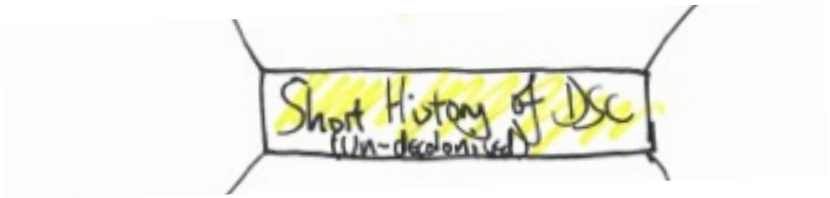
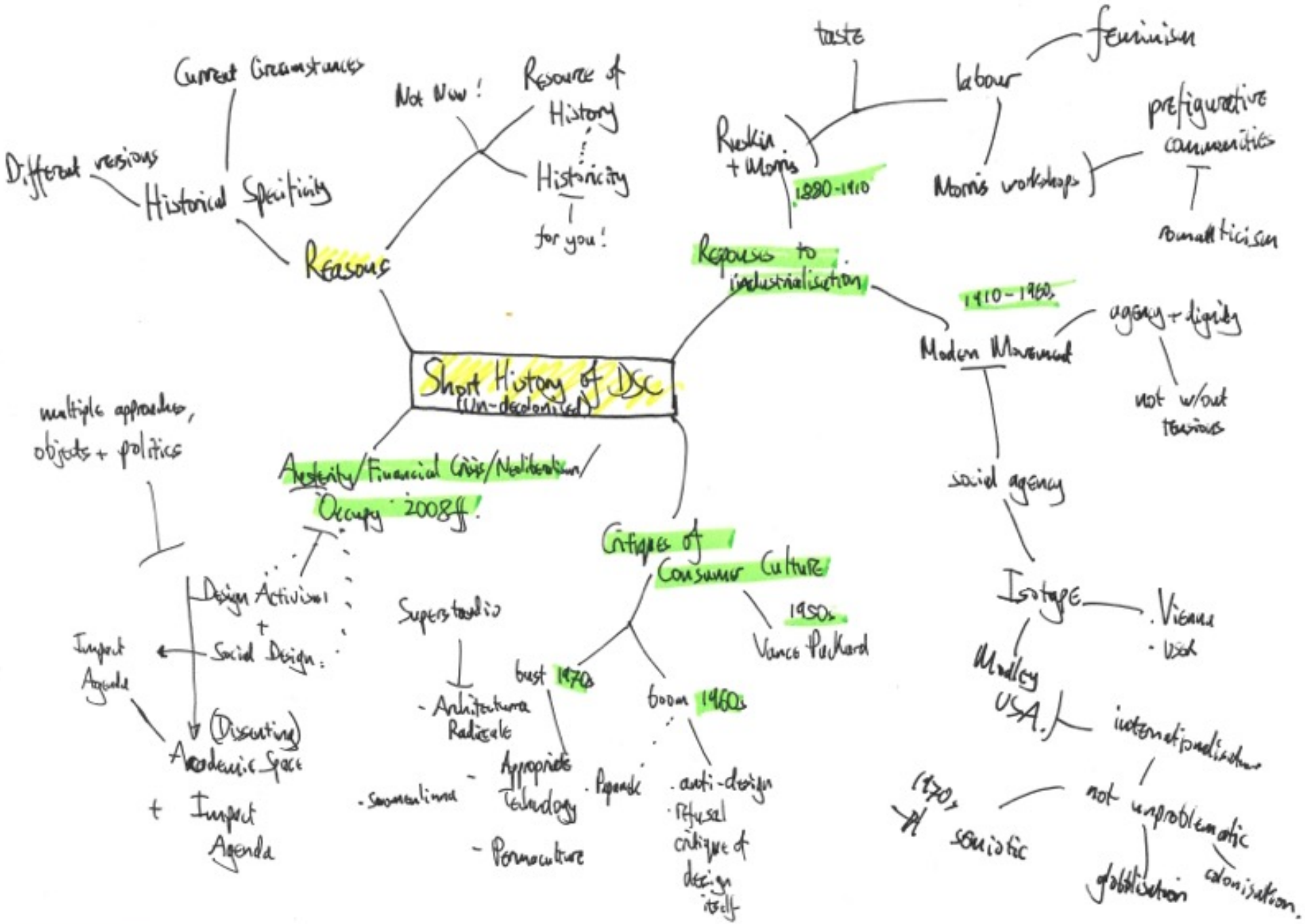
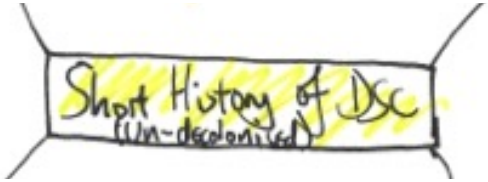
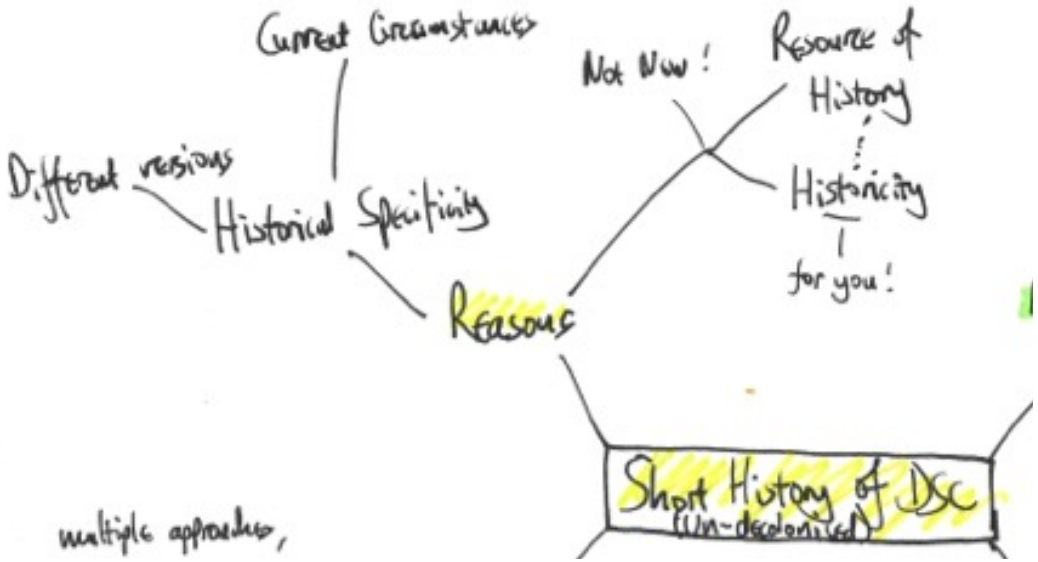

Short History of DSC
(Un-decolonised)


Short History of DSC
(Un-decolonised)
Reasons
Historical Specificity
Different versions
Current Circumstances
Not New!
Resource of History
Historicity
for you!
Responses to industrialisation
1880-1910
Ruskin + Morris
taste
labour
feminism
Morris workshops
prefigurative communities
romanticism
1910-1960s
Modern Movement
agency + dignity
not w/out tensions
social agency
Isotype
Vienna
USA
Modley
USA
internationalisation
not unproblematic
1970s
semiotic
globalisation
colonisation
Critiques of Consumer Culture
1950s
Vance Packard
boom 1960s
anti-design
refusal
critique of design itself
bust 1970s
Superstudio
- Architectura Radicale
- Appropriate Technology
- Permaculture
- Papanek
- Sarmentinna
Austerity/Financial Crisis/Neoliberalism/Occupy 2008ff
Design Activism + Social Design
Impact Agenda
(Dissenting) Academic Space + Impact Agenda
multiple approaches, objects + politics

Which version of Design for Social Change are you most drawn to in this talk?

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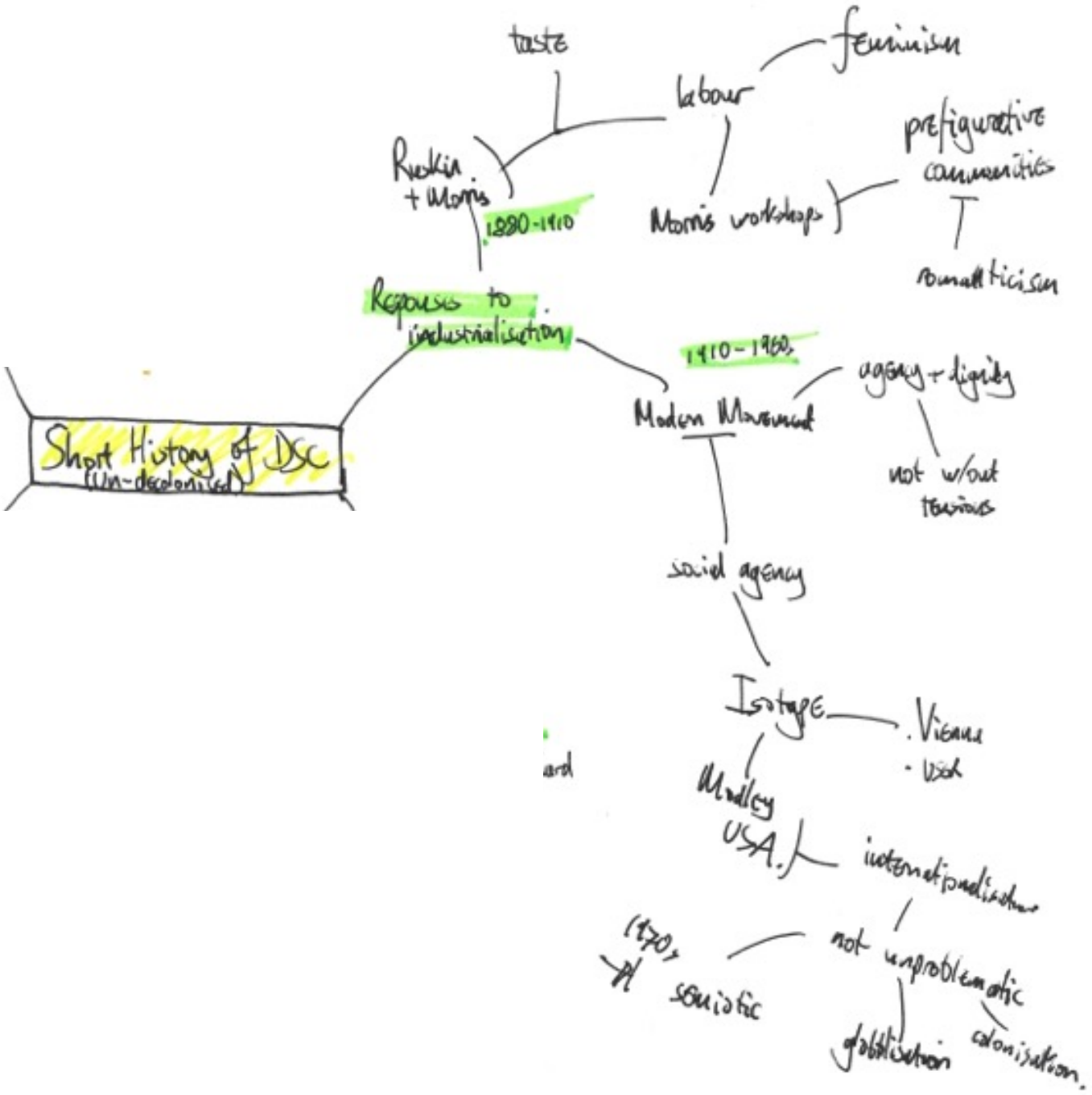
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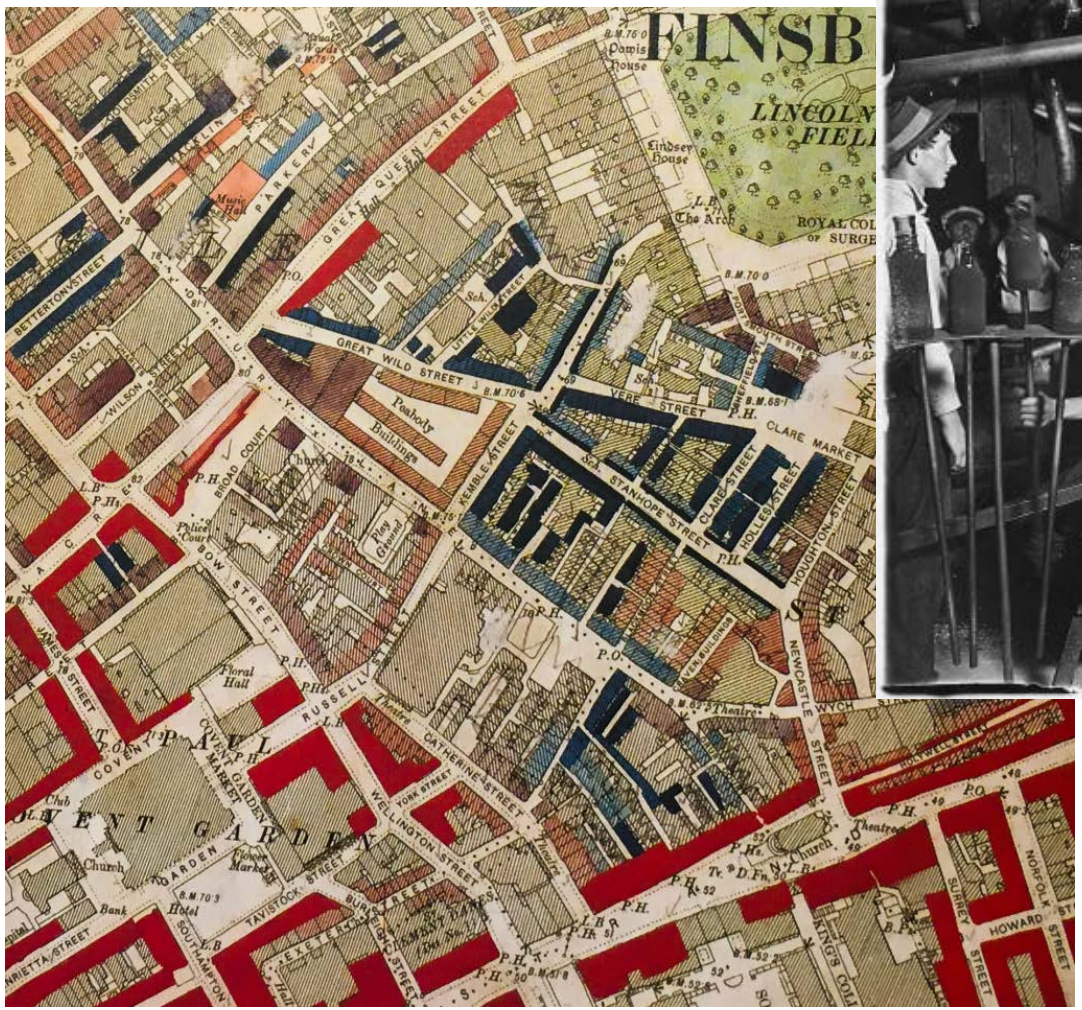
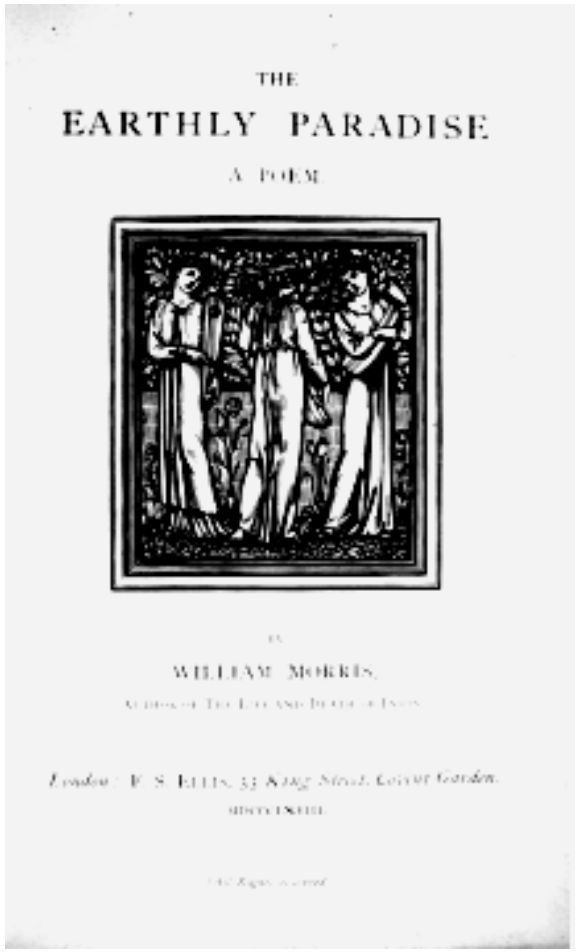
William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, 1880s



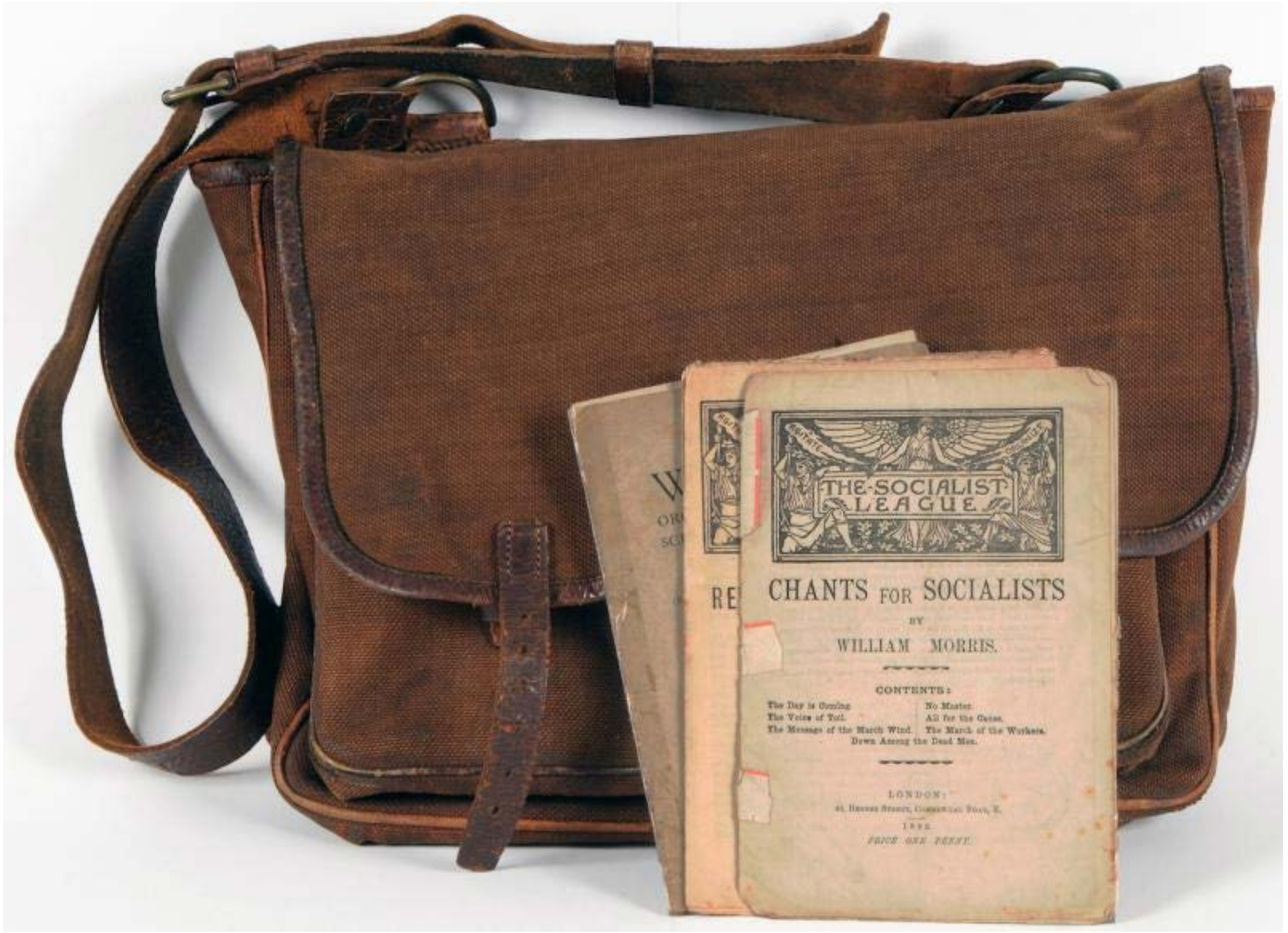
https://urbanformation.wordpress.com/2019/11/06/book-review-charles-booths-london-poverty-maps/

https://www.history.com/news/second-industrial-revolution-advances

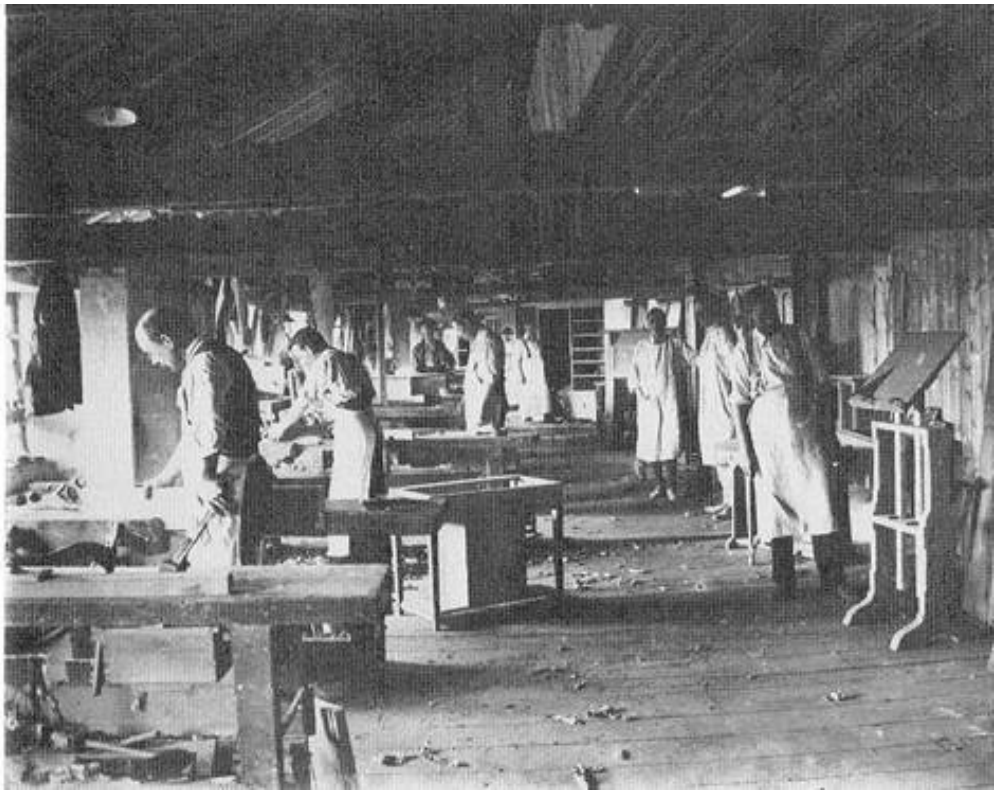
William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, 1880s



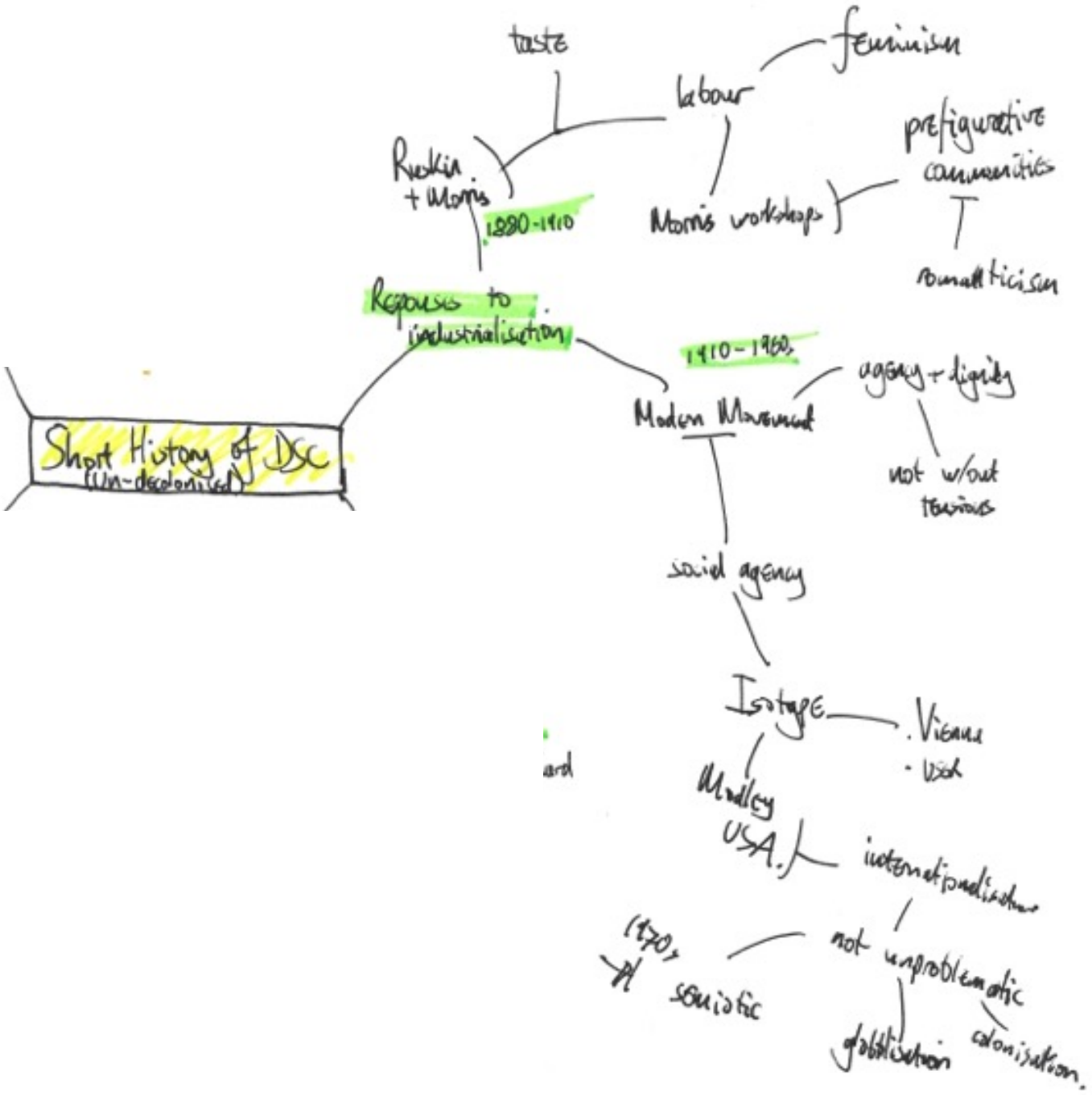
William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement, 1880s


THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE
CHANTS FOR SOCIALISTS
BY
WILLIAM MORRIS.
CONTENTS:
The Day is Coming
The Voice of Toil.
The Message of the March Wind.
No Master.
All for the Cause.
The March of the Workers.
Down Among the Dead Men.
LONDON:
1885.
PRICE ONE PENNY.

Guild of Handicraft f.C.R. Ashbee, 1888 Chipping Camden



prefigurative community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Isotype
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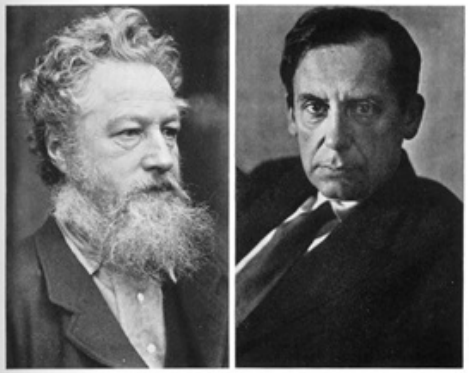
USA
Modley
internationalisation
not unproblematic
globalisation
colonisation
1970s
semiotic

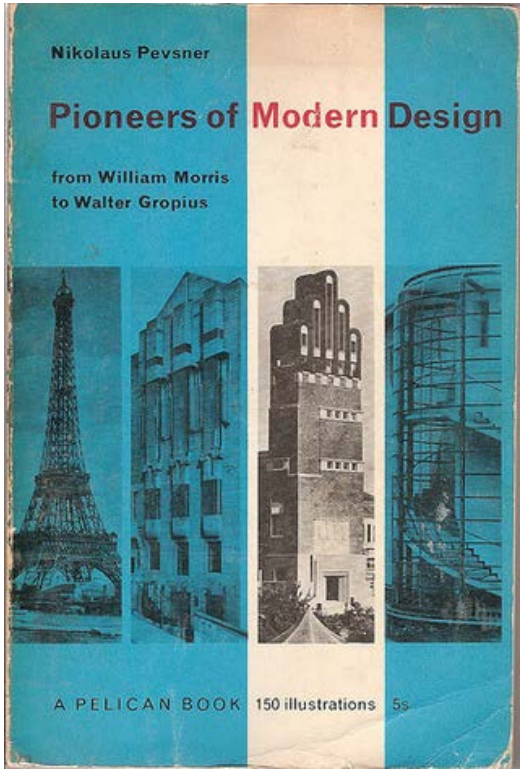
PIONEERS OF THE
MODERN MOVEMENT



FROM WILLIAM MORRIS
TO WALTER GROPIUS

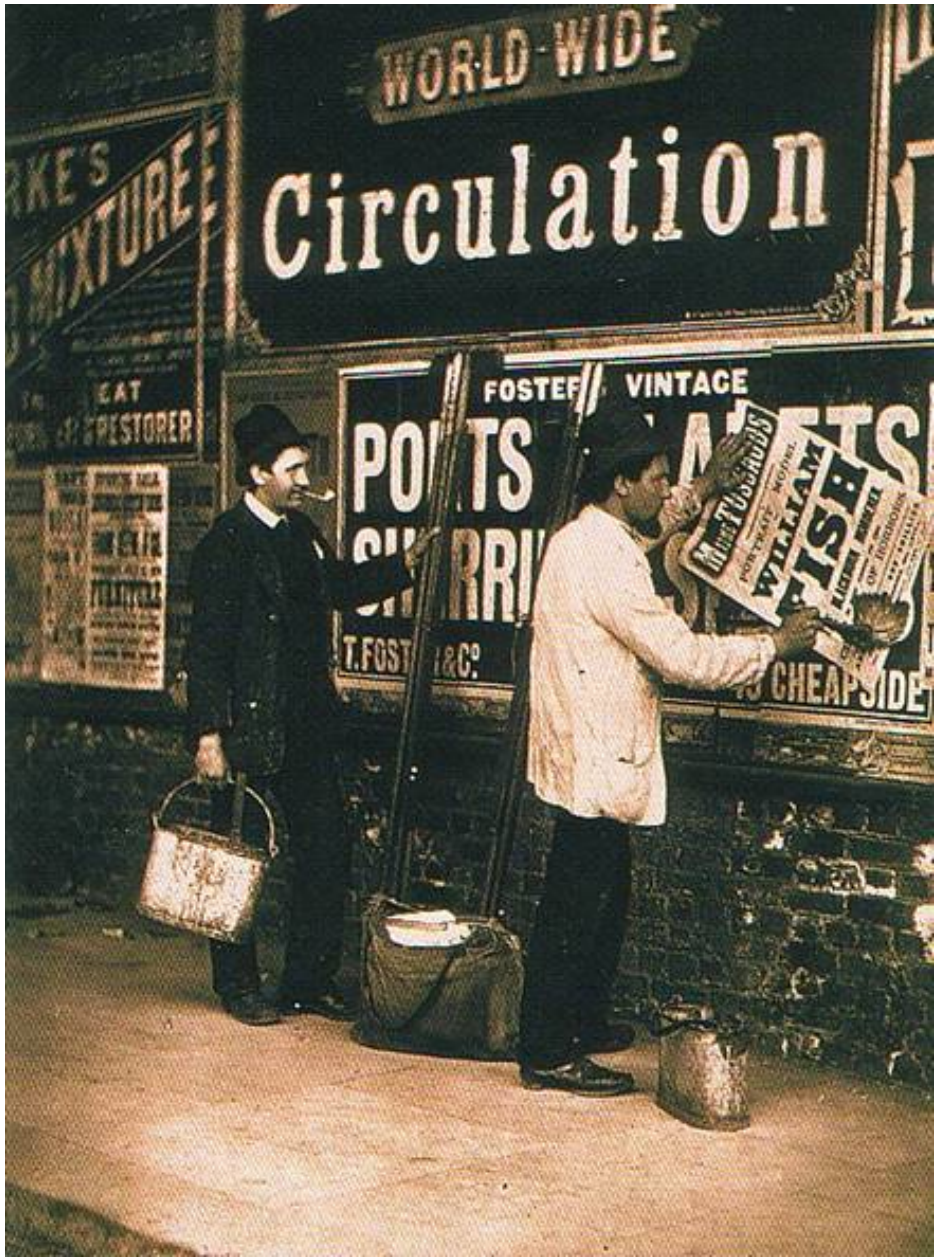
BY NIKOLAUS PEVSNER

LONDON: FABER & FABER



Jan Tschichold

The Professional Photographer - his work, his tools Basle 1928



unter mitarbeit des schweizerischen photographen-verbandes

gewerbemuseum basel ausstellung

der berufsphotograph

sein werkzeug — seine arbeiten

8. mai — 6. juni

werktags		14-19	
mittwochs		14-19	19-21
sonntags	10-12	14-19	

eintritt frei

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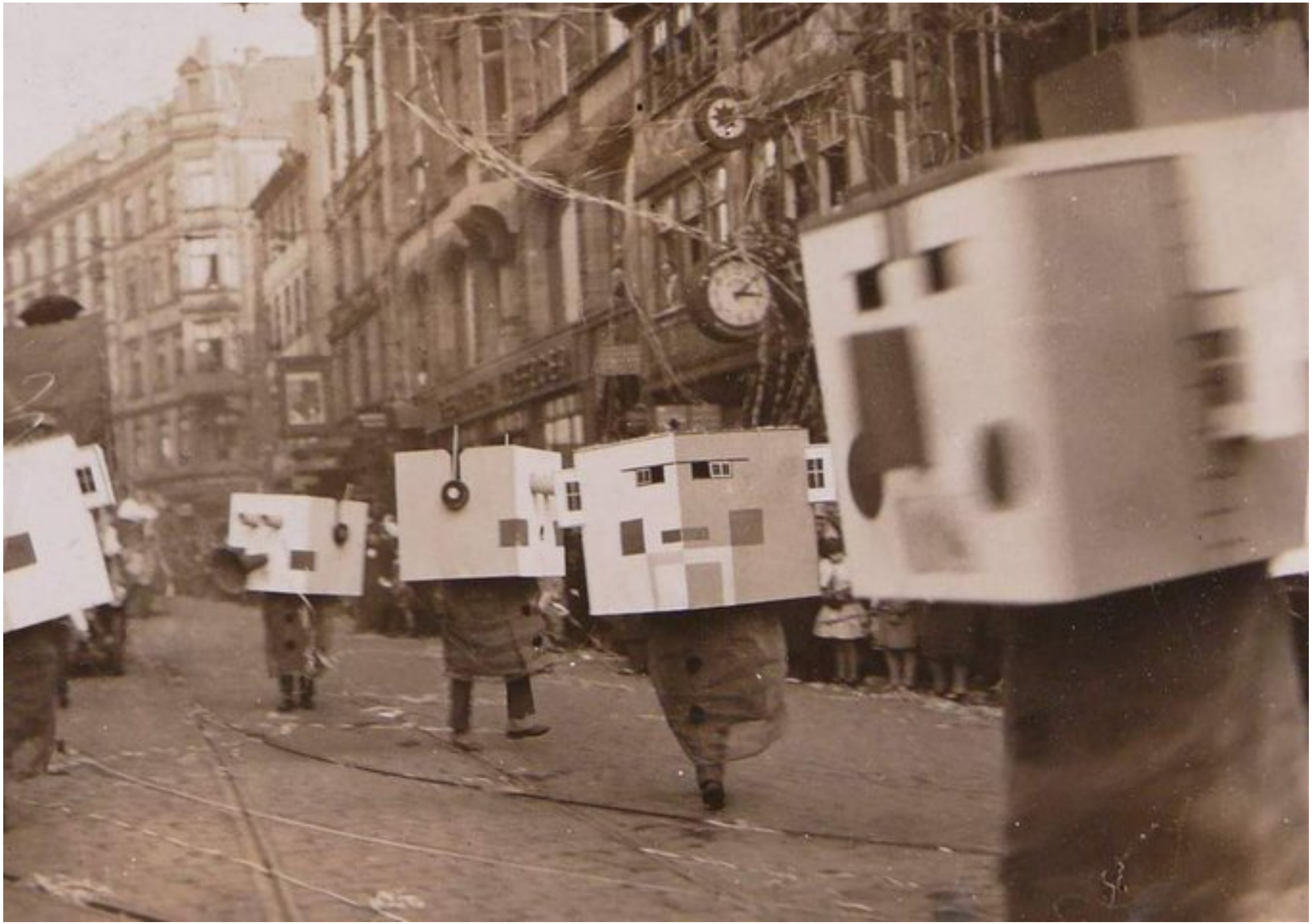
eintritt frei

De-la-Warr Pavillion, Bexhill-on-Sea

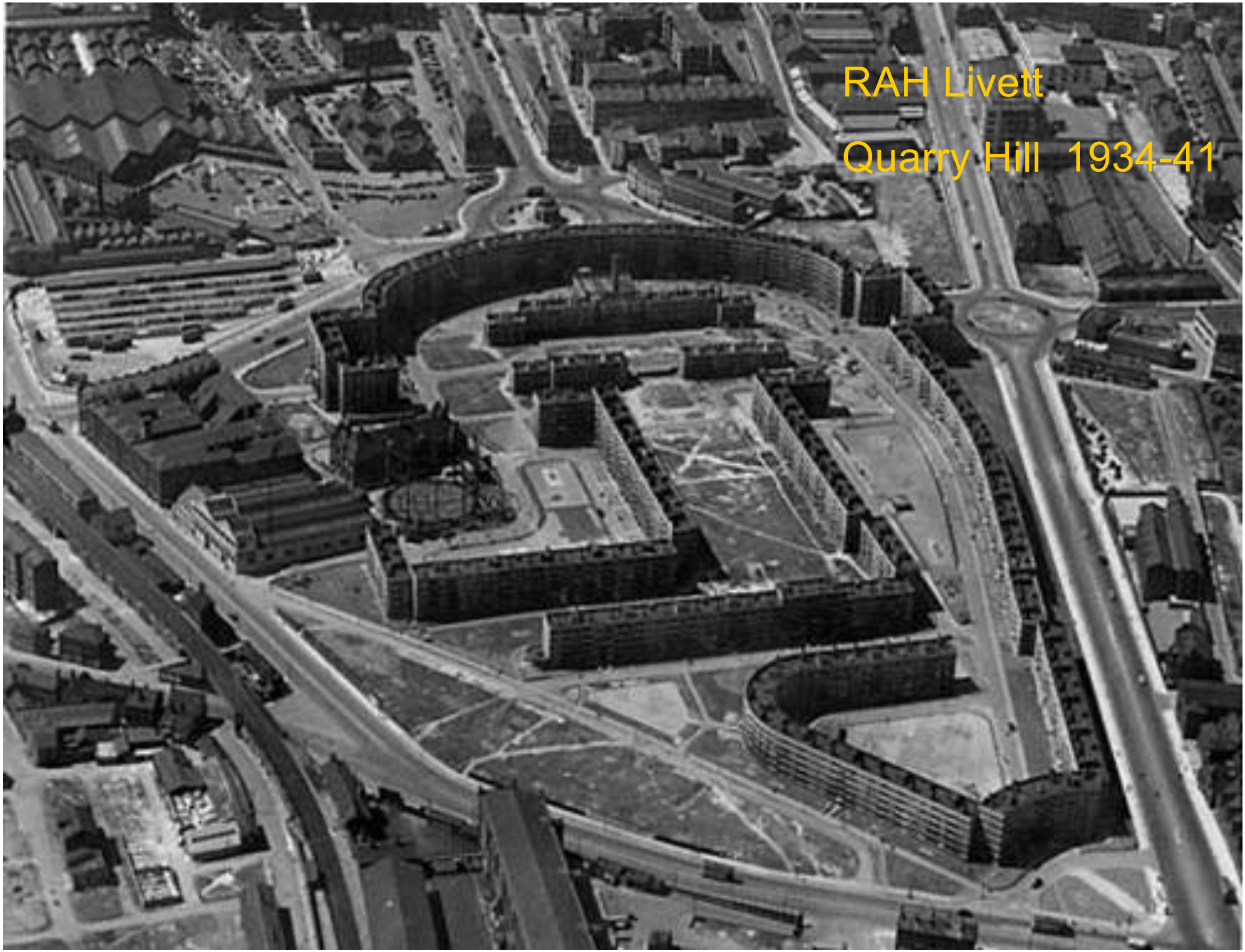
Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff 1935

Carnival parade in Frankfurt, 1929. Source: @ClaasGefroi



RAH Livett
Quarry Hill 1934-41

RAH Livett
Quarry Hill 1934-41


RAH Livett
Quarry Hill 1934-41

RAH Livett
Quarry Hill 1934-41

RAH Livett
Quarry Hill 1934-41

Carl Ehn 1927-30

‘Red Vienna’ 1918-34

Figure 1. Otto Neurath, 1938.

Figure 2. Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftsmuseum, New Town Hall, Vienna, c.1928.

Burke, C. (2009). Isotype representing social facts pictorially. *Information Design Journal*, *17*(3), 211-223.

Figure 3. Chart showing increase in provision of school meals by Vienna municipality, from the exhibition 'Wien und die Wiener' (Vienna and the Viennese), 1927. This is quite an early chart but the Vienna Method is already established: each pictogram represents 2000 of either kindergarten or secondary schoolchildren who have school meals. Here the source statistics appear on the chart (bottom right), but this practice was soon discontinued, as can be seen in Figure 4.

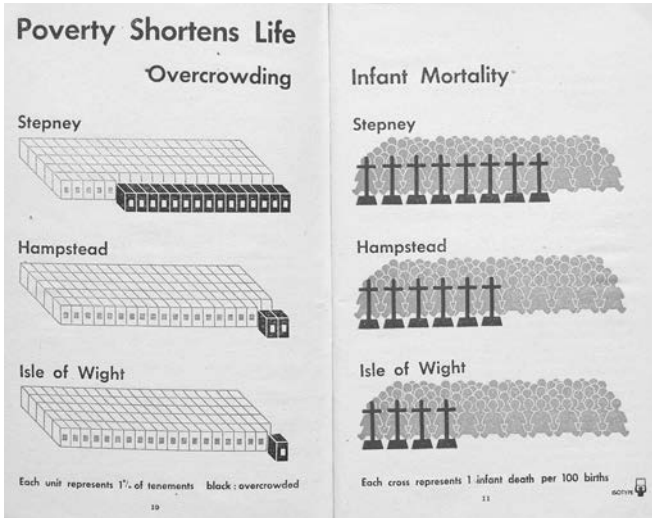
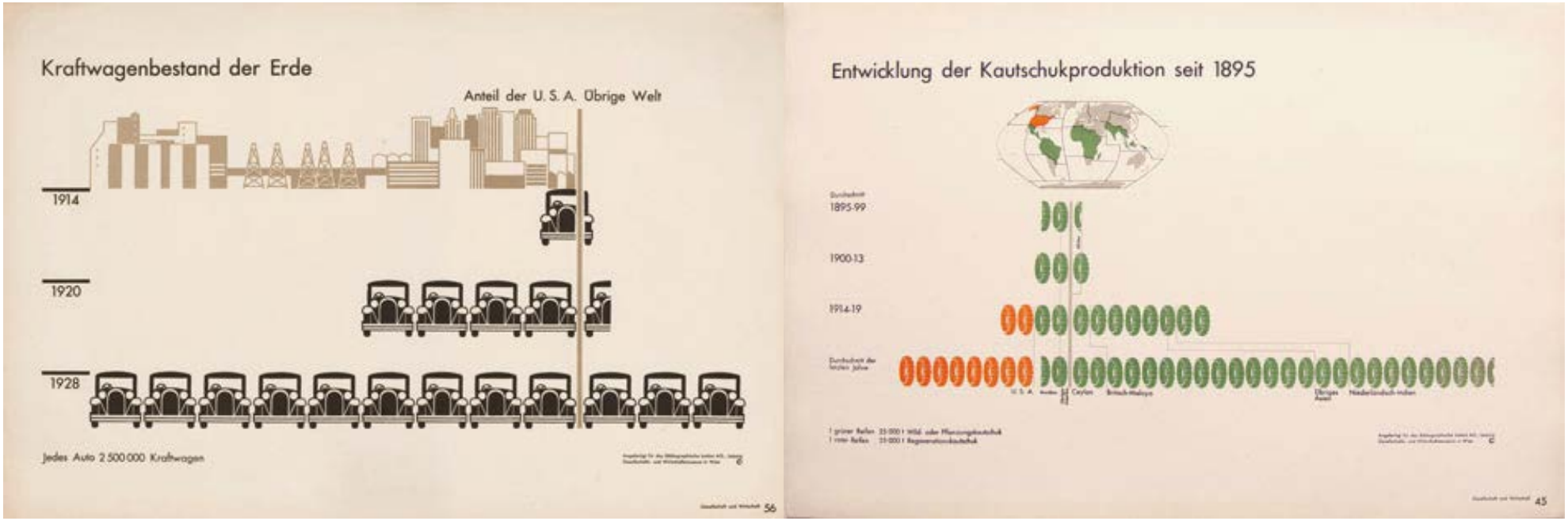


Figure 15. Pages from Ronald Davison, *Social security: the story of British social progress and the Beveridge plan*. London: Harrap, 1943. Produced with the support of the Ministry of Information.

Burke, C. (2009). Isotype representing social facts pictorially. *Information Design Journal*, *17*(3), 211-223.



Gesellschaft und Wirtschaft, 1930

http://isotyperevisited.org/2009/09/gesellschaft-und-wirtschaft.html

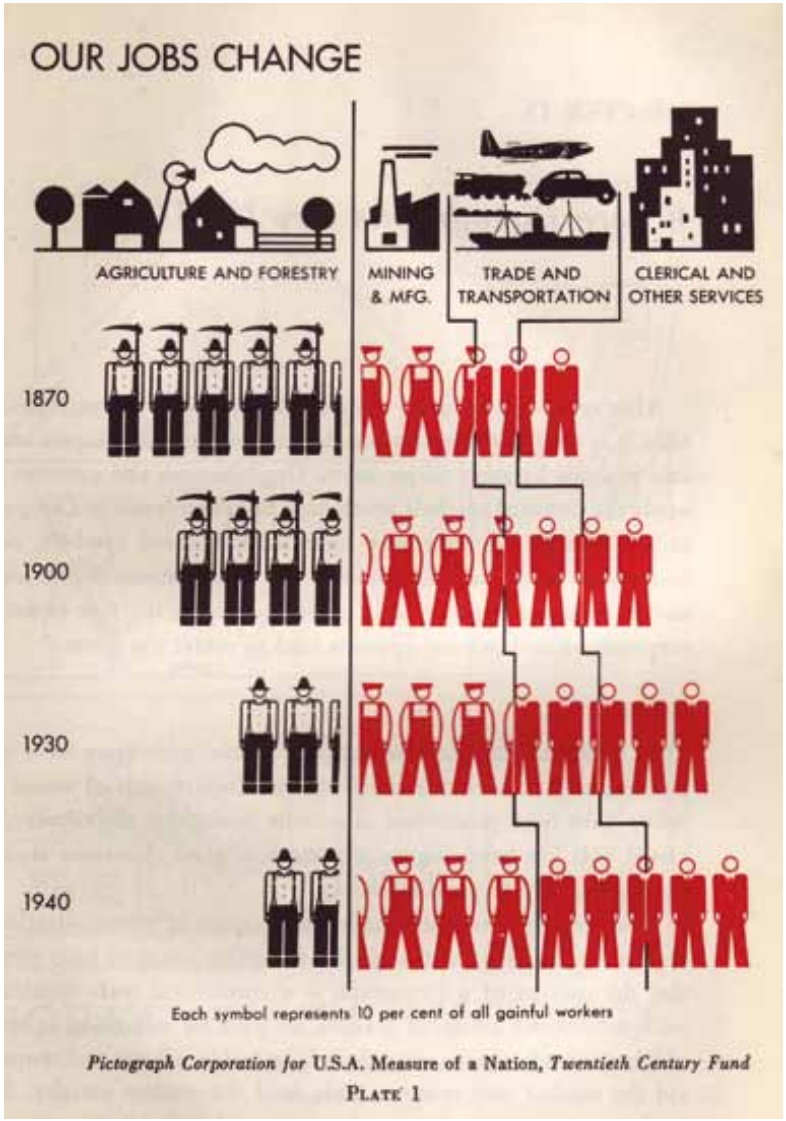


Figure 1
Pictograph Corporation chart: "Our Jobs Change." From Rudolf Modley and Dyno Lowenstein, *Pictographs and Graphs: How to Make and Use Them*, 1952. New York: Harper. Courtesy of HarperCollins.

Bresnahan, K. (2011). "An Unused Esperanto": Internationalism and Pictographic Design, 1930–70. *Design and Culture*, *3*(1), 5-24.

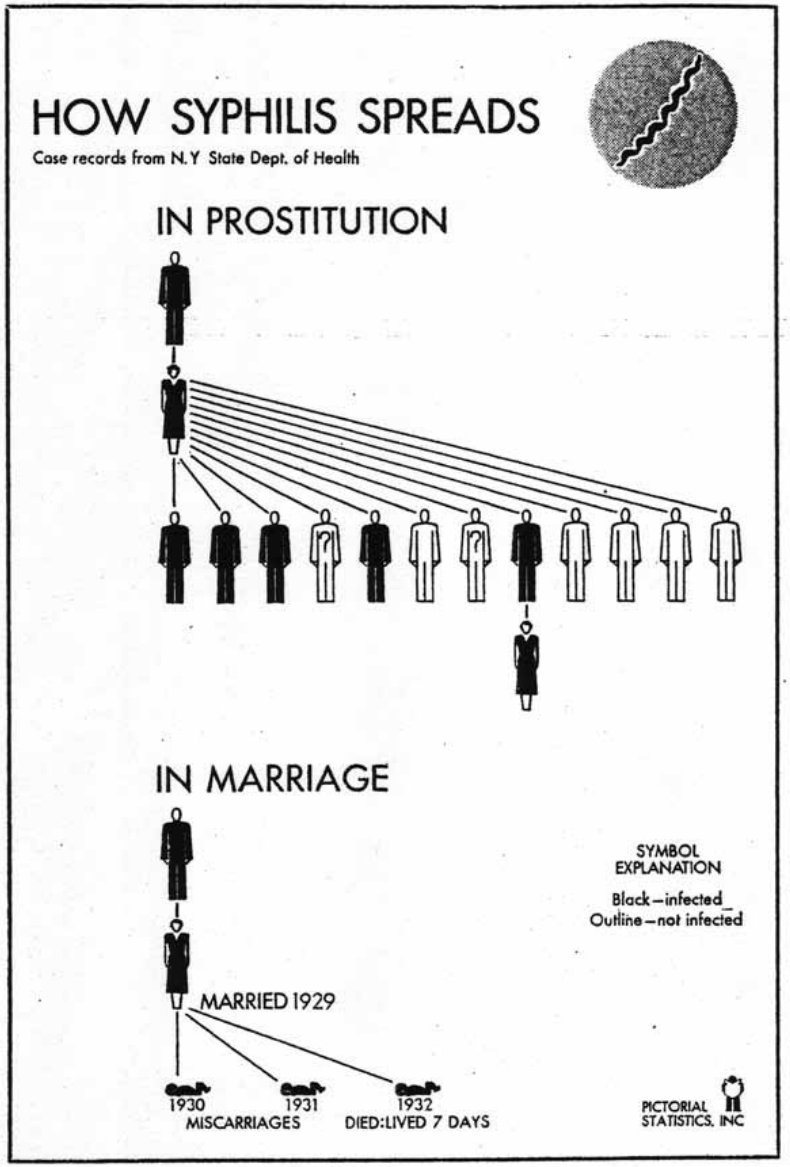
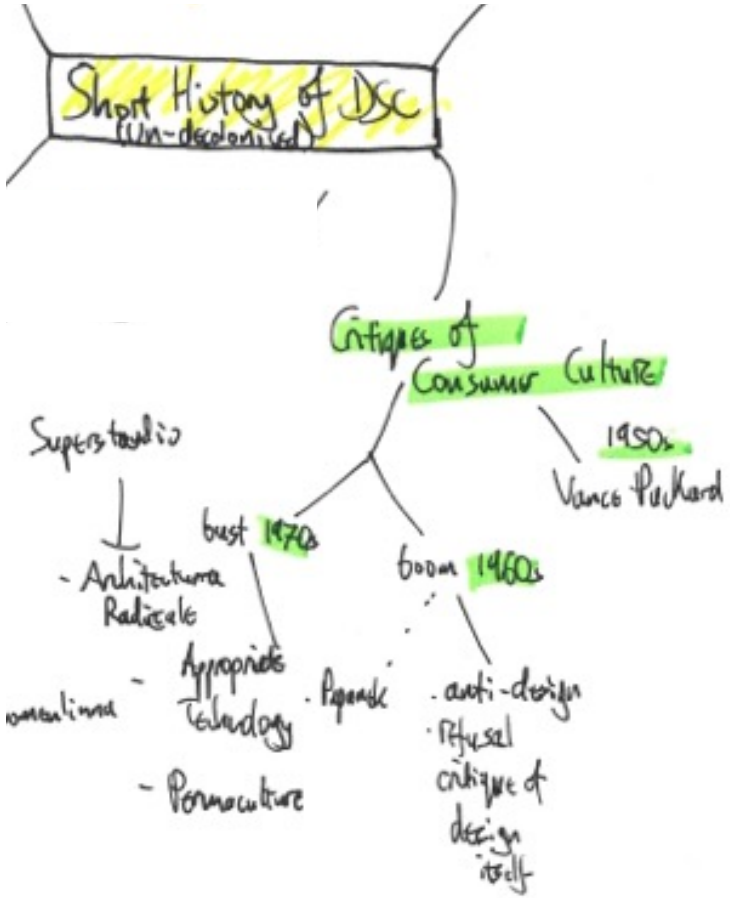


Figure 4
Pictorial Statistics, Inc. chart: "How Syphilis Spreads."
Reprinted in *Survey Graphic*, July 1936.

Bresnahan, K. (2011). "An Unused Esperanto": Internationalism and Pictographic Design, 1930–70. *Design and Culture*, *3*(1), 5-24.

Figure 6
"Pictograph Corporation Symbols" from Rudolf Modley, *Handbook of Pictorial Symbols.* 1976. New York: Dover Publications. Courtesy of Dover Publications.

Bresnahan, K. (2011). "An Unused Esperanto": Internationalism and Pictographic Design, 1930–70. *Design and Culture*, *3*(1), 5-24.


Short History of DSC
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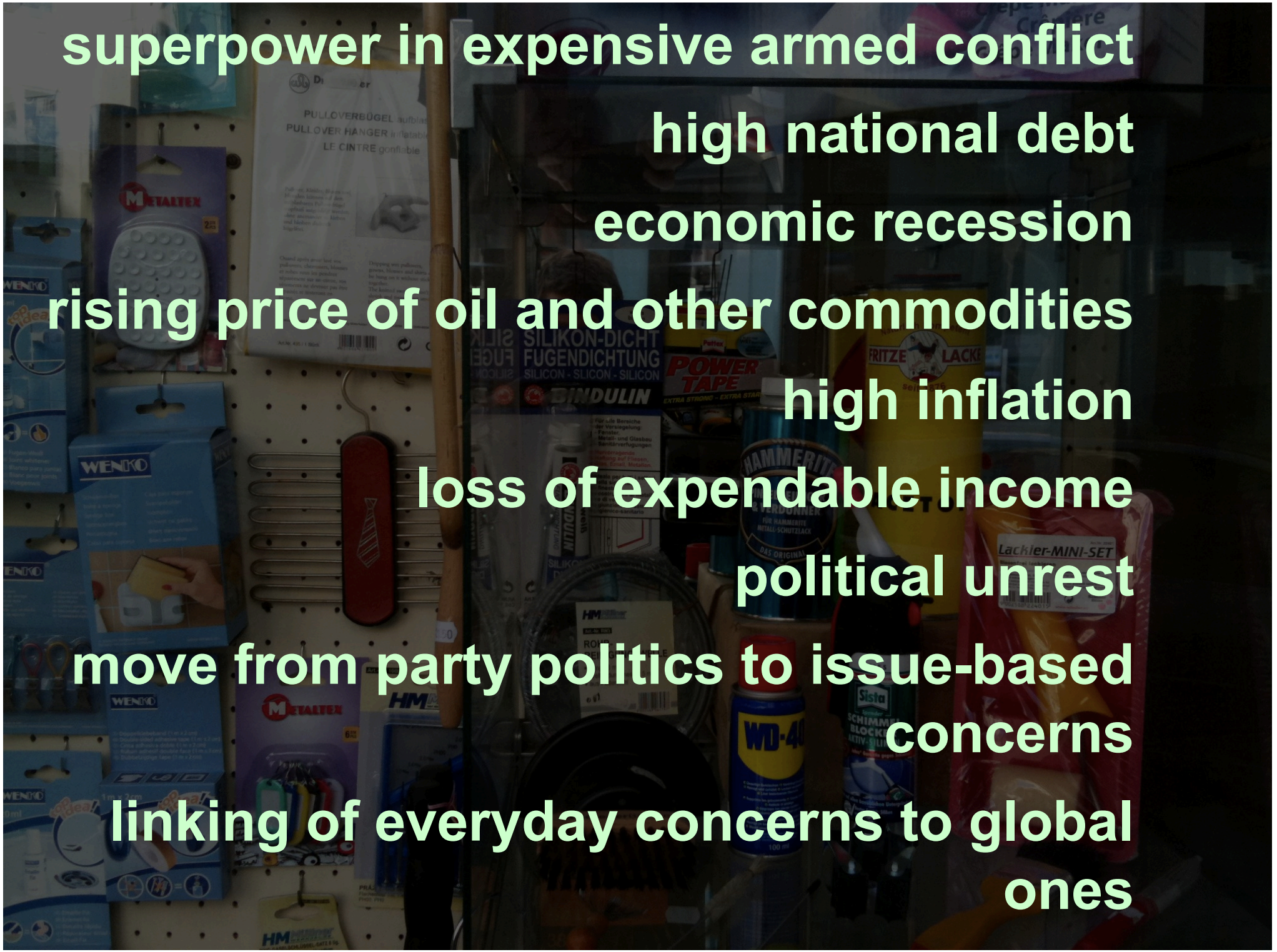
Critiques of Consumer Culture
1950s
Vance Packard
bust 1970s
boom 1960s
Superstudio
- Architettura Radicale
- Appropriate Technology
- Permaculture
- Papanek
- anti-design
- Refusal
critique of design itself

Paris

May 1968


superpower in expensive armed conflict
high national debt
economic recession
rising price of oil and other commodities
high inflation
loss of expendable income
political unrest
move from party politics to issue-based concerns
linking of everyday concerns to global ones

Routledge
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DESIGN AND CULTURE VOLUME 8, ISSUE 1
PP 55–77

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Superstudio and the "Refusal to Work"

Ross K. Elfline

Ross Elfline is Assistant Professor of Art History at Carleton College, where he teaches the history of art and architecture since 1945. His current research focuses on Radical Architecture in Italy, Austria, Britain, and America in the 1960s and 1970s, with particular emphasis on the Italian avant-garde collective Superstudio, the subject of his book manuscript. His additional research interests include conceptual art in America and Europe; the history and theory of the neo-avant-garde; sound art; and poststructuralist, feminist, and queer theories.
relefline@carleton.edu

ABSTRACT The Italian Radical Architecture collective Superstudio was infamous for their refusal to participate in architectural design. Their muteness was directed, however: they did not wish to secede entirely from architectural discourse, it was *building* from which they withdrew. This essay investigates Superstudio's negation alongside Italian leftist attempts to recast the meaning of work. From the alienation of assembly line production to a more holistic form of labor, this shift in the nature of work privileged the individual sovereignty of citizens and workers. This emphasis on creative autonomy informs a new reading of Superstudio's *Supersurface* as well as their *Histograms.*

KEYWORDS: Superstudio, Radical Architecture, *Autonomia*, Mario Tronti, *Supersurface*, Histograms, work, labor

In an infamous lecture presented at London's Architectural Association in 1971, Adolfo Natalini, founder of the Italian Radical Architecture collective Superstudio, belligerently announced the group's exodus from design practice, by stating:

Figure 1
Superstudio (A. Natalini, C. Toraldo di Francia, R. Magris, G. P. Frassinelli, A. Magris, and A. Poli), *Bazaar Sofa* (1969). © Gian Piero Frassinelli. Photo: Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Georges Meguerditchian/Art Resource, NY.

 DOI: 10.1080/17547075.2016.1143405

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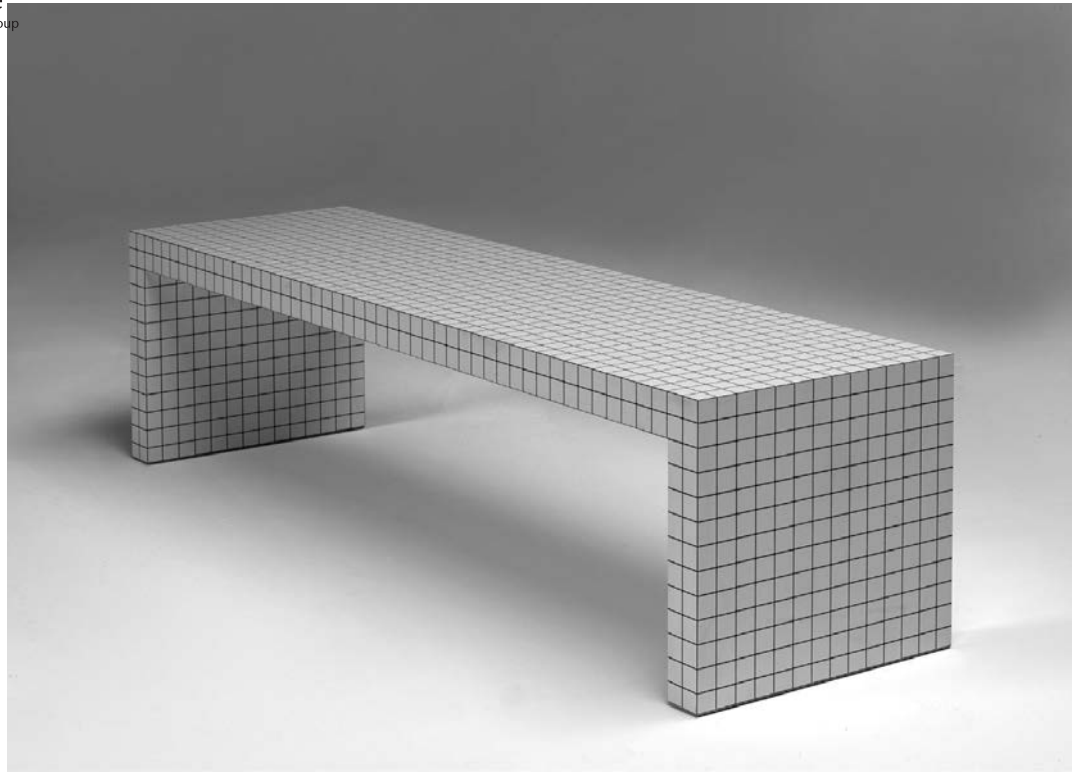


Figure 3
Superstudio (A. Natalini, C. Toraldo di Francia, R. Magris, G. P. Frassinelli, A. Magris, and A. Poli), *Quaderna Bench* (1971). © Gian Piero Frassinelli. Photo: Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/ Georges Meguerditchian/Art Resource, NY.

Here we see that the creation of fundamentally mute objects was intended to banish any sense of status anxiety or what Baudrillard had termed "the political economy of the sign" (Baudrillard 1981, 143–63). Absent the signifying relationships that serve only to buttress the existing power dynamics in an advanced capitalist culture, the autonomous urban resident rediscovers an unmediated connection to the viscera of everyday life. And so the *Quaderna* objects,

 DOI: 10.1080/17547075.2016.1142343

Superstudio. Italy. From Life-Supersurface (Fruits and Wine) 1971

THE LIMITS TO
growth
Donella H. Meadows
Dennis L. Meadows
Jørgen Randers
William W. Behrens III
A Report for THE CLUB OF ROME'S Project on the Predicament of Mankind
A POTOMAC ASSOCIATES BOOK
$2.75
Why the Things You Buy Are Expensive, Badly Designed, Unsafe, and Usually Don't Work!
With some startling practical alternatives--like a radio that costs 9c, a $6 refrigerator, a television set for $8, and much, much more!
Design For The Real World
by Victor Papanek
Human Ecology and Social Change
With an Introduction by
R. Buckminster Fuller
Completely Illustrated
small is beautiful
a study of economics as if people mattered
EF Schumacher
INTRODUCTION TO PERMACULTURE
Bill Mollison
with
Reny Mia Slay
Before
After
TAGARI

YRJÖ SOTAMAA
Skandinaviska Desingstuderandenas Organisation
Scandinavian Desingnstudents Organization
&/sdo
Fmk 3.00 (sis. lvv)
Skr 4.00 (inkl. oms)
Dkr 5.00 (inkl. oms)
Nkr 5.00 (inkl. oms)
2

With whom do you feel your solidarity
EMINAR ON INDUSTRIAL DESIGN 1970
RRANGED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH DESIGNERS ORNAMO,
PONSORED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
HEME: » IS PLANNING ORGANIZED DESTRUCTION? »
IME: AUGUST 24-SEPTEMBER 4 1970
LACE: INSTITUTE OF DESIGN
HE ATENEUM BUILDING,
ELSINKI, FINLAND,
Programme
Main theme:
»Is Planning Organized Destruction?»
Theme relates to The Environment Research Year, of UNESCO, 1970.
Previous to beginning of Seminar, a Data Collection group will be formed to collect basic information on national production, consumption, resource and production-tool use in Finland. This information will be sent to Seminar participants, before beginning of Seminar.
The Seminar will be de into separate, partly parallel, active »work groups», discussing and analyzing issues related to main theme, in connection with presen day industrial design, both on a national and international basis.
Each group has a Finnish industrial designer or environmental researcher — aided by student assistants — responsible for the carrying through of group activity.
Various specialists can called in by the groups additional information points of view.
The »work groups», whi will be formed, on vol basis, starting on the second day of the Sem will report to general Seminar meetings, whe issues will be discussed jointly. These meeting will be called together every third day.
»Work groups-subjects:
Neo-Anthropological Context:
Transition form disrupted, local Culture to international Industrial Culture: A painful change of life-style values.
Efficiency — productivity — social fragmentation.
Ecological Context:
Industrial man has the developed capacity to interfere seriously with the major life sustaining processes ... and from this time foreward the seco-systems also includes man's machiners and their products.
Stage of Industrialzation and Localization Policies:
Effects of industrialzation on local, social structures.
»Non -Products versus Product-Orientation:
What is all this about anyone with less? ... as if everything we do is good ... how about less with less. Stop depleting global resources.
The Industrial Designer — A Waste-Maker? :
Pollution or Recycling.
Industrial Design does not begin with the product and does not end at it.
Local Resource & Production-tool Use/Misuse.
Present state and future priorities of industrial design.
Communication: A Way towards Democratizing Decision-Making:
The neccessity of the environmental designer/ industrial designer to inform fellow citizens of environmental problems, objectives of own activity, alternative plans and their alternative effects, in order to, on his part, work towards democratizing industrial decision-making.
WORLD RESEARCH 1990
HISTORICAL MONUMENT

1960-1970

superpower in expensive armed conflict

high national debt

economic recession

rising price of oil and other commodities

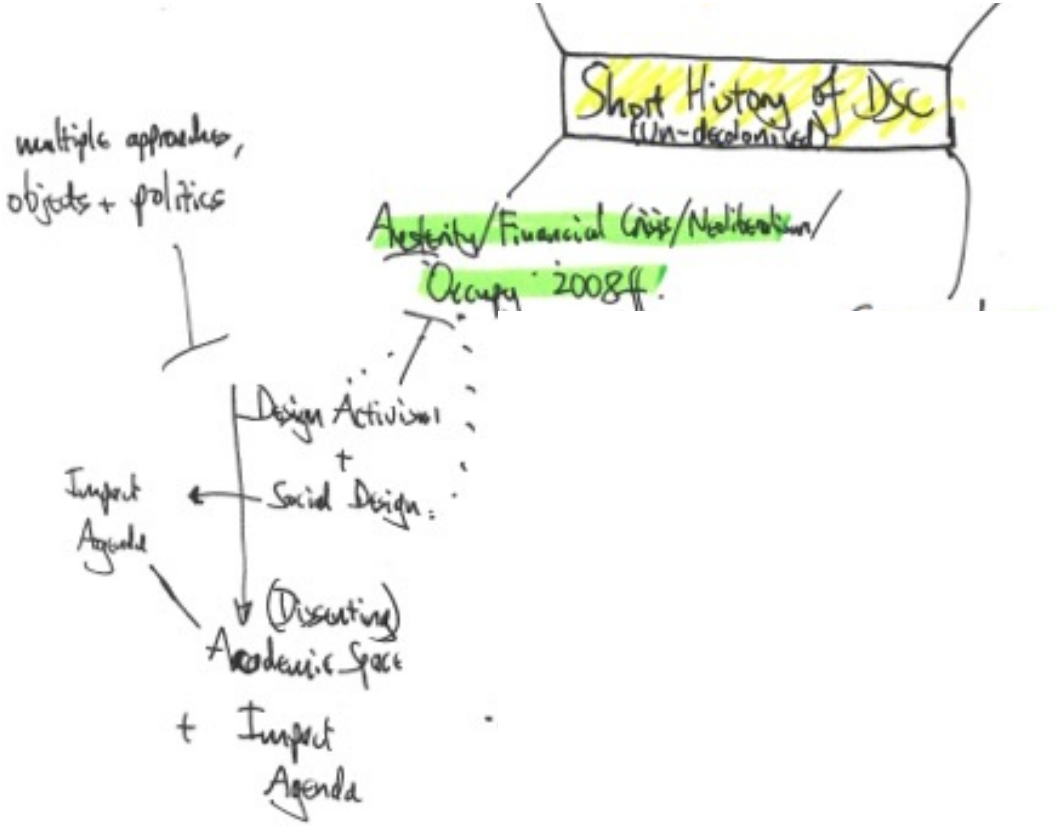
high inflation

loss of expendable income

political unrest

move from party politics to issue-based concerns

linking of everyday concerns to global ones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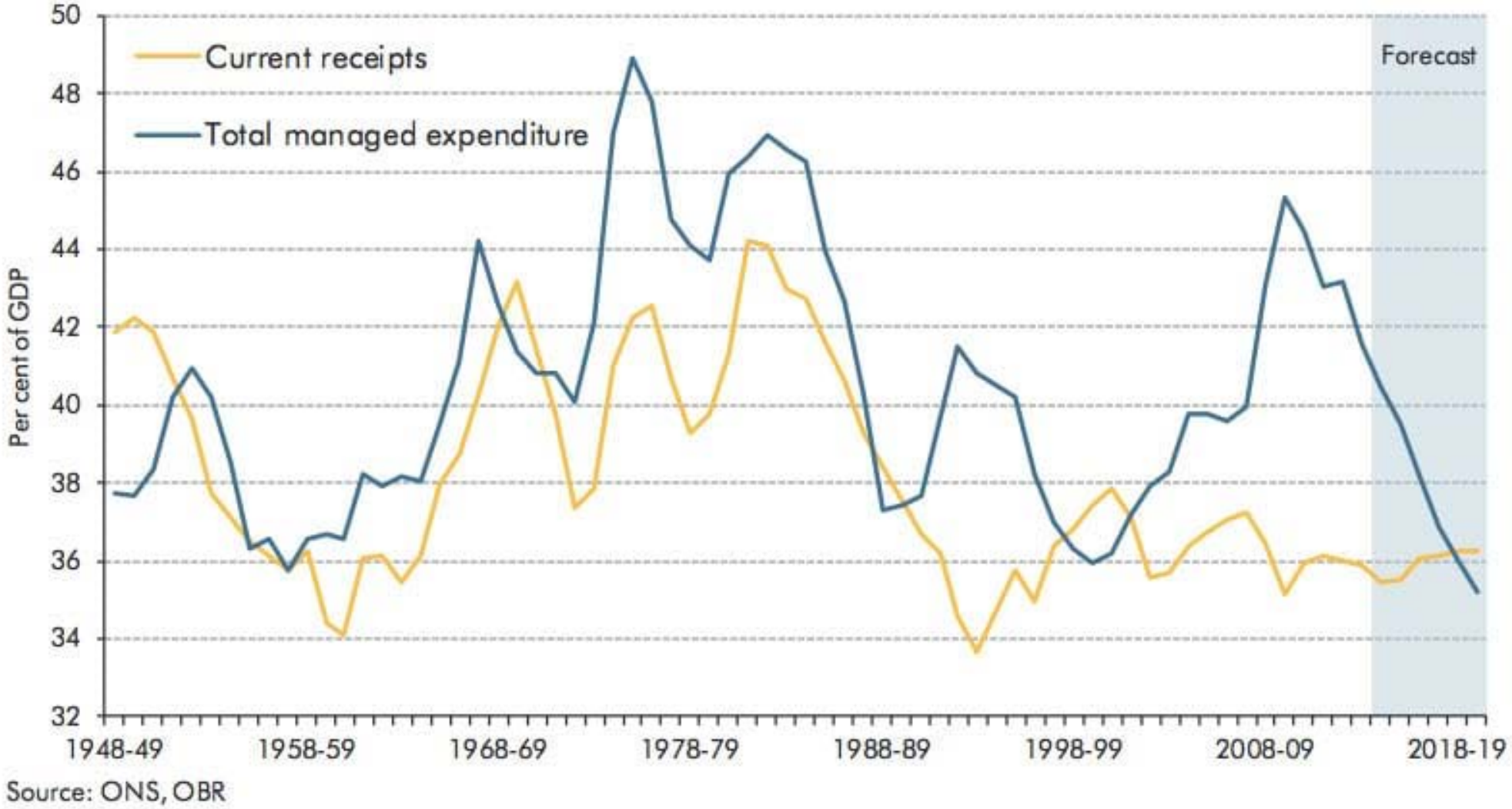
Occupy 2008ff!
multiple approaches,
objects + politics
Design Activism
+
Social Design
Impact
Agenda
(Discenting)
Academic Space
+ Impact
Agenda

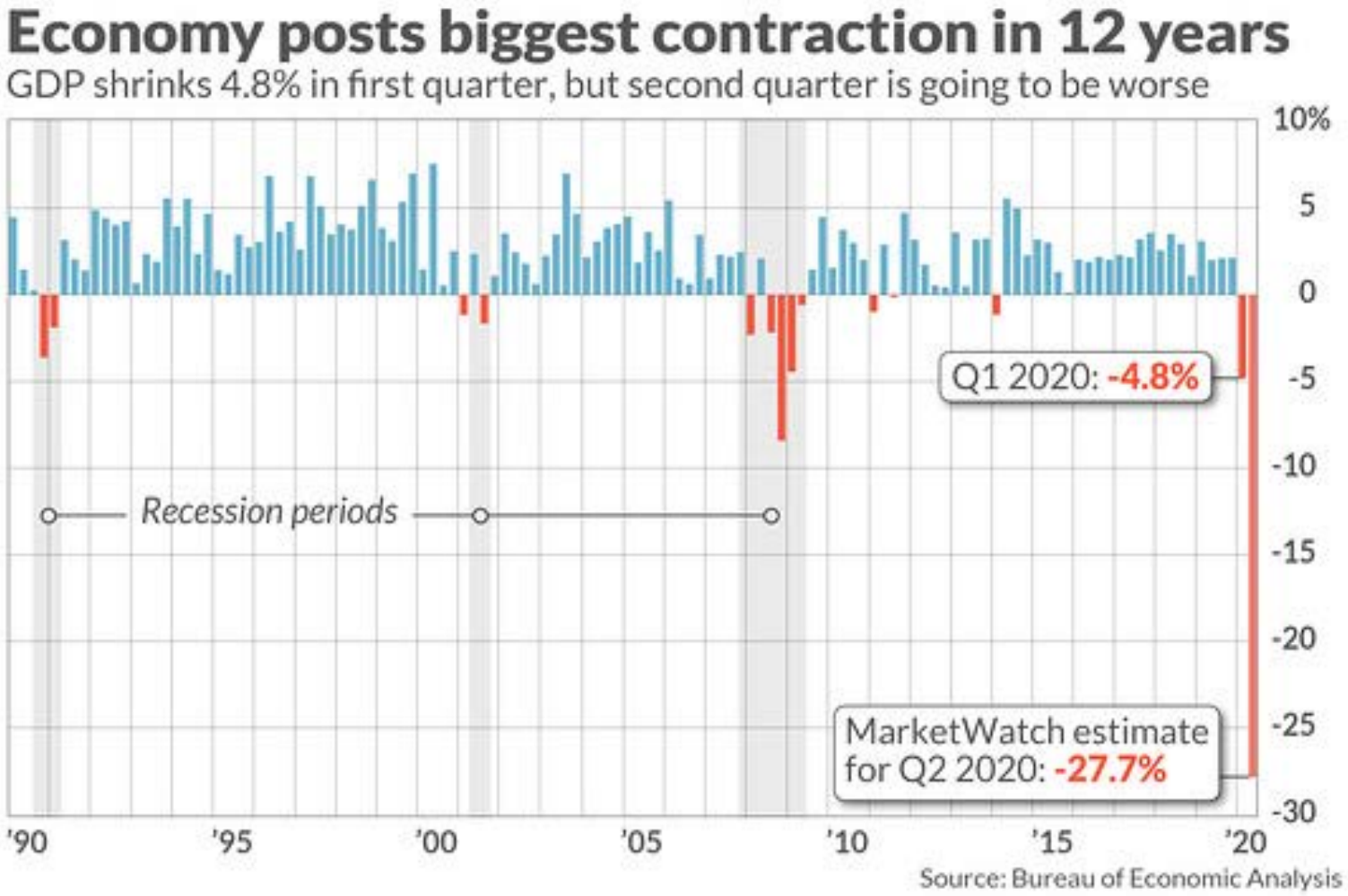
https://www.thedailybeast.com/occupy-wall-street-protesters-not-bankers-arrested-in-new-york

Chart 1.1: Total public sector spending and receipts



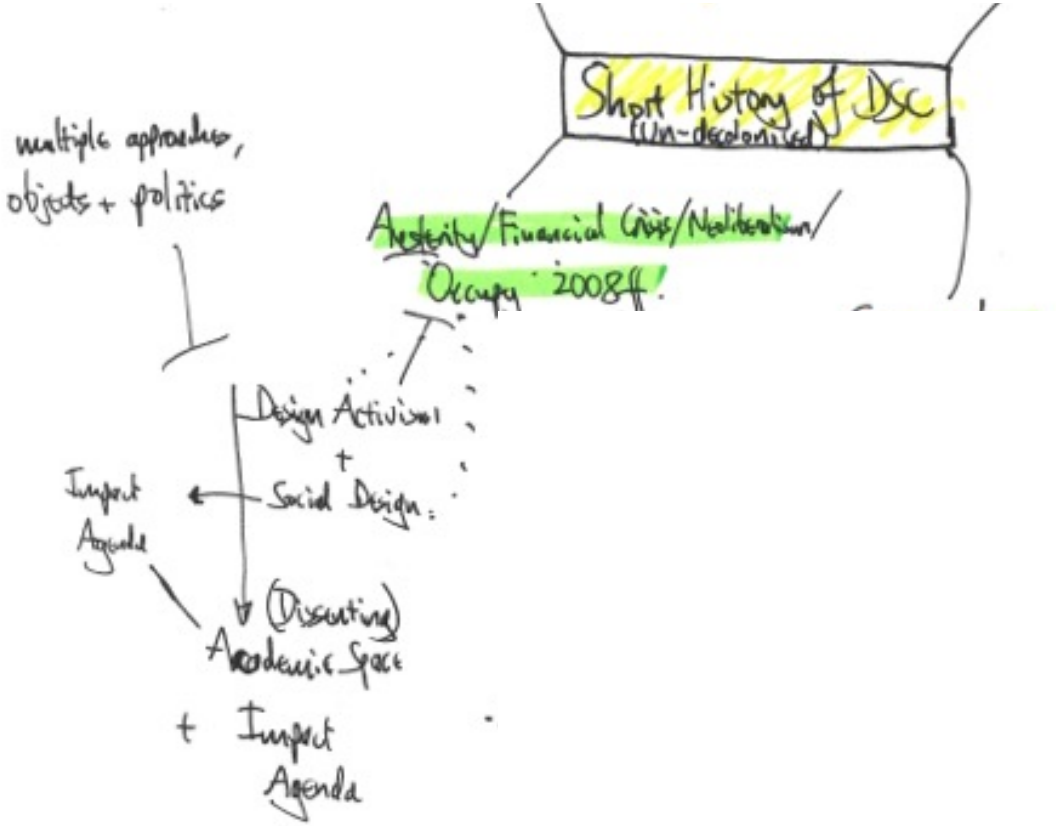
Source: ONS, OBR

https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/5326/economics/government-spending/



https://www.marketwatch.com/story/gdp-sinks-48-in-the-first-quarter---biggest-drop-since-2008-and-worst-is-yet-to-come-2020-04-29

US Economy


Short History of DSC
(Un-decolonised)
Austerity/Financial Crisis/Neoliberalism/
Occupy 2008ff!
multiple approaches,
objects + politics
Design Activism
+
Social Design
Impact
Agenda
(Discenting)
Academic Space
+ Impact
Agenda

	Definitions from literature *(from indicative literature unless stated otherwise)*	**Summary**	**Indicative literature**
Social Design	The collective task of developing an artefact or putting in place processes for the public good.	Often used as a 'catch all' term for designing that has a social (rather than commercial) orientation. Encompassing some of the fields below in this table (Armstrong, Bailey, Julier, & Kimbell, 2014), Social Design addresses multiple situations, largely design for political exchanges with the public sector, but also some community based work. Focusing on outcomes that produce 'social value', social design is open enough to encompass designing that both supports and challenges the status quo.	Chen, Lu-Lin, Hummels, & Koskinen, 2016; Dourish, 2010
Social Innovation	Driven by 'bottom up' collaboration to develop new ideas from existing elements.	As Social Design above, Social Innovation has a broad enough meaning to encompass a wide variety of design activities. It is differentiable from Social Design in its theoretical focus on socially enabled process rather than socially valuable outcomes, though both advocate similar design processes.	Manzini, 2014; Mazé, 2014; Mulgan, Tucker, Ali, & Sanders, 2007
Responsible Innovation	An emerging concept in the EU context that highlights the relevance of social-ethical issues in research and innovation practices (OZSW, 2019).	Perhaps the inheritor of Victor Papanek's Responsible Design (1971), this seeks to develop innovation processes that are environmentally sustainable, convivial, and humane. Responsible Innovation typically involves participatory and co-design processes.	Blok & Lemmens, 2015
Utopian, Molecular and Sociological Social Design	Socially oriented or otherwise ethical design practiced towards a sociological agenda.	Koskinen and Hush (2016) further characterise Social Design into three distinctive phenomena ● design towards *utopian* futures—Buckminster Fuller's Design Science as an example (Fuller, 1971) ● *Molecular* Social Design towards incremental change— such as contemporary forms of ethical design practices ● *Sociological* Social Design— in which a larger sociological conception of change is held.	Koskinen & Hush, 2016

Nash, Callum and Briggs, Jo (2019) All Innovation is Social. In: International Association of Societies of Design Research Conference 2019 (IASDR 2019): Design Revolutions, 2-5 Sep 2019, Manchester, UK.

Design and Publics.	Designing publics refers both to the way publics arise out of design interventions and to the generative action publics take—how they 'do design' as they mobilize and act in the world.' (MIT Press, 2019).	'Publics' as used here refers to Dewey's analysis of political movements of being affinities of self-interest (1927). As it is highly individualising—in this theory it makes no sense that a white male would support movements against racism or patriarchy—this conceptual device is cited as giving us a means of designing interactions that can leverage self-interest into collective action and supporting social change. There is some variation of terminology; *Designing for Publics* and *Designing Publics* refers to taking the designing to a public or mobilising (new) publics. *Designing with Publics* is collaborative design towards mapping existing publics.	Le Dantec, 2016; Light & Briggs, 2017
Contestational Design; Agonistic Pluralism	Aims to promote particular agendas in contested political arenas (Hirsch, 2008).	Designing ambiguous or controversial spaces and interactions in the community where opinion can be crystallised or deconstructed. Borrows from a Marxist, rather than Deweyian conception of social formation, in which the individual is subsumed and produced by social relations, rather than individually relating to them. This places the focus of designing towards effecting discourse rather than affecting the individual.	Julier et al., 2016; Korn & Voida, 2015; Mouffe, 2009
Citizen/ Citizenship Design/ Design as Citizenship	Designing as 'activist citizen' or through collaboration with citizens to generate responses to emerging problems, political issues and social phenomena.	More disparate than other philosophies and approaches listed here, but has a distinctive positioning of the designer as both constituted by and constituting their socio-political relations. Designer as an actor in the political relations that (re)produce them.	Grout, 2018; Heller & Vienne, 2003; Lewis, 2017
Design Activism	Design playing a central role in promoting social change, raising awareness about values and beliefs, and questioning the constraints of mass production and consumerism.	The literature is associated mostly with the production of artefacts for propaganda purposes. However, broader manifestations through objects and services concerning the design of and towards activism also specifies the use of design for radical political purposes.	DiSalvo, 2016; Markussen, 2011
Digital Civics	Uses digital technologies to empower citizens.	Broadly encompasses designing technology for the relationships between people and the state, and each other in civic responsibility. Typically mobilised through a civic university research agenda. Draws on participatory and co-design methods.	Olivier & Wright, 2015; Vlachokyriakos et al., 2017

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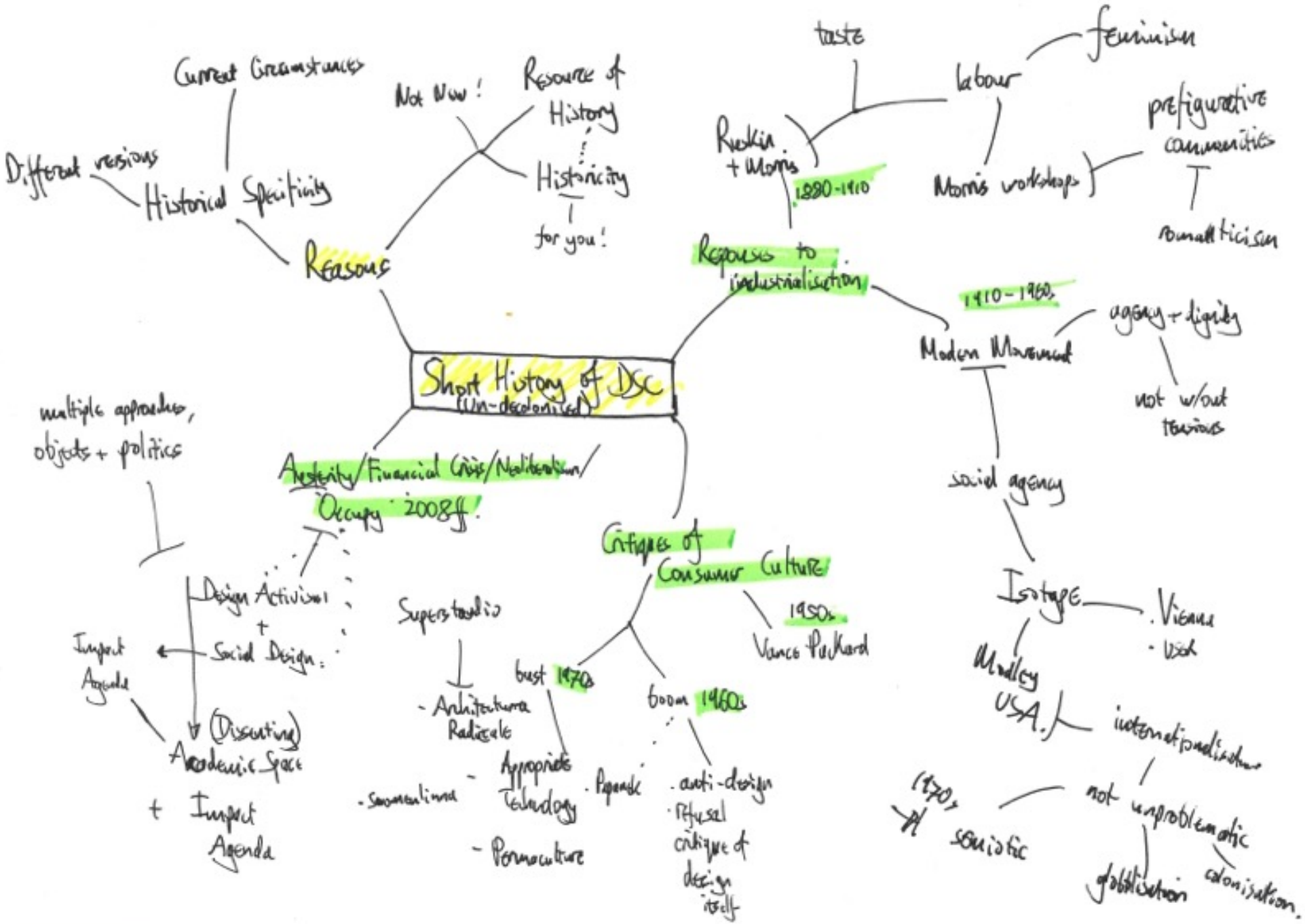
Short History of DSC
(Un-decolonised)
Reasons
Historical Specificity
Different versions
Current Circumstances
Not New!
Resource of History
Historicity
for you!
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1880-1910
Ruskin + Morris
taste
labour
feminism
Morris workshops
prefigurative communities
romanticism
1910-1960s
Modern Movement
agency + dignity
not w/out tensions
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Superstudio
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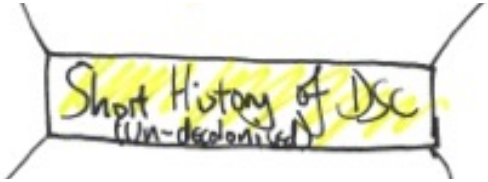
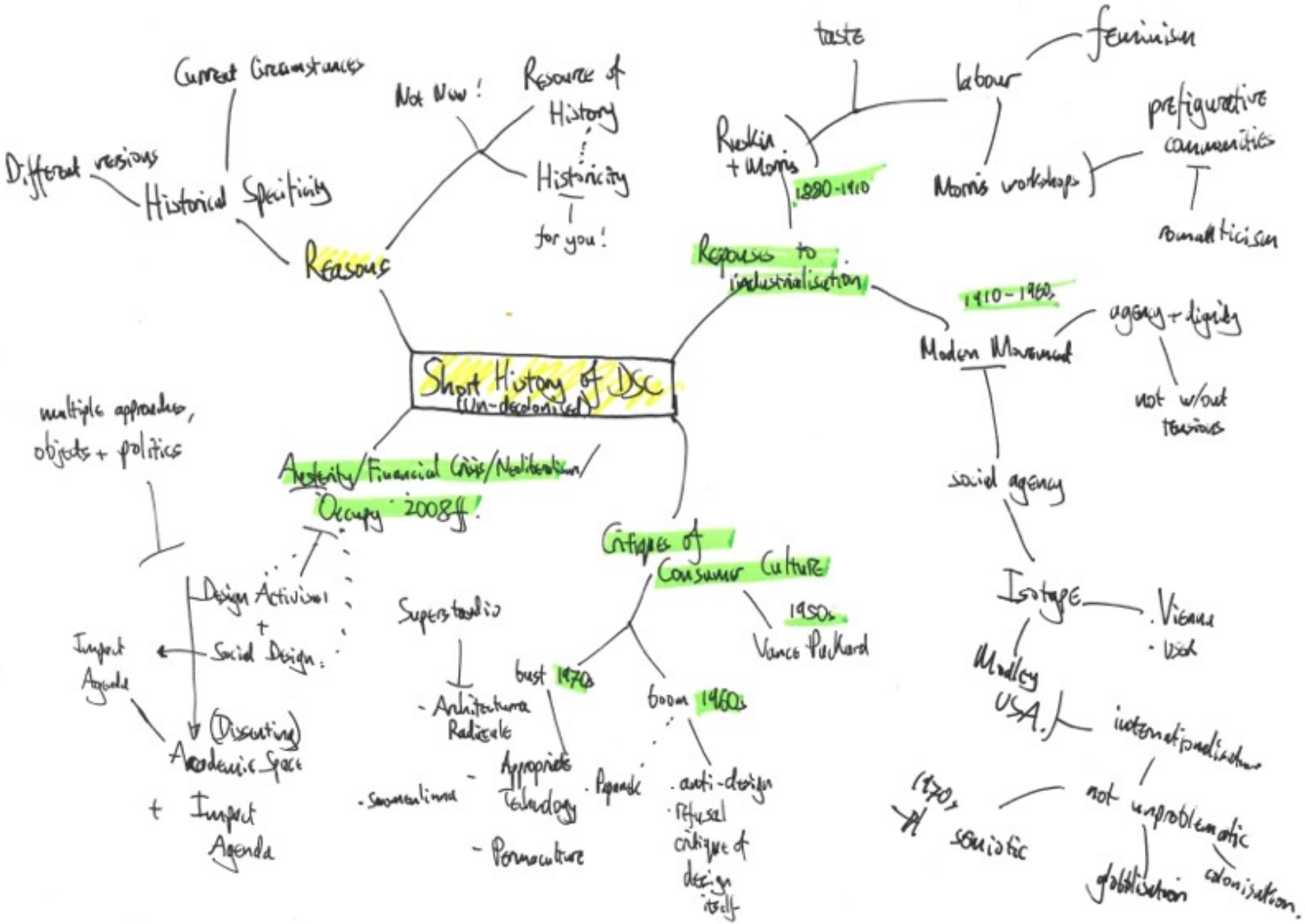
Which version of Design for Social Change are you most drawn to in this talk?

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