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ENGLIT 1913

20 September 2023

Topic: Design Colonialism In India

Thesis:

For my project, I was particularly interested in understanding the effects of Colonialism in design. Especially when it comes to a diverse country such as India. I am interested to see how the old forms of design, art, and creation have changed and adapted as a result of imperialism and colonialism. In addition, I want to try and find a way to understand the elements of its change, so I can see what design would look like in India if colonialism had not impacted it. I think it’s important to talk about the history of design practices and why many nations follow modernized eurocentric practices instead of individualizing design for specific areas and groups. Ideally I can use many different mediums such as Blender, Twine, and HTML to create an interactive website where users are able to learn about the history of art in India, its global influence, and the practices of colonialism in respect to design changes. Users can engage with the materials and different artifacts throughout the website. In addition, they will be able to learn about some of the cultural aspects of art and design embedded in India that have been systematically eradicated by European countries. I would like to make a website using HTML, CSS, and JS. Ideally, I would also like to utilize animation software for the interactive portions of the website and use Twine to take users through the history of Indian art and design, to create a more personalized storytelling experience.

Annotated Bibliography

**Medium**

Voorveld, Hilde A. M., et al. “THE RELATION BETWEEN ACTUAL AND PERCEIVED INTERACTIVITY: What Makes the Web Sites of Top Global Brands Truly Interactive?” Journal of Advertising, vol. 40, no. 2, 2011, pp. 77–92, <https://doi.org/10.2753/JOA0091-3367400206>.

This research article discusses the relationship between actual and perceived interactivity when it comes to creating websites. It goes through a detailed analysis of the two topics and a comparison of differences and commonalities between the two. Through several studies the different elements of actual interactivity are studied to see if they affect the perceived interactivity of the website. It provides valuable insight into creating interactive features on websites that create a collaborative experience for the user instead. This was published in 2011 which makes it dated, but the information and study results are still valuable for my project as it lays a foundation for what should be focused on and emphasizes creating thoughtful interactions on a website rather than cluttering it with many small interactive elements.

Ryan, Marie-Laure. Avatars of Story, University of Minnesota Press, 2006. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/pitt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=310751>.

This book is an overview on the different forms of media that is used to convey narration and take its user’s through a narrative experience with either old media or new. For the purpose of my project, chapter II.7 Web-based narrative, multimedia, and interactive drama was a valuable chapter as it gave specifics on the functionality and effectiveness of web based narratives. The chapter also discussed the advantages of using HTML as the programming language and how to incorporate that in a narrative focused way. It is important to understand that this source is dated as published in 2006 and the examples given in the book are old examples of multimedia and what was considered new media at the time. However, the analysis and ideas of the book are relatively similar and are still valuable to consider.

Quinlan-Gagnon, Wendy. “Art Museums Online: Using Interactive Websites to Build Cultural Capital.” The International Journal of the Inclusive Museum, vol. 5, no. 2, 2013, pp. 23–32, <https://doi.org/10.18848/1835-2014/CGP/v05i02/44398>.

This peer-reviewed research article examined 4 museums and their interactive websites in terms of cultural capital. The author assessed each website in a similar format and discussed if interactive websites can play a positive role in creating more inclusion and accessibility to information and art found in museums. This paper was written in 2012 which could be considered dated, but the information is interesting as it focuses on art in museums that can be a place of exclusion and create barriers for many. Especially, when considering art pieces by underrepresented groups or historical artifacts, these can often be inaccessible to those that may not have access to a museum. However, the analysis of the websites was a way to show their importance, and to emphasize the need to create multiple mediums of access for those who may not have access to the traditional route. Since my project focuses on Art and Design history, I found this article to be an illuminating read in understanding how the layout and structure of museum websites are important to their reach.

A Front-End Web Developer Masterclass Using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. Birmingham, England: PACKT Publishing, 2018. Film.

This is an online resource of a masterclass that goes over HTML, CSS, and Javascript. It is a long masterclass, totalling around 17 hours of thorough detail on all 2 programming languages and their relationship to one another. I mainly focused on the beginning of the class and the moments where they explained the syntax and ways to connect them together. This is a helpful resource as I do not have experience with HTML and CSS, but I want to learn how to create a website from scratch that can also incorporate the elements of interactivity.

BBC News. “India Partition: Roots and Legacy - BBC News.” News, 4 Aug. 2017, [www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-d88680d1-26f2-4863-be95-83298fd01e02](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-d88680d1-26f2-4863-be95-83298fd01e02).

This interactive website takes users through the complicated history of India and Pakistan over a span of 60 years. The functionality of moving through each webpage is relatively simple, and on most pages there is an option for some level of interactivity with the content. This was an interesting website to assess as it definitely left a positive impact on my retention of the material. However, I also noticed the limitations of the content itself, in that the interactivity was relatively mild, where it was more focused on recitation of a story rather than a collaborative process. While for my project, I want there to be information and narrative that is being laid out, but with more personalization from the user to create a more collaborative effort. However, the design of the website itself is very successful and makes for a more smooth and easy to understand functionality.

“8 Stunning Storytelling Websites and Why They Shine.” Vev Blog, [www.vev.design/blog/storytelling-website](http://www.vev.design/blog/storytelling-website).

This blog post showcases 8 interactive web stories that aim to give the reader more information on a certain topic or crisis. All 8 websites are very well designed and each has a unique style of narration and the design elements play hand in hand with each other to enhance the experience. This was very helpful for me to analyze as it also made me think about the specifics of how I want my layout to look and what elements I want to incorporate into the website. Some storytelling websites are purely focused on the narrative and the interactivity of the user can be limited to engaging with information. I wanted to create mini puzzles, and storyboard narrations so that the website can be replayed in a sense that allows it to become a living website of sorts. The post also made me critically evaluate the content I want to focus on and what I should avoid in an interactive website. Many of the websites portrayed were discussing heavy content, however, there was a difference in formatting it in a negative way versus humanizing the issue and making it more productive instead of just displaying negative statistics. For my project, I need to be mindful of not creating a narrative of an oppressed group, rather to exemplify the art and design that has been historically hidden.

**Topic**

WASHBROOK, DAVID. “South India 1770–1840: The Colonial Transition.” Modern Asian studies 38.3 (2004): 479–516. Web.

This paper delves into the impact of colonialism in South India and the transitions of the cultural, social, and political landscape during that period. It discusses the western views of Indian culture and the efforts to create a bureaucratic system and generalized a diverse group of people with many unique colors under one. This paper is helpful as it helps add the foundation to the website, where users are able to interact with the content and learn about the history and effects to the culture and people, before delving into the topic of Design and art. Not all areas of the paper will be used, but the understanding of the industrialization process of textiles, and the forced labor structures will be crucial to understanding the effects of Indian art on a global scale.

Ghosh, Monica G. Tiger Files: Textual and Visual Representations of Tigers in South Asian Contexts. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2013.

This dissertation is an extensive research paper on the textual and visual representation of tigers in South Asia. The paper takes an exhaustive look at the history of the Tiger imagery and metaphors and the subsequent European developments from their influence. Looking into popular media’s representation of the Tiger and analyzing the meaning and cultural weight of these symbols. I focused on chapter 3: reading tigers through visual culture, as there was more visual art and media to analyze and understand. The research was a large collection of visual art that showcased the history of the Tiger symbol and the attempts to westernize these symbols and their impact. These will be helpful to my project as it offers a view into the different depictions from both the Asian and European perspectives. Even though I am only focusing on one chapter, there is still much to be analyzed and it would be interesting to show the development of the Tiger as a metaphor for the assimilation and development of the westernized version of Asia that colonialism pursued.

Design and Modernity in Asia : National Identity and Transnational Exchange 1945-1990, edited by Yunah Lee, and Megha Rajguru, Bloomsbury Publishing USA, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/pitt-ebooks/detail.action?docID=7080657>.

This book focuses on the historical practices of design that have shaped many Asian nations post-colonialism. It delves into many design elements in various different countries and focuses on the geopolitics that play a large role in producing certain designs. This is a relatively new book, released in 2022, which further gives a more accurate portrait of the current dialogues between designers and historians when it comes to decolonizing design practices. For my project, I will focus on the introduction, chapter 7, and chapter 12. These portions of the book specifically focus on the development of modern design in India and showcase various examples that would be important to note in my project.

Gupta, Saurabh. “India Centered Design: Decolonizing India’s Design Heritage.” ZEUX Innovation | Top UI UX Design Companies in India | UI UX Design Consulting Firms, 7 Feb. 2023, zeuxinnovation.com/articles/india-centered-design.

This article discusses the term of design decolonisation and takes the user through the different areas in which India has been colonized when it comes to its design practices. The article offers valuable insights on the different ways design has been incorporated in everyday life and how the colonization of these designs often lead to gaps creating efficient and functional designs for specific cultures and erases the historical element of those designs. This article is a valuable source as it gives more ideas for my projects and different areas of research on design that I can elaborate on more.

Art Deco. “Art Deco.” Art Deco, 20 June 2017, [www.artdecomumbai.com](http://www.artdecomumbai.com).

This website is a collection of many different elements of design throughout India. It showcases different architectural buildings throughout India and has interactive maps on the website that allow users to access and learn more about the different geographical areas in Mumbai. In addition, they also contain a page for research that takes users though different areas of design from government building to theater halls. This website is a great resource as I build my own page, since it has some design elements that I find very effective. While there isn’t much personalized interactivity, there is a lot of information around my topic and the way it is organized is something that I want to take inspiration from.