

A photograph of a diverse group of young men and boys, many smiling, gathered in front of a large, arched stone structure. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an outdoor setting. The men are dressed in various styles of clothing, including traditional headwear like turbans and modern jackets. The overall mood is positive and communal.

constructing community

**Communitarian planning,
architecture, and art
in the new Iraq**

by: matthew boyer

PREFACE

This project presents a multi-media description (photos, drawings, maps, original documents, etc.) and analysis of a set of civil development projects that I envisioned, proposed, and supervised while assigned as a platoon leader in C Troop, 1st Squadron, 10th U.S. Cavalry. C Troop conducted stability, counter-insurgency, and reconstruction operations in the Balad Ruz area of eastern Diyala Province, Iraq from November 2003 to February 2004. During that period, prior to any mature project management bureaucracy, I received access to civil development opportunities and funds generally limited to Civil Affairs teams and Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs).

As the originator of these projects and many of their founding ideas, my experience has both enabled and hindered full assessment of the processes and their outcomes. My participation in the deliberations and decisions enables the detailed description included here, but also challenges my capacity for unbiased evaluation of the procedural errors and resulting shortfalls. This is an unresolved tension, created by my dual roles as actor and assessor, that is evident throughout this project.

The reader will notice numerous referrals to me as the arbitrator and final decider for the design and development of these projects, especially Ettihad. These personal allusions are not intended to advance a personally favorable view of the development process, but to provide an honest recounting of the process. This deference to my own "vision" and "education", as subsequent research and reflection strongly suggests, correlates with a number of the challenges I experienced. This project is intended to provide an in-depth account of civil reconstruction in a foreign culture in order to explore the challenges, discuss the lessons learned, and propose recommendations to improve similar reconstruction endeavors undertaken by American civilian and military entities in the future.

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The main street through Balad Ruz in eastern Diayla Province, Iraq



PREAMBLE TO PROGRESS: INTRODUCTION

“Our objective should be to enrich the lives of all of our people by making things of the spirit, the creation of beauty part of their daily lives, by giving them new hopes and sources of interest to fill their leisure, by eradicating the ugliness of their surroundings, by building with a sense of beauty as well as mere utility, and by fostering all the simple pleasures of life which are not important in terms of dollars spent but are immensely important in terms of a higher standard of living.”¹

--- Edward Bruce , Director of New Deal Public Works of Art Project (PWAP)



Children and townspeople at the Balad Ruz Children's Park

Edward Bruce made the opening statement during the depths of the Great Depression, when America's social conditions were the worst in our history. Bruce was director of one of the many federal agencies that cooperated to reconstruct the American economy and reinforce our democratic institutions. In 2003, many of these same crisis conditions existed in Iraq. The Coalition toppling of Saddam Hussein's authoritarian rule provided Iraqis with an opportunity for a more democratic government and more pluralistic society. But, Iraqi communities were in more desperate need of reconstruction to address their dismal social conditions. As a platoon leader operating in the eastern Diayala Province, I was part of an organization positioned to help make Edward Bruce's vision a reality. In late 2003, recent appropriations and demand for immediate reconstruction provided me an opportunity to propose, design and administer three such projects. This multi-media work (photos, drawings, maps, original documents, etc.) describes and analyzes of a set of civil development projects that I envisioned, proposed, and supervised to address abhorrent social conditions and lay a foundation for democracy and pluralism in Iraq.

I incorporated numerous people's ideas and aspirations to assemble a complement of proposals to garner Coalition funding. I intended for money from these proposals to provide enhanced educational opportunities, community improvements, and cultural development projects to help satisfy Iraq's enormous need for basic civic resources. The resulting projects included the Ettihad School, Community Center and clinic, the Balad Ruz Children's Park, and the works known collectively as the Unity Murals. This project is an academic appraisal of the ideas integrated into the Ettihad Complex and Balad Ruz community improvements, as well as the process used to envision, enact, and complete these demonstrations of democratic civic endeavor. Most pertinently, this work is an

examination of lessons learned through the course of these projects.

In November of 2003, eight months after Coalition Forces toppled Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime, C Troop, 1-10 Cavalry Squadron relocated to the town of Balad Ruz. Our troop assumed responsibility for security, reconstruction, and development of the city and environs of Balad Ruz, an urban area of over 80,000 people in the Diayala Province of eastern Iraq. In addition to combat operations and employment of indigenous security forces, C Troop also supervised most of the reconstruction projects in the Balad Ruz area. Soon after C Troop's arrival in Balad Ruz, the troop commander, CPT Eric Jamison, and the officers of C Troop, to include myself, conceived a vision for expansion and improvement of reconstruction and development of the local communities, the government, and the infrastructure. C Troop immediately developed a vision for operations in Balad Ruz that included not only military operations and law enforcement support, but also an extensive array of civilian endeavors aimed at improving living conditions and nurturing the growth of a truly representative government. Coalition funds earmarked for civilian projects served as the primary financial method for achieving C Troop's measures for holistic improvement. The 4th Infantry Division's preparation for relinquishing responsibility provided the opportunity, through the Division's unused civilian project funds, for C Troop to realize our ambition of implementing initiatives specifically targeted at improving the lives and opportunities of the population while nurturing democratic ideals.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Although we worked to promote democracy through our operations in Balad Ruz, C Troop, like all units

throughout Iraq, operated in the long shadow of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist rule. There was glaring evidence of the neglect and degradation that resulted from Saddam Hussein's pursuit of military might and nationalistic glorification in lieu of infrastructure, access to education, and economic stability. The Ba'ath Regime's most significant impacts were on the psyche of the Iraqi people. The societal ties that bonded neighbor to neighbor, countrymen to countrymen, and community to community no longer existed. These bonds had very little opportunity to develop in the violently authoritarian Ba'ath political system under Saddam Hussein. Hussein had often portrayed himself as a benevolent national leader for millions of adoring Iraqis, but this was not the Iraqi reality. Just like the authoritarian states that preceded Iraq, Hussein's authoritarianism was promoted as a benign authoritarianism that simply made decisions in the best interests of the citizens themselves. But, as once again proven in Iraq, authoritarianism by nature is never benign.² While only feigning benevolence and propriety, the Ba'athist authority structure, led by Hussein, was primarily concerned with conservation of power. While maintaining many of the associations of power, the true function of a stable, benign state authority is to serve as a repository of trust. Legitimacy of authority is a function of the ability and the trustworthiness of leaders who act according to the precepts recognized by these leaders and by those over whom they exercise leadership.³ In the Iraq that Saddam Hussein ruled for over thirty years, this certainly was not the case. The Ba'athists ruled through power of fear rather than legitimate authority, leaving an Iraq of fractured communities that lacked the education, infrastructure, and institutions required for pluralist prosperity.

By May of 2003, after the U.S.-led Coalition deposed Saddam Hussein's regime, Iraqis and the world were contemplating how to build a new Iraq and fulfill the promise of a representative pluralistic government. On May 22, 2003, the United Nations Security Council issued

Resolution 1483 laying out the responsibilities of the interim Authority (Coalition Forces in Iraq) and expectations for the new Iraq:

[The U.N. is] stressing the right of the Iraqi people freely to determine their own political future and...resolved that the United Nations should play a vital role in humanitarian relief, the reconstruction of Iraq, and the restoration and establishment of national and local institutions for representative governance.⁴

In addition to clearly stating the intention for a genuinely representative government in Iraq, the resolution also charged the Authority in Iraq (Coalition Forces) with working to establish the basic conditions for a stable and free Iraq, stating:

The Security Council calls upon the Authority to promote the welfare of the people of Iraq through the effective administration of the territory, including in particular working towards the restoration of conditions of security and stability and the creation of conditions in which the Iraqi people can freely determine their own political future.⁵

Under the aegis of this resolution and according Coalition policies, the forces in Iraq set out to establish security, stability, and political freedom in Iraq.

Most of the Coalition commanders and policy makers in Iraq envisioned the response to the U.N.'s charge as extending Western political traditions. Coalition leaders generally saw the future of Iraq in democratic terms, presupposing that Iraqis wanted to be citizens of a democratic republic. In the new Iraqi democracy the Coalition envisioned, important public decisions on questions of law and policy would depend, either directly or

BALAD RUZ AND BRICK FACTORY AREAS

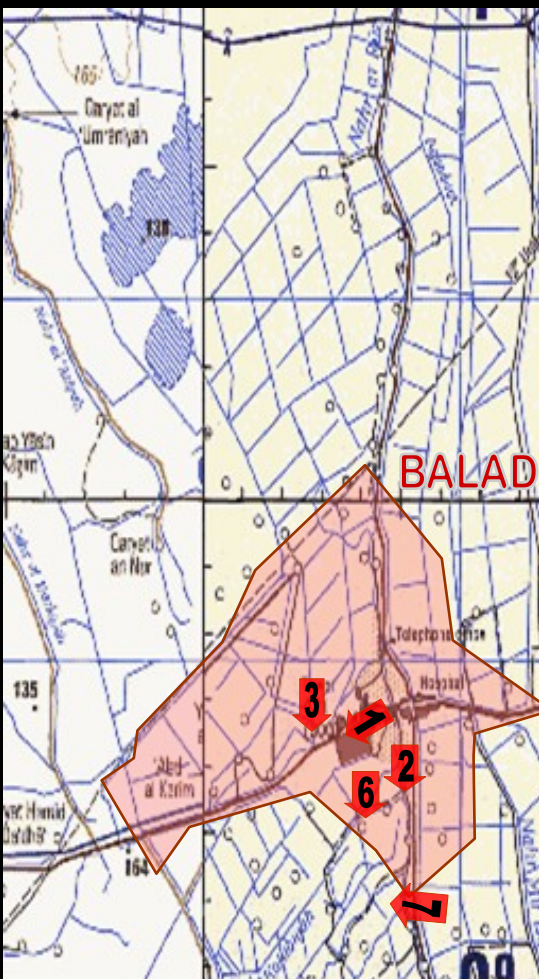


BALAD RUZ

BRICK FACTORY

LEGEND

- ★ Site for Ettihad Complex
- Site for Balad Ruz Children's Park
- M Sites for Iraqi Murals



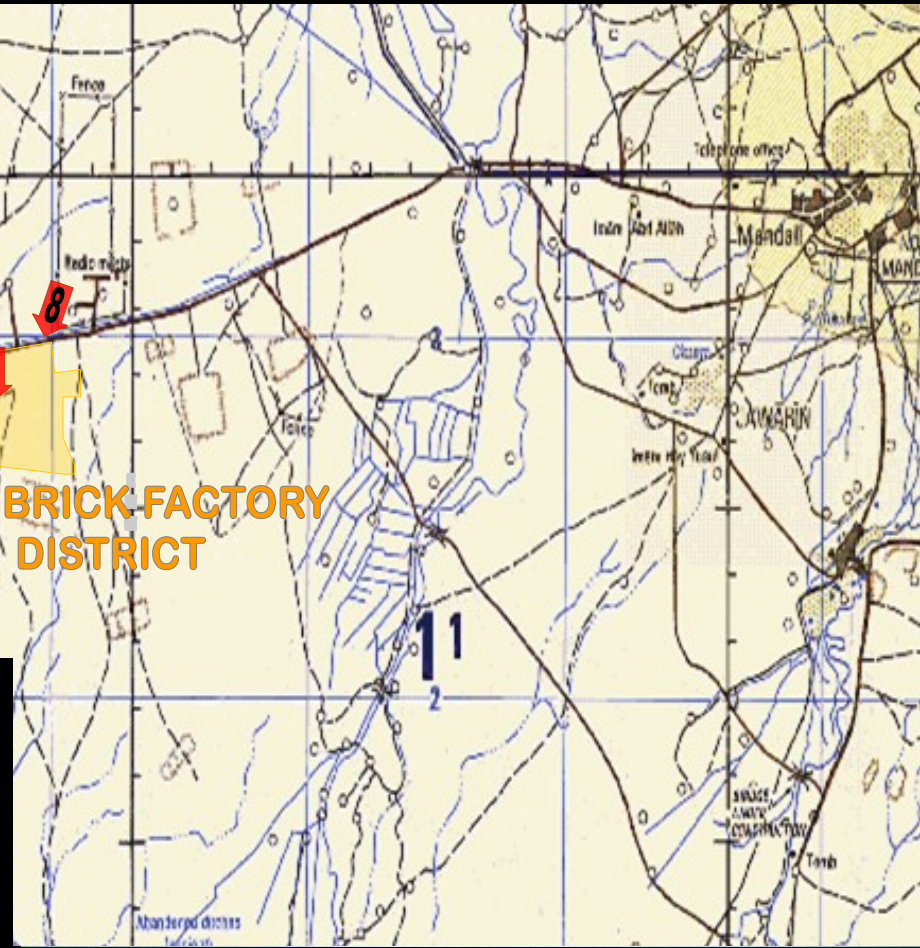
1 Crowded central market of Balad Ruz



2 Constricted, muddy streets of Balad Ruz



3 Site of the Balad Ruz Children's Park



4 The numerous individual brick factories that compose the Brick Factory area



5 Narrow paved road across the desolate terrain between Balad Ruz and the Brick Factory



6 Canals and walled groves near downtown Balad Ruz



8 Brick Factory smokestacks, as seen from the road over a mile away, billowing thick black smoke into the air



7 Fields and palm groves south of Balad Ruz

indirectly, on communities' collective endorsement. This vision built on an assumption that all citizens would have equal access to the political and bureaucratic systems. However, growth of such democratic ideals in Iraq faced many challenges. The bureaucracy and leadership would have to abandon the long-standing currencies of power, influence and nepotism for more pluralistic and inclusionary processes. Even if the Iraqi populace accepted these fundamentals of democracy, they could not realize a truly representative political system without the mechanisms to support basic community functions such as public participation, education and agreeable living conditions.

Despite the Coalition proclamations, manifestation of these democratic ideals in Iraq faced many challenges. To develop more democratic and pluralistic social norms, the populace needed to abandon the social structure brokered on power, nepotism, and favoritism established under Saddam's Ba'athist regime. Even if the Iraqi populace internalized these fundamentals, they could not attain them without developing and promoting



Figure 1. Iraqi Civil Defense Corps ensuring security of the Brick Factory area.

the basic community mechanisms that would promote improved living conditions, political participation, and unfettered access to basic education.

C TROOP OPERATIONS IN THE BALAD RUZ AREA

Upon taking tactical control of the Balad Ruz area, C Troop's first priority was integrating the Iraqi Police (IP), Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC), and newly established Iraqi Army (IA) into our continuous security operations. Most of our time and effort, like most other tactical units in Iraq, was dedicated to the security operations conducted both independently and with Iraqi security forces. In November of 2003 most tactical units like ours were focusing almost exclusively on unilateral security and pseudo-military operations. But C Troop, under the guidance of CPT Eric Jamison, identified and prioritized civil development initiatives to immediately improve conditions in the surrounding community. Rather than waiting for over-tasked Army Civil Affairs personnel to nominate and administer projects in Balad Ruz, C Troop leaders initiated identification, nomination, and administration of civil improvement projects. CPT Jamison did not allow C TRP to focus only on immediate security concerns. Rather, he pushed the Troop leadership to further examine local conditions and seek out appropriate solutions to promote Iraqi growth from a provisional state to a democratic nation. The combination of CPT Jamison's aggressive engagement of wider social issues and the readily available Coalition reconstruction funding enabled my pursuit of endeavors far beyond the standard platoon leader fare. With CPT Jamison's support, I was able to initiate an ambitious set of civic development projects to promote and support the stable, democratic, and pluralistic communities required for long-term security, stability, and democratic pluralism in Iraq.

Upon taking responsibility for the Balad Ruz area in November of 2003, C Troop immediately set out to identify and prioritize a set of initiatives to improve security and stability in our area. C Troop leaders, including myself, developed a plan that identified and grouped actions by type of development (security, economic, political, etc.). Each of the parallel progressions constituted a Line of Operation (LOO).⁷ The officers of C Troop, led by CPT Eric Jamison, then laid out the four LOOs to guide expenditure of C Troop's efforts and Coalition resources in our sector. The first LOO, a prerequisite for all subsequent endeavors, was security. C Troop supported the Security LOO by employing

LINE OF OPERATION
Planning device sequentially laying out integral steps for each unique developmental aspect required to achieve an independent, democratic Iraqi state

Coalition and Iraqi law enforcement forces, usually in joint operations, with the goal of curtailing violence to the level of an corresponding American city. Security was the first and most fundamental requirement for achievement of substantial and lasting success in the other LOOs.

The second LOO that C Troop established consisted of actions to set conditions for the formation of an independent and democratic Iraqi government at the local level. As a guide for the governmental developments, the officers of C Troop applied our personal knowledge of the American democratic system. These democratic assumptions underpinned the decisions we made to shape the political landscape in our area of responsibility. While our own democratic traditions provided a vivid template for Iraqi democratic institutions, a lesser understanding of local culture and social structures would counter the long-term success of our civil development efforts in Balad Ruz.

We focused our third LOO on improvement of the government services, to include the security, infrastructure, and education provided by Iraqi municipal institutions. Success of political institutions required the support and confidence of the population, a fealty built on trust

that the Iraqi government institutions would provide basic services fairly and efficiently to each member of the community. While this LOO's progression depended on expansion of government service capacity, it also required security and interdiction of insurgent attacks on infrastructure.

Our final LOO was dedicated to elimination of the conditions that propagated such non-compliant and subversive activity—economic counter insurgency. From others' experiences in previous insurgent conflicts in places such as Palestine and Chechnya, we knew that subversives' extremist ideologies feed on marginalized populations' that lack many opportunities. The resulting disenfranchisement among large portions of a population often creates the impetus for insurgent organization and resistance. Our final LOO focused on eliminating these conditions within our area of operations through identification, planning, and administration of development projects. Our augmentation of our overall security and stability plan with this non-kinetic LOO differentiated C Troop's approach from most other tactical plans and initiatives at that time.

Our ideas, plans, and actions for civil development were often more ambitious and sophisticated than other tactical units. But, we also made other prevalent mistakes in our pursuit of immediate security that diminished the full potential of our projects to help quell the growing counter-insurgency. Following our assessment of local conditions and clear delineation of our LOOs, we were able to develop a plan for immediate reconstruction. This plan pursue each of the interdependent requirements for a stable, democratic Iraq identified in our overall plan and each included LOO.

COMMUNITARIAN FOUNDATION OF THE CIVIC DEVELOPMENT CAMPAIGN

For the civic development projects I planned and administered, I developed a set of project-specific LOOs to align efforts with the communitarian outcome that I intended. The Brick Factory District was an agglomeration of about thirty individually owned brick factories near Balad Ruz. These Civic Development LOOs focused on developing the Iraqi *populous*, the masses, into a *civis*—a group of citizens possessing basic rights such as voting, deliberation of public issues, and communal determination of common good.⁸ In this sense, the term “civil” differs primarily from the term “public” because of its connotation of responsibility to society, to institutions, and to other people. The term civil also describes a community of citizens, their government, and their interrelations, that are not military or religious in nature. This idea was especially novel in Iraq, where almost all deliberations were dictated by religious or military power.

Civil can also describe the physical manifestations of civic life, or civil architecture—the form and function of buildings for the purposes of civic life.⁹ The projects I pursued, consisting of public architecture, accessible art, and urban planning, were intended to reinforce these civic ideals. I intended these projects and their civic aspirations to support and promote a larger communitarian ethic. This ethic assumes that communities create and sustain a democratic society’s most fundamental elements and the most vital threads of the democracy’s social support net.

COMMUNITARIAN BASIS FOR CIVIC DEVELOPEMENT

The ethos of Communitarianism, and its implications for civic spaces, most accurately encapsulates the values and priorities that I identified and advanced during the project development process. Democratic thinkers

advanced the Communitarian ethic as a reaction to unfettered individualism that fails to acknowledge the interdependence and obligations required in a functional society. Individualism in Hussein’s Iraq was reactionary, perpetuated by the population’s fear and distrust of the Ba’athist government. The secretive Ba’athist internal security forces treated almost any community-based activity, such as gathering and organizing, as an attempt at subversion. This fear-motivated brand of individualism so permeated Iraqi society that local Iraqis did not conceive and could not consider obligation to or dependence on any secular entity. The local Iraqi population had lived without basic social justice for so long that they generally could not grasp their own entitlement to it.

The Communitarian ethic acknowledges the belief that social justice is the foundation for the community virtues of equality, stewardship, and inclusion. These virtues are demonstrated in communities whose moral and ethical standards reflect the fundamental human needs of all of their respective members. Communitarianism marries the precepts of individual rights and freedoms with collective responsibility and duty, this ethic supposes that the best social structures will foster community and a sense of collective well-being.¹⁰ Simply put, Communitarianism asserts society’s responsibility to address their social problems, establish societal roles based on democratic citizenship, and instruct proper citizenship.¹¹ To the Iraqi people, these ideas and philosophies were as foreign as the American soldiers patrolling their villages. Yet, our long-term success in establishing democracy in the area required their adoption of these principles. It was this Communitarian ethic, seeking to foster public spirit and tame the reactive individualism, that underpinned our civic development LOOs and guided the Balad Ruz and Brick Factory District projects.

CIVIC DEVELOPMENT LINES OF OPERATION

The first civic development LOO I designated was “Creation of Civic and Cultural Spaces to Engender

DEMO-CIVIC

Characteristic of community activities that render the popular will that guides democratic deliberation

Demo-Civic Involvement.” This LOO focused on building the structures to support demo-civil functions of the new Iraqi government and constructing forums for local action. Positive local action requires both input of social capital and creation of trust. This exchange

demonstrates a strong connection between interpersonal relationships and the outcome of participatory democracy.

In addition to local action, focal practices also help perpetuate democratic activity in the community.

LOCAL ACTION

Community-level civic activities to identify and address common needs of the community and its members

Susan Arai, a Communitarian scholar, writes, “Through voluntary associations people are able to participate in focal practices, and move beyond individual benefits and experience, to form collective networks.”¹² Initiation of these voluntary associations, focal practices, and collective networks requires formal and informal spaces that promote regular interactions and gatherings. Except for the city market areas, which were very busy and inhospitable to orderly gathering and deliberation, secular civic gathering spaces did not generally exist in the Balad Ruz area. Alan Brinkley, a prominent thinker

on the role of communities within the larger nation, observed:

Rights cannot be sustained unless there is a civic life healthy enough to create a shared commitment to them. Communities create freedom; freedom does not create itself. But in order to create freedom, communities also create obligations to honor certain common values, to respect certain

*institutions, to accept some common definition of what is good. We cannot hope to be truly free unless we identify with and share in the governance of the political community upon which our freedom depends.*¹³

The primary intent of the projects I administered was to create spaces to support and promote communities that would enable and sustain the freedom that Brinkley describes.

The second facet addressed the need for basic communication of democratic values, which was addressed by the “Democratic Education” LOO. The goal for this LOO was to develop educational resources for instilling and sustaining demo-civil values. The development of educational resources included not only increased access to formal education, but also education by less formal methods, such as public arts and activities. I intended this set of projects to create edifices capable of shaping experiences, as well as representing the power, potential, and legitimacy of community.¹⁴ This idea of educating the population about demo-civil virtues through the course of their daily lives is descendent from the oldest democratic traditions. Pericles, leader of Athens at their zenith of culture, power, and prosperity, identified the need for public education from as many sources as possible. The ancient Athenians realized Pericles’ educational vision by integrating visual instruction into the facades of buildings on the Acropolis and elsewhere.¹⁵ Although C Troop would certainly not construct another Acropolis, CPT Jamison and I did plan to create structures and spaces encapsulating with similar civic and educational utility.

The third LOO, “Development of Health, Welfare, and Recreation Opportunities”, focused on providing spaces and resources to achieve more elemental community functions. The LOO 3 initiatives sought to improve the appearance of the generally distressed and un-

healthy neighborhoods in the Balad Ruz and Brick Factory areas. Also, LOO 3 facets would help provide relatively safe spaces that were specifically designed and designated for youth recreation—a virtually non-existent notion in Iraq. Through these recreational spaces, the children of Balad Ruz could participate in recreation and interaction that, like the adult focal practices, would develop and strengthen the bonds of community and cooperation.

The fourth and final LOO was “Inspiration and Reinforcement of Demo-Civil Values.” The structures and spaces I envisioned, through their location, form, and architectural details were intended to inspire and reinforce the values required for stable democratic communities. It is not surprising to find that many civic institutions in America are predominantly sited and architecturally monumentalized. These structures’ respective architectures do not merely symbolize importance, but also connote legitimate authority and specific civic virtues.¹⁶ This LOO, through the use of art and architectural detail, sought to inspire and perpetuate a conscious choice against repression, dictatorship, and the Iraqi individualism that were endemic in the post-Saddam Iraq.

ETTIHAD COMPLEX



I intended the first project, a community center, school, and clinic complex known as the Ettihad (Unity) Complex, to respond to the abject conditions found while conducting security patrols in the area. The conglomeration known collectively as the Brick Factory District consisted of about 30 individually owned and unassociated brick kilns that shared very little other than their location. The Brick Factory District possessed a remote location two kilometers from the nearest paved road and over ten kilometers from the nearest urban area of Balad Ruz. These brick factories were clustered around a geologic shield of clay-like strata well suited for bricks. The brick-making process spewed thick, noxious exhaust from the crude oil burned during the firing process. In addition to the abhorrent conditions, the Brick Factory's geographic, cultural and economic dislocation made it a place of unparalleled suffering in a generally destitute country.

BRICK FACTORY CONDITIONS

Among the many factors contributing to the Brick Factory District's deplorable situation, the physical isolation was the most obvious. The Brick Factory's geographic distance from urban and economic centers left residents with little access to economic goods or government services. For the brick factory workers, few of whom had automobiles, the three kilometers to the nearest paved road and ten kilometers to the nearest urban area made access to schooling, healthcare, and markets infrequent at best. The large berms of brick-making waste surrounding each brick kiln and living area further removed the Brick Factory residents from access and from view of outsiders. These twenty-foot berms served as instruments of literal and figurative isolation, denying the laborers who toiled and lived in their shadow any outward vantage.

These berms also precluded inward vantage, exposing

nothing but scattered smokestacks to casual observers. Without deliberately venturing into the Brick Factory District, passers-by had little inkling of the poverty and meager existence inside. The absence of a literal and figurative view allowed Saddam's government and the outside world to easily ignore or overlook the Brick Factory workers' plight.

The Brick factory was not only geographically isolated, but was also culturally and economically isolated. The area did not even have a formal name, signifying its near non-existence in the consciousness of local Iraqi leaders. Unlike almost all Iraqi villages, that possess clear religious identification and tribal hierarchies, the Brick Factory did not have designated muktars, the government appointed community leaders, or sheiks that were the senior tribal representatives and decision makers. These people were considered mongrels, not warranting access to the cultural network and hierarchy that supported all of Iraqi society.

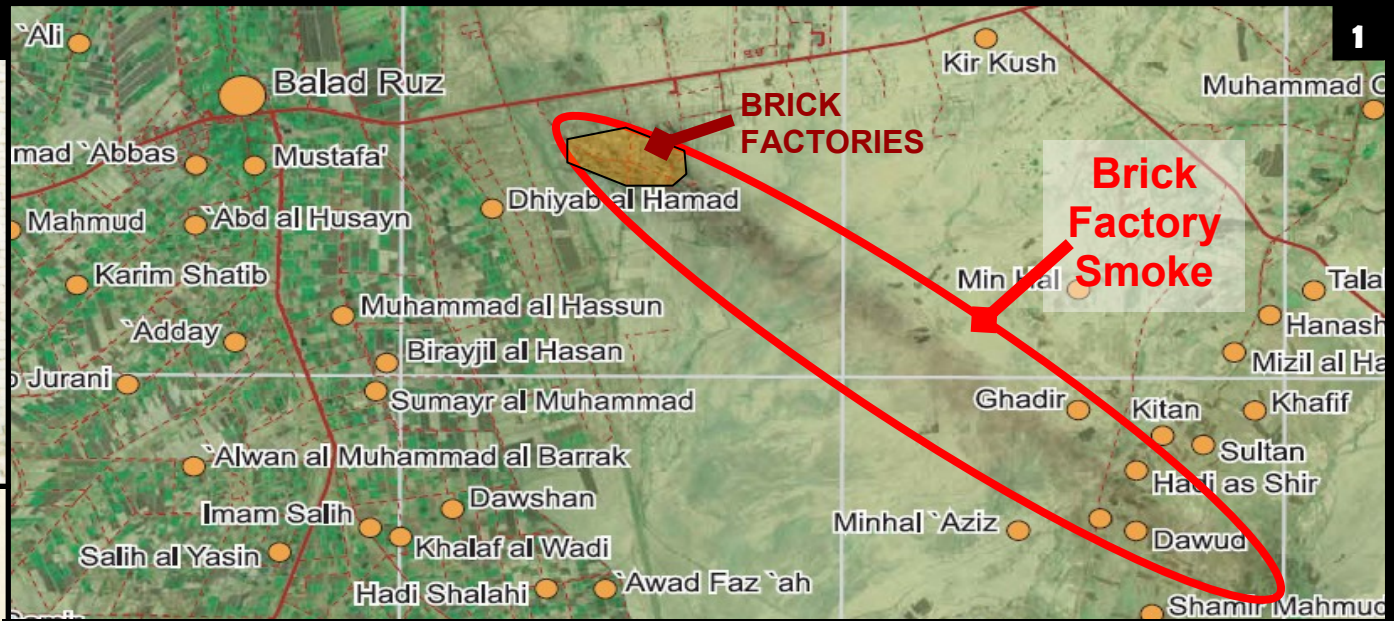
This marginalization also allowed for economic disenfranchisement. The individual brick factory owners, using intimidation and violence, deterred any organization among laborers, which kept wages very low, and perpetuated the workers' economic isolation. According to Communitarian thought, a person's access to social capital is greatly determined by his social position. These opportunities are further constrained by such geographic and social obstacles as lack of financial resources and lack of access to educational institutions such as high schools and universities.¹⁷ All of these conditions existed for the Brick Factory population, leaving them with little social capital to leverage for improvement of their situation. The convergence of the isolating factors and lack of social capital made the Brick Factory population one of the most neglected, but least visible, populations in all of Iraq.

Beyond the isolating factors, the Brick Factory was





4



1

Brick factory air pollution and work conditions created one the foulest locales in all of Iraq:

(1) Satellite imagery showing Brick Factory exhaust stretching over 5 miles downwind (2) Brick Factory smokestacks along horizon (3) Individual brick factories with black smokestacks and the isolating berms of refuse (4) Brick factory workers, ranging from young children to old men, posing in front of a kiln of heat-tempered brick.



2



3

also plagued by living and working conditions that rivaled the worst ghettos in the world. The kilns burned crude oil to produce the heat required to temper and harden the brick. The crude oil often spilled, where it was left to cover and leach into the ground, contaminating soil and groundwater. The burning of this crude also created thick black exhaust that the smokestacks belched into the sky, visible for miles around (see satellite imagery of the downwind smoke trail on page 17). This black exhaust often settled over the Brick Factory District area creating the putrid stench and foul air that the workers were forced to live and labor in.

The Brick Factory workforce included many women and young children as young as seven years old. While men were performed the most laborious tasks, such as moving the bricks, the more sedentary task of forming bricks fell to women. The young children, generally six to twelve years old, would load and lead the donkey-pulled carts that moved the loads of newly-formed brick around the factory area. No consideration was given for increasing opportunities or reducing risks for those brick factory workers. This left all workers, especially children, vulnerable to injury from such hazards as hot oil-burning pipes, large animals and heavy machinery. The leaders in C Troop quickly realized that these conditions, beyond being abhorrent, also made this environment ripe for the fundamentalist and extremist sentiments promoted by insurgents and terrorists. I envisioned the Ettihad Complex as the first step toward remedying this malevolent environment.

We, the C Troop leadership, decided that the project's first priority was addressing these conditions. A person's cultural identity is usually contingent on the sense of belonging to a group or place. The creation of place is a fundamental human activity.¹⁸ The disaffected people of

the Brick Factory District deserved a better place to belong to. I intended for Ettihad to provide the education, medical treatment, and community space, to support the population's identification with a better place. Ettihad would help this place develop into a physical, social, and intellectual locale with a more positive future and increased social capital. Samir Younes, an architectural theorist asserted, "Some kind of reflection (the will to act upon an idea or image) always precedes building (the activity itself), in view of the desired end (shelter)."¹⁹ Younes' reflection encapsulated the sub-human conditions and lack of social capital in the Brick Factory. Ettihad would realize our specific vision for a physical and institutional structure to address the Brick Factory workers' needs. The structure would support the civic virtues and democratic involvement required for a healthier and more united community.

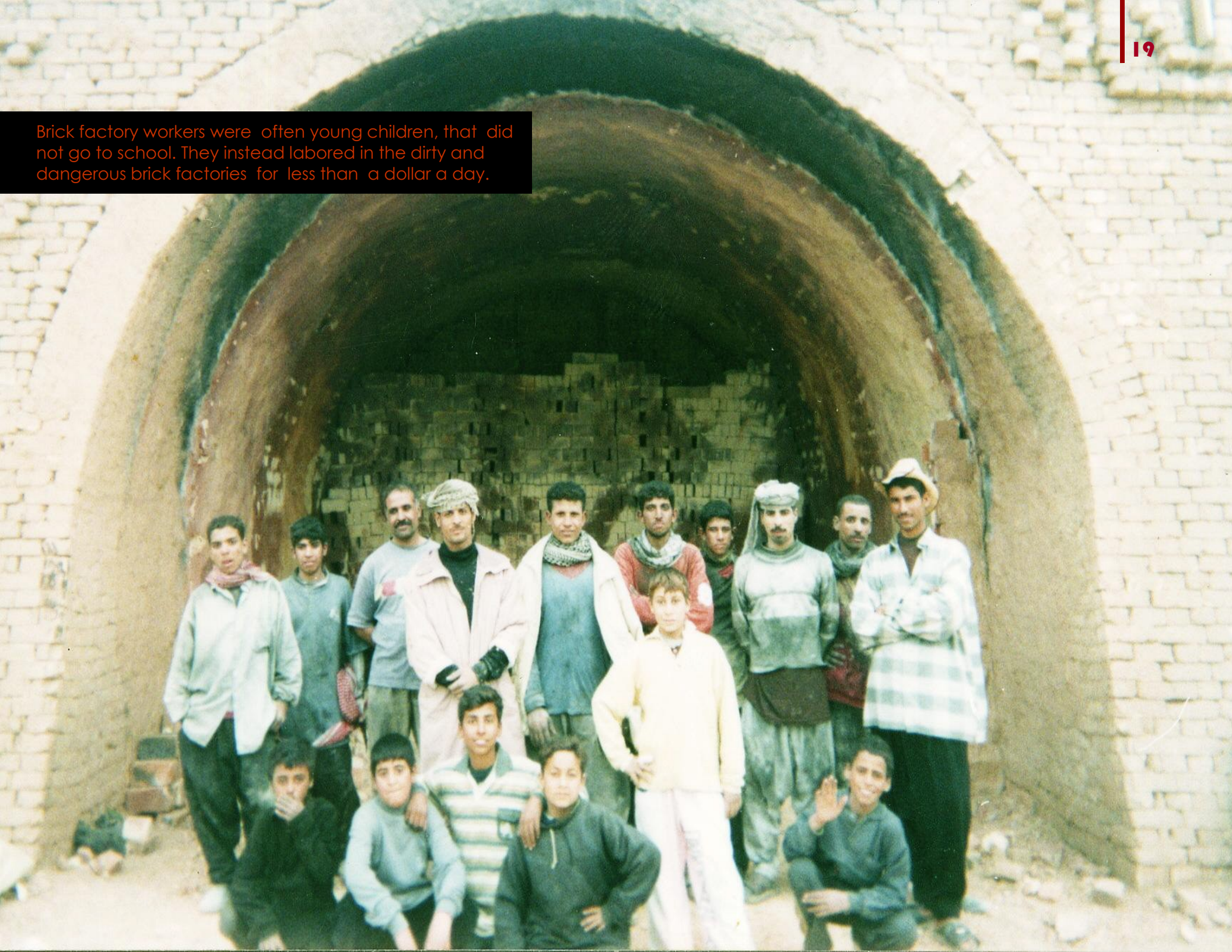
A VISION FOR THE ETTIHAD COMPLEX

Before I could propose a project to help counteract the Brick Factory conditions, I first had to clearly define the project's purpose and intended outcome. To define an appropriate outcome I started with a general vision to guide the project design process. Supreme Court Justice Daniel Webster eloquently described such a communitarian vision, saying:

Justice is the great interest of man on earth... whoever labors on this edifice with usefulness and distinction, whoever clears its foundations, strengthens its pillars, adorns its entablatures or contributes to raise its august dome... connects...with that which is, and must be, as durable as the frame of humanity.²⁰



Brick factory workers were often young children, that did not go to school. They instead labored in the dirty and dangerous brick factories for less than a dollar a day.



I intended for the Ettihad Complex to help provide Webster's justice to the Brick Factory population by establishing both literal and figurative foundations, pillars entablatures and domes for the community. Through application of the four LOOs over the course of this project, I would try to realize the potential of this structure to not simply represent the designers' cultural assumptions, but to communicate to Iraqis within their cultural vernacular.²¹ This project required myself and the contractors, who were local Iraqis presumably sensitive to local culture, to create a building that was greater than a simple reflection of my ideas. While the project depended on the contractors' realizing Ettihad's civic and communitarian underpinnings, the eventual successes and shortcomings of the project, more than any other factor, resulted from my own successes and shortcomings fully understanding the Iraqi cultural context we worked within.

As mentioned earlier, the initial LOO for this project was *Creation of Civic and Cultural Spaces to Engender Demo-Civic Involvement*. Democracy requires spaces where citizens can congregate to deliberate issues and work on solutions.²² However, I envisioned Ettihad Complex as far more than just a meeting place. I envisioned Ettihad as a structure to function, through its many spaces and forms, as a meeting hall, teaching space, medical clinic, recreation space, and museum. All of these uses would intersect to serve a common set of purposes—to attract public gatherings, infuse civic life with energy, and help define the cultural identity of the Brick Factory community.²³ I expected this complex to continue the populist tradition of advocacy architecture while addressing the pressing concerns of Iraq's least affluent.²⁴ Above all, I hoped the Ettihad Complex would promote and support the functions that Communitarianism envisions.

Communitarianism touts the linkage between public interaction and the common good. This ideology

identifies core democratic, civic, and altruistic values that are developed and reinforced through the population's complementary association < marginal note >.²⁵ This type of public interaction depends on civic engagement by individual community members. I intended for Ettihad to support such civic interactions, as well as promote direct involvement by residents through communicative methods. To realize this communitarian ideal we had to create a structure that would expand the possibilities of telling the common civic story as well as allow a new plurality of interpretive messages.²⁶ But, sustaining these civic traditions would also require improved and sustained education for the local population.

Although Ettihad would exemplify demo-civil construction, sustaining the practices initiated there would require further incorporation of democratic values. LOO 2, *Creating Opportunities for Democratic Education*, would compose one facet of this further incorporation. Thomas Jefferson said,

*I look to the diffusion of light and education as the resource most to be relied on for ameliorating the condition, promoting virtue, and advancing happiness of man.*²⁷

As well as improving the conditions for the Brick Factory community, the education provided at Ettihad's primary and secondary schools would help diffuse the democratic light throughout this community. Any government will degenerate if power is vested in the rulers alone, requiring the people to help sustain a safe depository for power.²⁸ For the Brick Factory residents to attain and retain freedom they needed better education. If the people do

COMPLEMENTARY ASSOCIATION

Interaction among different groups that provides benefits to all participants, often through greater familiarity and understanding.

INTERPRETIVE MESSAGE

Implicit ideas that are derived from architecture, arts, and other concrete forms of expression.



not possess at least basic education, they are especially susceptible to disenfranchisement. Instead of the Ettihad Complex inculcating regime dogma, it would serve as a truly public institution to promote and support communal exploration of ideas.²⁹

The third element that the Ettihad Community Complex would build on was LOO 3: *Development of Community Health, Welfare, and Recreation Opportunities*. While the Ettihad Complex would provide some basic recreational resources, the Ettihad amenities would primarily focus on health and welfare. Due to the septic working conditions around the Brick Factory area, these laborers had an exceptionally greater exposure to health hazards and an accordingly high need for medical attention. The Ettihad Complex's included clinic space would provide medical care for the Brick Factory area.

Rural areas, such as the Brick Factory area, generally have higher rates of chronic disease and infant mortality, as well as drastically increased instances of industry-related injury and injury-related mortality.³⁰ The geographic and economic isolation, in addition to the deplorable living and working conditions, further magnified the imperative for accessible health care for the Brick Factory population. The Ettihad clinic would provide the Brick Factory population with regular access to Iraqi health providers to conduct regular prevention, treatment, and referral. In addition to a clinic, the Ettihad site would also include an artesian well to provide fresh, clean water to residents that currently had to truck in water.

We sited the well, like the complex itself, away from the brick factories to avoid many of the harmful contaminants, like the dumped crude oil, that seeped into the ground and infiltrated into groundwater. When selecting the site, we balanced the need to establish Ettihad as a community node with the need for a healthy environ-

ment. To operate as a node, the Ettihad Complex needed to reside in a location central to the community. This would have meant locating the structure in the middle of the brick factories, in a perpetual cloud of factory exhaust and on long-contaminated ground. While the selected location was less central to the Brick Factory District, the imperative for a more healthy environment far exceeded other placement factors. Ettihad's site selection, inclusion of a clinic, and provision of fresh water addressed each of the major health and welfare concerns voiced by the population during our numerous patrols of the Brick Factory area.

The final avenue of advancement for civic development was LOO 4, *Inspiration and Reinforcement of Demo-Civic Community Virtues*. Sustained pursuit of community virtues would require basic education about democratic and communitarian virtues, as well as reinforcement through other less explicit means. LOO 4 focused on identifying and utilizing such less explicit modes, such as community-based art, to promote and reinforce the virtues required for a strong democratic community. We intended for the public spaces to possess a direct, palpable, and present civic orientation that reflected community strengths, values, and aspirations.³¹ Philip Bess, a leading thinker on the importance of strong communities to democracy, further described the virtues imbued by civic arts, saying:

The moral life is understood less in terms of being obedient to rules than in terms of developing various character habits of excellence, or virtues, by means of which one is able to pursue and achieve the goods and ends specific to any particular community. Education and success in virtually every type of human practice require the virtues of courage, justice, and honesty.³²



I intended for the architectural form, details, and art of the Ettihad Complex to help inspire and reinforce such community virtues through the education, congregation, and medical facilities. Myself and the contractors worked to ensure that this civic structure would serve a unifying role in Brick Factory community through the highest aspirations in the engineering, architecture, and art possible in Balad Ruz, Iraq.³³

ARCHITECTURAL TEMPLATES USED TO CREATE THE ETTIHAD COMPLEX

After identifying the virtues we hoped for Ettihad to entail and embrace, myself and the contractors then focused on determining the complex's actual form. The contractors, their local architect and I conducted an iterative process to determine the most fitting and functional structure. First, I communicated the function and meaning I envisioned for the project and then the contractors applied Iraqi engineering constraints and their first-hand knowledge of Iraqi cultural vernacular to refine my design. Using this process, we arrived at a plan that would translate my demo-civil idea into a structure useful and meaningful to the true owners of the complex—the Brick Factory population. To render my vision, I used the limited information available to study existing examples of democratically inspired architecture. Due to an almost complete lack of access to pictures and sketches, I had to use examples from my own memory and personal experience with architecture. My most vivid mental images were of civic-minded structures from my hometown of Asheville, N.C. and elsewhere. I used these buildings as examples to derive a template for Ettihad's civically-oriented physical structure.

I integrated a number of examples from American public architecture to derive the final vision for Ettihad. The civic structures I recalled were buildings that embodied the larger aspirations of their respective communities—sources of civic pride and focal points for civic as-



pirations.³⁴ I looked to realize similar demo-civic outcomes with the Ettihad Complex. I hoped that Ettihad, like great pieces of American public architecture, would become this generation's contribution to an ongoing Iraqi conversation about the significance of its burgeoning democratic institutions.³⁵

The Art Deco style was my primary stylistic inspiration for the Ettihad Complex. My intimate knowledge and memory of prominent Art Deco civic buildings heavily influenced this decision. Art Deco, formally known as Art Decoratifs, is a compromise between vernacular style, which stresses function and the integration of available material, and modernism that employs geometric patterns and the exploitation of industrial materials for ornament.³⁶ These industrial materials include metal, concrete, and terra cotta. Other traditional materials, such as ceramic tile, were also adapted to the angular, mechanized Art Deco aesthetic.³⁷ Ettihad, as I envisioned it, would similarly merge vernacular inclusion of indigenous materials and trades while encapsulating the modernist ethos through its geometry and industrialized elements. Beyond the aesthetic implications, Art Deco's prominent position in American public architecture made the style an appropriate exemplar for the Ettihad endeavor.

The Asheville City Building, completed in 1928, presents a quintessential example, as product of the local inspiration and the civic involvement, of civic Art Deco architecture. I hoped to embody similar inspiration in the Ettihad Complex design. The Art Deco architect Douglas Ellington conceived the Asheville City Building as a break with past formulaic styles. Similarly, I enlisted the Iraqi contractors to help design a building to break with previous Iraqi architectural modes that were limited to either religious or overtly Ba'athist glorification.

ETTIHAD CONTRACT PROPOSAL

After delineating a vision for Ettihad, the contrac-

ASHEVILLE CITY BUILDING

The Asheville City Building served as my primary example for designing the façade and details of the Ettihad Complex. The City Building was designed by architect Douglas Ellington and completed in 1928. As with many public buildings in this era, the City Building was designed in the Art Deco style, focusing on integration of local materials and locally inspired motifs. Through incorporation of regionally specific themes, the City Building, like many public Art Deco structures, communicates the prominence of civic institutions in the community's daily affairs.



tors and I drafted a funding proposal to make this vision a reality. Understanding the Coalition procedure for funding proposals (maximizing the amount of projects and impacts for limited rebuilding funds) we created a proposal to maximize usable area for the unit cost. To make this basic project proposal fulfill our lofty design vision, we had to find ways to free up monies by reducing basic building costs. We would then dedicate the excess money to the accoutrements and details we desired. We planned on reducing basic building costs by integrating another communitarian premise—community involvement. We planned to recruit volunteers from the Brick Factory community to perform support some functions of construction, such as mixing concrete, painting, and landscaping. Also, we planned to ask the brick factories' to donate some of their most obvious asset—bricks. We assumed that the brick factory owners would gladly donate bricks to help build a facility to serve their workforce. To free up money to complete our vision, we would have to integrate volunteers, in-kind donations, and closely manage all aspects of construction. With a game plan to maximize all volunteer, donation, and monetary resources available, we then formalized this outcome in a contract proposal.

In addition to a contract proposal to cover the full

cost of the project, the contractors also drafted an alternate contract that included the outside sources discussed in case a less expensive project pro forma was required. With the proposals in hand, we met with the Coalition contracting officer to review our contract proposal. With access to 4th Infantry Division's extensive unallocated reconstruction funds, the Pay Officer quickly approved the primary proposal (see Iraq contract proposal). I, as the project administrator, was given \$49,505 in American currency to issue to my Iraqi partners as I determined appropriate to ensure the project's satisfactory completion. With only about 40 days to complete the entire project, I issued the first draft of \$10,000 so the contractors initiated work immediately.

ETTIHAD CONSTRUCTION : INTRODUCTION TO THE FOUR FACETS

Once our contract proposal received funding, we turned our full attention to the project itself. We identified, weighed, and integrated many competing considerations throughout the course of the project. As contracted funds became available by reducing costs in one area, we directed unused funds to enhance other design aspects. What follows is an account of the considerations and additions that occurred during the project to realize our initial vision. These adjustments are grouped into four construction facets that represent the physical realizations of the respective four civic development LOOs laid out during project planning and design. These four facets follow a narrowing progression, from the general site location to the most finite architectural aspects of Ettihad's construction.

FACET ONE: SITE SELECTION AND LAYOUT

The first and most important facet of the Ettihad Complex's construction plan was site selection and de-



ETTIHAD MEMO AND CONTRACT

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
C Troop, 1ST SQUADRON, 10TH US CAVALRY REGIMENT
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION (MECHANIZED)
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5200

REPLY TO THE
ATTENTION OF

AFYB-AVC-CDR

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Brick Factory School Project

24 December 2003

- The contractors, Mohamed Hamid Hady, Ibrahim Mohamed Ibrahim, Jomer Abdu Latif Mohamed, are working with Coalition Forces in order to build a school, clinic, and community building vicinity of the brick factory at Balad Ruz. These contractors will be soliciting donations of money, materials, and labor from owners of the brick factories. Since this project is a joint endeavor that depends on maximum cooperation by Coalition Forces and residents of the brick factory, any assistance that can be provided will be of great value to the residents of the brick factories and all Iraqi people.
- Any questions please contact the undersigned at FOB Nott, Balad Ruz, Iraq.

Matthew Boyer
1LT, AR
Platoon Leader

Figure 2. Memorandum stating the mission of the Ettihad project and authorizing the contractors to solicit donations of brick from brick factories

Calculation The Cost of working

	ITEM DESCRIPTION	WT	QTY	Cost \$
1.	workers to plan the project and dig it with dimensions 50x50 cm	num	75	350 \$
2.	workers to mix the conceret and put it in the its places	=	100	333 \$
3.	workers to build the school from the ground to p.D.C with height	=	200	666 \$
4.	Filling the school and Hall with soil Material	=		1000 \$
5.	workers to build over the p.D.C to the end length of doors and Fix the Doors and windows	num	200	666 \$
6.	to put the conceret in lintens places over windows and doors with the Dimensions 25x25 cm	num	42	200 \$
7.	Building over the doors and windows with the length 65 cm to reach 3.1m			500 \$
8.	putting the conceret frame and putting the conceret in this frame			3330 \$
9.	putting plaster on the external and internal Walls with cement and sand Materials	m ²	1500	5000 \$
10.	putting the conceret material for all the Building with area of 672 m ²			666 \$
11.	putting the conceret material to the walls	m ²	55	250 \$
12.	painting the doors and windows	m ²		250 \$
13.	painting the Building from the external and external	m ²		1000 \$

-2-

Figure 3. Page 1 of the Ettihad Complex contract proposal.



(1-3)
Calculation of Building Materials

	ITEM DESCRIPTION	UT	QTY	COST \$
1.	we need IRON about 10 Ton	Ton	10	3330 \$
2.	The building costs us about 120000 Brick to finish it	num	120000	5000 \$
3.	we need Cement material about 75 Ton to complete it.	Ton	75	9000 \$
4.	The building needs about 30 Cars of gravel material.	m ³	370	2000 \$
5.	we need for Building about 40 cars from sand material.	BLU ³	500	2133 \$
6.	The Building consists of eighteen windows from the Iron Material	num	18	1800 \$
7.	Building consists of Iron door about nineteen door	num	19	1266 \$
8.	school has two big wooden doors made from the Iron material	num	2	666 \$
9.	school has two big wooden doors its dimensions 2x2.1m	num	1	500 \$
10.	painting the school and hall from external and external walls	quantity		666 \$
11.	painting doors and windows costs us	/	/	250 \$
12.	School shall provide with two working Fluorescent lights to every class, and hall	Rooms	20	1000 \$
13.	Contractor shall provide fan switches and ceiling fans for each class	num	16	1500 \$
14.	Repair ^{working} all plumbing as needed and by one Tank			1000 \$
15.	Included in contractor's bid is all labor and material to provide an operational plumbing system to main plumbing line and bring 4 toilets and sink	num	4 toilets 3 sinks	1333 \$

-3-

	ITEM DESCRIPTION	UT	QTY	COST \$
14.	place all window glass where needed	m ²		250 \$
15.	putting the pavias of roofs and filling with the soil.			1000 \$
16.	The Footings. 1m high Build with Bricks and covered with Asfelts.			2,000 \$
31444 Cost of materials 18061 Cost of working 47505 \$ the TOTAL Cost of Project 49505				
IBRAHEM . M - Ibrahim		Mohamed - HAMED		Gumar Abid

Figures 4 and 5. Pages 2 and 3 of the Etihad contract proposal with itemized material requirement list, including total cost of the project, \$49,505, and the names of the three Iraqi contractors.



velopment. We selected a location that best served the population in greatest need—the Brick Factory workforce and families. But, we also sought to select a site accessible to surrounding Iraqis that, although not part of the Brick Factory population, had very similar needs. Two main factors dictated the site location: environment and accessibility. Environment an considerations required selecting a site that would minimize the users' exposure to the brick factories' harmful externalities. Since the flat terrain provided little topographic differentiation between possible sites, prevailing wind patterns and groundwater quality were the primary site determinants. Although the wind was not an obvious factor for location, the brick factories' noxious smoke exhaust made the impacts of prevailing wind patterns on the site primary concerns. We therefore decided we needed to locate the Ettihad site generally upwind of the brick factories. The Ettihad site would also include a well, requiring a location far enough from the brick factories to ensure dumped crude oil did not leach into the well water. In an area so plagued by environmental abuse and toxic dumping, mitigation of environmental health threats was fundamental to creating a vibrant and healthy community node.

The second major factor in site selection was accessibility. The site, if properly selected, would allow access by both the Brick Factory population and the families scattered across the adjacent area. Local movement patterns along the major east-west transportation route and an arterial road into the Brick Factory area helped us identify a site that would best serve the Brick Factory residents and surrounding families. We also considered the impact of local culture and Iraq-specific movement patterns. Since many of the families in Iraq could not afford their own automobiles, they had devised an informal system, similar to a jitney system, to allow rural travel. Jitneys are personally negotiated rides that are sometimes free, like hitchhiking, and sometimes for monetary or barter

fare. The major road intersection about three kilometers north of the Brick Factories, where the arterial met the main east-west route, served as a major exchange point for such jitney traffic (see map on page 27). After careful examination of all factors, we selected a site that was upwind of the Brick Factory, removed from well water contaminants, and close enough to transportation routes to take advantage of existing movement patterns.

Once we selected the site, we then considered the site layout. While, many of the site layout requirements were prescribed by the approved contract proposal, we still had to consider the most economical and useful arrangement to accommodate each of the uses—school, clinic, and community meeting hall—included in the plan. The floor plan and arrangement of structural elements would greatly influence the activities and associations of the users. The success of our layout as a public space depended on its ability to promote and support the civic activities and associations we intended. We started with the school, which required six classrooms and administrative offices. We designed a floor plan to maximize the number of adjacent classrooms and thereby minimize the major cost factor in Iraqi construction—the walls. Additionally, the elongated arrangement, with courtyard-facing doors, would help direct the noise and motion associated with school activity into the open courtyard, instead of reverberating in an enclosed building.

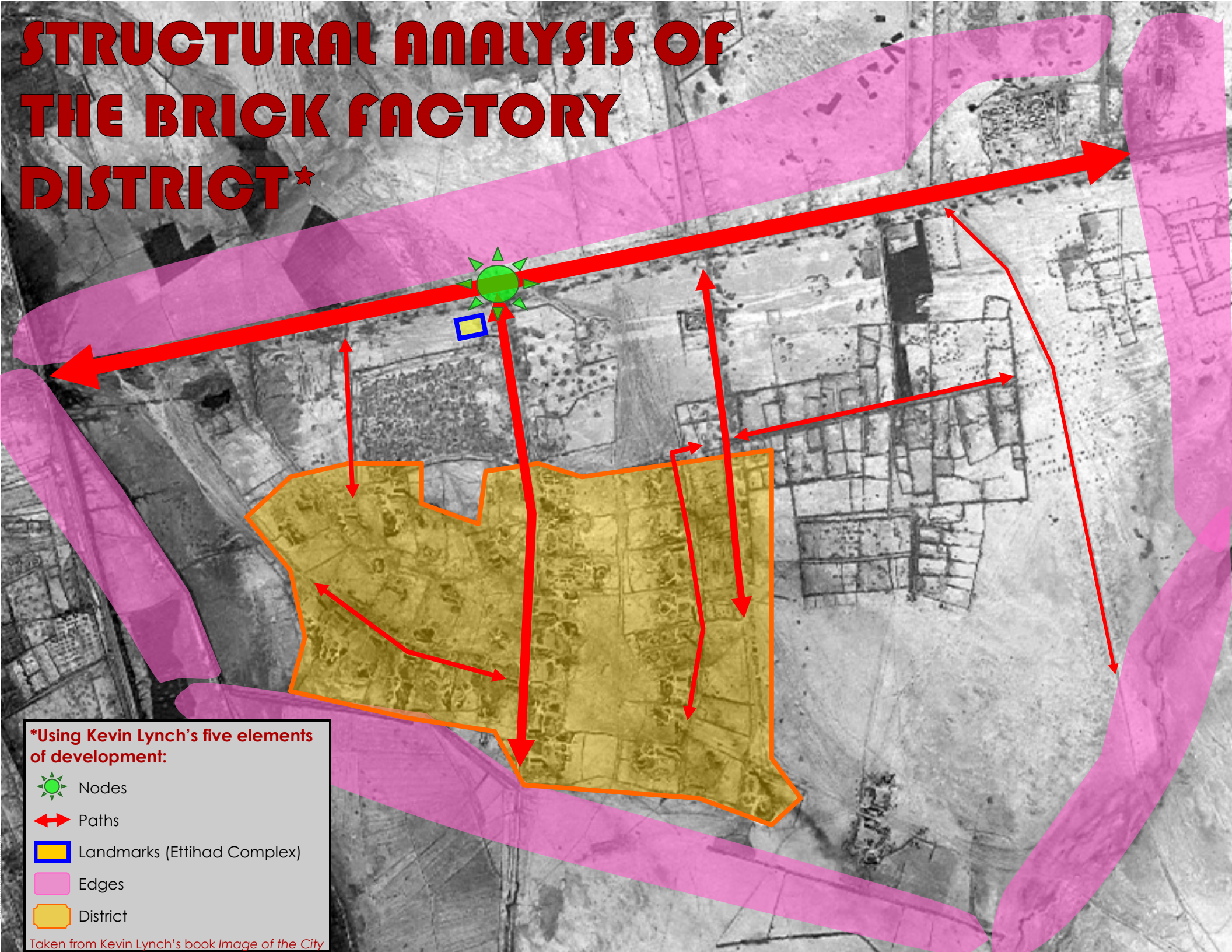
During layout design, we also considered the courtyard's importance for supporting socialization and recreation. The outdoor spaces, such as Ettihad's planned courtyard, are often important in climates and societies like Iraq where outdoor gathering is integral to public life.³⁸ While simply including a courtyard alone would not guarantee public use, the courtyard's position within the site could help promote use and interaction. Throughout our design process we considered the potential of forms



ETTIHAD COMPLEX SITE SELECTION



STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE BRICK FACTORY DISTRICT*



***Using Kevin Lynch's five elements of development:**

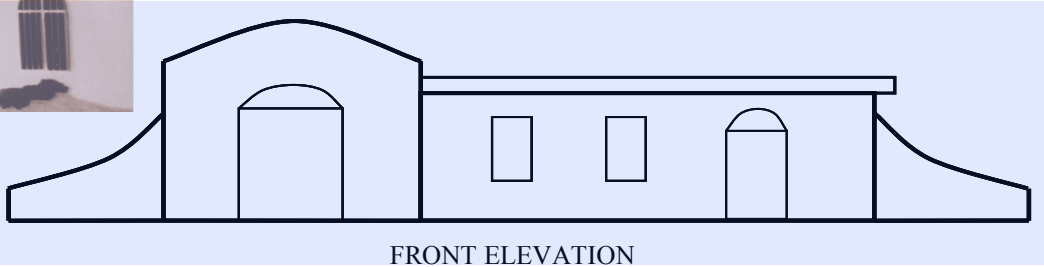
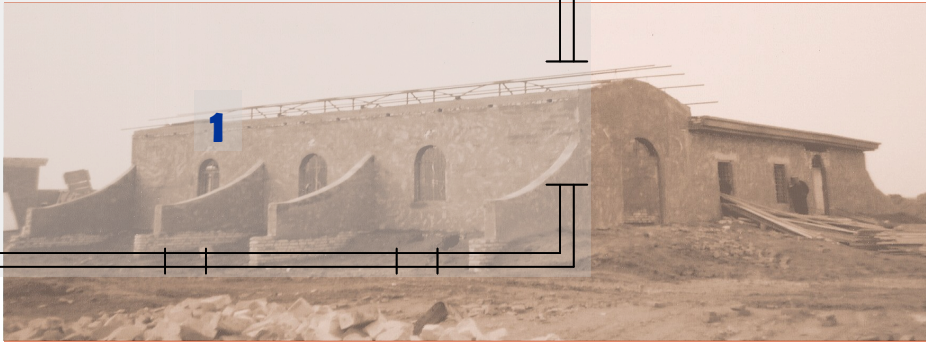
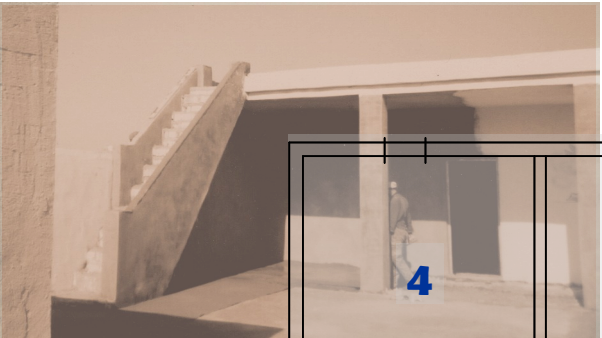
-  Nodes
-  Paths
-  Landmarks (Ettihad Complex)
-  Edges
-  District

Taken from Kevin Lynch's book *Image of the City*



We proposed the Etihad Complex so that the children who labored in the shadows of the brick factories and under the perpetually gray sky would have more and better opportunities. With better education and employment possibilities they would not need the fundamentalism and fanaticism that threatened the new democracy in Iraq.

ETTIHAD FLOORPLAN



- 1** Meeting Hall
- 2** Clinic Areas
- 3** School Administration
- 4** Classrooms
- 5** Covered Patio Area
- 6** Stairs to Roof
- 7** Courtyard
- 8** Men's Restroom
- 9** Women's Restroom

FRONT ELEVATION

The smooth structural lines and geometric forms of the Etihad Complex reflected the project's rational intent, while the vivid colors suggested Etihad as a setting for cultural and artistic expression.



and materials to suggest and support particular uses. We understood the quality of the space's use and interaction depended heavily on how well we arranged and furnished this public space.³⁹ To this end, we laid out the school, clinic, and meeting hall facilities in an L-shape to enable users of both the school and meeting hall to flow into the courtyard space. With the building layout set, we then focused on the engineering required, based on the Iraqi materials and methods available, to render our layout design.

FACET TWO: ENGINEERING

The second construction facet focused on the engineering considerations required to marry our site layout with the project vision. I understood, through my own experiences, how high design could affirm the role of civic buildings. Based on this knowledge, I implored the Iraqi contractors to integrate the engineering required to make our vision a reality. We had to think innovatively to execute the vision and layout design within the limitations of Iraqi materials, methods, and cost constraints. The classrooms, as the most intensively used areas, were our first consideration. The rooms were designed to each be four meters long by five meters wide. These dimensions were determined by a basic Iraqi engineering constraint: the longest supported span for Iraqi reinforced concrete ceiling was five meters. The wing of school rooms were oriented east-west so that the doors and windows would face north and south. This would minimize the amount of

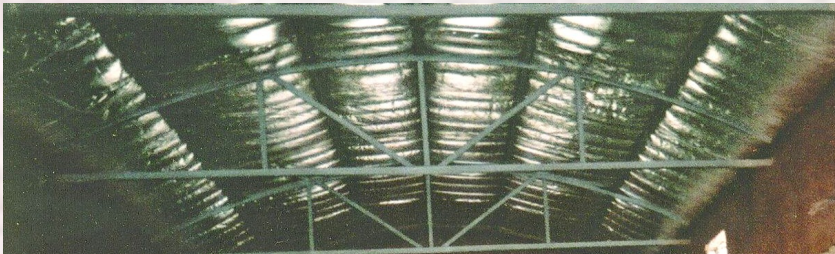


Figure 6. Curved trusses supporting the aluminum and insulation composite roof used to create openness within the community cen-

induction heat from direct sun light shining through the windows. While utility and feasibility dictated the school portion's engineering, our civic vision for the meeting hall required more intricate and sophisticated engineering.

Although Ettihad's school and clinic portions would likely experience the most intense use, we intended the meeting hall would serve as Ettihad's capstone. To create this focal point, the gathering hall would incorporate the most extensive sampling of engi-

neering techniques and aesthetic applications. We first had to consider the meeting hall's dimensions. We recognized that generous and inviting meeting spaces were important for encouraging the intended community gatherings and democratic development. We decided to make the hall as spacious as possible using the existing construction limitations. The hall would be six meters wide, the longest unsupported span that local engineering methods would accommodate. The hall's length would be fifteen meters to help create the extensive meeting space we desired. We designed the wall height of four meters (a full meter higher than an average room) to reflect the uniqueness of this space by promoting spatial openness and perception of possibility. To further accentuate the hall's openness and progressive form, I pushed the contractors to explore the feasibility of incorporating an arched roof. After extensive research and input, we found that only one Iraqi company could fabricate the arched trusses required within our budget constraints. But, these light steel trusses would not support the standard reinforced concrete roof. This required the contractors to instead use an insulated aluminum roof with a much lower distributed load than reinforced concrete.

The final engineering aspect focused on cooling this large space. To support productive gatherings in Iraq's

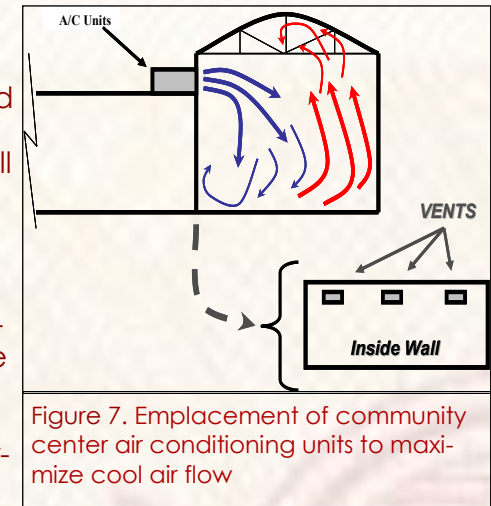
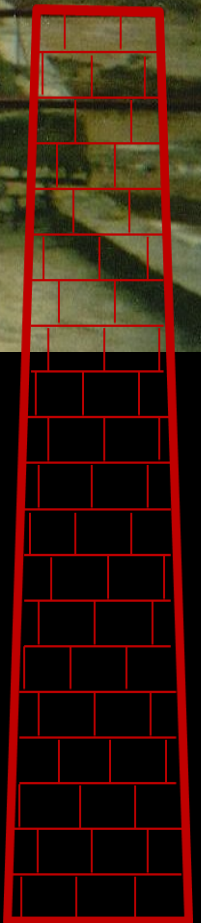
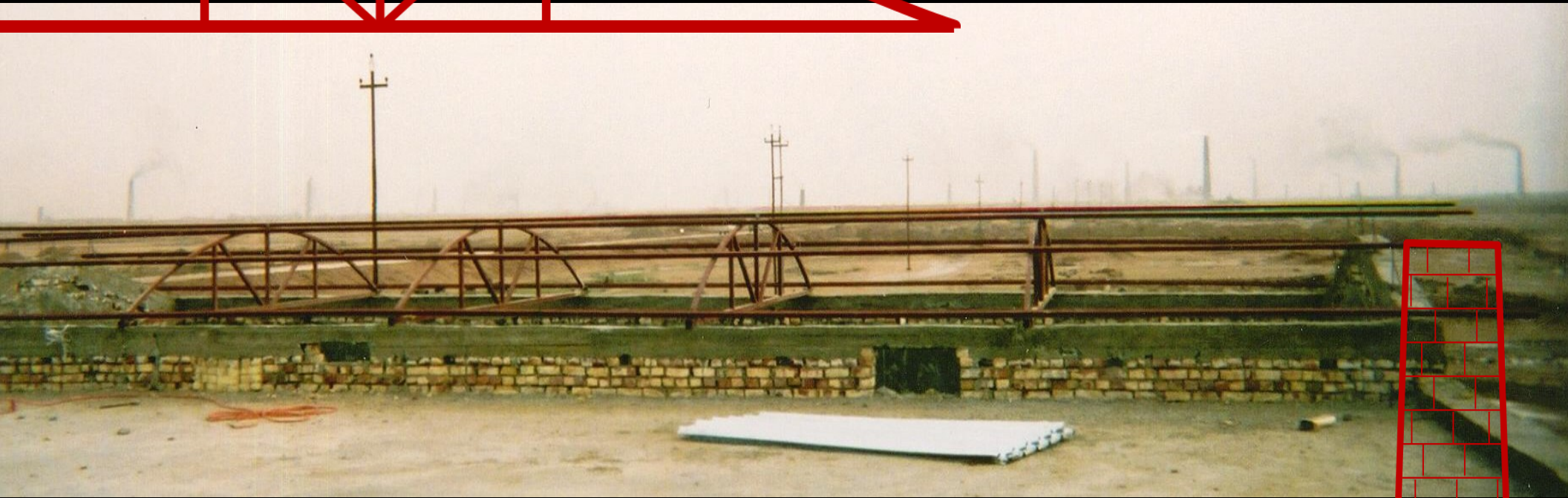
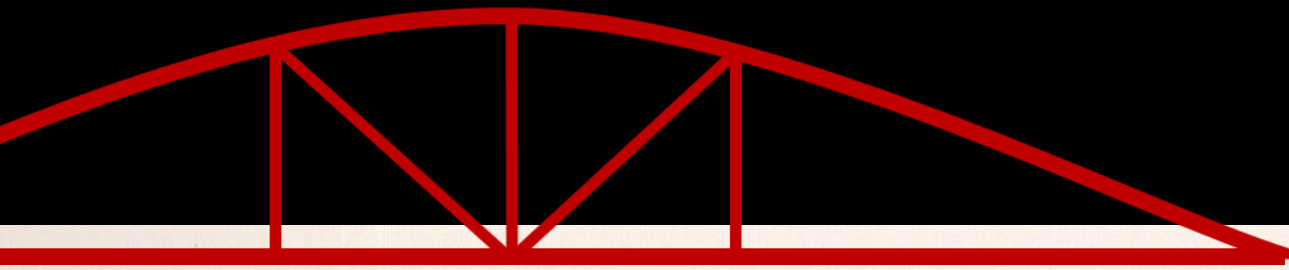


Figure 7. Emplacement of community center air conditioning units to maximize cool air flow





I intended the arched trusses, like the upward-curving buttresses and other geometric forms of the Etihad Complex, to serve as a counterpoint to the septic conditions of the brick factories and their smokestacks that belched poisons and pollutants.



Figure 8. The structure's smooth, geometric lines reinforcing the rational and progressive role of the Ettihad Complex in the community.

hot climate, the meeting space needed to be comfortable. Rather than positioning air conditioner inlets at the standard in-window height, we designed the hall so that we could mount the units on the adjoining ceiling with inlets at the top of the meeting hall space. This air input location would increase the air circula-

tion by allowing the heavier cool air to descend and mix with the warm air (see figure 7). In an Iraqi climate where the average temperature was well over 100 degrees, air conditioning design was not a trivial matter. While this engineering aspect was less visible, it would likely determine the meeting hall's usability more than any other single design or engineering facet.

FACET THREE: ARCHITECTURE

If the site and engineering were Ettihad's skeleton, the architecture and art would be the muscles and features making Ettihad a meaningful embodiment of the communitarian ethos. Appropriate, noble, dignified, and accessible civic architecture has been essential to Americans' democratic well being as citizens and as a society.⁴⁰ Such places of virtue, inspiration, and accessibility would also support Iraq's infant democracy. We intended for Ettihad to serve as such an open, inviting showcase for community speaking, acting, and leading. The complex would, through its layout, architecture, and art, promote pursuit of truth and knowledge, as well as reflect a newly found civic role.⁴¹ To successfully initiate community dia-

logue, Ettihad needed a form both suggesting and reinforcing demo-civil aspirations. To do accomplish this, we conceived and applied bold treatments for Ettihad's spaces, surfaces, and details. Thomas Barrie summarized the importance of these aesthetic aspects for the overall quality of the space, saying:

Architectural form and space is not apprehended by sight only. The feel and texture of materials and surfaces, the sounds of echoes and footsteps, are all part of a complete architectural experience.⁴²

The process to conceive and execute a cohesive architecture for Ettihad started with the biggest compositional blocks and continued to the specific details. We designed the exterior form, proceeded to the interior form, and then finally culminated with the architectural and artistic details. Definition of the exterior started with structural lines to reflect the Ettihad project's modern vision. We integrated curved lines into the exterior silhouette with upward arching lines from the ground, through the buttresses, up to the community center's arched roof. My own knowledge of American architectural examples, such as the Asheville City Building's Art Deco styling, inspired this arched roof line. Douglas Ellington, architect of the Asheville City Building, explained that the building was constructed "with the desire to have a structure emerge from the ground in fortress-like strength and ascend to its full height with a sense of verticality and inevitability."⁴³ Just as American court house builders were often very independent in their incorporation and combination of existing forms, I imagined the Ettihad form as a combination of various stylistic and architectural elements.

The specific architectural elements, as the most intricate units of significance within the architectural product, would provide detail for Ettihad's overall form.⁴⁴ We



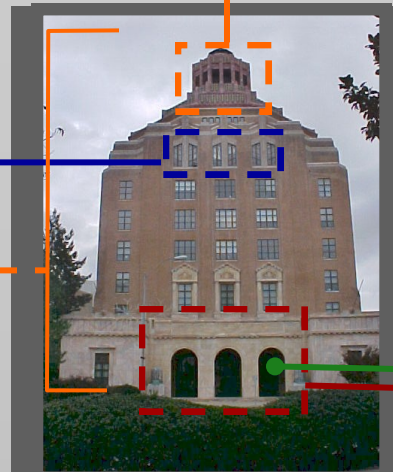
ART DECO INSPIRATION FOR ETTIHAD DETAILS

The Asheville City Hall and J & S Building in Asheville, NC were both designed by architect Douglas Ellington in the late 1920s.

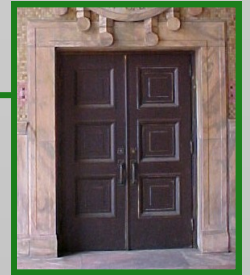


USE OF REGIONALLY INSPIRED COLOR MOTIF

Just as the Asheville City Building incorporated a color progression that mimicked the layers of mountain earth, the Etihad façade incorporated a motif reminiscent of the ground to sky color progression of the Iraqi horizon.



Asheville City Building



HANDCRAFTED ORNATE DOORS

In the Asheville City Building, large hand-made doors were used to create imposing entrances to reflect the grand civic activities within. The Etihad Complex main portals also incorporated ornate doors to signal the grand role of the building.



J & S Building



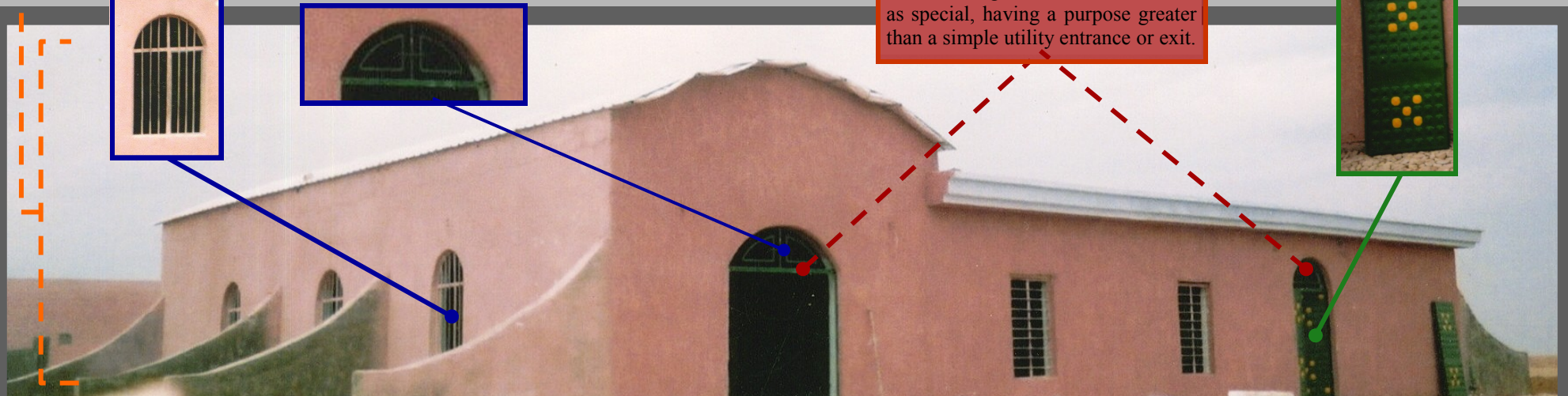
ORNATE TREATMENT OF DOORS AND WINDOWS

The Etihad Community Center design integrated uniquely shaped windows and entryways, containing stained-glass windows and transoms, that borrowed heavily from the ornate treatments of the Art Deco style.



ARCHED FRONT ENTRANCES

The arched front entries of the Etihad Building work to denote them as special, having a purpose greater than a simple utility entrance or exit.



intended to integrate the structural detailing into the complete structure to demonstrate the materials' characteristics and qualities. We hope that our integration of details would articulate our design decisions and delineate a hierarchy between the individual elements and the whole. The success of Ettihad's architecture depended on selection and integration of appropriate details to render a structure with beauty and meaning.⁴⁵ We planned for the details, consisting of objects handcrafted by local artisans from local materials, to reflect the building's local and populist character. Incorporation of locally-inspired motifs also followed patterns in American civil architecture. For the Asheville City Building, the architect integrated the most prevalent element, a general feather motif, to be lightly reminiscent of the Indian epoch that was a major local cultural influence. For American courthouses and city halls, the true clients, beyond the overseeing commissions, were the citizens. The most meaningful public buildings, through details and renderings, reflect the citizens' cultural narratives and values. The Ettihad structure's ability to successfully inspire demo-civil practices depended on our ability to incorporate details meaningful to the Iraqi clients—the Brick Factory population.

As the most prominent exterior details, the buttresses integrated upward curving lines, creating ascension from ground to sky. When I suggested this form, I envisioned that the building's upward rise from the Iraqi earth would symbolize the community and democracy arising from the local population. These buttresses were also integrated to imbue a sense of strength and stability for the structure and the civic spirit Ettihad was intended to encase. The buttresses were the first and most visible elements of a façade that we designed to inspire and sustain community pride and unity.

The doors were the next of the façade's prominent

features—the symbolic portals to the democracy and possibilities within.⁴⁶ The treatment of these openings would provide important cues to the observer about the activities conducted inside. The design for Ettihad's primary entrance, to signify the entrance's importance, was the most detailed. We planned for this entryway to provide a portal that was both taller and wider than the average door. This enhanced size would signify the entry's importance and beckon to people to the prominent space within. This entry would include ornate and handcrafted double doors denoting Ettihad as a unique and central community landmark. To further accentuate the importance of this portal, we incorporated an arced transom filled with stained glass panes. We also designed the additional front entry to provide access to the school. While the alternate entry would be smaller, to indicate its subordinate role, this portal would also contain a special crafted door and stained glass transom. We planned for these doors, with the rest of the front façade, to present a meaningful front and allude to Ettihad's role in the Brick Factory community.

We planned for the windows of the meeting hall to also reinforce the uniqueness of the structure. Rather than employing standard square windows, we commissioned a local craftsman to fabricate uniquely shaped windows. These windows would be filled with stained glass to help create a unique and impressive facade. I encouraged this detailing because the intricate use of stained glass was reminiscent of the mosaic tiling and coloring integral to the Art Deco structures I knew and respected. We intended these windows, like the doors, to serve as integral exterior elements signifying the progressive activities within the meeting hall.

We planned to tie all of the façade elements together by applying a complementary exterior color scheme. Just as Art Deco had redefined the treatment of



architectural facades by employing creative coloring and materials, we intended apply a unique color scheme to the Ettihad Complex's façade. With the exception of religious structures and Saddam's Nationalist bastions, Iraqi buildings generally received only basic treatments. Since only a limited range of colors were available locally, we selected an exterior scheme that made best use of these available colors. Taking inspiration from the rich earth to blue sky progression of Iraqi vistas, we painted the building in a pink hue and colored the roof light blue. This exterior color scheme was inspired by the Asheville City Building's exterior coloring. The architect, Douglas Ellington, had designed the Asheville City Building "with the idea in mind of having the general contours of the building reflect, in so far as it was possible, its general environment, and at the same time approximate in color the local terrain."⁴⁷ Our facade coloring would suggest to the community and all passersby that this structure, with its progressive form, promoted and supported activities essential to promoting community involvement in the new Iraq.



Figure 9. Progressive mural depicting community interaction and engagement in the Ettihad Meeting Hall.



Figure 10. Progressive themed murals in the Ettihad courtyard.

To complement the exterior design, the contractors and I turned our subsequent efforts to creating an equally thoughtful and inspiring interior treatment. We sought to shape interior spaces that would incite regular and widespread community participation.⁴⁸ We engineered and designed the meeting hall's interior space to transmit openness and possibility. To further accentuate the openness of the high, arched ceiling, we adopted a paint scheme to further suggest openness and possibility. Treating the walls with a bottom-to-top, darker-to-lighter color progression help create the desired feeling of openness. The advancing color, appearing closer to the observer, below the more retreating color, appearing farther away, would help create a sense of opening. This interior treatment would help Ettihad fulfill a crucial role of public architecture in a democracy—providing a public space that inviting, encouraging, and supporting civic interaction and discourse.⁴⁹



PHASES OF ETTIHAD CONSTRUCTION



(1) Sorting bricks for foundation (2) Measuring foundation (3) Contractors reading building plans (4) Tractor filling foundation (5) Workers mixing concrete (6) Workers building walls (7) Iraqi construction workers (8) Measuring door openings (9) Unfinished buttresses (10) Delivery of reinforcing bar for roof (11) Framing window openings (12) Unfinished meeting hall exterior (13) Forms for concrete roof (Laying reinforcing bar for concrete roof) (14) Building materials (15) Building materials (16) Unfinished courtyard with workers (17) Meeting hall with unfinished roof structure (18) Ettihad front during painting

The painted Ettihad Building prior to completion on February 1st, 2004.



BALAD RUZ CHILDREN'S PARK



Local children playing at the completed Balad Ruz Children's Park

We envisioned the second portion of C Troop's civic development efforts as a response to the glaring lack of safe locations for the children of Balad Ruz. A large swing sat idle in the muddy and refuse-covered central open area in Balad Ruz. With the bolts removed, the swing was of no benefit to the children. Instead, the children swung on loose restricting cables hanging from the nearby water tower .

Through discussions with local residents, we learned why the limited recreation equipment set unused. A local businessman owned the swing and would reconnect the swing set for a few days each month and charge the local kids to use it. This example highlighted the Balad Ruz children's need for a safe recreational area accessible to all. With the input of local leaders, we started considering ways to create a public recreation space where the Balad Ruz Children could safely congregate and play.

BALAD RUZ CONDITIONS

Numerous factors led to the town's glaring lack of safe and healthy recreation areas. The first factor was Saddam Hussein's lack of funding for basic development in Balad Ruz, a town that consisted of large Shia'a, Kurdish, and Turkomen contingents. This area, unlike the predominately Sunni areas of Western Iraq, did not appeal to Saddam's Sunni ethnic preference. As a result, the town rarely received the funding or development projects that equivalent Sunni cities garnered. This lack of funding was especially evidenced by the lack of community amenities such as soccer fields or inviting public spaces. Balad Ruz, a very dense city, was bracketed to the north and south by large canals that restricted pedestrian movement into more rural areas in pursuit of safe recreation. The canals'

constricting effect meant left the town's children to seek recreation in vacant, garbage strewn lots. Based on feedback from the local population, I recognized the need to address these planning issues as part of C Troop's civic development campaign.

VISION FOR THE CHILDREN'S PARK

The impetus for this project, like the Ettihad Complex, emanated from my personal experience and familiarity with urban planning. Growing up in Asheville, North Carolina, a town that made extensive use of Carter Administration funding and incentives for development of recreation spaces, I experienced the benefits of developing unbuildable areas, such as floodplains, as playgrounds and recreational spaces.

Development of urban parks and shared spaces in Balad Ruz could help foster four societal virtues. The first two virtues are related to well-being—public health and prosperity. The second two compose the normative virtues of social coherence and democratic equality. Through the development of recreational areas in Balad Ruz we could help make the town's population healthier, wealthier, more-crime free, and more democratic.⁵¹ The park would promote public health by softening the rough edges of the city, providing a safe and clean area dedicated to child congregation and recreation. Such civic development would also support local economic development by utilizing locally purchased materials and employing local laborers.

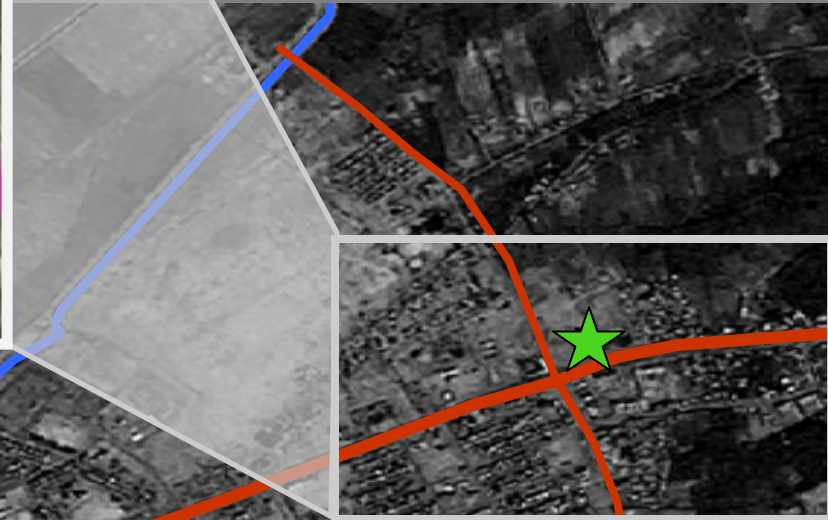
Playgrounds, especially those used by urban poor and ethnic populations, often foster social coherence and help deter crime through youth training.⁵² Formal recreation areas would have a fundamental role in forming








BALAD RUZ URBAN GEOGRAPHY



I selected the site for the Balad Ruz Children's Park based on its central location in town, I intended for the park to become a neighborhood node at the intersection of the four major routes into town and proximate to three schools that educated all the kids of Balad Ruz. The park provided a safe, clean open space for children restricted from the surrounding countryside by the large canals.



LEGEND

-  Balad Ruz Children's Park
-  Balad Ruz Schools
-  Major Canals
(at least 20' wide)
-  Primary Vehicular Routes
-  Main Traffic Circle

and promoting Iraq's new pluralism and democracy. Children could both learn and demonstrate pluralism and social coherence through their naturally-occurring play activities. The Balad Ruz Children's Park would provide a dedicated and safe setting for these activities. Beyond the obvious benefits of providing a place for Iraqi children to play, we intended this park to also serve as a cradle for democratic virtues.

LOCATION SELECTION

The first step in the "Park Project" development process was selecting a suitable location. For the park to be successful, it had to be, like any successful public space, readily accessible and integrated into the existing use and movement patterns. The best candidate was the low, muddy area near the center of town where children already congregated and played.

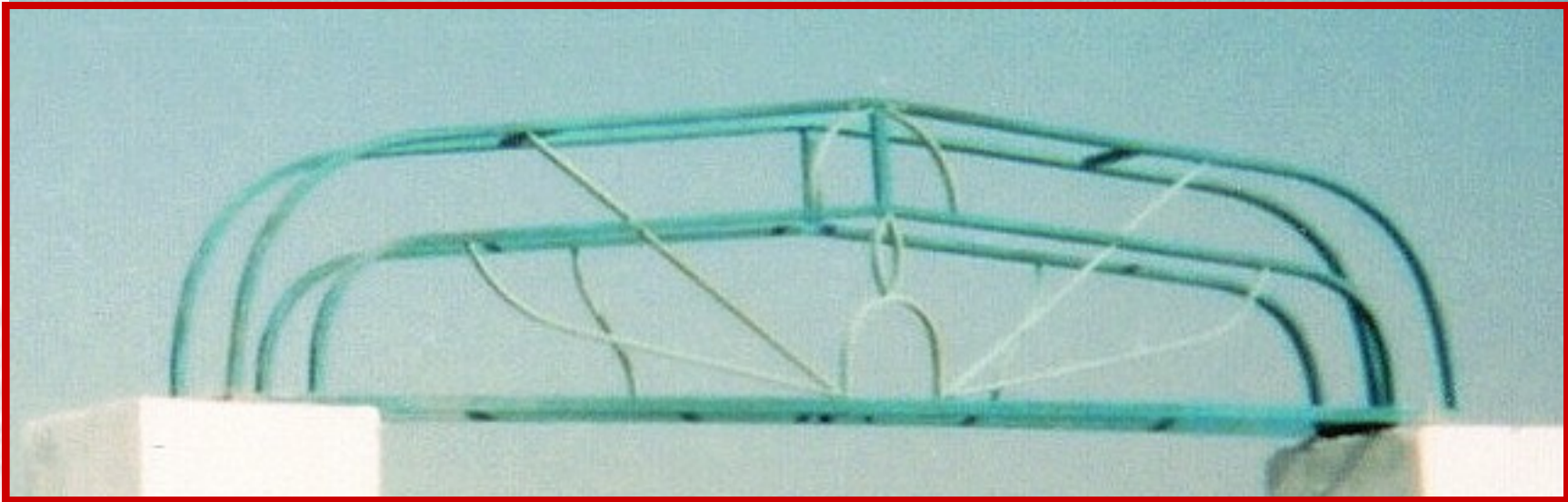
The park site, once improved, would enable several positive impacts. The first, in keeping with LOO 3 (development of community health, welfare, and recreation), was to provide a safe, sanitary locale for kids to congregate and play. Although the site would require work to raise and solidify a solid play surface, it was adjacent to the largest traffic circle in town, providing maximum accessibility. The site also sat in close proximity to the two major schools, which supported the park's integration into the children's existing movement and use patterns. The park's central location would also allow passersby to observe public interaction and pluralism in progress. The children, by naturally associating and interacting, would provide a visual reminder to reinforce the positive changes brought by pluralism and democracy.

CONSTRUCTING THE CHILDREN'S PARK

With the best site identified, we then considered how to create a meaningful demo-civic space with the resources available. Due to limited funds, our initial concept included only a crushed-brick surface and the existing swing set. Upon further investigation, I found that a nearby Coalition base had unused stores of lumber originally intended for constructing additional bunkers. After consolidating this new lumber and recycled lumber from other sources at our forward operating base (FOB), I worked with our partner Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) soldiers to construct playground equipment from the materials (see page 45 for an overview of the park construction process). Mimicking standard American playground structures, we created a design that utilized the lumber to build a slide, a bridge, and balance beam. The soldiers of C Troop then contributed money to purchase the screws, sheet metal, poles, and chain link fencing required to complete the design.

During the construction process, I requested and was granted \$2500 in Coalition money to fund additional park development and increase the space's potential for positive impact. To clearly delineate the park as a unique space with a specific purpose, we set aside a portion of the funds to build an ornamental gate for the park. The fence, consisting of brick pillars with rails between, was not intended to deny access, but rather to clearly mark the park as a special piece of Balad Ruz's urban fabric. We incorporated a gateway into the park to further designate the Children's' Park. This passageway, with two tall pillars supporting an ornate metal archway, would clearly signify the entrance to this unique civic space (see Figures 11 and 12). Once the playground components were erected on the site, the perimeter fencing and gate were erected.



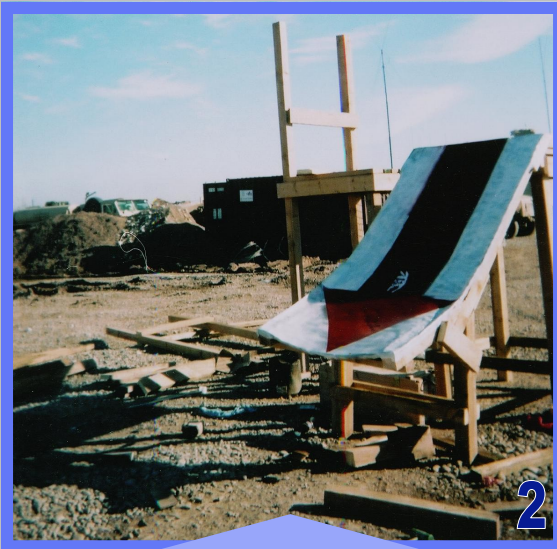


Figures 11 (above) and 12 (left). Ornate ironwork from a local artisan crowned the entry to the Balad Ruz Children's Park.

Only a few days before C Troop's planned departure from the Balad Ruz area, this unique project was completed. C Troop, local ICDC, and local leaders had marshaled limited resources to complete a community development project specifically designed to serve the least empowered of the population—the children.



PARK CONSTRUCTION PROCESS

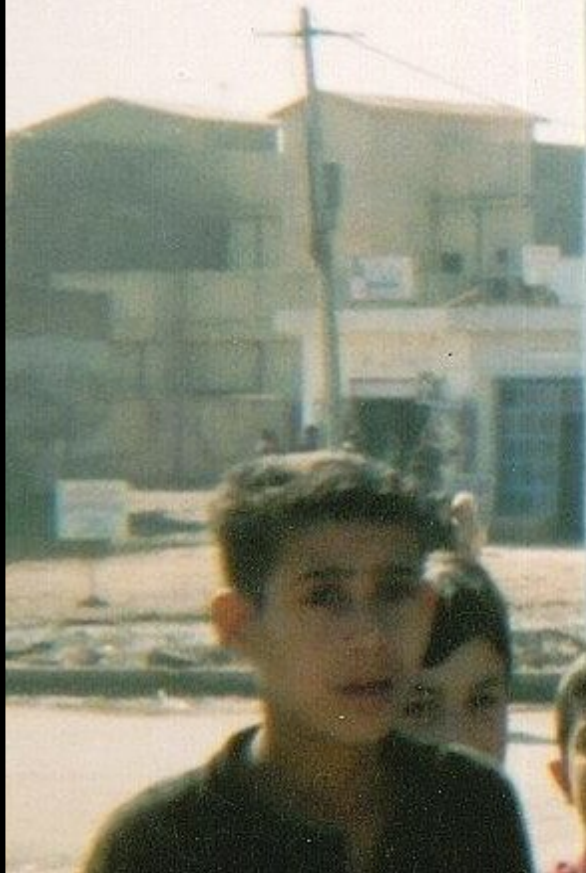


- (1) ICDC soldier helping fabricate playground equipment at C Troop's Forward Operating Base.
- (2) Playground equipment being fabricated prior to erection at the downtown site for the park.
- (3) Playground equipment during installation
- (4) Completed playground with the brick surfacing and ornate fence

The Balad Ruz Children's Park successfully turned previously unusable land into the first recreation area for city's many children.



BALAD RUZ MURAL PROJECT



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
لِلَّهِ عَمِيْعًا وَلَا تَفْرُقُوا
مَدَنِيَّةَ الْعَظِيمِ



Balad Ruz children standing in front of the Unity mural depicting an Arab, Kurd, and Turkomen joining together to build a new community. Other murals commission as part of the Balad Ruz Mural Project (right).

The third and final project, although funded as components of the Ettihad and Balad Ruz Children's' Park contracts, employed more artistic mediums than Ettihad or the Park Project. The "Murals Project" sought to reinforce democratic and pluralist themes through art. This program would consist of a series of murals at the Ettihad Complex and in Balad Ruz depicting communitarian, pluralist, and democratic themes. Under this project's aegis we commissioned a local artist to paint artistic representations of socially conscious themes that would support accomplishment of LOO 4 by suggest and reinforce democratic values through public art. This application of art to communicate and reinforce positive themes was not a completely new idea. The Mexican muralists and the New Deal art projects had both employed arts to depict populist themes. These murals had originated during periods of societal challenges and social reorganization comparable to the reform that was then occurring across Iraq. Like previous populist art, members of this population could create meaningful art to convey socially meaningful themes to communities that now considered the prospect of pluralism and democracy.

HISTORICAL TEMPLATE FOR IRAQI MURALS

Following the fall of Saddam's Ba'athist regime, the conditions in the Balad Ruz and Brick Factory areas resembled many of the conditions that had accompanied the periods of great populist art in Mexico and New Deal America. In Mexico, the people had been restive under a system of favoritism, dispossession, and ruthless political control. These conditions heartened the artists that depicted and participated in the national, political, racial, agrarian, social, cultural, and educational revolution that followed.⁵³ This encompassing revolution (or at least "restoration" to a previously viable state) was the change that Coalition envisioned for the new Iraq. The far-reaching Mexican reforms had not simply been motivated by a few artists, but rather were encouraged by

some radical government officials. These progressive bureaucrats had questioned how a revolution without an explicitly defined ideology could rise from the years of violent chaos to create a new consolidated government. They started defining this ascending ideology by initiating a massive public relations campaign. The new Mexican president's cabinet members, especially the Secretary of Public Education, had promoted a vision of a government that would take care of its citizens, educate them, and raise their standard of living.⁵⁴

We sought to promote and support this same type of benevolent administration until the new Iraqi government could sustain their democratic political and civil systems unaided. Development of a newly democratic and pluralist Iraq required the presentation and acceptance of socially coherent images of a united Iraq. I intended this set of commissioned murals to function as part of a wider communications strategy to present and promote such coherent messages of unity, pluralism, and democracy.

In Depression-era America, President Roosevelt's New Deal programs had created initiatives to employ artists and create art embodying national ideals.⁵⁵ The largest program, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) pursued these aims by commissioning artist to paint everything from post offices to city walls. I envisioned the Iraqi murals as creating art that, like the New Deal art in America, embodied the spirit of portraying virtues through accessible, populist artworks. Our method for creating these murals was more akin to another New Deal art program, the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts. This commission was assigned to procure and commission artwork to adorn schools, hospitals, public libraries, museums, and other tax-supported projects. The Section of Federal Arts artists used their program to elevate American art to a higher level of social consciousness. The Section administrators believed in the importance of populist art and the essential social fairness of opening its benefits to as many communities as possible through as many artists as possi-





Figure 13. William Gropper's "Construction of a Dam," 1938. A Works Progress Administration (WPA) mural for the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., showing the monumental product of labor and inge-

ble.⁵⁶ The Treasury Secretary funded this diffusion of government-funded art, issuing an administrative order that allocated one percent of the total cost of each government building for artistic embellishment the structures.⁵⁷ For the contracts I proposed and supervised, I adopted the Treasury Secretary's method, dedicating a certain portion of project funds to civic artwork and populist adornment of the public structures and spaces.

VISION FOR MURALS

Before commissioning these murals, we had to develop an overarching vision for the artist to interpret and create within. To guide our visioning of these murals, I looked to other entities that had successfully fostered civic art programs. Throughout history, many countries had utilized art as an integral instrument to rebuild their respective societies, mobilize their citizens to support of ambitious national goals, and to undercut the lure of non-constructive movements.⁵⁸ I envisioned these murals as a similar type of mobilization tool for democratic growth in Iraq and as a way to undercut the non-compliant, insurgent movement in Iraq. Through the visioning process, I attempted to combine the socially conscious spirit of the Mexican mural movement and the populist methods of the WPA and Treasury Department art initiatives to create a socially significant concept for these murals.

Since I was using an explicitly effects-based approach, my vision needed to assess the artworks' likely impact the population. I needed to clearly understand how the population would determine the artworks' significance so I could effectively guide the placement and content of these murals (see page 54 for discussion of the flaws inherent in this approach and the according lessons learned). Carol Aronovici, an expert on community building, commented

EFFECTS-BASED APPROACH

Activities that attempt to predict and assess what actions will produce the desired behavioral effects over some period of time.



Figure 14. Diego Rivera's Detroit Hall of Industry north mural depicting progress at the confluence of labor, innovation, and modern machinery.⁷⁰



on significant art within the community, saying, *The moral and spiritual value of the arts assumes its greatest significance when it is woven into the daily life of the people. It is a moral force which enhances the intimate relations between man and his neighbor, between man and his civic sense of participation, achievement, and joy.*⁵⁹

For the murals to act as the positive force I envisioned, they needed to communicate a socially significant imperative. These murals' purpose was to inspire the Iraqi population to more inclusive and constructive action by depicting how cooperation and hard work would build a stronger and more stable Iraq. The murals of Mexican revolutionary Diego Rivera, as well as American New Deal art, portrayed industrial workers exhibiting the same concentration, skill, and dedication Iraqi reconstruction would require. The industries represented in traditional murals, similar to the industries requiring reconstruction in Iraq, were usually heavy ones—steel, mining, lumber, and production.⁶⁰ The Mexican and New Deal mural scenes usually portrayed men working together rhythmically and intensely. Even the average worker exuded heroic qualities beyond strength and prowess.⁶¹ Many of the New Deal murals encapsulated, in response to the disenfranchisement of the Depression, the New Deal theme “Work Makes America.” It was this heroic view of workers building a new democracy and a brighter future through teamwork that I wanted to encapsulate and promote with the Iraqi Mural Project.

COMMISSIONING OF MURALS

Once I identified the method, the vision, and the outcome for this project, myself and my Iraqi counter-

parts could begin the process of commissioning these murals. Due to the compressed timeline to complete these murals, I was not able to review sketches and submissions from an array of artists. I commissioned an artist that I had initially employed to paint a children's' scene at the Balad Ruz Park to paint these murals. While I hoped the murals would embody a similar ethos to the Mexican and New Deal artworks, I did not want these murals to simply recreate Western murals and lack intrinsic meaning for the local population. To facilitate this local interpretation, I re-



Figures 15 (above) and 16 (below). Ettihad courtyard murals representing children playing happily together—static models for the real children who would often play in this space (top and bottom).



layed basic ideas to the artist that translated demo-civil values into Iraqi terms. I then encouraged him use his own cultural understanding and artistic sensibilities create appropriately meaningful murals. I wanted these murals to be artistic renderings that would demonstrate that by individual work, communal work, education and technology the new Iraqi democracy, starting at the local level, could preserve the best of the past and attain a more abundant future.

PRODUCTION OF THE MURALS

The first of these murals were to be placed in the most visible locale in Balad Ruz (see *Balad Ruz Urban Geography*, page 42). The first two murals decorated either side of a wall in the middle of the largest traffic circle that had once held glorifying vestiges of Saddam Hussein. For one side, the artist and I discussed the theme of building a new Iraq through cooperation. The other side would present a mural portraying pluralist harmony among the numerous divisions of the Balad Ruz population. I intended for these two murals to reflect the two most vital aspects of successful democracy, inclusion and cooperation, which were embodied in the populist ethos of Mexican and New Deal muralists.

I commissioned second set of murals to decorate the courtyard of Ettihad Complex. In the courtyard we commissioned a series of murals that would support perception a truly communal space. We intended for these murals to depict children participating in focal practices, such as interaction and inclusion, which are integral to community unity and strength. Cicero, a great Roman orator, explained that “art is the food of youth, the charm of age, an ornament of prosperity, a refuge and solace of adversity.”⁶² These murals would adorn the courtyard and promote the experience of Cicero’s artistic values for all the community members and school children who used it.



Figure 17. Ettihad Community Center mural depicting a more prosperous future through education, hard work, and cooperation.



Figure 18. Murals painted in Balad Ruz's central traffic circle depicting on one side (top) the construction of a new Iraq through hard work and ingenuity.

In an area wrought with suffering and disenfranchisement, I wanted murals that portrayed these children as the hope for a more healthy and verdant community.

The third segment of the Iraqi Mural Project was to be the most ambitious of all of the murals. We planned this mural for the meeting hall to serve as a space engineered and designed to be a kind of social blast furnace for forging community and democracy. This mural, stretching the length of the hall, would provide a life-sized depiction of the transition from instability to prosperity through communal work and a strong community. I sought for this mural sought, through the painter’s interpretation, to create a communitarian interpretation of place and the demo-civil virtues required for rejuvenation of the Brick

The set of murals aimed to perform something a structure alone could not—to communicate an immediately resonant vision of democracy’s therapeutic potential for the Brick Factory and Balad Ruz populations.



OUTCOME EVALUATED:
CHALLENGES FACED
LESSONS LEARNED
RECCOMENDATIONS



MAJOR CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

While this project describes many physical outcomes of our reconstruction efforts, these efforts also faced internal and external challenges. While understanding the specific design and construction processes is of some interest, this project's greatest value is the lessons learned from these processes. Understanding the challenges and the lessons they impart can help ongoing and future reconstruction efforts avoid similar pitfalls and achieve even greater positive impacts.

Iraqis lacked a well-established tradition of democratic ideals or activities to immediately support communitarian political and social functions

I intended for the Ettihad facilities and spaces to support and promote democratic community activities such as public meetings, pluralist gatherings, and deliberation of pertinent issues by the local population. But, the Iraqi population I worked for generally lacked the rich and established context to understand and value the democratic concepts, representations, and functions that are familiar to most Americans. Although Iraqis have exhibited some democratic attitudes and practices in their modern history (since gaining independence in 1921), these instances were localized, limited, and generally short-lived. Based on Iraq's autocratic history, most scholars have concluded that, in addition to lacking a significant democratic tradition, Iraq also lacks many of the success factors required for democracy now.⁷¹ Based on these deficiencies, many observers, such as the Government Accounting Office (GAO), have predicted that an autocratic regime might be the country's most likely long-term outcome.^{72, 73}

For most Americans, our views on social justice,

community, and equality are tightly fused with our republic's democratic and pluralist traditions. For Americans the idea of a national community, with common rights, traditions, and responsibilities, is among the oldest and most powerful notions in our collective history—an ethos woven into our Constitution.⁷⁴ I sought to capture this ethos in a set of construction projects that, through their processes and outcomes, would promote a new, more pluralistic Iraqi national identity. By the time of the Great Depression, America's most intense period of democratically-inspired architecture, art, and planning, the United States had an almost 150-year-old tradition of democratic ideas and activities. The Iraqi population I sought to serve had no such tradition or construct through which to interpret the art, architecture, and planning these projects would produce.

The concept of a secular and pluralist national identity based on democratic ideals did not exist for these Iraqis in the concrete form understood by Americans. Iraqis were much more likely to identify themselves by religious grouping (Sunni, Shia'a, etc.), ethnic delineation (Arab, Kurd, or Turkomen), or tribal association (al-Bu Nasir tribe, Beijat clan, Majid family, etc.).⁷⁵ As an American, I applied assumptions during the projects' conception and design that presupposed the appropriateness of American democratic functions, trappings, and meanings for this population. The decisions I made during the execution of these projects, although advised by Iraqi input, did not fully recognize the impact of Iraqi religious and ethnic sensibilities on how the population would view and experience the planning, architecture, and art projects I proposed.

During these projects I encountered the hazards that "liberators" commonly face when assuming a population is both immediately willing and "fully capable of moving toward democracy and living in freedom."⁷⁶ I superimposed a set of long-standing Western democratic

sensibilities and assumptions on a population with few positive examples of community interaction, much less any established democratic tradition. While this population definitely desired a brand of individual freedom and collective community, we could not correctly presume that they associated these desires exclusively with Western democratic modes and representations.

Due to my limited exposure to regionally and culturally significant modes of art, architecture and planning, I integrated western forms and modes that had limited or conflicted meaning for Iraqis

With very limited access to guiding information on Arabic aesthetic methods and themes, I based many of the projects' art, architecture, and design determinations on my own knowledge and sensibilities. This knowledge originated from my own exposure to civic architecture, art, and planning. While these design and planning considerations might have transmitted their intended meaning in a Western context, the forms, images, and symbols likely did not carry corresponding significance within the local culture. These projects' vernacular and symbolism, by primarily channeling Western influences, probably carried differing and possibly contrary meanings for the Iraqi population. In this case, my western sensibilities proved of limited value and resonance when attempting to create spaces and structures to promote and support community functions in Iraq.

During the formative stages of the civic development projects, especially Ettihad, I worked closely with contractors to conceive pieces of civic art, architecture, and planning that would resonate with the local population. During these deliberations and revisions, we discussed a vision for Ettihad's form and facets. While I tried to draw on the contractors' culturally-specific knowledge of civic architecture, they possessed limited knowledge of

modes and forms beyond modest local examples. In a country that had previously limited grand architecture and design to religious sites or structures glorifying Saddam, no tradition of quality civic spaces existed in peripheral areas such as Balad Ruz. I therefore inserted my personal knowledge of Western architecture and democratic spaces to inspire and direct the projects' design. The outcome resulted in a collection of architectural and artistic projects that conveyed themes likely more meaningful to Americans than to an Iraqi population unfamiliar with the structures and symbols of democratically inspired architecture.

Carol Aronovinci, a prominent researcher on the importance of cultural meaning in design, spoke to the need for designs rooted in local vernacular, stating:

All design, whether it be applied to a building or a city, is a human document which interprets, or should interpret, the temper of the people, their traditions, their background, their sense of human values, and their capacity to respond emotionally to certain stimuli of form, color, texture, and mass.⁷⁷

The forms, colors, textures, and masses I elected to use, while clearly signally a break with Iraqi autocratic traditions, likely differed too greatly from Iraqi cultural meaning, and tradition to effectively transmit the communitarian, democratic, and pluralist messages I intended. Better integration of forms and symbols meaningful to Iraqis would have increased the projects' long-term potential to promote community development and democratic growth. One key improvement would have been employment of traditional symbolic and "non-iconic" ornamentation and art preferred by Arabs as opposed to the realist depictions of human physical labor

often depicted in Western, democratically-inspired art.⁷⁸
⁷⁹ A more culturally appropriate approach would have merged familiar Iraqi themes with progressive ideals common to Western democratic expressions in order to create outcomes rooted in vernacular tradition but heralding new democratic aspirations. Despite the projects' separation from established Iraqi cultural meanings, the projects did succeed at transmitting progressive intentions that transcended traditional cultural expressions and reflected expectations for positive change.

My limited knowledge of Arab artistic and architectural traditions, as well as Iraqi building vernacular, limited the potential of my Ettihad design to support democratic and pluralist themes and activities

During the design and construction of the Ettihad project, I worked closely with the Iraqi contractors, meeting with them regularly to discuss the status of design and construction. During these meetings we developed a vision for the Ettihad's form and design. Our desire to make this building's architectural and aesthetic form match its progressive purpose motivated the extensive attention we dedicated to design. While the contractors agreed with this vision, they were not always able to expertly inform the design decisions. The lack of any tradition for visible civic architecture in the area limited the contractors' ability to conceptualize and design a building with such inspirational aspirations.⁸⁰ By default, my knowledge of Western civic architecture and design became our primary architectural guide.

Although we did integrate some handcrafted details by local artisans, such as metalwork and stained-glass, integration of more vernacular modes would have helped further transmit appropriate cultural meanings.

While I could have possibly found examples of such detailing in places like designs that adorn Iraqi currency and prominent examples of Arab architecture, we had no significant examples of civic-oriented design to integrate. Despite the Iraqi contractors' limited experience designing meaningful civic architecture and my limited exposure to Arab architecture, art, and planning traditions, we were still able to create a progressive structure to promote health, stability, and progress in the Brick Factory community.⁸¹

Ettihad Complex's site location beyond the community's geographic edges limited its potential to serve as a central node and landmark in the community

Both physical and human geographies heavily impacted selection of project site locations, especially Ettihad. Based on a purely spatial analysis, The Brick Factory District's dense conglomeration of factories and interspersed residences clearly defined a district within which Ettihad could serve as a node. But, the noxious externalities (exhaust smoke, oil spillage) associated with the brick factories made any location within the district extremely unhealthy and untenable for the planned school-community center-clinic complex and the associated artesian well. These environmental hazards required us to select a site beyond the edges of the district that was predominantly upwind of the factories. The best site away from the brick factories' smoke and contamination of the district was along the road into the Brick Factory District that served as the primary path into and through the district. While the selected site maximized the benefit of the existing movement patterns, the lack of centrality for intra-district movement limited the Ettihad's potential to develop as a truly central activity node for the Brick Factory community.⁸¹

While these location determinants were specific to the Brick Factory District, similar factors exist for many locales in Iraq and other developing areas. Due to the general absence of zoning or administration to govern the placement and externalities of noxious activities in developing countries, modern community design preferences may not be tenable or preferable.⁸² As the project administrator, I had responsibility for the final site location determination. I had to balance the importance of Ettihad as a literal community center and the need to mitigate the noxious impacts on an already disenfranchised population. In order to determine or approve sites for development and reconstruction projects, civil development administrators must understand the basic community structure and how the considered projects fit within these existing components to either support or detract from community use.

Arab cultural aversion to physical labor limited the involvement of Iraqi volunteer labor in the Ettihad construction process⁸³ and rendered some mural representations impertinent

I intended to promote community identification by using the Ettihad construction process to incite local investment of social capital and resources. I expected that volunteer participation by local residents could augment the paid construction workers by conducting manual tasks such as painting and cleaning. My template for this idea was American programs that offer communities materials and funding that was contingent on some labor or resource input from the benefitting community. For the Ettihad project, I expected that such local participation would reduce building costs and free unused funds in the contract for dedication to additional building improvements. My efforts to incite such participation proved al-

most completely fruitless.

This unwillingness of Arabs to engage in physical labor, although often viewed as simple insularity, actually has deep and rational roots in Arabs' Bedouin traditions. While Americans of moderate socio-economic status actually *like* to engage in manual activities, such as landscaping or tinkering, Arabs of similar socio-economic standing not only dislike it, but actually consider it demeaning.⁸⁴ For Arabs, based on their Bedouin cultural foundations, the notion of engaging in manual labor of any sort is loathsome.⁸⁵ Simply put, physical work is a curse to Arabs. Based on this cultural reality, I could not have reasonably expected the local population to engage in or receive inspiration from activities they view as demeaning, cursed, and to be avoided if at all possible.

This prohibition not only doomed my efforts to integrate community volunteers, but also made many of the commissioned murals appear unrealistic and impertinent to the local population. For one of the commissioned murals I actually suggested the theme of "working together to build a new Iraq", which depicted a laborer laying bricks in the shape of a new Iraq. My knowledge of artwork from America and other developed countries that glorify labor and modernism inspired this recommendation.⁸⁶ In light of Arab culture's demonization of the artistic depiction of humans and aversion of physical labor, this highly-visible mural was likely an irreverent and inappropriate display for inspiring local cooperation.

The Brick Factory population lacked the basic income and stability required to enable voluntary community participation or full realization of the Ettihad Complex's civic possibilities

Amitai Etzioni, a leading Communitarian thinker, noted that once material needs are sated and securely provided for, additional income does not directly result in additional happiness. On the contrary, evidence shows more contentment is found in nourishing ends-based relationships, such as bonding with others, community building, and public service, as well as in cultural and spiritual pursuits.⁸⁷ These are the relationships and pursuits I intended to engender through the Ettihad Complex's construction and use. But, as Etzioni observed, the ability to conduct these demo-civil activities explicitly requires prior satisfaction of basic material needs. The Brick Factory workers, most of whom earned less than \$2 a day, were not meeting their own basic needs adequately enough to productively engage in more abstract communitarian activities.

The residents' meager existence and resource shortfalls precluded them from pursuing the higher community functions we intended the Ettihad Complex to support. Although the Ettihad Complex constituted an essential first step toward a stable democratic community, we needed to couple project development with wider initiatives addressing wages and work conditions as well.⁸⁸ Without accompanying economic initiatives to increase social capital and human resources, the local population could neither maintain the Ettihad Complex nor fully realize the project's communitarian potential. With every member of every family laboring just to subsist, there was no one to study at the school, seek treatment at the clinic, gather at the community center, or ensure upkeep of the facilities.

The lack of individual or collective initiative within Iraqi society deterred proactive identification of need and organization of existing social capital to response to local needs

Through the course of these civil development projects, I observed a general unwillingness among the Iraqi population to independently initiate or organize projects to benefit the whole community or population. This reluctance was partly due to Arabs' traditional belief in deference to elders or tribal leaders to make decisions for the whole family, village, or tribe.⁸⁹ But, the preceding five decades of Ba'ath Party oppression played a much greater role in discouraging local initiative. The Ba'ath "shadow state" made grass-roots initiatives and cooperative projects a lethal proposition. Since seizing power in 1968, the Ba'ath Party had employed extreme, targeted violence and patronage powers from oil wealth to co-opt or break any independent vestiges of civil society.⁹⁰ Therefore, autonomous organization or cooperation simply did not exist in most Iraqi communities.

Under Saddam Hussein's authoritarian rule patronage and hidden networks were used to create a "shadow state" that recast Iraqi society by discouraging community cooperation and severing the interpersonal trust such cooperation required.⁹¹ Beyond discouraging initiative or organization, Saddam's regime considered any non-Ba'athist cooperation or organization subversive and a direct threat to regime control. The regime would have sought out and eradicated the types of independent community functions that I promoted as eminent threats to the Ba'athist rule. While we intended our civil development projects to reverse such apathy and disengagement, the Balad Ruz population in 2003 was still very suspicious and generally uncooperative. For long term growth, Iraqis needed a secure environment to implement democratic processes and observe their positive impacts. But, this causal pairing of community action and

positive democratic outcomes would require much more time than the three months C Troop had in Balad Ruz and the Brick Factory areas.

Gathering input from individual Iraqis was often challenging due to their traditional social structure that defers to elders or sheikhs and discourages individual action

To better tailor these projects to the population's actual needs, I attempted to engage the local population directly, as if planning similar endeavors in the United States. While community-based planning techniques such as charettes can facilitate the democratic interaction and input I sought, they are very different from the autocratic decision-making methods prevalent in Arab culture and Iraqi communities.⁹² During our patrols in the Balad Ruz area I often spoke with local residents to gather their input about community needs and their suggested solutions. As a part of these interactions, I also attempted to solicit support, such as volunteers and in-kind donations, for the impending projects. For Iraqis, as with most Arabs, the values of tribal loyalty and deferment to elders were deeply engrained in the general population. This was especially true in the remote areas like the Brick Factory District, where laborers and farmers were both uncomfortable and inexperienced with forming and sharing individual opinions on community matters.

This influence of authority figures was also a source of power that I could have used to better solicit help with the Ettihad construction. During the Ettihad planning process I developed the idea of soliciting the brick factory owners for in-kind donations of their most abundant resource to support construction of a school for their workers—bricks. To attain brick donations from the brick factory owners I approached them individually. While I intended this solicitation as a request to support the community, it likely appeared to the brick factory owners like Saddam's previous use of power to demand patronage.

The brick factory owners were generally unresponsive and uncooperative to queries. I would have likely engendered greater involvement in and support for the Ettihad construction by utilizing their existing social structure. If I had courted the local sheikhs and elders first, these leaders could have commanded and held the brick factory owners accountable for material support. With the endorsement of influential leaders, many more people would have felt free (or obligated) to participate and provide assistance.

Implementation of the extensive design considerations required me to conduct frequent site visits and revision meetings with the contractors

The Ettihad contractors, like all contractors, were primarily interested completing the contract requirements at the minimum amount of cost. Any additional costs to complete the project would diminish the profit they received. Therefore, the contractors had no implicit value for the design details and architectural accoutrements I wanted to include. For the contractors, a plain utilitarian structure would have met the contract requirements and yielded the maximum profit. Do to our divergent values in the construction process, I had to closely monitor the construction process and issue the according monetary payments in such a way as to compel the contractors to include the additional design features I desired.⁹³ One of the primary issues noted by the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) in program reviews was a lack of sufficient quality-control and quality-assurance for reconstruction projects, resulting in inefficient use of American taxpayer dollars.⁹⁴ Judging from the experiences from other similar reconstruction projects, the Ettihad Complex's structural quality and extensive architectural detailing likely could not have occurred without this regular oversight and involvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Constructing Community's extensive description and supporting materials enable significant process examination and identification of salient points for future application. These are issues, due to their project-specific nature, that broader assessments of Iraqi reconstruction efforts rarely explore. Therefore, the recommendations provided here pertain more to quality design, construction, and management of individual development projects than administration of more extensive and longer-running reconstruction programs. Just as most of the challenges discussed here emanated from incomplete understanding of Arab culture and Iraqi communities, the recommendations also focus on the cultural (rather than administrative, accounting, financing, etc.) factors and determinants for reconstruction projects in developing locales like Iraq.

Agencies responsible for reconstruction should provide personnel overseeing design and contracting of reconstruction projects with additional cultural training that is appropriate to their duty location. My generally unsuccessful efforts to engage the local population to solicit volunteers and in-kind contributions demonstrated some of my fundamental unfamiliarity with Iraqi culture. I deferred to my personal knowledge and experiences due to my lack of understanding about basic cultural differences that made my Western assumptions less applicable. Other challenges I encountered during the reconstruction projects resulted from my lack of basic knowledge about art, architecture, and planning traditions in Arab culture and Iraqi communities. Some basic knowledge, such as under-

standing the Islamic prohibition on depicting humans in art, would have averted some ill-fitted solutions I proposed. The Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction (SIGIR) observed similar deficiencies across reconstruction experiences in Iraq.⁹⁵ For reconstruction projects to fully succeed, contracting and overseeing personnel must assess the impact of cultural complexities as well as the fiscal and administrative aspects of project management. Due to the intricate differences between cultures and operating environments, this cultural training should address the specific characteristics and complexities of the place the individual will operate.

Provide all personnel supervising or administering reconstruction projects with basic urban planning and urban design instruction as part of their standard training. Often the most influential factor for determining how well community reconstruction projects will serve their intended purposes and populations is location. Determining appropriate location consists of more than just deciding the project's geographic position or geologic suitability. Effective site location also includes such factors as relationship to predominant movement patterns, proximity to incompatible or noxious uses and accessibility for the intended users.⁹⁶ These determinations require a basic understanding of city planning tenants and urban design considerations. While project oversight determines the quality of the completed structure, effective site selection determines whether the completed project will ever truly fulfill its intended purpose and realize the intended effect.

Government agencies supervising and contracting reconstruction efforts should develop the "reach-back" capacity to solicit advice from outside cultural and design experts. Due to the often specific nature of cultural and design considerations, personnel supervising reconstruction

projects need to have access to experts, such as architects or anthropologists, that have specific knowledge pertinent to the project considerations. Due to the importance of cultural understanding to tactical operations, the U.S. Army has integrated civilian anthropologists to create Human Terrain Systems (HTSs) that are attached to most combat brigades.⁹⁷ Similar capacity must be created to support reconstruction operations. While positioning of cultural and design experts on location may not be practical, government agencies should establish a reach-back network that will allow project administrators to rapidly contact and gain input from experts in the United States or elsewhere.

Government agencies involved in architecture-, art-, and planning-related reconstruction projects (DoD, USAid, etc.) should cooperate to develop a design guide and pattern book consisting of pictures, plans, and detailed sketches from representative or noteworthy examples of appropriate projects. When the Iraqi contractors and I were contemplating progressive designs for the projects we had very few resources, beyond our own experiences and recollections, to gather ideas from and measure ideas against. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides a guide for designing domestic community development projects which recommends for designers to “identify and prioritize the key design components of the project—those that will do the most to meet user needs, respond to the context and enhance the neighborhood.”⁹⁸ Such a guide would allow contracting officers to better inform and oversee the design process and promote projects that, beyond simply meeting basic requirements, are focal points for civic pride and reinforcement of progressive community values.

AFTERWORD

Through subsequent research, discussion, and reflection I have gained additional insight into the cultural patterns and subtleties that impacted the successes and limitations of the Brick Factory and Balad Ruz projects. Since I departed the Balad Ruz area immediately following the completion of the Ettihad Complex, I did not get to witness the facility's use or assess the appropriateness of the structure's design. Many of the pictures included in this project were taken as C Troop left the area for the last time. While the long-term impacts of these projects is unclear, our attention to and deliberate conception of quality design and aesthetic value for community resources clearly left a series of projects that, due to their progressive processes and outcomes, were not often duplicated in Iraq. The value of this project is to demonstrate how we can promote deliberately-designed art, architecture and planning projects in developing countries and to discuss how we can conceptualize, design and administer these more meaningful projects to better serve the populations we seek to secure, stabilize, rebuild, and empower.

NOTES

- ¹ Gerald E. Markowitz and Marlene Park, *Democratic Vistas: Post Offices and Public Art in the New Deal*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1984), 5.
- ² Albert Weale, *Democracy* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1999), 15.
- ³ Philip Bess, "Communitarianism and Emotivism," In *Theorizing a New Agenda in Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*, ed. Kate Nesbitt (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1997), 375.
- ⁴ United Nations, Security Council, *Resolution 1483 (2003)*, 4761st Meeting, 22 May 2003, 1.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.
- ⁶ Weale, 14.
- ⁷ This mechanism, the Line of Operation, was a methodology for charting waypoints of success for the numerous specific areas of improvement that Coalition units and commands wished to plan out and track the progress of. Although this term was not specifically used by C Troop, this idea of a "roadmap" to success was a very prominent part of our planning in each of the locales we operated.
- ⁸ Richard Dattner, *Civil Architecture: The New Public Infrastructure* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 2.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.
- ¹⁰ Susan Arai and Alison Pedlar, "Moving Beyond Individualism in Leisure Theory: A Critical Analysis of Concepts of Community and Social Engagement," *Leisure Studies* 22 (2003): 187. Arai and Pedlar survey the tradition of communitarian thinkers to provide the consolidated specification of what Communitarianism entails and envisions that is adopted here.
- ¹¹ Bess, 375. Philip Bess list these fundamental ideas as products of early communitarian thinkers such as Neva Leona Boyd.
- ¹² Arai, 197.
- ¹³ Alan Brinkley, "Liberty, Community, and the National Ideal," *American Prospect* 29 (1996): 56.
- ¹⁴ Mary P. Ryan, "'A Laudable Pride in the Whole of Us': City Halls and Civic Materialism," *American Historical Review* 105 (2000): 1132.
- ¹⁵ SOURCE FOR PERICLES
- ¹⁶ Bess, 376.
- ¹⁷ Arai, 196.
- ¹⁸ Thomas Barrie, *Sacred Path, Sacred Place: Myth, Ritual, and Meaning in Architecture*, (Boston: Shambhala, 1996), 45.
- ¹⁹ Younes Samir, "Constructing Architectural Theory," *Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy* 78 (2003): 234.
- ²⁰ Douglas P. Woodlock, "Courthouses are Worth the Cost," *Architecture* 85 (1996), 49.
- ²¹ Ryan, 1132.
- ²² Kevin Mattson, "Reclaiming and Re-making Public Space: Toward an Architecture for American Democracy," *National Civic Review* 88 (1999): 133.
- ²³ Sam Demas and Jeffery A. Scherer, "Esprit de Place: Maintaining and Designing Library Buildings to Provide Transcendent Spaces," *American Libraries* 34 (2002): 68.
- ²⁴ Bess, 373.
- ²⁵ Arai, 197.
- ²⁶ Ronald Lee Fleming, "The Changing Place of Interpretation in American Public Space," *Places* 16 (2004): 72.
- ²⁷ Thomas Jefferson, *Democracy*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1969): 138.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 138.
- ²⁹ Demas, 65.
- ³⁰ Ron Damasauskas, "The Case for Keeping Rural Hospitals," In *Rural Health Care: Innovation in a Chang-*

- ing Environment, ed. Lavonne A. Straub (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 1992), 40.
- ³¹ Ryan, 1133.
- ³² Bess, 375.
- ³³ Woodlock, 53.
- ³⁴ Woodlock, 49.
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Carla Breeze, *American Art Deco*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2003), ii.
- ³⁷ Ibid., iii.
- ³⁸ Raymond J. Curran, *Architecture and the Urban Experience* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983), 141.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 139.
- ⁴⁰ Richard Dattner, *Civil Architecture: The New Public Infrastructure*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995), 3.
- ⁴¹ Demas, 68.
- ⁴² Barrie, 4.
- ⁴³ Douglas Ellington, "Architecture," In *Dedication of the Asheville City Building*, compiled by Gallatin Roberts, (Asheville, North Carolina: City of Asheville, 1928), "The Architecture."
- ⁴⁴ Vittorio Gregotti, "The Exercise of Detailing," In *Theorizing a New Agenda in Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory 1965-1995*, edited by Kate Nesbitt, (New York: Princeton Architectural Press: 1997), 496.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 503.
- ⁴⁶ Curran, 133.
- ⁴⁷ Ellington, "The Architecture."
- ⁴⁸ Ryan, 1136.
- ⁴⁹ Mattson, 133.
- ⁵⁰ Diego Rivera, *Portrait of America*, (New York: Covici & Friede, 1934), 11.
- ⁵¹ Terence Young, "Modern Urban Parks," *The Geographical Review* 85 (1995), 536.
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ Emily Edwards, *Painted Walls of Mexico: From Prehistoric Times Until Today*, (Austin: University of Texas Press: 1966), 169.
- ⁵⁴ Leonard Folgarait, *Mural Painting and Social Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 6.
- ⁵⁵ Park, 9.
- ⁵⁶ Olin Downs, "The New Deal's Treasury Art Program," In *The New Deal Art Projects: An Anthology of Memoirs*, edited by Francis V. O'Conner, (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972), 18.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ⁵⁸ Wendy Kaplan, 289.
- ⁵⁹ Carol Aronovici, *Community Building: Science, Technique, Art*, (Doubleday: Garden City, New York, 1956), 310.
- ⁶⁰ Parks, 52.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Aronovici, 308.
- ⁶³ Etzioni, 68.
- ⁶⁴ Brinkley, 57.
- ⁶⁵ Aronovici, 315.
- ⁶⁶ Raphael Patai, *The Arab Mind*, (New York: Hatherleigh, 2002), 120.
- ⁶⁷ Diego Rivera, *My Art, My Life*, with Gladys March, (New York: Citadel, 1960), 183.
- ⁶⁸ Patai, 177.
- ⁶⁹ William Gropper. "Construction of the Dam," (1938). Commissioned by the Works Progress Administration for the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C.
- ⁷⁰ Diego Rivera. "Detroit Hall of Industry, North Wall," (year). Commissioned by Henry Ford for the Detroit Hall of Industry.
- ⁷¹ Chappell Lawson and Strom Thacker. "Will Iraq Become a Democracy?"

- ⁷² GAO-03-792R, *Rebuilding Iraq*, pg. 2, 26.
- ⁷³ Chappell Lawson and Strom Thacker. "Will Iraq Become a Democracy?"
- ⁷⁴ Alan Brinkley, "Liberty, Community, and the National Ideal," *American Prospect* 29 (1996): 56
- ⁷⁵ Patai, 16.
- ⁷⁶ This phrase was taken from President George Bush's address to the nation on February 26, 2003 explaining the reasons and likely benefits of the recently initiated invasion of Iraq and removal of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime.
- ⁷⁷ Aronovici, 1956, p. 315.
- ⁷⁸ Bianca, 2000, p. 42. Dominant Arab architectural and artistic traditions employ symbolic and "non-iconic" modes and avoid the naturalist or humanist depictions demonized by Islamic interpretation.
- ⁷⁹ Patai, 2007, p. 177. This preference for geometric modes over naturalist themes is partially a result of Muslim *hadiths* prohibiting representation of the visual form of any living being, especially humans. But, Arab artists would have likely disobeyed the *hadiths*, like their non-Arab Islamic neighbors, without their supporting cultural disregard of reality and adherence to ideal constructs (such as perfect geometric shapes).
- ⁸⁰ Bianca, 2000, p. 29. Due to a tradition of attributing open space to specific social entities, there was no "autonomous" ground for public institutions to manage. The "public" spaces, such as mosques, madrasas (religious schools) and caravanserais (roadside inns for travelers) were detached from main arteries and removed from observation and use by the general population.
- ⁸¹ This analysis of Ettihad's location selection uses Kevin Lynch's five-facet typology (paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks) for understanding the structure of human development within communities presented in *The Image of the City*.
- ⁸² Bianca, 2000, p. 39. Due to Islam's extensive concession of autonomy and responsibility to various social groups within the society, modern city planning and according separation of incompatible land uses were generally non-existent.
- ⁸³ Patai, 2007, p. 120. This cultural phenomenon and its origins are discussed at length to explain the rational beginnings of the attitudes toward labor and how these attitudes impact Arab work and employment behaviors today.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 121.
- ⁸⁶ For some examples of such artwork glorifying physical labor, see Diego Rivera's Detroit murals, William Gropper's "Construction of a Dam", and numerous Works Progress Administration posters.
- ⁸⁷ Etzioni, 2001, p. 68.
- ⁸⁸ SIGIR, 2009, p. 332. One of the lessons identified by the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction was that "developing the capacity of people and systems is as important as bricks and mortar reconstruction." A general failure among Iraq reconstruction projects, to include Ettihad, was the failure to develop sufficient Iraqi capacity for facility administration and maintenance after project completion.
- ⁸⁹ Patai, 2007, p. 295.
- ⁹⁰ Dodge, 2003, p. 159.
- ⁹¹ Ibid.
- ⁹² Walters, 2007, p. 166. The term *charrette* refers to a collaborative process in which stakeholders (government, citizens, private firms, etc.) work together to develop solutions to a design problem. This method is commonly used to conceptualize public projects that impact numerous groups or stakeholders.
- ⁹³ One example of such a design inclusion was the arched trusses for the community meeting hall's roof. While

a simple flat concrete roof would have sufficed, I demanded arched trusses to support an arched roof and thereby create a more open meeting space. While the arched trusses were not strictly required by the contract specifications, my influence during the construction process ensured this design intent was achieved.

⁹⁴ SIGIR, 2009, p. 334.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 332. SIGIR's report identified numerous principles for improved reconstruction that address this issue, including that "programs should be geared to indigenous priorities and needs." The SIGIR report also noted that "the reconstruction experience in Iraq revealed deficiencies in how the U.S. Government understands the dynamics of societies it seeks to influence."

⁹⁶ 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment in a Operations and intelligence (O&I) briefing in March, 2009, highlighted one clear example of a failure to fully consider location when planning reconstruction projects. The briefing stated that the accessibility of some newly constructed schools was severely limited due to poor site selection. This instance demonstrates how better understanding of local movement patterns would have likely resulted in more effective application of Coalition reconstruction resources.

⁹⁷ The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) runs the HTS program to serve all military branches by providing social science research

and advising at the tactical level. The TRADOC description of HTS composition and mission is provided at: <http://humanterrainsystem.army.mil/default.htm>.

⁹⁸ The HUD Design Advisor provides guidance for designing locally-appropriate affordable housing through a webpage at <http://www.designadvisor.org/>

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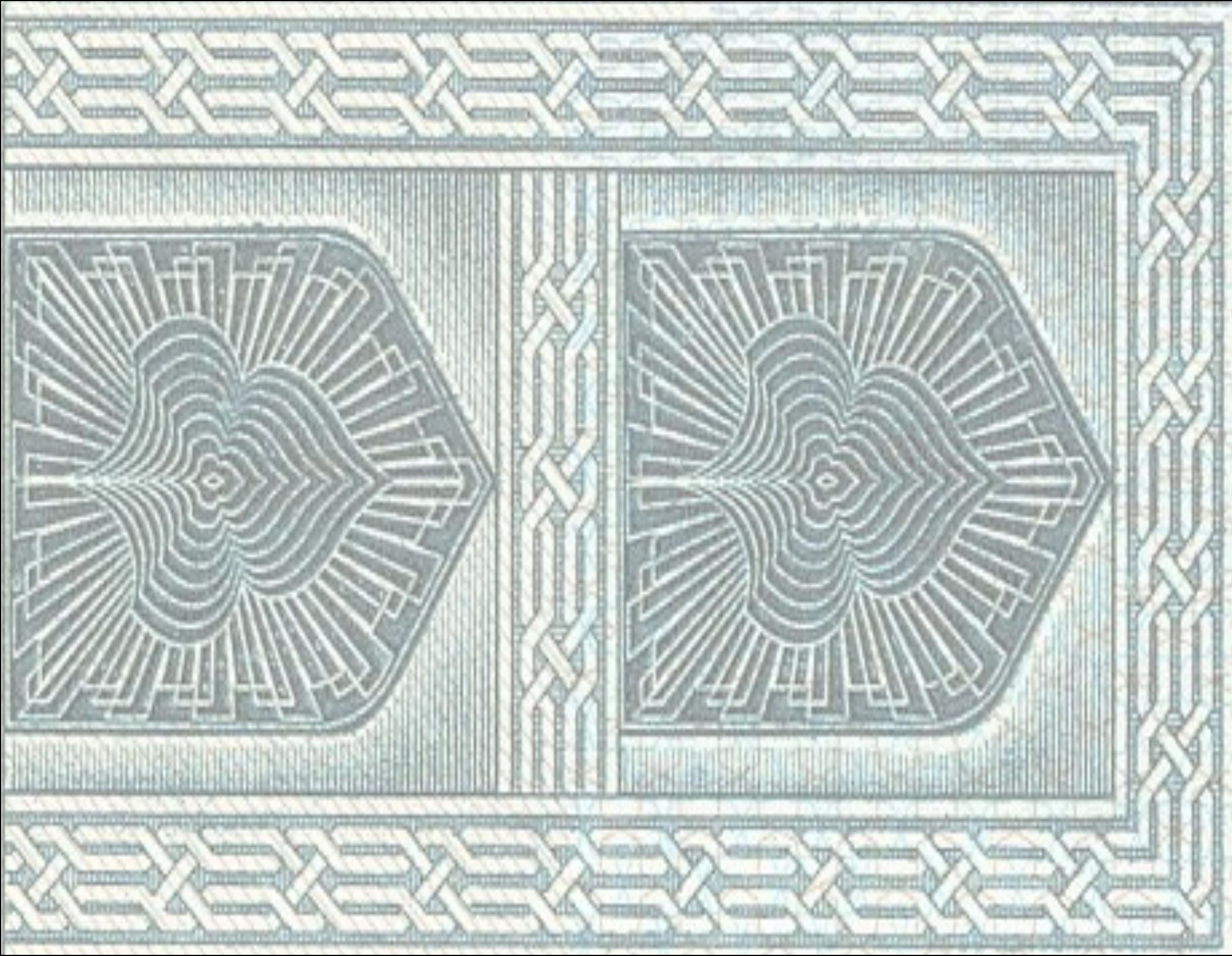
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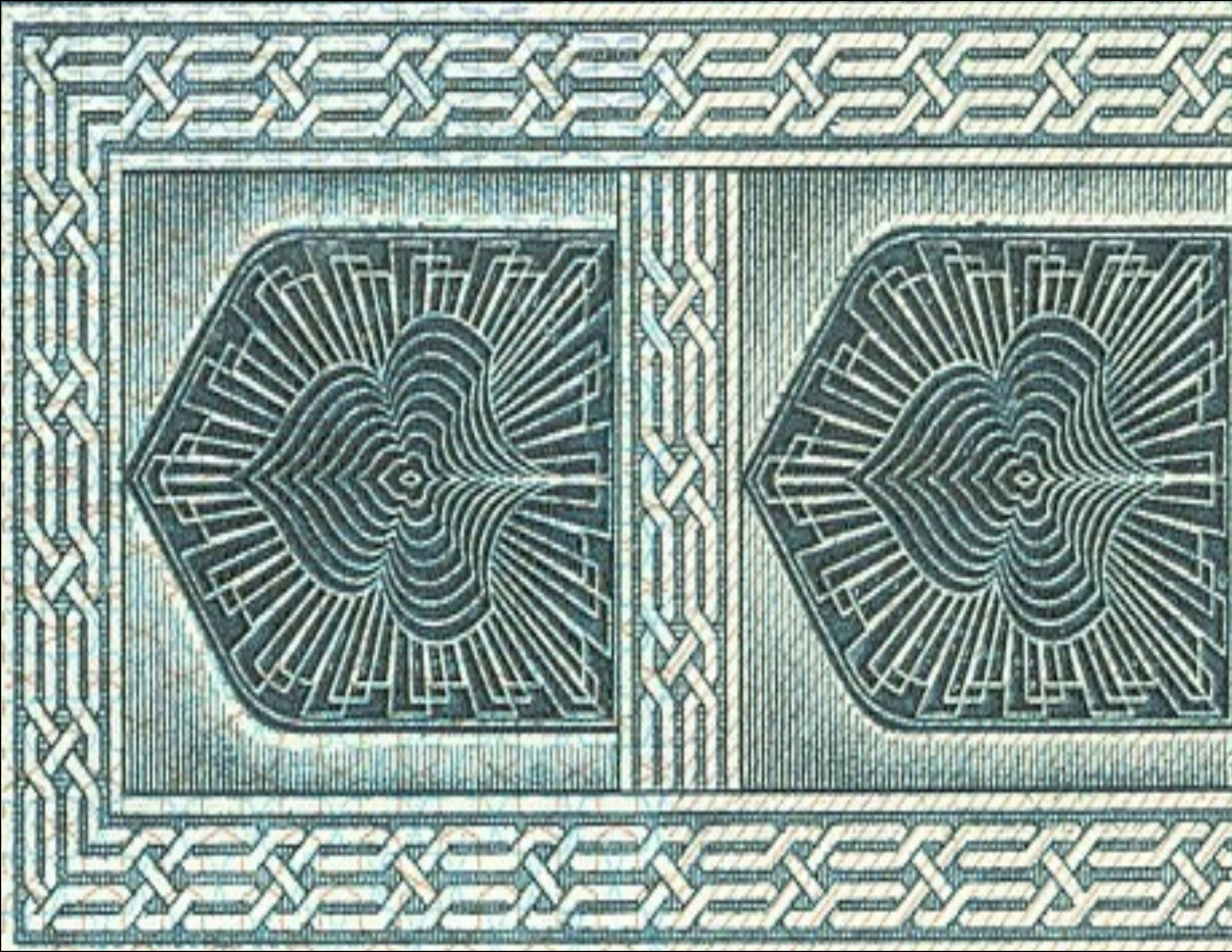
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This project is dedicated to the Iraqis that risked their lives to make my idea a reality. Without their cooperation and service, these projects literally would not have gotten off the ground.



Myself standing with (from left): Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) Lieutenant, Iraqi interpreter, Iraqi contractor Mohamed Hamed, Iraqi contractor Ibrahim Muhamed Ibrahim, and an ICDC soldier.





BACK-UP PAGES

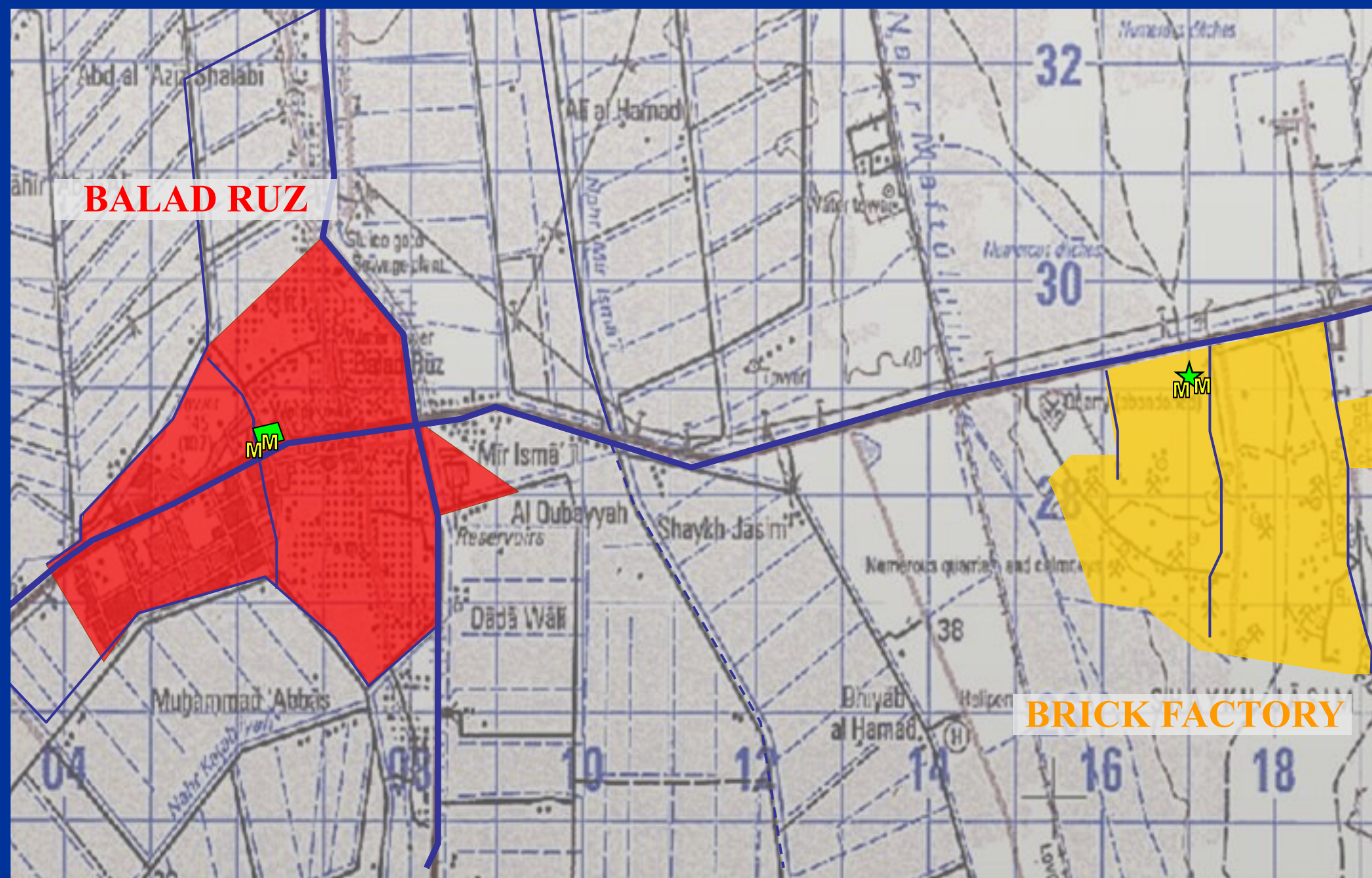
BALAD RUZ

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BRICK FACTORY

Map Overlay



BALAD RUZ AND BRICK FACTORY AREAS

BALAD RUZ

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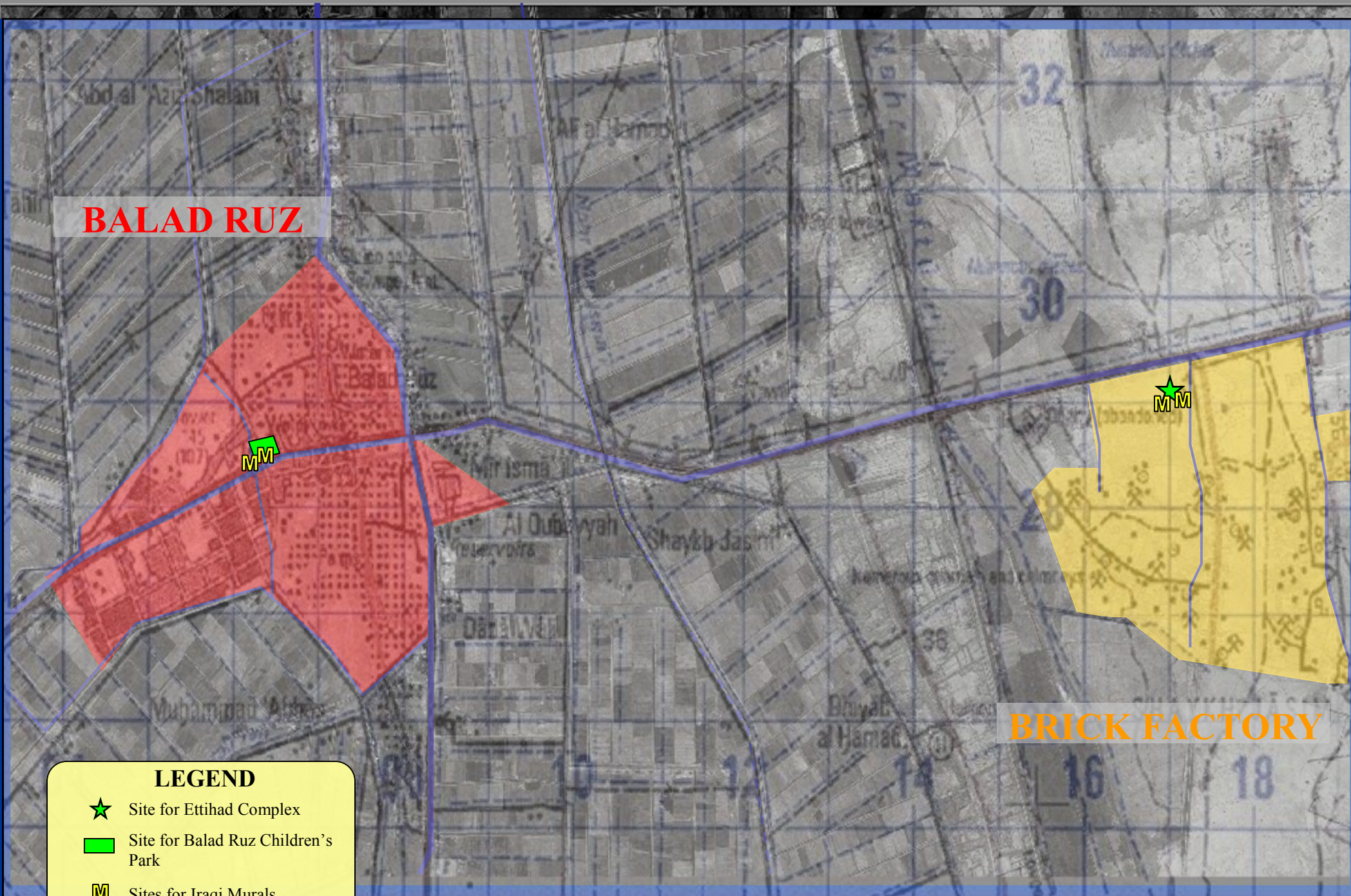
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BRICK FACTORY

LEGEND

- ★ Site for Ettihad Complex
- Site for Balad Ruz Children's Park
- M Sites for Iraqi Murals

BALAD RUZ AND BRICK FACTORY AREAS



BALAD RUZ

BRICK FACTORY

LEGEND

- ★ Site for Ettihad Complex
- Site for Balad Ruz Children's Park
- M Sites for Iraqi Murals

Arab artistic tradition does illustrate and promote the effort and activities required to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure, economy, and individual communities

When considering production of murals for public consumption and inspiration, I worked to clearly delineate the murals purpose and implicit messages. I envisioned a collection of murals reflecting the idea that Iraqis would realized prosperity through unity, cooperation, and dedicated labor. Diego Rivera, the most hallowed of modern mural painters, identified this premise as the central theme for his populist murals. He said, "I placed the collective hero, man-and-machine, higher than the old traditional heroes of art and legend."⁶⁷ For the Balad Ruz murals, I identified this collective hero as the central theme. But, Arab traditions dictated more ideal artistic constructs than humans laboring to build communities. Unlike Western realist traditions, Arab traditions are very rarely representational. This is due to the Muslim prohibition of representation of any living being, especially man, and the Arab cultural aversion to physical labor. Therefore, the new murals that I intended to promote national pride through populist glorification of the laboring classes were likely incongruent with Iraq cultural understanding.⁶⁸ I did not understand this Iraqi cultural artifact, which was never clearly described by Iraqi themselves, until my subsequent learning with Arab culture. At the time I commissioned the murals these themes seemed, to an American born into democracy, like rational methods to tout the required actions and likely benefits of the Iraqi reconstruction efforts.

TRADITIONAL MODES OF ARABIC ART

These bills show archetypical modes of Arab artistic expression, employing intricate geometric patterns and depicting significant religious sites, but without human forms.



GLORIFICATION OF RULERS AND REGIMES

The traditional modes of Arab expression were coupled with nationalistic representations of rulers and armies to reinforce the powerful perception of dictators and regimes.



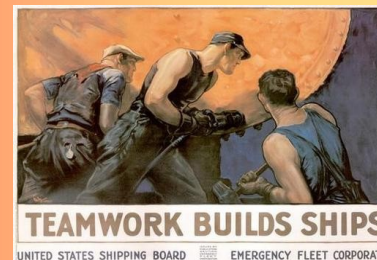
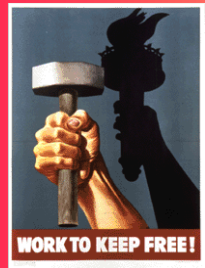
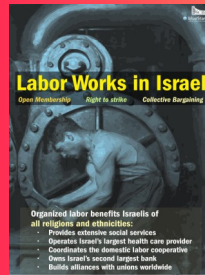
IRAQI MURALS DEPICTING DEMOCRACY THROUGH LABOR AND COOPERATION

The murals that comprised the Iraqi Mural Project reflected the themes of progress through labor and cooperation. But, these murals were not consistent with the Iraqi cultural vernacular and societal aversions, diluting their effectiveness inspiring the labourous work of nation-building.



GLORIFICATION OF NATION BUILDING THROUGH PHYSICAL LABOR

My inspiration for the Iraqi Mural Projects came from a trans-cultural tradition of glorifying labor and laborers. This tradition used human forms to inspire the work required to build strong nations. This reverence for the laboring masses was not shared by Iraqis, who, by Arab tendencies, viewed physical labor as shameful and to be avoided if at all possible.⁷¹



NEW MODES OF ARAB EXPRESSION

As shown in these new currencies, Arab governments are starting to adopt the progressive themes employed by many industrialized nations and in the Iraqi Mural Project I sponsored.

