of sculptural aspects of their design, members suggested a few ideas like, making a modern interpretation of a backpack being inspired from the Scottish *kishie*. However, dominant players emerged strongly in team Oak, arguably restricting space to explore design possibilities, which on the other hand suggested thinking around the structure that can be achieved within the given time frame, and with limited skills they had on basket making. This led the team to use toolkits supplied by the artisan for amateurs. The following conversation shows how their design process quickly evolved in the conceptual design phase around the ideas of form, function, materials and techniques.

Shona: So let’s use rush work to create form and pattern.

David: I wonder what happens when you combine different materials and techniques.

Simi: Yeah, one layer of this (a twisted rush) and another layer of something else.

David: Or something else.

Shona: I’m thinking what is it that we create? What sort of function does it have? Is it almost like sculpture?

Karen: Considering the time we have as well as the skills which we don’t have; it might be a sculpture or structure like thing, it is not going to be a basket or something.

Silvia: (Showing the basic tool kits provided) How about we use something like this?

David: Oh yeah, we might develop something accidentally. We might say wow look at that.

Soon after the team decided on the sculptural nature of their design output, the team's spontaneity was withdrawn as the team got divided into two sub-groups. Two members attempted to explore on their own what could have been built as a sculpture by looking at books on basket making (provided by the artisan) and started to talk about African basket making as one of them was a native African. Other members instead turned their attention to the baskets in the room and explored how they were made and what techniques can be integrated into their own making.

While the team struggled in taking their idea forward as a sculptural object, it was the architect in the group who stepped up to suggest several blocks to think around the idea of 'build' and 'structure'. This was quickly taken forward by other members to think of ways of combining basic tool kits to create the structure. The team's idea was then driven mainly by what materials and the fabricated tool kit offered during the design process, more than being determined by drawing or sketches.

However, the team did not interact well and was fragmented due to its turn taking nature in the making process, and having nothing to do collectively as a group. This alienated certain members in the team and led to a lack of enthusiasm over the task. Not only were implications reported in working with powerful strangers, but it also showed collaborations between such members are a challenge: "There are pros and cons. But that's the thing with any group work. I think the pros [were that] we were able to bring quite diverse sets of skills to the group. Cons were like clashing in the personalities. That kind of led to—we should do that and we should not do that. When it was like that I kind of took a back seat...when there are too many cooks, I don't want to spoil the broth. Even though I had certain ideas, I wasn't quite vocal with them" (personal interview, July 2016).

Despite team Oak demonstrating an agonistic space and showing discontentment in their design interactions, the neutral observer reported that each member made an equal contribution towards the design activity. Also despite having a museum curator in the group, there was little discussion of heritage or integration between disciplines in the initial design phase. This was exemplified by the comment: "we realised after we experimented that, oh yeah heritage! [As in such discussions were missing initially] Which we could have thought about it" (David, personal interview, July 2016). This

seemed to be the result of having focused too much on making an object, which one of the members saw as a miss-interpretation of the brief by other team members.



Image 74: Experimenting with materials
Photo by author



Image 75: Using a base to create the structure
Photo by author

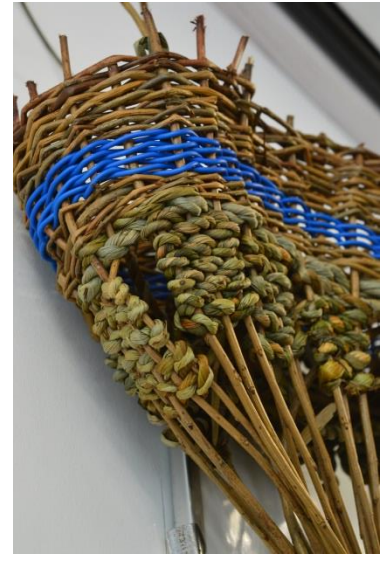


Image 76: Final design
Photo by author

The group referred to heritage as using traditional basket weaving techniques and materials in their design process. As one of the members explained, it was about ‘old techniques’. In a post charrette-interview Silvia, a textiles weaver mentioned how the idea of contemporary was seen within their basket making activity; “[Basket making] is interesting because it was also a woven practice. I was quite surprised by the strength of it. For me it was about discovering the materials ... [and] we were using old baskets made in the past. But we were putting more design ideas into it. And I think the rest was quite cool. You can see how people think of different ways and none of them were typical basket making. It was something else.” When enquired later whether the group understood heritage as an old concept, another member said: “In a way but not in a negative connotation. I don’t know this is because we are from fashion industry, but as Scottish we love about our heritage. In terms of heritage we kind of see it as an old thing, but we hold it very close and dear. We don’t think heritage as an old per-se” (David, personal interview, July 2016).

7.5 Charrette's outcomes with regard to heritage production and the use of Design Anthropology as a 'Decolonial' methodology

In light of the findings above, and the contributions of the charrette's discussion to heritage discourse, observations of the charrette further confirmed heritage as a constructionist concept (Smith 2006, Smith and Akagawa 2009), so "not as much as a 'thing', but as a cultural and a social process" using past memories to negotiate new expressions and identities for the future (Smith 2006, p2). Especially team KK constructed heritage in terms of values, narratives, beliefs, what materials mean and offer in the very context of production. For teams NB and Oak, it was mainly material-led. Heritage was both consumed and produced within the charrette environment; empathy was not only created between people but also between things and materials: it could be seen as a collective expression between the material and non-material cultures, as demonstrated by team KK.

The multidisciplinary teams confirmed how heterogeneous actors, who may not necessarily come from an immediate tradition (or a maker culture), can effectively contribute to the construction of its heritage. The charrette suggested new approaches for an inclusive industry especially at the craft-design interface, where dissonant and contested ideas were managed effectively, or at least confronted through co-creational activities. Most importantly, the charrette attempted to capture "knowledge from experience [or] know-how" (Bashforth et al. 2017, p88) of multiple heritage actors. It not only acted as a way of increasing participation in heritage debates, but by involving makers from diverse backgrounds it informed how people conceptualise heritage in design-led projects. The charrette experience therefore acted as a 'live' project to identify and acknowledge iterative connections between people, things and ideas, and the way decision making happens. The charrette in a way contributed to challenge the traditional top-down approach to heritage management; instead, space and opportunities were explored by different people at different times in a collective manner. Using participatory and collaborative methods, here departs from Laurajane Smith's (2006) assertion of Authorised Heritage Discourse, which is largely driven by dominant discourse that "takes its cue from the grand narratives of Western national and elite class experiences, and reinforces the idea of innate cultural value tied to time depth, monumentality, expert knowledge and aesthetics" (ibid, p299). Particularly when designers act as experts, based on their innate selections, exclusivity and persuasiveness

that disconnect the future from the present as they materialise and objectify futures (Drazin et al. 2016)⁹⁰, the charrette was a heritage and design anthropology project in parallel to Drazin et al.'s. Even though their project was material-led, rather than process led, they highlighted the importance of value creation through collaboration. They said: “the designer’s perspective is often raised above others in its validity, yet this can be simultaneously a benefit and a burden. How do we both validate designerly perspectives as potentially progressive, and authorise them in relation to other ways of knowing? An appreciation of values is a necessary element of contemporary design work, and yet values are expressed not so much in fixed knowledges as in process and transactionality... [instead value creation is] a collaborative project, not the preserve of design paradigms only... [Therefore] design should collaboratively resonate with many people’s perspectives and lives...” (Drazin et al. 2016, p212).

This is especially useful in craft and design debates (which were discussed in an earlier chapter 2 and discussions of chapters 4, 5 and 6), where the challenges of globalisation and the acknowledgement and acceptance of local and traditional ways of knowing are not yet resolved, when design meets craft which requires mutual borrowings of cultures and values and when they operate under “unequal circumstances” (Tunstall 2013, p242). The charrette offered insights into the workings of shared heritage (Denes 2012) and a community-based approach to heritage management (dos Santos and Müller 2012) which could be developed further by involving different stakeholders including tradition bearers.

The experiment confirmed the importance of viewing both tangible (the material culture) and intangible heritage (practices, representation, expression, knowledge and skills) in a holistic manner where material, the embodied knowledge, practices and the social worlds are included (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). This is relevant for discussions around safeguarding cultural heritage by involving producers, consumers, policy makers, educators and other contributors. Such participatory and co-creation models would allow dynamic interactions between members over heritage craft making, utilising different ideas and other social and design practices in a complementary manner, rather than considering these as tensions (i.e. curators and art management personnel in the charrette enjoyed creative making activities beyond their daily heritage or creative arts

⁹⁰ Drazin et al (2017) use design anthropological approaches for heritage management at Bauhaus Dessau Master houses which is a UNESCO world heritage site. They look at heritage management in a way of archiving, curating and designing of material cultures as part of a ‘cleaning activity’ which involves creativity and value creation. Although being a material-led study, art based practices evoked embodied knowledge of cleaning as a social event, a craft and a collaborative activity.

management role while designers and other makers enjoyed the ability to explore heritage in a collective manner, and as an embodied practice, which allowed to bring maker's own perspectives and inheritances to discuss about Scottish basket making). It legitimised heritage making practices as to scale-out to new and realisable constituencies, and as explained by Bashforth et al. (2017, p95), these 'scaled-out' sharing practices enhance " 'local interventions' [by] reworking long-standing heritage storylines". Therefore the charrette was useful in terms of "bringing out alternative opportunities", allowing a "polyphony of voices", and "mutually vigorous but tolerant disputes" amongst diverse members (Emilson and Hillgren 2014, p69).

Moreover, the charrette model encouraged an expanded participation by including socio-material assemblies as 'things' within the design process rather than objects as 'things' (Bjögvinsson et al. 2012, Emilson and Hillgren 2014). Therefore, not only had the charrette experiment confirmed the mutuality of tangible (material relationships) and intangible heritage (knowledge, skills and practices) for heritage discussions, the workshop format also supported "mutual learning" (Vergunst et al. 2017, p155) between public such as making communities, professional communities like architects and designers and heritage institutions like museums, as well as universities. Such collaborative and transformative relationships often go beyond meagre outcome oriented projects to connect with possible futures to determine what the other adaptive uses of heritage could possibly be, what their relational values are. In the post-charrette interviews undergraduate and postgraduate designers aptly emphasised the need to include collaborative learning experiences as an important element for university design education, as they believed such engagements could subvert the traditional educational rationale of producing work for assessments, and that work produced collaboratively could have a wider impact. Such experiences correspond to Tunstall's (2013) use of design anthropological understanding of how its methodologies can tease out the commodification of traditional art and craft practices with its usual connotation of exploitation by designers. She says; "people are less likely to exploit another person with whom they have established deep bonds through knowledge of the deeper meanings of the artwork to the artists and their communities" (Tunstall 2013, p242).

Dana Abdulla's commentary (Schultz et al. 2018, p90) about decolonising design within design schools corresponds to the perceptions held by student participants. For example she asserts that knowledge produced within the curriculum should not be a copy-paste which gets "masked as universalism", with implications of using artisanal communities

for “school projects” and providing “aid discourse”. Instead the mode of engagements enacted by the Charrette placed student designers amongst the viewpoints of other wider maker groups (and their world views). For example, the students (as participants) learnt to legitimise Scottish basket making as another way of making and thinking about ‘design’ instead of following basic epistemic foundations of their design school knowledge which usually becomes the only valid form of knowledge exerting a hegemonic view. In Walter Mignolo’s words (2011, p78-81), accepting other forms of knowledge such as vernacular basket making practices in this case, breaks the “Western code” by departing from the global linear thinking which is built on the basic premise of “I think [design is needed] therefore I am [helping to revive craft]”. Instead, charrette informed by design anthropology promotes the idea of “I am [looking into the possibilities of other making cultures] where I think [design also has potentials to contribute to that]”. Such approaches do not reject western epistemic contributions in totality (such as the co-creation methodologies used in the charrette). On the contrary, Mignolo (2011, p82) explains “it implies appropriating its contributions in order to then de-chain form their [Western] imperial design”, which is an important first step towards decolonising.

Finally, the charrette which was organised as a co-creation activity showed not only the issues that it may be entailed when working with multiple stakeholders, but also offered ways to minimise and mitigate hegemonic practices associated with class, gender and geographically based inequalities. Conceived in this fashion, a charrette based on such design anthropological approaches enhances cultural responsibility of the design process promoting decolonial methodologies, as it respects “other ways of being in the world...[through] respectful design” (Tunstall 2016, p279).

7.6 Implications of the findings

The charrette was not without its limitations. The most critical one was the limited time frame, which confined the exercise to a short one day basket making charrette. This may have not permitted a full immersive experience of Scottish basket making; therefore the experience the participants received was partial. The other limitation was that it only had one professional basket maker, and lacked artisanal involvement to fully comprehend those craft and design engagements described and assessed in the Asian context of this study. Although the invitation was open to anyone who is interested in Scottish basket making to take part in the charrette, the limited participation of

‘traditional bearers’ of Scottish basket making may have therefore created outcomes that are partial, contestable and fragmented. Evaluating this through the researcher’s own reflection on her field work in India and Sri Lanka, showed that traditional and indigenous makers there were willing to co-operate and voluntarily contribute to research, while in Scotland participation on a voluntary basis outwith their professional capacity was hard to obtain.

It must also be noted, that no model can replicate the same scenarios, hence the charrette should not be reviewed as providing one-fit solution to all participatory heritage management approaches. It should therefore be seen in light of, as one of the approaches or options that can be used to bring stakeholders together to discuss, make, share and interpret their ideas to determine what matter to the community most at a given time or in a particular situation.

The design process, which the basket making charrette explored during this experiment, only looked at the fuzzy front-end of the design process⁹¹ and therefore is neither comprehensive nor conclusive. The analysed results thus demonstrated the conceptual design stage, and only considered how heritage dialogues emerge during that initial design phase. Since this was carried out as a public engagement activity, without really supporting an immediate cause, or inform policy or practice, it is possible that participants may have act perfunctorily. The charrette also had the limitation of having a set financial budget; therefore the activities had to be limited to suit that. On the one hand, the charrette acted as a facilitated project that might have similar connotations to the reSIDE project (discussed in chapter 4), but on the other hand it was also extended in order to make participation democratic and make a facilitated project that was more useful for the community by offering a platform for engagement.

Within a charrette format, long term immersions are not possible. Although this may appear as a limitation, in design interventions or in heritage projects which have limited time frameworks, the charrette format is suitable to quickly provide discussion that all parties may contribute to. This may adhere to understanding and creating legacies in

⁹¹ The fuzzy front-end is said to be the most challenging phase of the design process, and it is the stage where people build complex relationships with each other, and with the materials and object cultures (Sanders and Stappers 2008). For a specific case study analysis on the rationale behind focusing on the fuzzy front-end of the design process in a traditional craft and design intervention see Tung (2012) in Weaving with Rush, where he proposes that it is the stage which deals with intangibility and ambiguity most out of all the other design stages concerned. The fuzzy front-end therefore provides the basis for the subsequent phases of the design process in terms of generating design concepts, prototypes and product development.

collaborative research work with communities, to benefit communities (Facer and Pahl 2017). This is achieved by increasing democratic participation, develop partnerships, offer future design possibilities with speculative design spaces that also increase cultural value and thereby widen impact. However, one might posit that proposing tools and methods that are generally driven by European or Scandinavian design regimes, may still carry the legacy of a hegemonic expression of colonial and modern design principles (Tlostanova 2017), which this study set out to avoid in the first place. This is averted by corresponding to Tunstall's assertion on "securing a space" for decolonising design innovation through design anthropological approaches (Tunstall 2013, p233) and promoting ways to achieve cultural respect by applying design anthropological principles (Tunstall 2016). This was achieved by using the charrette format as a platform for 'negotiation' of different ideas.

Therefore, the charrette was not used in this study as a way of bringing design thinking to replace or undermine indigenous or localised thinking (whether it was Scottish basket making, or any other Asian traditional craft practice), but to give an opportunity for the communities to express, themselves rather than being driven by dominant individuals or businesses, via an alternative space. Such design space and activities driven by design anthropological approaches then go on to identify and acknowledge mutual borrowing of different value systems and cultures of different stakeholders, and eliminate disciplinary boundaries created by Western design regimes. As Tunstall (2013, p240-45) describes, such approaches not only disregard the unequal circumstances in which that cultural borrowing takes place, they also discard or at least attempt to work around, those false distinctions between art, craft and design, and an imposition of European design traditions. While accommodating and recognising other forms of value systems, design anthropological thinking shifts the hegemonic value systems of educational, professional, disciplinary or class based distinctions and hierarchies to create conditions of compassion among the participants and uphold their interactions within the wider environments (Tunstall 2013, p240-45).

Design anthropology corresponds to the nascent scholarly debate of decolonising design, which includes participatory approaches that are derived from the Northern/Western design regimes. Such approaches are criticised for creating "a semblance of freedom, creativity and choice and are immediately usurped as effective tools of coloniality of design, distracting attention from the real and grim defuturing tendencies" (Tlostanova 2017, p59). Instead, participation when initiated from a design anthropological purview

might correspond to Tlostanova's anticipation of a decolonial situation of design, which would be "a creative and dynamic reflection and realisation of the people's forgotten and discarded needs, wishes and longings, which would be inevitably linked to the local cosmologies, ethics and systems of knowledge seen not as the dead and museumised past, or as a conservative fundamentalist dystopia, but as a living and breathing present and promise for the future" (Tlostanova 2017, p55).

In this way, the use of design anthropology in this study served three purposes: a) to improve interdisciplinarity in design and heritage projects, b) to bring alternative value systems and cultures into play as a way of acknowledging and accepting their existence, and c) to eliminate the authorised notions of heritage and design, while promoting decolonial approaches to both heritage and design practices.

7.7 Chapter Summary

Bundgaard after her ethnographic fieldwork with Patta Chitra painters in Orissa, India returned to those artisans to propose a theoretical model in terms of showing how craft world is organised there. Even with long term immersive ethnographic work, her approach and the proposed model failed to convince the artisans, proving that combining analytical discourses with that of living practices is a difficult task (Bundgaard 1999, p208). Her example showed how ethnographic research might fail to communicate tradition bearers' own voices and the reality of their interpretations, even though it has been at one point expressed during field work. Unable to relate to the theoretical model, artisans therefore reduced the issues she brought to a simple repudiation of facts. Although Bundgaard framed these different discursive formation as a result of having different "semantic registers" of the art worlds of painters, regional and national art specialists, the limitations encountered in such studies become clearer when George E. Marcus (2016, p205-06) suggests to move beyond classic ethnographic methods of "writing beautiful texts" to include participatory art based approaches. Using participatory approaches within this study then allowed directing attention to the gap this research tried to bridge from the start namely the lack in participatory approaches to heritage management. Not only did it translate ethnographic methods such as observation and conversations to enable participatory innovation, especially in design driven processes, but it also showed how we could instigate participatory approaches to heritage management to truly capture all stakeholders' voices in a

collaborative manner, and invoke tradition bearers' participation and their local discourses, characterised by pragmatism.

In doing so, this research study built the case for why we need participatory approaches within heritage craft practices, in order to connect design and anthropology. It did this by analysing various approaches that were evident in the mediations of governments, NGOs and international agencies, as well as those approaches that had been implemented within entrepreneurial activities and educational programmes. . This was especially done with design being argued to be an authorised discourse, usually carrying a modern/colonial precedent (Fry 2017, Tlostanova 2017). Instead of relegating design as an authorised discourse (or considering design as futile), the study indicated the need to make design a collaborative discipline that could complement other areas, broaden the use of design tools and methods to aid participatory engagements in the heritage field (particularly craft), and therefore suggesting how the said fields are connected in an overlapping manner.

As the focus of the research was given to craft and design intervention, it went on to elicit a few concerns that Section C of chapter 2 had raised in terms of how heritage and design projects should be developed to appreciate design possibilities, rather than focusing on the outcome, or solving problems in design driven projects. These questions were answered through a charrette format, following design anthropological processes, which invited multiple actors who showed an interest in Scottish basket making. The charrette was based on co-creation and collaborative knowledge exchange activities, with participants coming from diverse backgrounds and fields. It included both Western and non-Western participants, situating the collaborative engagement to be applicable to both Global North/South projects. Although it had certain implications in terms of representational issues with fragmented outcomes as it only focused on the initial idea generation phase, the charrette format suggested how to overcome the authorised nature of design that is seen in craft and design engagements by making it more participatory and democratic. Hence it corresponded to Tlostanova's (2017) decolonial design approach, where local knowledge systems and ethics are given value in the process of creating a de-globalisation status of design—which otherwise train modern professional designers being based on an Eurocentric epistemological tradition.

Testing, evaluating, identifying, and sharing the narratives articulated through a participatory, public-engagement project, the research argued that design

anthropological contributions provide a dialogical nature to those encounters. Developing a dialogical process in knowledge exchange activities enabled new insights and perspectives about how one should approach heritage making practices, when material, technological, social and cultural boundaries merge. The design anthropological contribution in this case was partly to provide options of a decolonial status in craft and design engagements, and offer new cultural reflections, which were different to that of the formalised knowledge of designers, makers or curators when they approach heritage craft. It evoked possible futures of how Scottish basket making can be envisaged when a diverse set of stakeholders engage in the making process showing how ‘possible’ worlds come into being. The making activity supported through the charrette prompted interventions in social realities, thereby built connections with the new and emergent conceptions of contemporary cultural heritage, within a broader societal context, and beyond the immediate basket making activity or considerations of heritage as obsolete. The charrette provided a design space, a site where material, cultural and social values transform to inform practices and people. In so doing, the co-created experiences allowed the participants to connect the past, present and imagined futures to talk about heritage as a mutually-constructed idea rather than as an imposed one. Finally, the chapter endeavoured to show the possibilities of using design anthropological approaches within a charrette format to improve interdisciplinarity in research, promote cultural respect in design engagements, and thereby put forward an engagement model as one (amongst many other approaches) that fosters decoloniality in design and heritage studies.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter is to revisit the aims and objectives the thesis sets out at the beginning, and determine its degree of success in achieving them. By offering a final reflection, the chapter concludes with how the research contributes to the current discussions regarding decolonising design and heritage in craft development, as well as insights for future research work within the intersecting disciplines of heritage, craft, design and anthropology.

8.1 Revisiting the research aims and objectives

Aim 1: What are the different types of knowledge, material practices and experiences visible in craft and design engagements within local-global relationships and in what way do they contribute to heritage discourse?

Objectives:

- a) to analyse a specific knowledge exchange project
- b) to identify who participates and how they collaborate
- c) to identify the ways in which participants construct a heritage narrative in relation to particular discourses about craft and design.

The study attempted to address these points by critically reviewing how craft, design and heritage discourses are grounded in the work of globalisation. Major issues and implications were identified when these subject disciplines were categorised within temporal (as historical and contemporary), spatial (as East-West or First World-Third World) and contextual (within disciplinary and hierarchical boundaries, institutionalisation and professionalisation) dimensions. A few concerns that became central to the discussion were the value of interdisciplinarity in subject areas, the need of a decolonial situation for design and heritage, and the relevance of participation which makes it useful in craft development discourse. While it established the case why studies should expand their boundaries in order to connect with complementary subject areas, the study also argued that there is no notable research that valued this interdisciplinarity in heritage, craft and design research, especially in the participatory

domain, and research into such interdisciplinarity was therefore identified as an emerging key area of research in both craft and design as well as in heritage studies.

In examining the above intersecting disciplines, the study was framed to analyse different types of knowledge, material practices and experiences that can be found in craft and design interventions—where it proposed a conceptual framework to analyse traditional, contemporary, professional craft and design practices that corresponded to the earlier mentioned temporal, spatial and contextual dimensions (Chapter 2). By doing so, the analysis examined the local and global from micro and macro perspectives, with ‘micro’ relating to individual and communal practices and ‘macro’ relating to national and international influences that might affect the micro level. To conduct the research, the study adopted a multi-sited ethnography by following ‘people’, ‘metaphor’, ‘story’ and ‘things’ in the local heritage craft as expressed and understood in the global design industry (Chapter 3). In order to achieve the aim of identifying different types of craft and design engagements that might exist in such local-global relationships, particular attention was paid to an artists’ exchange programme that took place between India and Scotland, which also served to illustrate a comparative interface between East and West (Chapter 4). The various types of knowledge practices involved, and those who participated in them were identified through observing and analysing the creative outputs of the four makers and the daily work of individuals (designer makers, designers, artisans) and collective making (i.e. community of practices in traditional craft making). In addition, the way in which these different makers experienced variations in their approaches to design were analysed in terms of how they responded through their material practices, and the way they describe their work as ‘traditional’, ‘innovative’ and ‘contemporary’.

Opportunities and barriers to work within the intersection of east-west craft and design engagements were identified through the multiple discussions the participants had amongst themselves, ones they had with other members of the wider community and also through the follow-up interviews the researcher conducted. The opportunities and barriers of this cross-cultural knowledge exchange activity did not fall into simplistic dichotomies reflecting eastern and western stereotypes, although participants were aware of such stereotypes and made use of them as reference points to talk about and evaluate their experience. However, the distinctions that were drawn about craft and design were indicative of rural and urban divisions, collectivism and individualism, survival and choice, education and occupation, strict and structured caste-based craft

practices (in India) and making activities that are more liberal and individualistic in the Scottish context. In this regard, craft appeared to denote a tradition that people in village communities could more easily connect with, whereas ‘design’ was seen as something that was more progressive, as opposed to backward looking, but was something people were interested in using in order to make craft objects more marketable, and thus help revive local ‘craft’.

The collaborative interface provided by the reSIde project was seen as one that helped the participants to work within these differences and distinctions by drawing on both similarities and differences to reflect on their own practices. The analysis of the collaborative work indicates how participants coming from different knowledge backgrounds could collaborate, despite these distinctions. It showed that by exploring and evoking alternative opportunities offered at a collaborative interface, makers could more deeply develop certain embodied experiences towards people, material and practices. However, embodied experiences that people developed through collaborations were naturally limited when final project outcomes were focused on developing individual artistic production rather than collective work. Suggestions were made as to why engagement methods need to be ‘decolonised’ by allowing subaltern viewpoints and removing superimposed ideas and elite perspectives when producing creative work. The analysis also showed that different groups and individuals construct the idea of ‘heritage’ differently—hence confirming that heritage is a multiple construction made by different actors within communities, institutions, NGOs, design schools, businesses etc. Such an analysis of heritage corresponds to Smith’s (2006) assertion of heritage as a constructionist concept. As stated in Chapter 2, there is an evident lack of participatory methods in the literature of heritage management. To address this gap, this study used participatory approaches to assess the extent to which they might prove useful in developing decolonial methodologies to help all relevant actors in a community to build a heritage narrative in which they feel fully included.

Aim 2: Develop an understanding of key actors involved in craft and design engagements within local-global relationships, and their contribution to heritage craft practices.

Objectives:

Observe and analyse

a) a traditional craft community,

- b) a craft enterprise,
- c) craft projects conducted by higher educational institutions and
- d) compare these within two cultural settings (India and Sri Lanka).

Based on the findings of the first aim and its objectives, the second aim illustrated how these different, yet supporting actors of communities, heritage organisations, design schools and institutions, businesses, enterprises and NGOs, name, claim and identify ‘traditional’, ‘heritage’, ‘innovative’ and ‘contemporary’ practices through their craft and design engagements.

Analysis carried out in this study found that economic, socio-cultural and political categorisations of craft and design in India and Sri Lanka display myriad distinctions regarding how both craft and design are perpetuated beyond object and material cultures (Chapters 5 and 6). This analysis covered various temporal (colonial, post independent developments, cold-war, industrialisation, contemporary globalisation), spatial and contextual aspects (i.e. individual, community, national and international institutions such as government, development agencies, NGOs, higher education institutions, businesses, etc.) by reviewing how the heritage narrative is constructed in everyday social realities by and for different groups of people. Thus, the study identified possible heritage actors or stakeholders and the role they play in craft development discourse through their use of particular heritage and design narratives. The contentious issues (development needs, business networks and their relationships, institutionalisation of heritage and design, independent designer projects etc.) identified during the fieldwork demonstrate how these multiple constructions of heritage contribute to different areas of knowledge, identity and labour practices, and eventually having a compounding effect on the local communities.

The examples reviewed in India and Sri Lanka demonstrated similar themes based on colonialism, traditionalism, nationalism, modernity, development and globalisation that created a particular image of craft and design. Certain differences were noted, based on the geographic, cultural, social, political and economic differences displayed between the two countries with regard to the specific examples studied. The analysis was wide ranging and revealed that identity dialogues, views of tradition and heritage and various networks and relationships in relation to global design industries, suggested a resonance in their edifice and this confirmed that the local-global relationships are an assemblage, and do not occur in isolation. Therefore, heritage craft, as expressed and

understood in the present global design industry, was presented as a discursive formation resulting from colonial, modern and post-independent nationalistic developments, together with the influence of cold-war projects, industrialisation and globalisation.

In both Sri Lankan and Indian contexts, 'craft' went on to be strongly associated with a sense of romanticised and nostalgic imagery. Such views continue to hold sway today, and to some extent resulted in the so-called 'salvage paradigm', in which craft is seen as being at risk and therefore in need of preservation and revival efforts if it is to survive. 'Design', on the other hand, became seen as progressive and associated with professional practices that followed a Western epistemological foundation, and was considered to be aiding the craft sector in an attempt to make it contemporary and innovative. Design in this sense was seen as creating a distinct regime of values where it became 'an authorised discourse' that also exhibited a western culturally-elitist perspective, a so-called 'elite hypostatisation' (Bundergaard 1999) in its approaches. Enthusiastically adopted by design institutions at the national and international levels, this view of design has created a top-down approach and also marginalised the grassroots levels of the craft sector. The designers and development officials involved in craft development went on to play an authoritative role in promoting craft revival, exercising expert knowledge that created certain distinctions and divisions amongst artisanal groups, juxtaposing such things as innovation and tradition, urban and rural. This resulted in class distinctions emerging, with some being identified as 'modern designers' and others as 'unmodern artisanal makers', which corresponds with the findings of DeNicola and DeNicola (2012) and DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber (2016).

In a similar vein, the way heritage is constructed in these craft and design engagements was also discussed. This illustrated the general accepted authorised notions of heritage discourses visible in policy, categorical forms and hierarchical structures of national and international organisations, and in development efforts led by NGOs and craft enterprises. However, by paying attention to craft communities, the analysis of ethnographic work identified how artisans strategically adapted to changing needs and the way they constructed their own heritage narratives in response to official discourses regarding heritage and design. An examination of ethnographic work revealed the locally mediated effects of the capitalist framework of the global design industry. This demonstrated that artisans were evidently able to strategise and exploit particular heritage narratives to their own advantage and sustain the craft practices even when

asymmetries of power exist in development activities. The fact that such strategic behaviours were apparently not acknowledged at an institutional level reveals the inability of the current development, heritage and design policies to fully capture the grassroots efforts of artisans. The points of criticism and competition between different actors presented in the craft development discourse, whether involved in commercial, cultural or other projects, indicated some of the difficulties involved in bringing together people who have different value systems. This was despite the assumption that an easy reconciliation would be achieved between heritage, craft and design in their practices, without considering that there might be precarious outcomes for knowledge systems, gender and labour practices at a more immediate level, and contested ideas about national identity, cultural and material responses to globalisation at a meta level.

The role of design schools was specifically reviewed to reveal that not only they see themselves as offering design education for craft development, but also to emphasise the role they play in ‘instrumentalising heritage’ (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2004). Analysing various design interventions that were observed in the two design schools in India and Sri Lanka showed how designers charged themselves with an assigned duty of reviving craft through design innovation, and that this was indicative of class distinctions that were institutionally inherent in their own education as well as the professionalised design practices that catered for an urban intellectual creativity as opposed to the informal skills that the rural makers had. Such craft and design interventions revealed the power and agency manifested in design as it became a pervasive ideology constructing a particular heritage narrative, but design also posed benefits to communities they engaged in co-creational activities. Hence it was argued that emphasis needs to be placed on enabling participation at grassroots levels in craft and design interventions. This is in order to minimise the negative effects that might result from the pervasive assumption that there is an easy reconciliation between people, hierarchies and disciplines of different values systems. With possibilities identified to develop an engagement model, it is important to remember that for decolonised approaches to be effective, all actors involved in shaping the heritage narrative must be included in the process, and be free to experience and mediate their own practices.

Aim 3: Design participatory approaches to heritage management, for work on heritage craft and design interfaces that work towards developing decolonising approaches.

Objectives:

To propose;

- a) a collaborative engagements model with multiple heritage actors by reflecting on the findings of the craft and design engagements studied,
- b) plausible methods and tools and
- c) design and test a model of a participatory engagement

Instead of refuting design in totality as a ‘defuturing’ concept, the research reviewed how it can be appropriated and reconstituted to suit the changing needs of societies and to make design a decolonised practice towards a new reading of design. This brought about accepting other value systems and cultures, and eliminating the unequal circumstances within which cultural borrowing takes place, and most significantly by challenging Western culturally-elitist perspectives. Such an approach would support sustainment, empathy and cultural responsibility where the study looked at how to increase the participation of potential stakeholders especially by enabling the voices of local communities to break the existing power structures in their negotiations. In order to achieve such changes, ‘Design Anthropology’ was used within a Charrette format (Chapter 7). What this achieved was to provide an interface for heritage craft and design interventions to occur, where multiple-heterogeneous actors contributed to the design process by exploring different heritage narratives. This engagement model supported participatory heritage management in the form of a co-creation process, which worked outside the existing authorised notions of heritage and enhanced the community-orientation to heritage.

The proposed engagement model aligned to the observations and analysis of the earlier fieldwork and case study data, it became clear that an easy reconciliation between different members and disciplines would be hard to come by, therefore it needed to be supported through deep collaborations. The charrette also confirmed the mutuality of tangible (material relationships) and intangible heritage (knowledge, skills and practices) that are required for heritage discussions and ‘mutual learning’ between disciplines, individuals, communities, and institutions between and across hierarchies and categorical distinctions. The charrette model that was based on design anthropological approaches, was then positioned as an approach of decolonial methodologies in order to depart from authorised notions of heritage and design, which were argued to be taking their cue mainly from a western culturally-elitist point of view. The engagement promoted the idea of building a communal future by furthering inclusivity and

supported the work of Decolonial scholars such as Tunstall (2013, 2016), Tony Fry (2017), Walter Mignolo (2011) and Escobar (2017a).

8.2 Final Reflections and the Limitations of the study

Limitations of this research in terms of selecting locations, favouring specific methods over others and implications of ethics in framing the study were mentioned at various points in chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7. In chapter 7, a dedicated section was covering the limitations of designing, testing and evaluating the engagement model with an examination of concomitant issues on what might be anticipated when projects take place outside a Western context, where participation, representation and knowledge exchange will have different semantic registers. This still leaves an opportunity for future researchers to conduct participatory workshops in other social and cultural contexts to fully evaluate their uses and develop more robust approaches to increase participation and collaborative opportunities.

The researcher's own cultural position in this study needs to be taken into account, along with any resulting biases. Having been educated as a designer in a Sri Lankan university that followed a UK education model which was specifically designed to cater to the global apparel industry, before being educated to postgraduate level at a UK university, the researcher's position might not have been totally impartial when it came to identifying the real struggles of the many artisans that were observed and interviewed during the fieldwork given her professional background. Although it gave the researcher a position to question the existing design education system from an insider's view point, it also required the researcher to question her motives considering the 'baggage' of education, and class distinctions catering as it did to 'a global hierarchy of values' (Herzfeld 2004, DeNicola and DeNicola 2012)—as this study was the very hierarchy it criticises throughout.

8.3 Contribution to knowledge and Directions for future research

The work discussed in this thesis contributes to the literature that debates how craft and design interventions should be approached and conducted. It aligns with those who argue that precarious outcomes can result from poor intervention strategies in heritage craft, for example Scrase (2012), DeNicola and Wilkinson-Weber (2016), Bundgaard (1999) (1999), and Venkatesan (2009). This study challenges the limited framework of

existing craft and design studies and argues for an expansive view by bringing in other intersecting disciplines such as heritage and design anthropology. The comparisons that were drawn in the thesis between the local and the global were unique in that they had not been previously explored within a single study. Most studies focused on a particular sector, a group or a subject discipline at a particular time (thematically illustrated in chapter 7) and thus lacked a comprehensive approach to research. To avoid similar pitfalls, the scope of the research was widened (at the same time retaining the focus through the use of multi-sited ethnography) to include complementary discipline. Such an interdisciplinary approach offers opportunities for future researchers to look further for possible fields of studies or disciplines to connect with. It is also possible that similar framework and interdisciplinarity could also be applied to study other living cultures such as dance, music, performing arts, drama, food heritage etc.

Especially the engagement model that was developed as part of this research combines theory and practice, and offers new areas of thought and practice not only for heritage, design and craft practitioners, but anyone engaged in the development sector to increase their participation by connecting with the grassroots: be this in the Global North or Global South.

Moreover, some of the materials that were investigated as part of this research were the first of its kind (for example the Kellers' Report was an unexplored document thus far in the Sri Lankan craft and design historiography and also the relationship between ICSID, UNIDO and design for development agenda in Sri Lanka was explored for the first time), which added critical and new knowledge to craft and design research.

The research hence suggested how these intersecting discourses of craft, design, heritage and anthropology once enabled for increased participation could then benefit addressing one of the key existing challenges in the fields of heritage and design—that of being an authorised discourse. It adds to what Smith (2006) and others (Bortolotto 2015, Nic Craith 2008) argue about increasing participation in heritage management, in order to contribute to holistic interpretations and achieving 'glocal' approaches while departing from Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD). It also contributes to the emerging discussions around Decolonising Design that calls upon to overcome the defuturing effects of colonialism, modernity and development that further gets intensified through the effects of contemporary globalisation in design projects (Fry 2017, Escobar 2017a, Onafuwa 2018, Tlostanova 2017, Tunstall 2013).

In that sense, the findings could be of interest to both policy and practice.

Firstly, it adds knowledge to minimise one of the emerging criticisms of the UNESCO's 2003 ICH convention in terms of not proposing 'approaches' to encourage community participation (Bortolotto 2015). For international and national heritage institutions, the study might be a challenge to rethink their approaches, what tools they could use when working with the craft sector, and review how interdisciplinary could add value by combining design and anthropological methodologies when they draft practical guide books and how-to toolkits. This is instead of merely proposing the 'designer as a mediator' or 'design as aiding the craft sector', as it creates an asymmetry of power and agency, which is still visible in some of UNESCO's publications such as *Designers Meet Artisans* (UNESCO 2005).

Secondly, it has benefits for those who undertake design interventions within the craft sectors e.g. NGOs, HEIs and businesses. The engagement model, proposed in this research will aid these organisations to make their engagements more collaborative and participatory by considering other value systems and cultures. By recognising mutual borrowings, people with different skills might be better equipped to work alongside each other and evaluate the social and cultural implications of design with a pragmatic interest in material culture.

Thirdly, it contributes to design education more specifically, to reorient design approaches that could benefit the wider society by making it culturally and socially appropriate, economically sound, and supportive of sustainable practices. While design education in its present status is largely driven by the Western epistemological foundations, discussions in this study may be useful for the academic community to consider as interdisciplinary subjects of heritage, craft and anthropology to propose a different praxis of education that may favour both Design in the Global North and South. This is promising at a time as higher educational institutions turning their attention to including exciting postgraduate courses such as design for social innovation (Northampton and Ravensbourne universities), design for change (Edinburgh College of Art), sustainability and ethics (Heriot Watt University), design management and cultures (UAL⁹²) and design anthropology related courses (i.e. UCL⁹³, Harvard University, University of St. Andrews in their MRes. Anthropology, Art and Perception

⁹² University of the Arts London

⁹³ University College London

as well as in the European institutions such as KADK⁹⁴ and SDU⁹⁵). The growing number of design labs, social impact studios and design movements that span the globe from Latin American countries to Australia, such as Design and Anthropology Lab (LaDA) in Rio De Janeiro, Citizen Designer movement, and societies like The Studio at the Edge of the World as well as the anthro-design yahoo group⁹⁶, are a sign of this trend.

⁹⁴ The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation

⁹⁵ Southern Denmark University

⁹⁶ <https://anthrodesign.com/join-us/>

Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval Form from the School of Textiles and Design

School of Textiles and Design Research Ethical Guidelines

In keeping with directives from the European Union and from the UK Government, universities are required to put in place ethics procedures and guidelines for research. In addition, research councils ask for formal ethics approval of proposals in some of their funded programmes.

Heriot-Watt University has established a University Ethics Committee to guide schools, monitor procedures and ensure appropriate ethical issues are being considered. The committee has asked schools to submit ethical approval procedures relevant to their research activities. At the School of Textiles and Design, Ethical Approval must be sought using this form. The Director of Research approves most requests on presentation of the form (with supporting documents where applicable). In a limited number of cases granting of approval may have to be referred to the School Research Committee (or part thereof). Where there are more serious concerns applications will be referred to the University's Ethics Committee.

This note outlines the context and provides a standard protocol for ethics approval for research proposals.

General Ethical Principles

- No field of human activity can be considered exempt from ethical concerns. Increased accountability has led to systems of research governance to ensure that research methods and information are open to public scrutiny and can be seen to be subject to the highest ethical standards.
- Research should conform to generally accepted moral and scientific principles. There are:
 - a) Obligations to society:- for example, conforming with responsible, moral and legal practice; maintenance of high scientific standards and impartial assessment and dissemination of findings.
 - b) Obligations to funders and employers:- the relationship between researchers, funders, and employer should be clear and balanced without compromise to morality, the law or professional integrity.
 - c) Obligations to colleagues:- the maintenance of standards and appropriate professional behaviour with methods, procedures and findings open to review.
- Breaches of these principles include areas of research misconduct such as fabrication, falsification and plagiarism.
- The well-being of all involved in research is of central concern in ethical considerations. All staff are therefore obliged to comply with health and safety guidelines and to carry out a risk assessment of the research whatever its nature (for example, laboratory work, field work, testing of participants).

Ethical principles for research involving human participants

One major obligation on the part of researchers which is not included in the above list is to the participants who are involved in research. Social researchers must strive to protect participants from undue harm arising as a consequence of their participation in research. This requires that their participation should be voluntary, and as fully informed as possible. At the same time, no group should be disadvantaged by routinely being excluded from consideration. Participants should also be aware of their entitlement to refuse to participate at any stage for whatever reason, and to withdraw data just supplied. Special considerations should be given to studies requiring

informed consent from vulnerable participants. Such groups include children, those with an intellectual disability and those in a dependent relationship to the researcher or commissioning body (for example, students in the University or patients in a hospital).

a) For interviews / focus groups:

- All participants must be fully informed of the nature of the research and give informed consent prior to interview.
- Participants must be given a plain language statement of the nature and purpose of the research.
- It is generally preferable not to identify individual participants but, if the identification of participants is necessary, participants must be informed of this, and of safeguards to ensure that this information is restricted to the researcher or a specific research group.
- No interview should be recorded without the permission of the participant.
- Interviews by telephone must meet the same conditions as face-to-face interviews.
- Written parental consent is required for interviews with participants under age 18 (16 in Scotland), unless such interviews take place in the presence of a parent or guardian or in an institutional setting where the institutional consent has been given.

b) Questionnaires: All written questionnaires must have an opening statement informing the participant of the nature and purpose of the research. If a questionnaire contains any questions likely to cause offence to the respondent, this should be clearly indicated on the front cover, so that the participant may decide not to read on. Completion of the forms shall indicate evidence of informed consent. Please provide a copy of your proposed questionnaire.

c) Observational methods: Where behaviour patterns are observed without the participants' knowledge, researchers should take care not to infringe the privacy of an individual or group. Where practical, an attempt should be made to obtain consent *post hoc*. Cultural variations in what constitutes public and private space should be acknowledged.

d) Photography: Photographing human participants in publicly accessible spaces is a legitimate research tool. However, if prejudicial to the participants' interests or reputation, identifying features of the participant must be obscured.

e) Experimental or field testing of participants: Ethical requirements for this situation are the same as for those applying to participant interviews.

f) Withholding information from participants: If it is *essential* to the design of an experiment, questionnaire or interview that some information about its purpose is withheld from participants (e.g. because this knowledge would influence their behaviour), then full information must be provided when participants are debriefed and they must be given the opportunity to withdraw their data. Experiments of this kind should not be conducted if it is likely that participants will react to debriefing with discomfort, anger or objections.

More detailed reference documents are available which provide useful further guidance on these issues, notably, the Social Research Association's *Ethical Guidelines*, and the BPS ethical code at www.bps.org.uk/documents/Code.pdf.

School of Textiles and Design
Protocol for Ethics Approval

1. Title of research: **Knowledge Management in cross cultural craft and design engagements**
2. Purpose of study: **PhD field research**
3. Is ethical approval required by another body linked to the research? **NO**

If YES please attach copies of the approval given to the other body, and confirmation that no changes have been made to the protocol since approval was granted

4. Is permission required from another body to use data or research materials? **NO**

If YES please attach copies

5. Does the research involve the use of human subjects: **YES**

If YES what is the nature of the research e.g. focus group, questionnaire, etc

The research takes place in Scotland, India and Sri Lanka. In India and Sri Lanka it involves working with local craft communities through ethnographic means by documenting their practices and learning their processes. This requires carrying in situ observations along with open ended questions inquiring about their practices collecting both the oral history traditions and the contemporary developments of the traditional craft practices. This also includes completing a 3 weeks placement at a local NGO in Jaipur India working with traditional artisan groups in Jaipur and Sanganer. Also this will be followed by additional 3 weeks research activities at the National Institute of India in Ahmedabad with students and academics. This involves documenting and observing different craft modules offered at the NID.

If NO please go to Q.13

N.B. The researcher should have considered the use of secondary data sources and should be clear that the aims of research cannot be met without new primary research involving people.

The research is purely qualitative as it takes an 'ethnographic' approach: which is studying and writing about people, hence cannot be achieved through secondary data sources. Thus undertaking primary research involving people is crucial for validity of the research method and its outcome.

6. Is written consent to be obtained? **YES**

Completion of all forms will indicate evidence of informed consent.

Written consents will be obtained from participants as far as possible. But in those circumstances where working with community groups involves who are illiterate the tape recorded consents will be obtained.

*If YES please attach a copy of the consent and information form or indicate when it will be supplied.
If NO please justify.*

7. How long will a subject have to decide whether to take part in the study.

It will take about 5-10 minutes after researcher debriefing the participants about information on why they are taking part in the research, what kind of information will be collected, how confidentiality is assured, and how they can opt out of the study if they wish to do so. Time will also be allocated for questions and clarifications.

Time in days

If less than 1 day, please comment.

(Note that it is common in the case of face to face interviews not to give significant advanced notice. This is acceptable in view of maximising the response rates and reliability of some survey based research.)

8. Will any of the subjects be from one of the following vulnerable groups?: **NO**

Children under 18 (16 in Scotland)
People with learning difficulties
Patients in hospital
Other vulnerable groups (e.g. mental illness, dementia)

9. If any 'yes' box in question 8 is ticked, what special arrangements have been made to deal with issues of consent for the subjects (e.g. consent from parents, professional carer, relevant institution, etc).

10. Are there any potential physical, psychological or disclosure dangers that can be anticipated from involvement in the research? **NO**

If yes, please give details.

11. What steps will be taken to safeguard the confidentiality and anonymity of subjects?
When interviewing the artisan groups the participants will be identified as: male/female artisans and whether they belong to first, second or third generation printers. Basic information and observations will be made related to age and gender, otherwise no significant identifiable information will be inquired. All the participants will be anonymised in any publication materials, unless they wish to be recognised by their names. The confidentiality will be assured before the interviews and also after the discussions by briefing them about the points discussed and how the data is going to be used within the research work.

12. Does the study design involve actively deceiving participants? **NO**

If yes, briefly describe the nature of the deception and explain why it is necessary

13. Does the research project comply with the requirements of current Data Protection legislation (for example, data storage and security.), including in relation to the use and (non-) disclosure of secondary data sets? **NO**

14. Is your risk assessment of the health and safety implications for staff of the research High/Medium/Low or negligible: **Negligible**

If medium or high please ensure that the health and safety officer in the school is informed.

Please sign the following:

I as a Principal Investigator (supervisor) have checked the above for accuracy and am satisfied the information provided is a true reflection of the intended study.

Name (please print) _____

Signature _____

Date _____

I am satisfied that the researcher has properly considered the ethical implications of the intended study and has taken appropriate action.

 _____ (Director of Research)

Date 07.08.2016

Appendix B: Plain Language Statement



Plain Language Statement

I am Chamithri Greru, a PhD student of Heriot Watt University in the School of Textiles and Design, in Scotland.

I am doing research with regard to how global design influences the local craft in different craft and design engagements across cultures. I am visiting Jaipur, Sanganer, Bagru and Ahmedabad to conduct my field work.

I would like to invite you to take part in this research work by sharing your experiences of how your local craft traditions have evolved with the design influences. The research will be face to face interviews of approximately 30-60 minutes.

The interviews will be digitally recorded and I will take notes and photographs. This research has received ethics approval.

Participants' information is confidential and will anonymise all of your answers, unless you wish to be recognised. You have the right to withdraw without giving a reason and prior the publication of the research thesis on June 30th 2016.

Contact for further information

Chamithri Greru, PhD Research Wing, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. +44-78-41054756, email- gcg30@hw.ac.uk

Contact details of PhD supervisor: Dr. Britta Kalkreuter, Room 201, High Mill, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. Tel: +44 1896 89 2193, email- B.Kalkreuter@hw.ac.uk

Signature: -----

Date: -----

Appendix C: Verbal Consent Script as addendum to Ethics protocol



Verbal Consent Script as addendum to Ethics protocol

Purpose of the study:

Verbal consent will be taken mainly from craftspeople in the community context and at the production workplaces in Jaipur, Sanganer and Bagru. This is to document their traditional practices of textiles block printing tradition and its evolution.

Oral consent process:

Participants will be given information on why they are taking part in the research, what kind of information will be collected, how confidentiality is assured, how the risk incurred in participation will be handled in the research, and how they can opt out of the study if they wish to do so.

The script introduced to craftspeople will be as follows:

As you know, I am Chamithri Greru, a PhD student from the Heriot Watt University in Scotland. I am conducting a study on traditional block printing textiles practices and the influence of design for it, and I would like to ask you some questions about that. For the translation of this interview I will get the help from (the name of the translator).

I would like to tape record our conversation and also take photographs while you are at work as well as photograph some of your samples. The reason I want to tape record is to get your words accurately and that I do not have to write down everything. If at any time during our talk you feel uncomfortable answering a question please let me know, and you don't have to answer it. Or, if you want to answer a question but do not want it tape recorded, please let me know and I will turn off the recorder. If at any time you want to withdraw from this study please tell me and I will erase the tape of our conversation. I will not reveal the content of our conversation beyond myself and people helping me whom I trust to maintain your confidentiality. I will not use your names in my research so that no one can identify you but if like to include you can tell me that. Now I would like to ask you if you agree to participate in this study, and to talk to me about your textile making practices. Do you agree to participate, and to allow me to tape record our conversation?

Further contact:

A business card will be left with each participant containing the following details of the researcher if they wish to contact for further information, have concerns about the research or withdraw at a later stage:

Chamithri Greru, PhD Research Wing, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. +44-78-41054756, email- gcg30@hw.ac.uk

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form for Academics



Informed Consent Form for Academics

I would like you to participate in a research project.

This work is being carried out as part of the PhD research of Chamithri Greru from the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University, Scotland. I am exploring the provision of craft education at the National Institute of Design and how you engage with the local craft practices, and ways in which you have taken measures to safeguard the cultural heritage.

The interviews will be digitally recorded and I will take notes and photographs. This research has received ethics approval.

The length of the interview will depend on how much you time you are able to spare and approximately it will take 30-60 minutes. You will be under no obligation to answer to any of the questions.

Your information is confidential and will anonymise all of your answers, unless you wish to be recognised. All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act, 1998. You have the right to withdraw without giving a reason and prior the publication of the research thesis before June 30th 2016.

May we keep an anonymous copy of the interview data you provide?

Yea No

I have been fully informed as to what this interview discussion will entail, and am aware of my right to withdraw at any time. I hereby fully and freely consent to participation in the interview, which has been fully explained to me.

Signed _____

Date and place _____

Contact for further information

Chamithri Greru, PhD Research Wing, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. +44-78-41054756, email- gcg30@hw.ac.uk

Contact details of PhD supervisor: Dr. Britta Kalkreuter, Room 201, High Mill, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. Tel: +44 1896 89 2193, email- B.Kalkreuter@hw.ac.uk

Appendix E: Informed Consent Form Design Students



Informed Consent Form for Design Students

I would like you to participate in a research project.

This work is being carried out as part of the PhD research of Chamithri Greru from the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University, Scotland. I am exploring how designers engage with local craft communities and your experiences about it including cultural based product designing.

You will be asked to share your experiences, research projects, samples or prototypes you have made as part of academic work at NID. This might include ephemera, sketch books, photographs, documentary evidence, field work data and oral histories related to traditional craft practices you have witnessed and how you have incorporated them into the design process. These will be photographed and documented only if you agree.

The interviews will be digitally recorded and I will take notes and photographs. This research has received ethics approval.

The length of the interview will depend on how much time you are able to spare and approximately it will take 30-60 minutes. You will be under no obligation to answer to any of the questions.

Your information is confidential and will anonymise all of your answers, unless you wish to be recognised. All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act, 1998. You have the right to withdraw without giving a reason and prior the publication of the research thesis before June 30th 2016.

May we keep an anonymous copy of the interview data you provide?

Yes No

I have been fully informed as to what this interview discussion will entail, and am aware of my right to withdraw at any time. I hereby fully and freely consent to participation in the interview, which has been fully explained to me.

Signed _____

Date and place _____

Contact for further information

Chamithri Greru, PhD research Wing, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. +44-78-41054756, email- gcg30@hw.ac.uk

Contact details of PhD supervisor: Dr. Britta Kalkreuter, Room 201, High Mill, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. Tel: +44 1896 89 2193, email- B.Kalkreuter@hw.ac.uk

Appendix F: Informed Consent Form for Design Charrette participants



Informed Consent Form for Design Charrette participants

I would like you to participate in a design charrette.

This charrette is being carried out as part of the PhD research of Chamithri Greru from the School of Textiles and Design at Heriot Watt University, Scotland, with the funding received from Principal's Public engagement fund in 2015. I am exploring how collaborative design could happen within heritage/tradition and design interfaces, which you have been fully informed prior to the charrette via email as well.

The charrette will be video recorded and I will take notes and photographs. There will also be a neutral observer present but will not be directly involved with you. Another facilitator will help me today to conduct the charrette. After the charrette and upon prior agreements I will interview you to collect further information of your experiences.

The length of the charrette is a full day activity and your participation is voluntary. This research has received ethics approval.

Your information is confidential and will anonymise, unless you wish to be recognised. All data will be collected and stored in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act, 1998. You have the right to withdraw without giving a reason and prior the publication of the research thesis before December 30th 2016.

May we keep an anonymous copy of the workshop participation data?

Yes No

I have been fully informed as to what this workshop discussion will entail, and am aware of my right to withdraw at any time. I hereby fully and freely consent to participation in the interview, which has been fully explained to me.

Signed _____

Date and place _____

Contact for further information

Chamithri Greru, PhD Research Wing, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. +44-78-41054756, email- gcg30@hw.ac.uk

Contact details of PhD supervisor: Dr. Britta Kalkreuter, Room 201, High Mill, School of Textiles and Design, Heriot Watt University- Scottish Border Campus, Scotland. TD1 3HF. Tel: +44 1896 89 2193, email- B.Kalkreuter@hw.ac.uk

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