

## INTRODUCTION

# National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization

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Design is simultaneously global, regional, national and local (Calvera 2005), and it has been so at least since the dramatic increase in intercontinental trade and travel in the fifteenth century. The Silk Road and the transatlantic slave trade are examples of the pre-modern and early modern globalization of commerce associated with the development of similarly global channels of communication about goods and their design and manufacture. Today, the cars we celebrate as 'Italian', for example, could just as well be designed by Britons and Brazilians and manufactured in Poland and Pakistan, on behalf of multi-national owners, for markets in Switzerland and Swaziland. But while design might be more global than ever before, it is still conditioned by, and in turn informs, its global, regional, national and local contexts at once. Technological developments, including the world wide web, digital cloud services and CAD/CAM, enable collaboration between automotive designers, for example, working anywhere from Delhi and Detroit to Dubai, but however well-travelled the designers themselves might be, they operate from within physical contexts in which local, regional and national as well as international factors are active.

While since the nineteenth century the national has been a dominant category for understanding culture and identity, as well as politics and economics and a host of other factors, in our own century, mainstream media and academic discourse alike have been preoccupied with globalization (Applebaum and Robinson 2005). Across the humanities and social sciences, international developments in higher education, the continuing influence of postcolonial theory, and the contemporary focus on sustainability, have all exerted an

influence on the ways in which design, particularly, is understood. Design historians have critiqued an existing bias in the field towards Western industrialized nations based on a definition of design derived from its separation from industrial manufacture. They (we) are now looking further afield in writing *Global Design History*, to use the title of a 2011 anthology (Adamson, Riello and Teasley 2011). In this work, national histories have been criticized as unsuited to a new global gaze in which contemporary society and historical narratives are to be freed from the geo-political straightjacket of nation states (Traganou 2011: 166). Arjun Appadurai (1996: 169) has even claimed that the nation state has become obsolete as a marker of identity construction. Is the nation simply imagined (Anderson 1983), a modern myth, as Ernest Gellner (1983) claimed? Or can this admittedly complex construction still be a valuable framework for histories of design?

The nation state is no longer the only socio-cultural or political-economic unit forming our identities and experiences, if it ever was, but national and regional histories of design have demonstrated cogent frameworks for the discussion of common socio-economic, cultural and identity issues. In the context of celebrations and moral panics alike concerning the impact of globalization, it is critically important to recognize that the much-vaunted global chains of design, manufacturing and commerce are still composed of national endeavours. *Designing Worlds: National Design Histories in an Age of Globalization* aims to rethink the writing of national design histories in light of the increasing attention to trans-, inter- and supranational understandings of design, past and present. With contributions from all five continents, it provides a timely examination of the historiographic and methodological value of national frameworks in writing design history. This introduction begins by examining how the dominant national paradigm has been challenged by the global as an academic, and mainstream, preoccupation, and then argues for the reconceptualization of the national within the global in design history before exploring the contribution of the chapters presented in this book.

## **The Nation and History Writing**

The nation and the national have formed perhaps the most widespread and long-lasting paradigm in historical scholarship from its origins as an academic discipline in Europe in the mid-nineteenth century (Berger 2005: 631) to the late twentieth century. Because of the intrinsic relation between academic history and the political nationalism that gave rise to and consolidated the modern nation state, the national paradigm and the understanding of what constitutes a nation in history writing have long remained to a large degree implicit. Today, however, the awareness that nationhood does not always neatly coincide with the borders of the nation state necessitates a more reflexive historiography in

which more nuanced and contested perceptions and expressions of the national are brought to the fore. This book contributes to such developments by consolidating the academic endeavour of globalizing design history with the highly complex co-construction of national identity and material culture, exemplified by cases probing issues such as geopolitical shifts, migration, ethnic national minorities, transnational dialogues, international product flows, etc.

Umut Özkirimli's sound historiographic survey of writing on nations (2010) sees its origins in a 'primordial' understanding of the nation as a natural entity. Primordial nationalism is supported by a feeling of belonging and emotional iterations of national identity such as patriotism. The continued dominance of the nation as a category of understanding seems to support the idea that many people accept the nation as, if not natural, then somehow inevitable. Terms such as motherland, fatherland and homeland merge kinship and territory and underscore a 'sociobiological' understanding of the nation in which the heritage and temporal depth (Grosby 2005: 43, 11) form a macro correlative of the successive generations of a family.

It was only with the widespread influence of poststructuralist theory on the historical profession from the 1980s onwards that the primacy of the national as narrative and framework for understanding was seriously challenged. Across the humanities and social sciences this challenge took the form of a renewed interest in the national, not as a given or a convenient unit of analysis, but rather as a constructed entity. Scholarship on the nation focused on deconstructing its symbolic and representational aspects (Berger 2005: 650–660). Özkirimli groups three of the key writers on nations – Ernest Gellner, Benedict Anderson and Eric Hobsbawm – in the 'modernist' group, which sought to dismantle the idea of the nation as natural or inevitable. This group instead revealed nations as constructs, the results of concerted engagements in the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1993) and imagined communities (Anderson 1983), albeit with a regrettable emphasis on high culture (Gellner 1983) and public discourses and practices, rather than everyday or demotic instances of the national. The undeniably influential theories of national identity proposed by Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson and others have been critiqued most notably by Tim Edensor for being too singularly focused on 'high' culture, ceremonial practices, state interventions and official life. 'What is missing' from their accounts, he claims, 'is a sense of the unspectacular, contemporary production of national identity through popular culture and everyday life' (Edensor 2002: 12). This has significant implications for recognition of the importance of design in communicating national identity, as we shall see below. Design extends to everything that is planned and/or made; design history enjoys therefore a broad area of enquiry, not limited to high or official culture, nor confined purely to popular culture.

Özkirimli then turns to ethnosymbolist approaches to the nation, including Anthony D. Smith's examination of the nation and ethnicities, before arriving

at ‘new’ approaches to nationalism characterized by the work of five theorists informed variously by postcolonial and feminist theory (on which, see also Blom, Hagemann and Hall 2004) and including, notably for the study of design understood as a demotic phenomenon, Michael Billig’s work on ‘banal nationalism’ (1995). Özkirimli adduces from his survey a synthetic approach which takes the best from the literature across the categories he reviews, to arrive at an understanding of the national as ‘neither illusory nor artificial, but [...] socially constituted and institutional, hence “real” in its consequences and a very “real” part of our everyday lives’ (Özkirimli 2010: 217). He closes his book with a call for greater collaboration between theorists of nationalism who all too often operate in an abstract mode with insufficient reference to specific empirical examples, and historians who ignore theoretical developments in favour of ‘descriptive narratives of particular nationalisms’ (Özkirimli 2010: 219).

## Postcolonialism and the Nation

Poststructuralist approaches to understanding nations, and the detractors of this work, have been accompanied by work informed by postcolonial theory. Because the modern nation state is a recent construct, and one that was transposed and translated to the non-Western world as part of, and in the wake of, colonialism, its role in historical narratives has preoccupied postcolonialist historiography. Dipesh Chakrabarty, for instance, argues that ‘European thought is at once both indispensable and inadequate in helping us to think through the experiences of political modernity in non-Western nations, and provincializing Europe becomes a task of exploring how this thought – which is now everybody’s heritage and affects us all – may be renewed from and for the margins’ (Chakrabarty 2000: 16). The histories of modern non-Western nations are better understood by reading the reception and rethinking in these societies of colonial thought than by discarding it – the latter would amount to ‘postcolonial revenge’, a less productive strategy (Gandhi 1998: x).

Crucially, however, postcolonialist theory has also led to a renewal – and improvement – of the national paradigm in historiography. A key example is Partha Chatterjee’s critique of Benedict Anderson’s claim that colonial nationalism was inevitably based on European models. Chatterjee argues that this is a misconception caused by historians prioritizing the political realms of society over the cultural, and that a cultural history of colonial nations will reveal the emergence of modern national cultures independent of, or at least parallel to, the Western-dominated colonial state (Chatterjee 2010: 23–36). Similarly, and again based on examples from the history of the previously colonized world, Chatterjee dismissed as premature Appadurai’s call to move beyond the nation (Appadurai 1996: 158–177), arguing instead for

increased attention to historical processes ‘located on a different site – not the moral-cultural ground of modernity and the external institutional domain of global civil society but rather the ground of democracy and the internal domain of national political society’ (Chatterjee 2010: 176). Also, it bears mention that national narratives in non-Western societies such as India and China long predate the modern Western nation state and its historiography (Woolf 2006).

Taking Fernando Ortiz’s notion of transculturation as his example, Walter Dignolo has even critiqued postcolonial perspectives for their reliance on the national framework: ‘either you find a nation-state that becomes an empire (like Spain or England) or one undergoing uprisings and rebellions to become autonomous, working towards the foundation of a nation’ (Dignolo 2000: 16). In an effort to move beyond such dichotomies, however, it has been suggested that the marginalization of the colonized world is as much a product of postcolonialism itself as one of colonialism, in that the process of marginalization and separatism, at least in the case of the Arab world, ‘coincided with the self-conscious desire of the Arabs to disentangle themselves from the colonizers’ history, the history of the West, and to rewrite their independent national history and reconstruct their cultural identity’ (Akkach 2014: 70).

Although the modern nation-state is emphatically a nineteenth-century European construct, this book argues that national frameworks for design historical analyses can be highly rewarding also beyond the conventional geographies of the field. In fact, more than half of the chapters focus on previously colonized regions including Southern Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean and Latin America. These case studies provide much-needed knowledge on the design histories of underexplored nations and regions, but more importantly, for our project, they also offer new and unique understandings of how design cultures are formed and operationalized in the complex and contested processes of forging societies, collectives, communities, institutions and identities. Whether they analyse how Brazil constructed an official national identity as exotic, yet modern at international exhibitions in the late nineteenth century, or how today design discourse in New Zealand grapples with ownership of Maori design traditions, these contributions all demonstrate not only that the design histories of postcolonial nations can benefit from a reflexive national framework, but also that they are crucial to the book’s aim of exploring how design culture in the modern world is shaped by the intersection of the national and the global. The African nations defined by the 1885 Berlin Conference are often thought of as haphazard. However, as shown in, for example, Marta Filipova’s chapter on glass as a national identity marker in what today is known as the Czech Republic, and Ariyuki Kondo’s chapter on the cultural exchanges between Europe and Japan during the Meiji era, international geopolitical developments have important implications for national design histories across the globe. Similarly, dipti bhagat’s discussion of how

international trade in second-hand clothing is integral to Zambian design culture illuminates Stina Teilmann-Lock's analysis of how 'Danish Design' has moved from signifying 'made in Denmark' to now implying 'designed in Denmark' (but made elsewhere).

## From Nation to Nation: Other Alternative Approaches

Different scales of focus have been tested, most notably by the French *Annales* School (see, for instance, Braudel 1969), while social history, history of everyday life and micro history have tended to focus on other units of analysis, for example the family, the village and the region. More recent alternatives to the national paradigm have included comparative history and transnational history. An example of the former, which is relevant to the history of design, is Greg Castillo's 2010 examination of the significance of homes during the Cold War as demonstrations of the relative merits of socialist and capitalist societies and associated lifestyles. Castillo ranges comparatively across East and West, Soviet bloc and the US in tracing this argument through the material culture of the competing regimes and the discourses which surrounded it. And design historians will have much to gain from considering the work of the major Tensions of Europe project and the associated Making Europe book series, which applies a transnational approach to the study of how Europe and Europeanness have been constructed by and around people, ideas, knowledge and technology in constant movement across national borders (see especially Oldenziel and Hård 2013). This work is extremely valuable for elucidating and exemplifying the place of design and technology in understanding nations and their interactions. Ultimately, though, both comparative history and transnational history rely on the nation as entity and conceptual category, and therefore produce histories that complement rather than contest national histories. Also complementary are regional histories, whether of regions within nations, such as the study of *North East America* by Daniel Maudlin and Robin Peel (2013), or supranational regions such as Scandinavia (Fallan 2012).

Larger alternatives to the national paradigm include the growing fields of world history and global history. Design historical interventions in these categories include Victor Margolin's monumental *World History of Design* which combines a chronological arrangement with regional and national perspectives (Margolin 2015) and the anthology *Global Design History* (Adamson, Riello and Teasley 2011) which emphasizes an object-centred perspective as well as global connections and flows. The textbook survey *History of Design: Decorative Arts and Material Culture, 1400–2000* (Kirkham and Weber 2013) also aims for global coverage (albeit with the exclusion of Australia/Oceania in the first edition). Aligning the 'material turn' in the humanities with the desire

to move beyond the Western bias of most fields, Ruth Phillips argues that ‘It is no accident that a concern with materiality has accompanied the rise of global consciousness and the reframing of curricula and research in “world” terms – e.g. “world” history, art history, literatures’. Their congruence, she claims, is facilitated by the material turn’s friendliness to ‘critical analysis of alternative sensory regimes’ (Phillips 2013: 140). World histories of design, then, are alluring because things lend themselves to cross-cultural translation and understanding. However, a warning is sounded about world history from advocates of border studies, Tony Fry and Eleni Kalantidou, that: ‘The plural nature of design cannot any longer be gathered and contained within any homogenizing frame notwithstanding for a “world history of design” to be “manufactured” within design history’ (Fry and Kalantidou 2014: 6; see also Fry 1989). National studies may be too bounded by borders, but they are perhaps less prone to generalizing about the commonality of huge international regions than the project of world history.

Clearly, the historiography of recent decades demonstrates that there are multiple challenges to the national framework in the writing of history, and alternative approaches abound. Notwithstanding these highly significant and influential developments in historical scholarship, the national paradigm is far from discarded – if anything, it is resurging. Stefan Berger has pointed to the political turmoil following the end of the Cold War as a catalyst for this renewed interest in national histories: ‘The nation is about to return to the historical stage, as it is still widely identified as the most powerful community of memory’ (Berger 2005: 673). The new national histories are, however, significantly different from the homogenizing, monolithic narratives so prominent in traditional historiography:

Where the old national paradigms worked on the basis of ‘othering’ and inclusion/exclusion mechanisms, the new histories have steadfastly opposed excluding certain stories in order to make the overall story a homogeneous one. [...] The historical master narrative needs to be pluralized in order to arrive at more tolerant and playful forms of cultural identity. (Berger 2005: 678)

National histories have been portrayed as outmoded and static, for example by François Hartog, who has asked ‘How should we write national history without reactivating the patterns of nineteenth century historiography: that is to say, the close association of progress and the nation . . . or without presenting it as a paradise lost?’ (Hartog 1996: 112). Such worries, however, seem to be predicated on an outmoded and static understanding of the nation itself as analytical category. If the nation is instead conceived of as a dynamic, ever evolving entity – as an ‘essentially contested concept’ (Lorenz 2008: 30) – sidestepping the trap described by Hartog seems possible. As we argue in this volume, the national framework – although contested – remains a vital and rewarding organizational concept in the writing of history not in spite of its contested character, but because of it.

## Globalized Nations

We live in an age of globalization. Globalization clearly has ramifications for the role of national frameworks and the experience of national identities. However, at the same time, 'we live in a nationalized world. The concept of the nation is central to the dominant understandings of both political community and of personal identity' (Cubitt 1998: 1). The increased mobility of people, products and information alike might be making the conceptual grid of nationality more complex than ever, but it is not eradicating it. According to Tim Edensor, 'globalisation and national identity should not be conceived in binary terms but as two inextricably interlinked processes', because 'as global cultural flows become more extensive, they facilitate the expansion of national identities and also provide cultural resources which can be domesticated, enfolded within popular and everyday national cultures' (Edensor 2002: 29). Similarly, Anthony Smith has argued that far from rendering nations, nationalism and national identities obsolete, globalization reinforces and recasts their roles in contemporary society (Smith 1995). Writing history today, then, should be less about pitching the global against the local, regional and national, and more a matter of exploring the interactions and influences between these different scales: 'As each scale of observation and analysis is associated with specific cognitive benefits, the very principle of a variation of scales is more important than the choice of one single scale' (Revel 2010: 59).

So far, we have briefly reviewed the diminishing dominance of the national paradigm, and a range of alternatives, to reach the current state of the art in the historiography of nations: recognition that the local, regional, national and global operate in dynamic simultaneity. It is from this position that we must now consider design and national identity.

## Design and National Identity

Constructivist approaches to national identity have incorporated design culture in their analyses to some extent, but largely in passing and rarely with much new insight into the meaning and role of designed artefacts. In calling for an interdisciplinary approach to the study of national narratives, Stefan Berger insists that scholars from across the arts and humanities 'need to study fictional, artistic, musical, visual and historiographic representations of the national pasts alongside each other' (Berger 2008: 10). Few studies to date have, however, systematically incorporated design in such examinations. The material culture invoked in these studies has on the whole been restricted to that which can be said to have an explicitly symbolic function, such as flags, coinage, folk costumes, monuments, etc. (see, for example, Billig 1995). Whereas others have called for greater attention also to material culture with less overtly nationalist symbolism,



this remains a little explored venue (Smith 1991: 77; 2001: 7; Edensor 2002: 12). Edensor's critique of the work of Gellner, Hobsbawm, Anderson, Smith and Hutchinson as useful but ultimately neglectful of popular culture and everyday life as scalar practices is perhaps most pertinent as a call for greater design historical examination of national identity. In noting that 'The intimate relationships between people and the things they make (or used to make) become important signifiers of identity for national communities', Edensor recognizes that 'mass manufactured commodities are associated with particular nations, also often carrying mythic associations that connote particular qualities and forms of expertise' (Edensor 2002: 105). Therefore, the relationship between design and national identity is both extremely practical, concrete and material, and operates at the level of the public imaginary, myth and symbol: 'In the face of globalisation, commonly shared things anchor people to place' (Edensor 2002: 116). Designers are responsible not only for the livery and regalia of state and monarchy, and the flags, currency, stamps and other insignia of the public-facing nation; they also furnish our everyday surroundings with goods and services which are taken for granted and have been largely excluded from examinations of national identity to date. Yet, as historians increasingly engage with material culture, this regrettable lacuna is slowly being addressed.

In the introduction to his popular project *A History of the World in 100 Objects*, Neil MacGregor emphasizes the role of designed artefacts in narrating national histories in a global context: 'All round the world national and communal identities are increasingly being defined through new readings of their history, and that history is frequently anchored in things' (MacGregor 2012: xxv). For example, in some former colonies experiencing industrialization relatively late when compared with Western nations, design was considered an important 'way for countries on the periphery to come to terms with modernity, with the modern project, and not only in the realm of industry, but also in that of social organization' (Bonsiepe 1991: 252). Since Gui Bonsiepe wrote these words nearly a generation ago, the notion of a periphery, which implies a centre, has been challenged and a model of multiple centres is now more accepted as a way of understanding cultural difference on a global scale (Calvera 2005; Kikuchi and Lee 2014: 325). This position undergirds particularly the chapters in this book by dipti bhagat and Livia Rezende.

However, the intimate relations between design, designed goods and national identity are equally prominent in what are often termed 'post-industrial societies', where national industrial heritage and national design heritage become key identity markers. Examples abound in the UK, the first industrialized nation, where the Big Pit National Coal Museum in South Wales switched in 1980 from being a productive coal mine to part of the National Museum Wales. It has been successful in providing an immersive heritage experience for visitors from around the UK and internationally. Other examples include the UNESCO World Heritage site at Ironbridge in England, which is home to ten

museums commemorating the ‘birthplace of industry’ including, in addition to the Iron Bridge itself, the Coalport China Museum and Coalbrookdale Iron Museum among others (Ironbridge 2015). The negotiation of design heritage is seen, for example, in a region that is world famous for its design heritage – Scandinavia – as is demonstrated in the chapters that follow, by Stina Teilmann-Lock (on the legal implications of Denmark’s design heritage) and by Kjetil Fallan and Christina Zetterlund (on museological practice which challenges and usefully complicates an existing normative homogenizing narrative). Fallan has suggested elsewhere that ‘products clearly identified with national industrial heritage have become increasingly important identity markers in our time of “liquid modernity”, and their capacity to convey and evoke memories of *temps perdu* is more significant than ever’ (Fallan 2013: 81). A good example of the practice he points to is found in the remarkable popularity in contemporary New Zealand of collecting ‘kiwiana’ – objects seen as emblematic of recent national history and cultural identity (Bell 2013), as Claudia Bell elaborates in her chapter here.

However, design history has not only revealed how designed objects can function as national identity markers (Aynsley 1993); it has also provided sharp criticism of the same phenomenon, challenging the celebratory myths surrounding stereotypical national design icons (Jackson 2002; 2006). This essential anti-essentialist project has informed subsequent scholarship in the field such as Fallan’s revisionist collection of essays on Scandinavian design (Fallan 2012) and our joint work on Italian design. In the latter, Lees-Maffei has pointed out that a tendency to privilege the acts of ideation and design, rather than the processes of manufacturing, mediation and consumption, in determining provenance for goods persists, even in the light of widespread recognition of the global nature of contemporary design (Lees-Maffei 2014: 287 ff.). Critiques of the association of design and national identity and work in design history which has supported reductive or overly programmatic instances of such associations have been informed, to a greater or lesser degree by postcolonialism, discussed above. D.J. Huppertz has complained that ‘Whereas it is by now widely acknowledged that the histories of modernism and of colonialism are deeply entangled, design history has not properly explored this connection’ (Huppertz 2010: 33). Yuko Kikuchi and Yunah Lee have been similarly critical of the extent to which what they characterize as ‘Euroamerican’ design history has failed to integrate work from outside that region, such as the emerging scholarship on East Asian design history, and has also failed to take account of design histories in languages other than English (Kikuchi 2011; Kikuchi and Lee 2014). The problems associated with languages in design history writing will not easily be solved without significantly better funding for bi-lingual publication, massively increased linguistic capacity among design historians, or perhaps a technical solution facilitating translations of a quality suitable for academic work. In the meantime, design historians can continue

working on the more extensive coverage of design, variously defined, around the world, informed by the recognition of the impact of colonialism and postcolonialism alike:

the history of design is entangled with the history of colonialism, even if this appears to be deliberately avoided in most design history discourses. It was not just design in the colonial spaces that perpetuated or supported colonialism; design in the ‘metropolises’ made use of a seemingly unlimited supply of raw materials, contributed to the rise of consumerism and created demand for products that perpetuated the colonial system of exploitation of labour, extraction of raw materials and environmental destruction. (Pereira and Gillett 2014: 113)

Much work in this direction remains to be done and it is a promising project which should continue to yield rich results for understanding design. A recent example is Arden Stern’s study of how the hand-painted store-front signs in Lusaka, Zambia ‘are visually linked to globally dominant design practices’, yet ‘their creators simultaneously imbue graphics of diverse geographic, historical and cultural provenance with Zambian specificity’ through a process of domestication (Stern 2014: 406). Postcolonial approaches have informed many of the chapters in this volume in various ways and now we will turn to the contribution of this book.

## **The Contribution of this Book**

*Designing Worlds* responds to the small currently published literature on global design history, and the difficulty of obtaining evidence to support work on this topic, by contributing an original and innovative reassessment of the role of national histories. The fifteen chapters which follow are written by senior and emerging scholars from a range of nations within all five continents. The geographic arrangement of the chapters is intended to make clear the importance of borders. Nations are not isolated; rather, they are contiguous with other nations. Several of the chapters show this explicitly, for example Zeina Maasri writing about tourist campaigns for Lebanon at the intersection of East and West, Nicolas P. Maffei on the Texas-Mexico border as a productive ground for mixed cultures and cuisines, and Grace Lees-Maffei on a transatlantic domestic dialogue, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean. Comparative, transnational and border studies approaches provide design historians with ways of going beyond the regions which have received disproportionate levels of attention in the field. In this book, the USA is approached through its borders, in the chapters by Nicolas P. Maffei and Grace Lees-Maffei just mentioned, and in the chapters examining the constituent parts of the larger Americas (see below for a discussion of comparative approaches).

This book aims to overcome the ‘descriptive narratives of particular nationalisms’ characterized by Özkirimli as typifying the drawbacks of existing

work in history on nationalism (2010: 219). The authors of the chapters here articulate methodological and historiographic issues attendant upon the interface of design, its histories and the nation. For example, as can be the case with other types of historical research, one problem in writing national histories of design has been the lack of available sources. This applies to countries with highly developed design cultures and historiographies, just as it does to less well-known national design stories. Recently, an important archive in Germany was threatened with closure and dispersal, but in some nations design has not been archived or preserved at all because there is little tangible design infrastructure. As Fallan and Zetterlund argue in their chapter, the problem of ‘missing materialities’ is particularly pertinent when seeking to articulate the heterogeneity of national design histories to include ethnic, national and social minorities whose material culture has been neglected by state institutions. Patricia Lara-Betancourt addresses the scarcity of archives and infrastructure in relation to Latin America, while Deirdre Pretorius seeks evidence of an academic design community in the South African region. Recently, D.J. Huppertz and Grace Lees-Maffei conducted an international survey of the state of design history which showed that it was growing into new regions and nations (Huppertz and Lees-Maffei 2013), so this issue of missing archives and absent or emerging infrastructures is likely to become more prominent as design history develops globally.

In order to better understand the design history of the national within the global, the chapters in this book analyse different geographical areas. Authors examine the issue at the level of continents (Africa, and Latin America within the South American continent, or subcontinent of the Americas), supranational regions (Latin America, Scandinavia as represented by Norway and Sweden), transnational studies (Norway and Sweden; Japan understood through the eyes of an émigré German in Britain; the UK and USA in a domestic dialogue; hybrid food cultures in the USA and Mexico; returnees from Britain in Jamaica) and the nation state (South Africa, India, Lebanon, Czechoslovakia, Denmark and Brazil, among others). Some stories which are worth telling retain national boundaries, of course, but where a single nation state is the focus in this book, it is understood in relation to others, so that the representation of a nation on the global stage is the concern in Suchitra Balasubrahmanyam’s analysis of Ghandi’s Dandi March and Nehru’s Republic Day Parade as it is in Livia Rezende’s examination of Brazil’s national representation in international exhibitions of 1867 and 1904. Even where the focus is domestic national identity packaged for domestic consumption, as in the case of Claudia Bell’s chapter on Kiwiana, international comparisons are crucial.

What the chapters show us, collectively, is that the comparative method is essential for understanding the national. The treatment of South Africa here raises issues commonly raised in relation to other states establishing or refashioning national identities. In this book we see, for example, India’s articulation of

national identity in Nehru's Republic Day Parade and arguments about shifting national identities played out in Czech glass and Bohemian crystal. If we were to push the comparative method further here (which we have not done in order better to explore a range of approaches), Claudia Bell's analysis of 'Kiwiana' may be compared with US and Canadian 'Native American' beaded and other goods made in Taiwan and sold in indigenous shops, including those on reservations in the late 1960s and 1970s. And Zeina Maasri's study of Lebanese tourist campaigns might incorporate a comparison with Iran to give a more complex picture of the Middle East region. Comparative design history needs to demonstrate the dynamism of Ortiz' transculturation and Bhabha's hybridity; see chapters 11 and 14 for discussions of hybridity in the history of design.

In the opening chapter, dipti bhagat states at the outset, in response to the homogenizing generalization so often bestowed upon the vast and heterogeneous continent of Africa in media and public discourse, that she does not 'treat "Africa as if it were one country"; rather she recognizes that the "category", or the "sign" of Africa [...] persists'. She pays attention to 'supple conceptions of local, national, regional and long distance connections of the continent that became Africa'. Ultimately, bhagat argues, it is 'by highlighting the complexity of African engagement with other places in the world – an interaction which is often asymmetrical – involving objects and people, ideas, processes and intentions, design histories in / of Africa might throw off the shackles of its categories of Eurocentric exclusion and embrace an interdisciplinary approach to scholarship'.

Deirdre Pretorius continues this questioning project in her chapter 'Does Southern African Design History Exist?' She examines the region of Southern Africa rather than one of its constituent nation states. Her chapter therefore invites consideration of the process of detecting a cogent unit of study in geographic terms: if design history appears to be absent from the African countries, can we achieve greater critical mass by looking at a region, such as the Southern African region? Does that regional approach make more sense than a national one for nations where design history is not as prominent as it is elsewhere? Pretorius responds to this dilemma by seeking to determine a cogent unit of study in academic terms; if design history is largely obscured, where can we look for it? She demonstrates the value of detective work in higher education institutions, in the curricula, in journal coverage and in conference activity, to piece together evidence of a Southern African design history.

Our final chapter concerning Africa sees Jacques Lange and Jeanne van Eeden focus on the South African Nation. In discussing the role played by design and designers during key moments in that nation's history from 1910 to today, the authors demonstrate the impact of the paucity of documentary materials. Designers communicated 'different versions of nationhood' scripted by successive governments: 'Colonial legacies of visual stereotyping in terms of

race and national identity were found to be wanting, and a new, more inclusive and representative visual vocabulary was established that reflected and possibly helped to construct this emerging Africanization’.

In moving from Africa to New Zealand, we discover in Claudia Bell’s chapter ‘Resisting Global Homogeneity but Craving Global Markets: Kiwiana and Contemporary Design Practice in New Zealand’ how contemporary designers have sought to utilize Maori visual culture. Notwithstanding a consensus that Maori motifs should be reserved for Maori-made artefacts, ‘Maoriana’ goods are mass produced in Chinese and Taiwanese factories, thereby raising questions about heritage, authenticity and meaning. Bell shows the significance of quotidian demotic design for national identity in a way that responds to Edensor’s critique of the emphasis on high culture and public design in existing studies of nations.

Ariyuki Kondo continues the examination of ‘the idea of the national character of a nation’s art and design’ in his case study of the development of modern Japanese design in the Meiji era (1868 to 1912) in tandem with Nikolaus Pevsner’s ideas about ‘a new geographical historiography of art’ in which the nation is understood as a ‘self-conscious cultural entity’. Pevsner anticipated the ideas of Gellner and Anderson by several decades. Pevsner’s approach has contemporary relevance in being distanced from ‘the anathema of ultra-nationalism and racialism’, Kondo argues.

The nation, national identity and nationalism are all consciously and actively designed in certain circumstances. Suchitra Balasubrahmanyam examines the design of large-scale public events as instances of the construction of nationhood in the context of postcolonial reconstruction. Mahatma Gandhi’s Dandi March (1930) and Jawaharlal Nehru’s Republic Day Parade (from 1951) deploy similar design strategies in dissimilar ways to articulate ‘very different conceptions of India’. Nehru’s Parade instances the invention of tradition – by a diverse range of criteria – which has been so critical in fostering national identity (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1993). In comparing the two events, Balasubrahmanyam concludes that ‘If disobedience was the leitmotif of the Dandi March, then obedience and routinized falling-in-line was the organizing principal of the Republic Day parade’. This chapter suggests ‘a methodological shift which illuminates how design imagination and design praxis is deployed by agents who have hitherto not been considered designers, thus opening up a rich ground for fresh exploration in diverse global settings’. Furthermore, it points to ‘a reciprocal lens whereby the evolution of a particular strand of Indian nationalism in the context of the country’s colonial experience is revealed through design, and the examination of that strand in turn reveals design as a space and mode of action in the political domain’. Finally, by examining what Balasubrahmanyam calls the ‘afterlife’ of these two events, the chapter has implications for designers in that their agency is ‘transferred to new actors’ as ‘design is ever a work in progress’.

Moving to the Middle East, Zeina Maasri analyses promotional prints issued by the National Council for Tourism in 1960s–1970s Lebanon. Noting that the Tourism Council and its agents – graphic designers included – chose ‘to promote the country as a modern European-styled Mediterranean tourist destination’, she considers the implications of this strategy in the context of conflicting politics of nationhood and belonging in the Arab world. Maasri’s chapter uses the case study of Lebanon to present ‘new understandings of how design for the tourism industry intersects with processes of nation building and modernization in postcolonial contexts’ which ‘complicate a putative binary between the West and non-West in design historiography’. Lived experience rarely conforms to binary oppositions, and the Lebanon case deftly demonstrates what Jacques Derrida and Dominick LaCapra term supplementarity: ‘Supplementarity reveals why analytic distinctions necessarily overlap in “reality”, and why it is misleading to take them as dichotomous categories’ (LaCapra 1983: 152).

In turning to a region which has received a disproportionately large amount of attention in existing design historical scholarship, we examine Europe through the Czech Republic and the Scandinavian countries, and how these nations are managing their rich design heritage in a rapidly changing society. Marta Filipová pays attention to the development of perceived national, cultural and ethnic characteristics in design and the discourse surrounding that design. In her case study she shows how categories of understanding glass have been based on assumptions about Czech, Bohemian and Czechoslovak identities and the market desire for a perceived authenticity intimately relating design to specific national geographies and manufacturing traditions.

The idea of authenticity is key to the following chapter, ‘The Myth of Danish Design and the Implicit Claims of Labels’ by Stina Teilmann-Lock. The legal protection of design is a topic that reveals the continued significance of national frameworks. Intellectual property rights vary enormously in different national contexts, as legislation is deeply entrenched in the structures of national legislative bodies and processes (Pouillard 2011; 2013; Teilmann-Lock 2012; 2014; Gorman 2014). Consequently, Carma Gorman argues, ‘it is important – sometimes even essential – to study design from a national perspective’ (Gorman 2014: 270). Teilmann-Lock shows the category of Danish design as having been constructed by marketing professionals and design mediators both within and outside Denmark. She concludes by considering unsuccessful attempts to foster a European design identity, which have foundered in the face of persistent national cultures of design within Europe’s ‘design nations’. As such, her study is an example of how ‘local design cultures are both challenged and enabled by the increasing globalization of the marketplace’ (Fiss 2009: 3).

Staying in Scandinavia, Kjetil Fallan and Christina Zetterlund consider the methodological issues involved in challenging a ‘homogenized heritage’ through examination of ‘heterogeneous material cultures in Norway and Sweden’. Dipesh Chakrabarty noted at the beginning of the century that:

the question of including minorities in the history of the nation has turned out to be a much more complex problem than a simple operation of applying some already settled methods to a new set of archives and adding the results to the existing collective wisdom of historiography. (Chakrabarty 2000: 107)

Rather, it requires rethinking some of the fundamental tenets of historical scholarship. In Scandinavian design history, what surfaces as particularly poignant in this context is the field's almost symbiotic and rarely problematized relationship with modernism (in historiography and design alike). Questioning the absence of minority material culture in Norwegian and Swedish design history, Fallan and Zetterlund link these omissions to key features of Scandinavian design historiography such as the use of carefully selected national typologies and traditions to legitimize the modernist mission of much design discourse and design history throughout the twentieth century as well as to methodological challenges such as a dearth of archival material and the thorny issue of inclusion/exclusion in identity formations through 'border maintenance'.

The remainder of the book addresses the Americas. While Fallan and Zetterlund in part provide a comparative analysis pertaining to two nation states within the region of Scandinavia, Grace Lees-Maffei's chapter offers a transnational examination of two countries that are technically neighbours, albeit divided by the Atlantic Ocean. In 'A Special Relationship: The UK-US Transatlantic Domestic Dialogue' Lees-Maffei reviews the limitations of single-nation studies which fail to incorporate comparative or transnational analyses, and argues in favour of a more comprehensive adoption of comparative studies in design history. Comparative design histories are few (exceptions include Castillo 2010, mentioned above). Not only does comparative analysis help to alleviate the risk of erroneous periodization attendant upon extrapolating from a single nation case, and the tendency to assume as evidence of national identity trends which are in fact international or transnational, but it also provides a more accurate account of cultural development freed from the piecemeal disaggregated picture assembled through successive national histories. The call for transnational approaches is not new, but it is necessary in design history. As well as proposing that design history should be studied comparatively, and being based on the belief that national identity cannot be understood purely from within the nation (Lees-Maffei 2013), Lees-Maffei's chapter differs from much work on national identity in design which examines public manifestations intended for international audiences such as exhibitions, international fairs, parades and tourist posters and tourist wares. Lees-Maffei analyses instead a design discourse, domestic advice, which is intended for a domestic market and does not explicitly set out to communicate national identity. The fact that the treatment of the national is not explicit in these sources does not mean that it does not exist. Indeed, they are replete with guidance on consumption and other practices which can be read as evidence of the communication of national tendencies and identities.



Nicolas P. Maffei also examines design and the national in the USA through reference to one of the USA's neighbours, and returns to the issue of perceived authenticity, this time in relation to the case study of the imagery of Mexican-American food packaging and architecture. Border theory – the interdisciplinary examination of spatial, political, social and cultural borders – has been used as a way of thinking about the interfaces of nation states. Borders of various kinds condition many aspects of contemporary life, including the way in which design is understood. Maffei's historiographic survey identifies homogenization, harmonization and 'inauthentic authenticity' as key narratives in the writing on Mexican-American food cultures. Food design is an emergent field in design history; here the intersection of food and design is shown to be a 'cultural battleground where an asymmetrical power relationship advantages Anglo producers' and where the manipulation of so-called authenticity increases sales.

Like Bell's examination of 'mundane' design, Davinia Gregory examines a case study of demotic design, specified by customers and builders rather than designers and architects. Her chapter examines the forms of domestic architecture in twenty-first-century Jamaica and specifically the significance of classical columns. Clearly, the columns and porticos of classical architecture have been adopted in many nations around the world as symbolic of substance and rationalism, hence their regular use in the architecture of government and learning. However, in Jamaica such architectural forms denote a highly particularized relationship between homeland, the adopted home of immigrant destinations and the successful return to the native land for comfortable repose and reflection. Similar architectural features embody distinct meanings in specific geo-cultural, and in this case national, contexts. Gregory's chapter is also exemplary of the integration of subjectivity into the writing of design history (Fallan and Lees-Maffei 2015), a methodological approach which offers another dimension to the understanding of design and its histories.

In proposing 'A Global/National Approach to a History of Design in Latin America', Patricia Lara-Betancourt argues that replacing an emphasis on the 'only national' with an approach which encompasses the 'global and national' entails examination of the effects of assimilation and appropriation in 'sophisticated networks of trade, world exploration and cultural sovereignty' and recognition of how these processes impact upon local heritages. Lara-Betancourt shows Latin America shaking off a colonial identity in favour of a European-inspired modernity. While Asian and Middle Eastern nations were more circumspect in their responses to European goods, standards and ideals, Latin Americans associated their adoption with progress. She concludes her chapter by suggesting that European modernism may not have flourished without this Latin American adoption and that it was more accurately a global and transnational achievement: 'It is by focusing on this dual perspective that it becomes possible to appreciate the significance of the transnational interplay within a global stage'.

The final chapter details Livia Rezende's analysis of the ways in which Brazilian national identity has been communicated using materials and manufacture, design and consumption, through the case study of international exhibitions. Design historians within and outside Brazil have neglected to examine the artefacts by which Brazil represented itself internationally in these exhibitions because they pre-date the 'arrival' of modern design. However, since 2000, new work presenting a more accurate and heterogeneous picture of design in Brazil has emerged. Rezende's concluding call for 'a move from discipline territorialization towards the making of a design professional and academic practice that includes the wider material and conceptual production of the Brazilian population while connecting them to global experiences' echoes that of the preceding chapter.

## Conclusion

Studies of the national in design must now place their subject within the contexts of the local, regional and global at once if they are to accurately reflect the processes by which design is produced, mediated and consumed in our century. In discussing several possible arrangements for the chapters within this book, we imagined ourselves circumnavigating the globe from Africa to Australasia, East and South Asia, via the Middle East and through Europe to the Americas. We hope you enjoy the ride.

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