The Role of Contemporary Requirements in Shaping Iraqi Buildings Identity, (1960-1980)

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Abstract. The era spirit is witnessing continuous intellectual transformations in the international architectural field, influenced by the contemporary requirements. Various design trends have emerged about dealing with these contemporaries. Some designers focused on presentation importance of Iraqi contemporary identity, while others try to employ it in other directions that are not consistent with the local character. The research problem is knowledge lack in clarifying the role of contemporary requirements in shaping the identity of Iraqi buildings for the period (1960-1980) and how to employ the architectural act of its designers. The aim to determine how the architect responds to these contemporary requirements through the architectural act that distinguishes each designer from others. The theoretical framework is embodied by establishing Dealing Levels with local identity and reading it in a specific time and place within the levels of Explanation, Interpretation, and Disassembly, which were linked to the concept of an integrated response in achieving it through three strategies of revival, renewal, and reform. Then the elements are applied to a sample of the most prominent Iraqi architects in the period above to obtain results and conclusions, which emerged in achieving an integrated response case in dealing with contemporary requirements.

1. Introduction
Architectural elements, forms and structures reflect the lifestyle of the people or group that produce them, and the lifestyle includes...
customs, traditions, ways of thinking, religious beliefs, moral principles and social values... Etc. Identity varies in terms of appearance and expression and is at different levels from physical to spiritual and from individual to collective, and this makes identity a set of successive and overlapping circles of belonging in that.

Al-Jadraji addresses the identity issue, he deals with architecture as well as identity as a phenomenon until it appears to exist as a physical entity, and it must have elements that interact with each other in order to be the decisions of its production [1], but Baroudi finds that the title (the problem of architectural identity) raises implications for the architectural form that can Emotionally aware, however, these implications can be directed to the intellectual dimension of architecture, which is the deeper dimension of architectural identity and adds that it is easy for architectural work to carry a formal identity, no matter how contemporary or traditional[2].

2.2. Contemporary Requirements and architecture globalization

The architectural community represents a human society and therefore it is subject to the contemporary development of its material and moral existence and what is evolving in man is his perception of changing the way he views creativity. Achieving contemporary architecture necessarily requires harnessing everything new in architecture to meet the needs at the level of technology and materials, so the use of non-contemporary technology or the repetition of the traditional building craft in the modern era is a disruptive work to develop architecture somewhere. Consequently, the local architect must remain in direct contact with the architectural theories produced by the centre of developed countries. But this matter may lead us to the globalization of architecture, which represents modern expressions that entered the dictionary of contemporary architecture, and set a new direction in international dealings, but the essence or content is not at all new. Otherwise, it tries to expand at the expense of the neighbours first, before it becomes on the map of the world after that, so it is necessary to study it carefully and in accordance with the prevailing local identity [3].

3. Contemporary Iraqi architecture identity

Many theorists considered that the golden era of contemporary architecture in Iraq went through a number of stages, which differ from one scene to another, but one of the most prominent classifications included three main stages, which are as follows:

The first stage was within the period (1960-1980), which was reflected in the works of Iraqi architects returning in the fiftieth decade of the younger generation whose products emerged in the sixties and seventies, including Rifaat Al-Jadarji, Qahtan Awni and others. As for the features of the product in this stage, they were represented in the spread of concepts of modern architecture and the international style and its reflection on the products influenced by the ideas carried by Iraqi architects returning from outside the country, which they tried to embody in the buildings that they designed at that time. As for the materials, after the use of bricks prevailed in the previous stage, new materials were previously unknown, such as iron, concrete, and cladding materials such as marble, natural stone, and plastering. With regard to the scale, the stage witnessed the magnitude of the scale horizontally and vertically and the emergence of multi-story buildings in addition to the scale of the scale at the level of details such as the adoption of wide glass surfaces and smooth walls with large areas [4].

The second stage is represented by Iraqi architects graduating from the first Iraqi architecture departments, in addition to the use of consultative offices and Iraqi executive institutions that have emerged to complete these projects for the period from the end of the seventies and eighties and to some extent in the nineties and the most prominent pioneers: Fadel Ajinah, d. Saher Al-Qaisi, Muthana Al-Bayati, Inaam Al-Zalzalah and others.

As for the features of this stage, the beginnings of this stage witnessed a trend towards the concept of architectural heritage and adherence to it after the prevalence of modernity trends and the international style in the previous stages. Besides, modern materials were used in the implementation of these buildings that helped increase the financial resources by nationalizing the oil in importing and bearing its high costs, so they were used in most buildings, especially ministries, airports, and other buildings, with the availability of specialized personnel to deal with them. The product of this stage was also distinguished by the presence of the human scale in its buildings, especially the residential houses and
some public buildings, due to the use of simple heights, with high buildings at this stage such as communication centers, some ministries and administrative buildings.

As for the third stage, it is represented in architecture at the end of the nineties of the last century and the beginning of the twenty-first century to the present time, the most prominent of which was the emergence of digital technologies at the level of design and implementation, the most prominent of which was Zaha Hadid and Manhal Al-Haboubi. The most prominent characteristics of this stage were the emergence of free forms and designs of formal complexity and the entry of executive techniques in the field of implementation such as digital manufacturing, such as the adoption of CNC machines [5].

Due to the narrow field of research, the first stage will be addressed as it is considered the first development of our contemporary architecture. previous studies that dealt with the relationship between local architectural identity and contemporary requirements to explore the research problem.

4. Previous studies
Munawara study shows that technology has shaped the images surrounding this world, changed known traditional lifestyles, and launched new ways to choose knowledge and various methods of shopping. Here, this technology must also reformulate architecture for everyone, and ask the question of what architecture will be in the future, and how do contemporary requirements affect it? The truth now is the period of refurbishment, the entry of new jobs to previously unknown buildings, and building systems linked to contemporary communications technology that will re-establish the architectural form and push it back into a new revolution, reminiscent of the nineteenth-century revolution when steel overwhelmed architecture. The importance of keeping pace with the architectural progress of the world, obtaining its relative independence from Western and global thought in general and the domination of what is prevalent of the local heritage, and thus moving to a more advanced country in establishing a positive balance between global thought and traditional heritage together. It is illustrated the influence of architectural thought by the technical tools of contemporary and its ability to realize its ideas and imagination, to say that "form follows technology", a phrase similar to the term Louis Sullivan "form follows function", which he launched at the end of the nineteenth century to celebrate the end of an era and the beginning of a new era. Additionally, Peter Blake's phrase "Form follows Fiasco " is a form in the mid-1950s describing the deteriorating state of modern architecture: now there is no way to express the state of architecture without the idea that the architectural form will respond to the high-tech era, information flow, and image revolution that Created with technologies[6].

Manaf study, discussed that at the beginning of the 20th century to this day, two main styles have a great influence on the identity of local architecture, the first of which is based on the style of influence driven by the world-class style and distinguished by its lack of belonging to a particular region, as it is a group of imports competing with the model Traditional or local or regional affiliation to its areas of existence, as a result, the local architecture was characterized by boring facades, and the uniform exterior and sometimes wholesale production mass production as if the architecture had receded. The other method tries to oblige the architects to give the characteristic of local privacy by addressing the appearance of the exterior only utilizing certain and local decorative items [7].

As for the study of Wali and others, it raised a question about how to preserve the local identity in light of contemporary requirements? Which was one of the most important solutions in it is to refer to the essence of Islamic architecture, as the direct interpretation of this architecture should be avoided, but rather work to give multiple alternatives that match the current local needs. In addition, the study emphasized the importance of preparing designs for buildings that take into consideration the characteristics of the local environment from used materials and building methods.

From previous studies, it can be concluded that there is a relationship between the concept of identity in architecture within its local level and the level of its globalization achieved by entering contemporary data, which are included within certain levels of identity on the one hand and the extent of the architectural response to it. Here, the research problem has emerged: “a knowledge lack about the role of contemporary requirements in shaping the identity of Iraqi buildings for the period (1960-1980) and how designers employ the architectural verb”. The aim will be to determine how the architect responds to these contemporary requirements through the architectural act that distinguishes each designer from the other.
5. The role of contemporary requirements in shaping our local identity

Identity varies in terms of its appearance and expression, and it is at different levels from the physical to the spiritual and from the individual to the collective, and the identity as belonging to a religion, homeland, nationalism or creed, and this makes it a group of successive and interrelated links of affiliation in that one, and It makes the larger rings the smallest and the most vulnerable to imbalance and loss of balance, and this means that in the event of a contradiction between the goals of the smallest ring and the big circle become links to belonging to the smallest ring is the most capable of identifying and defining its boundaries[8].

While in the case of unstable societal conditions and the event of a threat to society from external forces - ideological ties are the strongest and most able to ensure the loyalty of the followers, but such conditions do not last long because their continuation in the event of their occurrence transforms them into a semi-natural state, as it restores the commitment And loyalty to the minor affiliation. In general, there are three main levels of architectural identity in relation to each contemporary requirement:

- **Expediency architectural identity**: This level deals with human needs and is often the physical needs that exceed all other needs such as environmental, natural and historical needs. The best example of this level of identity is what was brought about by the Modern Movement, where we see that its focus was on the functional, structural and physical side while neglecting all spatial, climatic, social and cultural influences of society.

- **Public architectural identity**: It reflects the environmental, cultural and social life of a specific group or society and neglects the differences between members of one community, and that the identity of the individual derives from the identity of the group. Among the most important characteristics of this identity in contemporary Iraqi architecture is the emergence of packaging for building facades, screens, various shapes and colors that have benefits for visual and environmental insulation that were commonly used with Louvers that helped in Iraq's dry hot climate and long exposure to sunlight.

- **Personal architectural identity**: This type of identity deals with the fundamentals of a person’s identity and separates it from the identity of the society to which he belongs, and it is the opposite of the first type that is concerned with generalities, here it is concerned with the specificities and differences that distinguish this person from his sons, and the difference is often here In the details of thought and culture because it is self-evident that one society is under the same prevailing environmental and social conditions.

The concept of contemporary requirements adopted by the current research represents the current interval, which represents the time frame as an integral dimension with the spatial dimension in which the architectural identity has crystallized, so these requirements are the variable factors imposed over time that work as inputs must be taken into account by the architect, which requires Response of some kind to her. This makes the term identity distinguish between two concepts, represented by the constant and the variable. Constant concept: that identity is something that was completed and realized in the past in a certain period, and that the present is an attempt to understand and achieve this example. This interpretation of identity makes it a constant thing associated with the past so that the identity becomes predefined. Variable concept: It represents the dynamic perception that identity is something that is constantly acquired and modified and never reformed, but this trend sometimes brings identity to the form that liberates it from all possibilities or relationship with the past, as Adonis says that Arab and Islamic society and culture is what They still think according to the concept that identity is presented in advance, that it is similar to the nucleus, individuals are its fruits and manifestations and that its relationship with it is like the branch of its origin, but the position is that the identity is, on the contrary, it moves and has movement, and the individual creates his identity while creating his idea and work. Some express their identity as a result of the relationship between constants and variables, such as what Al-Jabri calls through his vision of identity-based on linking the present with the past, and sees the need to renew the cultural identity from inside, and not to spread global culture on its external surface. Therefore, the construction process must take place on historical grounds, with the pursuit of modernity in its data [9].
Here, the contemporary architectural verb stands out as a procedure that the architect takes to deal with the local identity within its constant and variable classes, which is the most important intentional verbs issued by the architect as a response to contemporary requirements, which includes two main stages: The first stage represents how to read the local identity in a specific time and place. Through three basic levels: Explanation, interpretation, and Disassembly, which are as follows:

- **Explanation level** reads the identity by analysing the architectural language, items, semantics, and classifying it according to the formal patterns and styles. It is exposed to regulations so that the architect does not have to deviate from the significance framework. Therefore, it is based on an explanation and clarification of the idea through similarities in characteristics or forms with the presence of rules governing the interpretation process.

- **Interpretation level** searches the underlying meaning and intractable understanding, it is related to the deep ideas associated with the designer (high subjectivity), through research, exploration and guessing of alternatives and possibilities related to the meaning inherent in the building.

- **Disassembly** gives priority to the production to access its codes, and this varies from one architect to another, because the disassembler does not care about what the text says, but rather turns to the same discourse that disguises itself and its reality, by breaking existing relationships and linking them to new patterns and adopting blocking and mockery.

As for the second stage, it is represented in how to respond to contemporary requirements within the scope of the local identity, through three basic levels of contemporary architectural act represented in (Revival, renewal and Reform) which are as follows [10]:

- **Revival**: It is the search for the cognitive space immersed in our intellectual heritage to re-emerge from it again, so what it searches for is only present, whether on the graphic aspects such as arches and domes or decorative, and all that the matter requires is extracting it from the middle of the rubble that covers it, without being allowed to be allowed To him something new to take for granted.

- **Renewal**: It seeks to show the appropriate appearance of the age and the consequent consequence of this by highlighting the new solutions by rejecting all that has gone by and seeking to keep pace with the era spirit.

- **Reform**: It is a different matter, as it assumes that there is a mistake fundamentally, unlike the previous cases, but rather it accentuates that meaning and seeks to fix it, which does not divert it from the circle of what it is looking for.

This trilogy as shown in figure 1 addresses and respects reality and proceeds from it to understand contemporary requirements, but in a way that is inseparable from the existence of a clear relationship between the design thoughts and its reality.

**Figure 1.** Illustrates the relationship between contemporary requirements and local identity.
6. Case studies

This aspect focuses on clarifying the general orientation of a group of the most prominent architects of Iraq for the period (1960-1980) and the specific approach of the contemporary architectural approach to each of them in order to explain how they see contemporary requirements and how to employ the architectural act for them, as follows:

6.1. Contemporary Architectural Act of (Muhammad Makiya)

This architect is characterized by the stay of heritage traits in his works. Although he graduated from Hammer Smith School in London and completed his PhD in Cambridge, he is considered an advocate of the return to heritage and the revival of Islamic architecture, as his architectural act is embodied in three types:

- The first represents the formal pattern that calls for open-plan diagrams.
- The second is the adoption of the formal structure of Islamic architecture in emphasizing the figurative and decorative aspects as an important visual unification factor for the visual formal structure that is rich in details and historical significance.
- Finally, emphasize the return to traditional craftsmanship and technical construction as shown in figure 2. This approach and its objectives are offset by the general orientation of the West, which is the mid-eighteenth century to return to the past.

Thus, Makiya believes that the contemporary architectural act deals with personal and public identity according to the interpretation and responds to it according to the revival that inherited in the historical details and indicators.

![Figure 2. Illustrates the interpretation and revival of Makiya. the Caliphs Mosque in Al-Gomhoria Street – Baghdad, Makiya, 1966.](image)

6.2. Contemporary Architectural Act at (Refat Al-Jadraji)

Al-Jadraji believes that architecture should reflect the new construction methods and the optimal use of materials, economic conditions and spiritual aspirations. He deals with local building materials such as bricks in a new style and the use of Curtain wall style, he calls for avoiding imitation of old styles and this comes through being influenced by the pioneers of modernity who called for it and that the contemporary vision he presents in modern architecture as shown in figure 3. Though he saturated with aesthetic values inlaid with heritage elements, they are associated with contemporary techniques, which have departed from traditional architecture in some of its axis, which has become deliberate reforms in dealing with a specific environment.

Thus, Al-Jadraji believes that the contemporary architectural act reflects the expediency identity according to the interpretation and responds to it according to the renewal and reform.
6.3. Contemporary Architectural Act at (Qahtan Al Madfai):
Al Madfai is considered one of the pioneers of the trend that calls for adopting the essence and mechanism of thinking of the West and reconciling them with the material production of heritage in its full form or some of its details as selected heritage elements. The form of heritage is the constant that must be taken. Each content since it is a variable must be derived from our time, whether locally or internationally as shown in figure 4. His work was characterized by the adoption of modern technology and materials in traditional buildings, as well as in the adoption of ceilings with continuous concrete contracts as a deductive case of Islamic contracts in the building of the Iraqi Plastic Society.

Therefore, Al Madfai deals with identity within its expediency and personal level, adopts the contemporary architectural act according to the interpretation and responds to it according to the renewal.

6.4. Contemporary Architectural Act of Hisham Mounir:
Hisham can be considered to belong to the compromise in architecture by reconciling heritage with the West and calling for the rejection of extremism. His architectural act combines the best in the Arab-Islamic model and the best in the Western model. He tried to combine two models as a source of legislation for contemporary local and international architecture by interpreting heritage from a more open perspective and that it could be adapted to the developments of the times. His work was influenced by local trends and the return of some of its items as a form, not spaces, so his inspiration from heritage was only decorative images as shown in Figure 5.
Figure 5. shows the renovation of Hisham Munir. Baghdad Municipality, 1978.

Khalid Al-Sultani recalls Hisham design of the Capital Secretariat building as a keen architect who does not forget his formative convictions (although time has exceeded it in one way or another) because he tried to create a blended design that can combine modern and old on one surface and the presence of the pointed arch, which extends its height on the surface of the front facade reflects the specificity of the culture of the place.

Thus, Hisham believes that the contemporary architectural act deals with the expediency and general local identity, according to the interpretation, which is adaptable and responds to it according to the renewal.

6.5. Contemporary act of Qahtan Awni:
Awni distinguishes between his generation and the architects' professions because his product reflected the absorption of modern architecture and was not merely a tradition of Western productions. It is based on the fragmentation of the architectural mass into its primary parts and then assembled with a syntax cubicle, which reflects the spirit of modernity despite the historical functions of items form such as the dome, the fragmented wall and the arched openings. In the design of the University of Mustansiriya, the architect was created by demonstrating the enormous potential of materials (bricks and concrete), especially the main hall where the local bricks were used as shown in figure 6.

Thus, the architect, Qahtan Awni, believes that the contemporary architectural act deals with the expediency and personal local identity according to the interpretation resulting from fragmentation and installation according to the renewal [11].

Figure 6. shows the expediency and personal local identity according to the interpretation of Qahtan Awni. Mustansiriya University, 1966.
7. Results

The application results of the theoretical framework items to the samples show in Table 1, and the presentation of the graph of the results shows in figure 7. After that, the findings and recommendations for the induction will be presented.

| The role of contemporary requirements in shaping local identity | Primary Items | Secondary Items | Possible values |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------|
| Dealing Levels with local identity                            | expediency   | Functional side |            |
|                                                              |              | Structural side | *           |
|                                                              |              | Physical side   | *           |
| Generality                                                    | Environmental aspects | *       |
|                                                              | Cultural aspects | *       |
|                                                              | Social aspects |           |
|                                                              | Economic aspect |           |
| Personality                                                   | Distinguished thought | *       |
|                                                              | Distinguished background |           |
| local identity in term of contemporary requirements           | Explanation  | Similarity      |           |
|                                                              | Symmetry     |               |
| Interpretation                                                | presumption  | *       |
|                                                              | Interpretation | * | * | * |
|                                                              | potential    |           |
| Disassembly                                                   | elements Deconstruct. | *       |
|                                                              | connection Breaking |           |
| Responding to contemporary requirements in the light of local identity | Revival | Pattern | * | * |
|                                                              | Graphic items | Heritage | * | * | * |
|                                                              | Historical   |           |
| Renewal                                                       | Disconnect from the past | |
|                                                              | Keep up with the spirit of era | * | * |
| Reform                                                        | Contradiction with the existing building | |
|                                                              | Contradiction with context | |

![The role of contemporary requirements in shaping local identity](image)

**Figure 7.** shows the application result of the samples
8. Conclusions

8.1. Theoretical Aspect Conclusions:

- Striving to generate an integrated system in which the self meets with its environment of topics that affect each other and achieve a convergence between the real perceptions represented by the essence of local architecture represented by its perceived constants and the perceptions of renewable variables as a result of the introduction of contemporary requirements.
- The activation of the elements of mental awareness of society such as consciousness can be a contemporary event in itself by activating the contemporary act in it and make the orientation of awareness of society to contemporary events is an event in themselves.
- Contemporary requirements and response in architecture represent two philosophical concepts, while the contemporary architectural act is a deliberate complex act that must contain the contemporary event philosophically and the response adopts its direction at all architectural levels.
- The contemporary Iraqi architectural reality is witnessing many events that the architectural act should clarify its philosophical position by activating the levels of reading contemporary events and determining the type of response that works to reform the reality in general.

8.2. Applied Aspect Conclusions:

- Architects within the contemporary period relied crucially on the local identity within their expediency level to respond to contemporary requirements, particularly concerning architectural structures.
- The tripartite levels of response (revival, renewal and reform) depend in one way or another on the tripartite levels of reading (Explanation, interpretation and Disassembly) resulting in the architectural act according to the individual architecture, in which the majority of them calling for renewal in a manner that preserves the essence of heritage.
- Finding complementarity between the levels of identity in its association with each contemporary requirement in order to achieve a state of response to the architectural act with the spirit of the age on the one hand and the constants that achieve affiliation.

8.3. Recommendation

- Emphasis on local architecture, which responds to every contemporary impact and is characterized by preserving the ancient and its identity of the place within an integrative system that achieves creativity in the final product.
- Technical contemporaries should not be afraid to influence our local architecture because they are alternative tools rather than laws and models of architecture. We should not be inspired by the architectural forms of ancient Arab architecture, but by the roots - the essence and some argue that in our response to events, we can draw a local filtering screen in which modern influences are achieved while retaining the laws and regulations of traditional local architecture.

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