The Victorian Era
Victorian period 1820s – 1900

**turned to past for inspiration**
rejected renaissance aesthetics (esp. type)
found parallels in gothic art and architecture to the present period
  ex: christian virtues
borrowed elements were detached from origin (ornament)
  work made for spiritual means
  work to celebrate progress and social/economic advancement

british sense of social, civic and artistic responsibility declined
**wealth became motivating factor**

**ornamentation based on historical forms**

more wealth = more ornament = + social status
offered status and pleasure, proclaimed the innocent and masked
human nature
  lust
  greed
  colonial dominance

belief that ornamentation and design were the same

spread this influence through all countries through the printed mass media

**type**
display faces = altered traditional faces
bodoni, didot

Fascination with Egypt b/c of Napoleon
slab serif faces

**ADVERTISING**

**IR created surpluses in production**

△ necessary to create a “need” for the surplus
advertisement = integration of type and image to sell
1st advertisers brokered space in print
print work characterized by ornamentation

in USA this occurred after the civil war
initially advertising was about calling peoples attention to the product and telling them about it.
“Reason Why” pioneered by John E. Powers
informational campaign, not strategic
educate public about new products
  shift from simple > complex advertising

popular themes: nationalism, patriotism, progress, work
Walter Dill Scott

Theory of Advertising-basis was the concept of suggestion
Psychology of Advertising - called into question the consumer as rationally motivated

purchases made impusively Δ appeal to the emotions, suggestion must be pleasurable and not cause serious reflection or critical questioning.

Advocated the use of direct commands. These concepts would be applied more and more in advertising and in war propaganda.

Newspapers allowed for advertisements
first advertisers were salespeople
newspaper advertising kept to a minimum
newspapers were in control
later shifted to advertisers and back again....
1860’s = commercial art
craftsmen and artisans entered printing/advertising which became more conceptual

chromolithography
woodcuts, etc sold through catalogs
   1st clip art

1870 jules cheret pioneered poster through printing

after civil war in us - surge of consumerism
popular themes for advertising: nationalism, patriotism, progress

no connection between art and selling in the victorian mind

Philosophical Developments

**European Socialism**

process of industrialization required new ideas to understand it
new programs of action + new philosophies

laissez faire policies led to new ideologies loosely categorized as “socialist”
   conscious exploitation of the worker
   unavoidable workings of a capitalist, market dominated system

**Marxism**

marx: the exploitation of the worker by the owner (property, factory) would lead to social revolution - the overthrow of capitalist oppression and in the end to the institution of a rationally ordered society where human beings could at last be truly free.
fundamental premise is that history – changes in politics, philosophy, religion, the arts and so on – can be explained in terms of economic systems defined as the sum total of the relations of production. History moves towards a utopia in which private property and class distinctions will no longer exist.

Marx and Engels observed that the fission of labor under modern capitalism had resulted in the alienation of the artist from society which is due in part to the distinction between the fine and the applied arts that came about during the renaissance. They believed that the alienated artist might put his talents at the disposal of the revolutionary movement working to alter oppressive economic relationships (they admitted that non-economic factors influenced art).

The theories of Ruskin attracted more converts than Marx and Engels.

under the influence of Marxism we have grown more attuned to the economic analysis of cultural phenomena and more receptive to the investigation of art forms (such as furniture) which were considered irrelevant to history.

premodernism

**Arts and Crafts Movement**

1851 > industrial fair held Crystal Palace

belief modern machinery > stamped out taste by eliminating artist

industry = break w/ medieval system

a reform movement – sought to humanize the advance of the IR struggle against the encroachment of industrialism on working persons way of life

visually style remained consistent with the general victorian preference for ornament (very broad stylistically)

IR eliminated the role of the artist in production process
by mid 1800s last vestiges of the medieval guild system (artisans) was held as contemptible

essential unity and interdependence of all art tradition was rejected

social reform > tried to re establish aesthetic standards coherent national style

**Augustus Welby Northman Pugin**

(arch) all ornament should constitute an enrichment of the essential form
idea of honesty in art + design

according to Pugin the quality of architecture was directly dependent on the quality of society from which it originated. Thus his central proposition that food architecture and design can only be produced by a good society. This gave rise to the infusion of moral attributes to building and the continuing use of such terms as truthful expression and honest structure.

**John Ruskin**
“art is the expression of man’s love of his labor”

writing inspired that A + C movement

Damned the social and artistic effects of industrialization.

Reassert the aesthetic and spiritual importance of the handmade in a society loaded with shoddy mechanically produced goods that signaled the arrival of the machine age.

fitness of purpose is a moral obligation - ornamentation should be organic.

objects are valuable and functional merely because of their beauty ir removes artists. design carried out by engineers

gothic forms best

voiced negative opinions about industry influenced Morris

**William Morris** (1834-96)
rejected forces that separated art from everyday life believed that a society unable to produce good design had at its core a faulty ethical system.

**socialist philosophy**
artist-designers-craftsmen would take direct responsibility for their creations and thus restore the pride in work that had been violated by the anonymity of the production line

sought to recreate a medieval environment workshops would be training ground for total artist

snobbish intolerance for machinery blind admiration for the antique

perceived as father of modern movement b/c everything falls into the domain of design to make a better world ideas adopted by Bauhaus and modern movement

manufactured furniture, wallpaper, etc
PREMODERNISM [ ARTS & CRAFTS + ART NOUVEAU ]

designed for the masses
only rich could afford it

emphasis on decorative honesty vs victorian covering up?

founded kelmscott press (private press tradition)
believed gothic was best national idiom - a style for england

failure wanted social reform and to preserve the transitional art forms versus the machine

he could not keep up economically with machine

catered to wealthy who could afford hand crafted items. this did nothing to inspire the working class to revolt

workers he was trying to incite were trying to feed their families

Art Nouveau
1st international design style, enhanced industrial products
transitional style between the historicism of most of the 19th century to innovation - the modern movement

unifying decoration, structure + intended function
design process pointed to abstraction because line was invented

1880s to outset of ww1
rebellion against victorian sensibility
revolutionize every aspect of design in order to set a standard that would be compatible with the new age

influences
orientalism
rococo
celtic patterning

began in England, descendent of arts and crafts
mackmurdo, includes Beardsley
characteristics: organic leafy design, curvilinear floral abstractions applied to conventional forms

between art for art’s sake and practicality
return to the romantic past
some continued with excesses in style
often obscured surface similarly to victorian design fascination with mysticism

art books and magazines - spread b/c of economical printing methods lithography

overall common language but style developed differently in each
country
england: simplified forms
france: decoration dictated form
Austrian secession (macintosh)
usa: tiffany glass, louis sullivan’s celtic architectural ornamentation

**Frank Lloyd Wright**
organic architecture
reality of the building existing in the interior rather than exterior - idea that function is integral to form
space is the essence of design

1900 – revival of the square (geometric image)
Glasgow School
Rennie Mackintosh, Francis and Margaret McDonald and George Walton

**The Glasgow School (Art Nouveau)**
use of organic imagery, emphasis on sinous line adn union of ornament and structure. Natural nature became popular because of mechanization caused by IR.

based on Ruskin’s thoughts
arch was art
contributed to mans mental health
nature in the design process
efforts from labor were an art form
artists must usefully edit and exercise historic and natural form to create modern relevance

**Charles Rennie Macintosh 1868-1928**
architect at 16
traveled to italy
advocated need of truth of native style
believed form should be genuine and utilitarian
critical of architectural precedence
1893 teamed with 3 other students

Graphic work influenced by pre-raphaelite work
celtic ornament, simple lines. favored more functional design
emphasis on detail, design is responsive to sight

the artists cannot attain mastery unless he attains mastery of invention, design process is about experimentation
context changes

**belgian architect henry van de velde**
believed good design was a social curative, chasing ugliness out of
man's intellect. incapable of realizing the vision of ruskin and morris but was a stepping stone to modernism.

(began school which later became Bauhaus, note influence)

integration of art + industry

Vienna Secession
influenced by Glasgow School

Otto Wagner
Gesamkunstwerk (complete work of art)

Die Wiener Werkstätte
Koloman Moser
Josef Hoffman

Hoped to improve the aesthetics of all sorts of durable goods

Duetscher Werkbund – 1907
cooperative of architects, industrial and graphic designers
cooperated with industry
overcome the alienation that had arisen between those who invent and those who carry out

Jugendstil (german equivalent to art nouveau)
sense of urgency in Germany and Europe to catch up to UK
Nietzche was an impetus for this in his writing

Nietzche
asserted god is dead (religion is an opiate of the masses a la marx)
concept of super or over man – countries should be run by powerful men
hoped for ideal superhuman condition

need to remodel the world in order to make it bearable to live in art becomes a means to overcome and improve our morality
PREMODERNISM [ ART NOUVEAU ]

France  heavy decoration dictated form
influenced all aspects of design
typefaces: arnold bocklin, aegean are examples
architectural ornament
costumes and fashion

Czech

United States
American designers believed style was consistent with technological
developments of the age. Many designers followed unquestioningly
the dominant trends of the time.