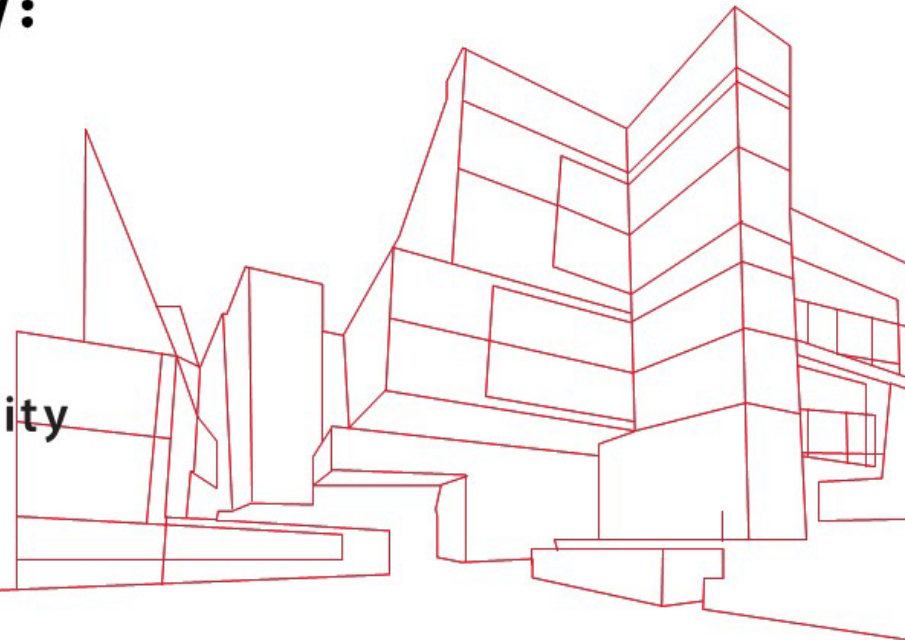


Lancaster, UK

# Craft and Design for Sustainability: leverage for change

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ImaginationLancaster/Lancaster University



## Structure of Presentation

- Topic and aims

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- Understandings of craft

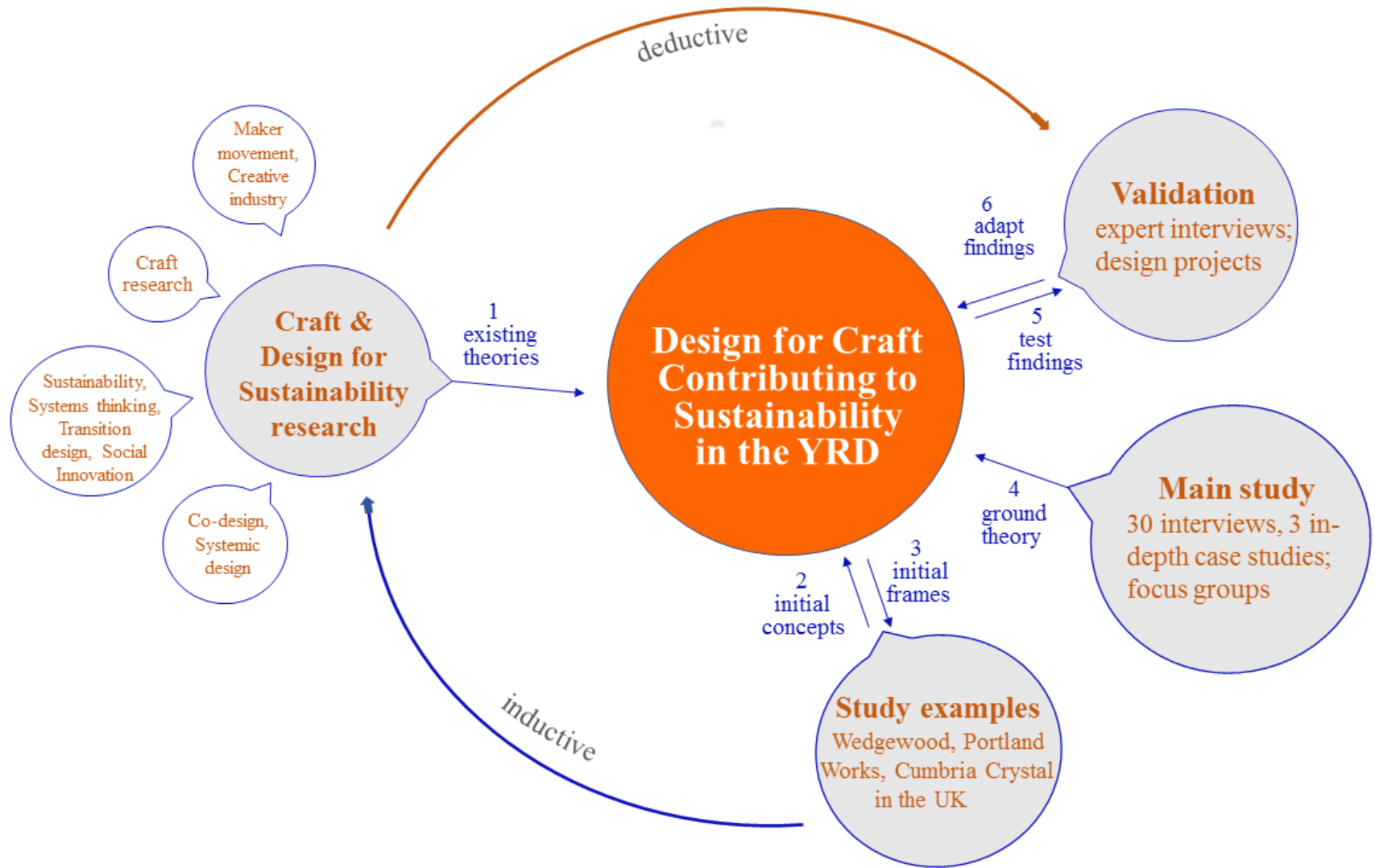
## Structure of Presentation

- Topic and aims
- Understanding of craft
- Implications of Sustainability

## Structure of Presentation

- Topic and aims
- Understanding of craft
- Implication of Sustainability
- Common ground between craft and sustainability

# Overview of research



- Preindustrial, marginalized, past
- culture, origin, tradition



# Connection & Relations

- Hand-mind-heart
- People-material-nature
- Doing-thinking-being
- Past-present



sense of continuity in their lives.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE HUMAN TOUCH

For work to be creative and meaningful, for it to connect at a deeper level with people, it has to be of people – of the hand, the eye and the spontaneous, intuitive responses that are possible when working directly with materials. During the process of making, one has to 'see', 'listen', be responsive, and make decisions – not in a pre-planned, impositional way, but as the work unfolds. The maker has to allow the work to inform its emerging direction. Eisner puts it this way:

*The work itself secures its own voice and helps set the direction. The maker is guided and, in fact, at times surrenders to the demands of the emerging forms. Opportunities in the process of working are encountered that were not envisioned when the work began but that speak so eloquently, about the process of emerging possibilities that new artists experienced. But*

Walker, 2017: 162

## Objectives and Aims

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What is the relationship between craft and design for sustainability?
- How can design contribute to craft for a sustainable future?

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- What is the relationship between craft and design for sustainability?

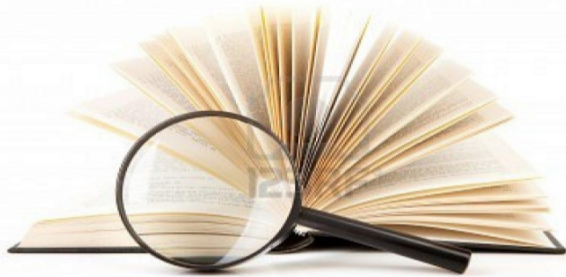
## Objectives and Aims

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

- What is the relationship between craft and design for sustainability?

The relationship between craft and sustainability has not been researched in a systematic way

# Methodology



## Literature Review

Theoretical analysis



Scoping study

## Implications for Craft

Practical

Ecological attribute  
Localism & Vernacular

Epistemological

Complex way of knowing

Ontological

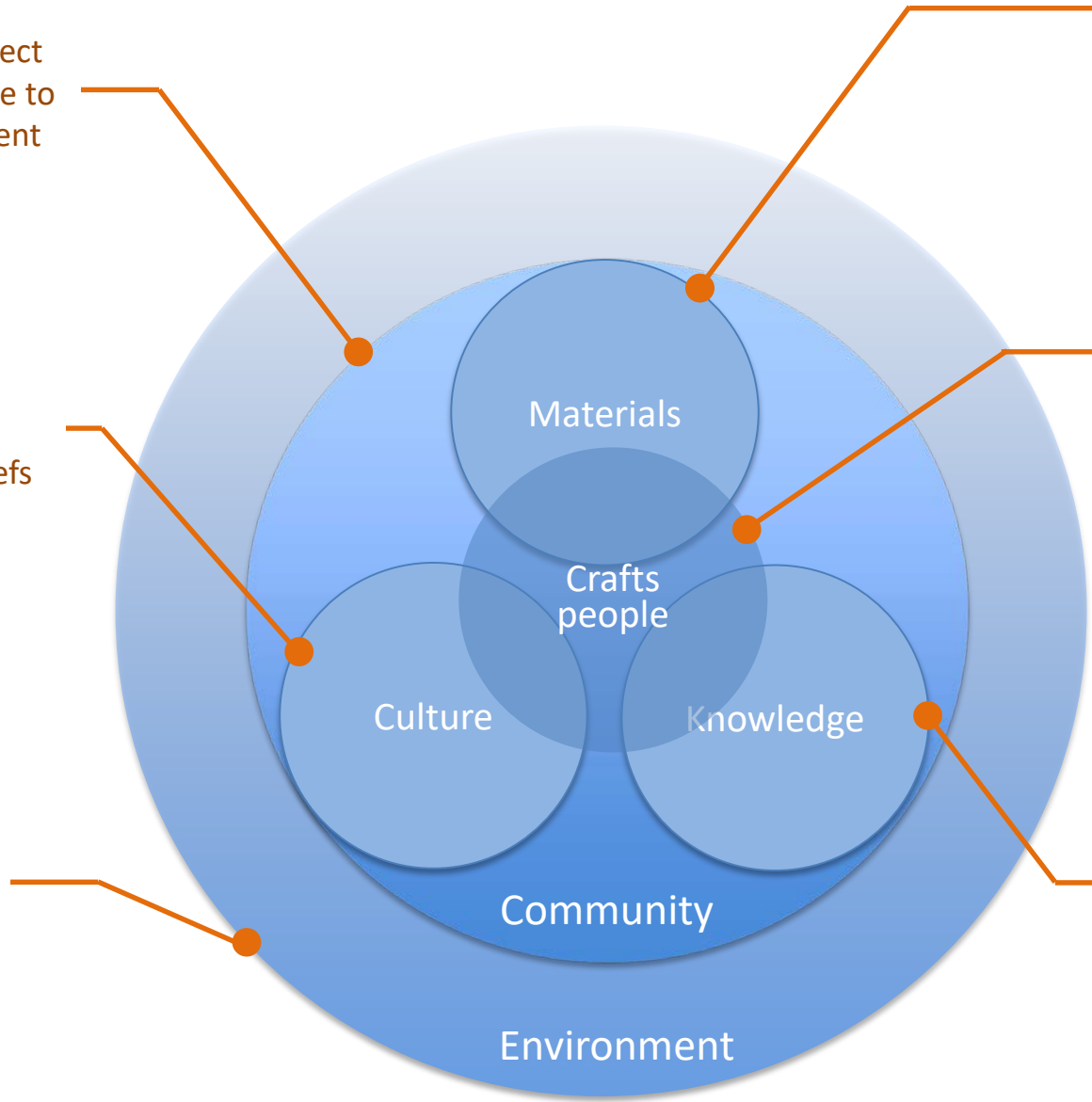
Continuation of tradition  
Authentic being

# Practical: An ecological way of making

Local, small, connect people and culture to natural environment

Tradition, folk art, customs, social & moral norms, beliefs

Ecological, sustainable living system, self-organizing, interconnected, symbiotic



Renewable, natural aesthetic, likely to be environmentally friendly

Skilled, knowledgeable, holistically engaged making, knowing and being

Tacit know-how, experimental collaborative knowledge

## Practical: craft as an ecological way of making

- Local materials
- Local knowledge
- Local practices
- Local culture
- Local diversity & identities



## Epistemological : craft as a complex way of knowing

- Does craft just represent bodily kinesthetic knowledge?

*“Embodied knowledge is more than merely skilled practice and performance, and the body plays a key role in the making and recall of a wide spectrum of knowledge, including the conceptual kind”*

Marchand, 2010:18

## Epistemological : craft as a complex way of knowing

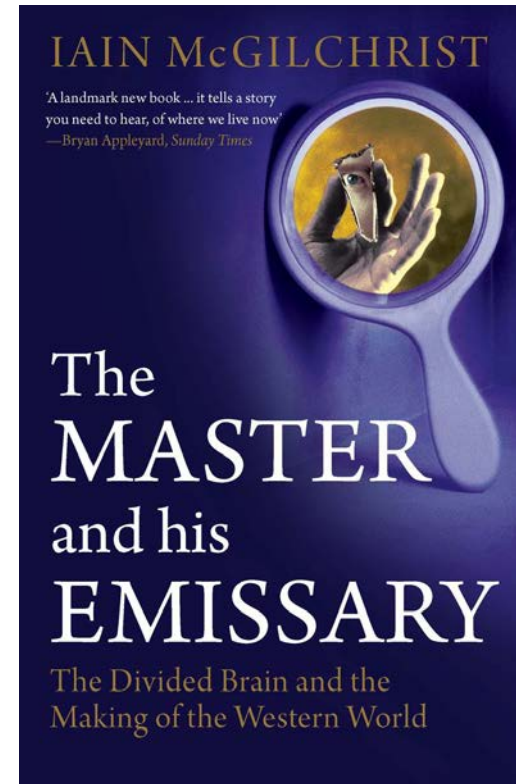
- Explicit, linguistic knowing
- Perceptual knowing
- Implicit, embodied knowing
- Existential knowing (emotion, beliefs)



## Epistemological : craft as a complex way of knowing

Our worldview needs revision.

Embodied, intuitive ways of knowing are as important as rational, cognitive ways of knowing



## Epistemological : craft as a complex way of knowing

*“I use a lot of sensual words ..., with analogical, visual words like square, triangle, stone and water, etc. to make more sense.*

*So, they put understandings into practice, and the practice corrects their understandings, and vice versa”*

Interview with a ceramic master in Jingdezhen,

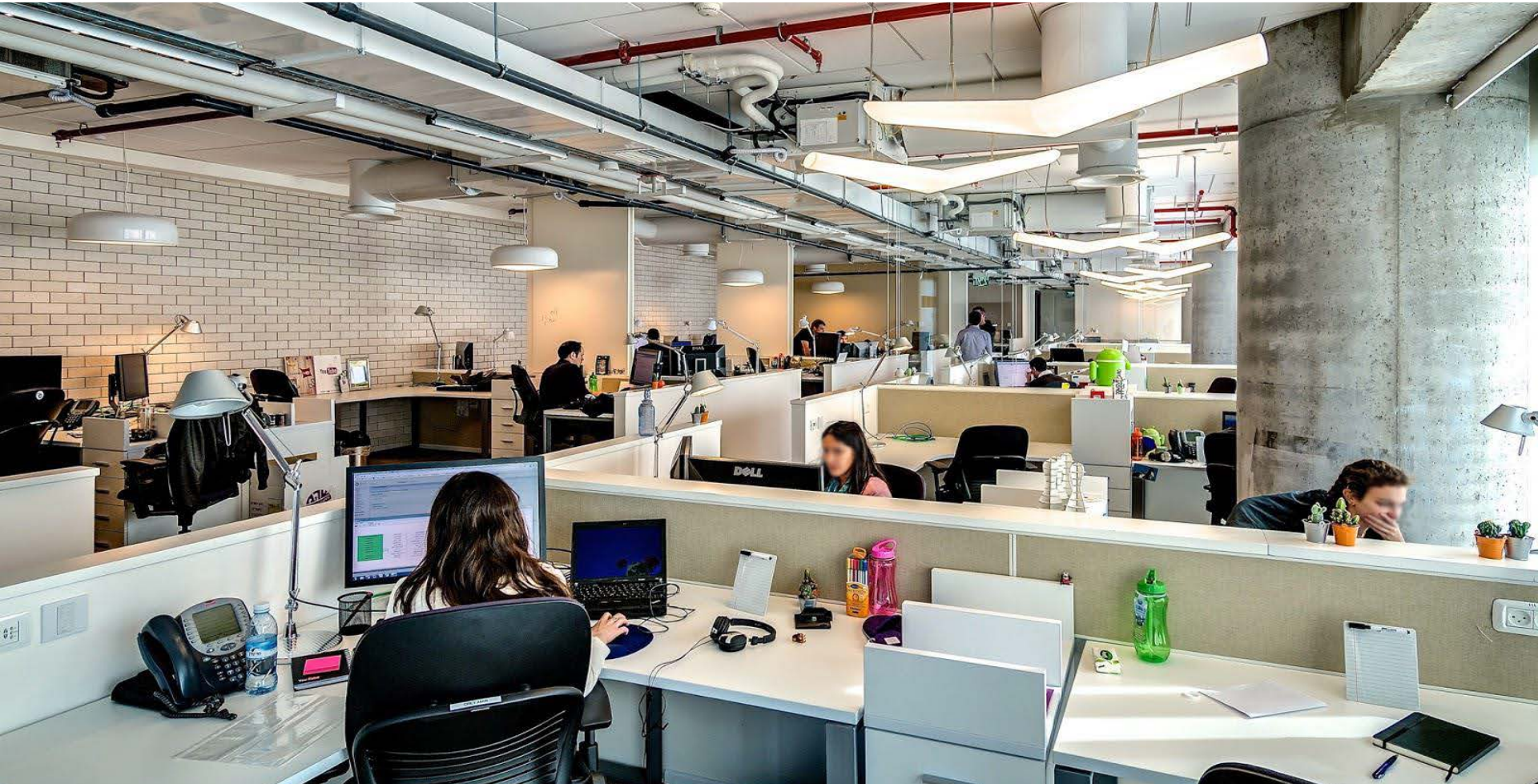
20 May 2017

## Ontological: craft as an authentic way of being

- Connected relations
- Self-actualizations
- Self-transcendence: the psychological heritage, the spiritual, symbolic and beliefs

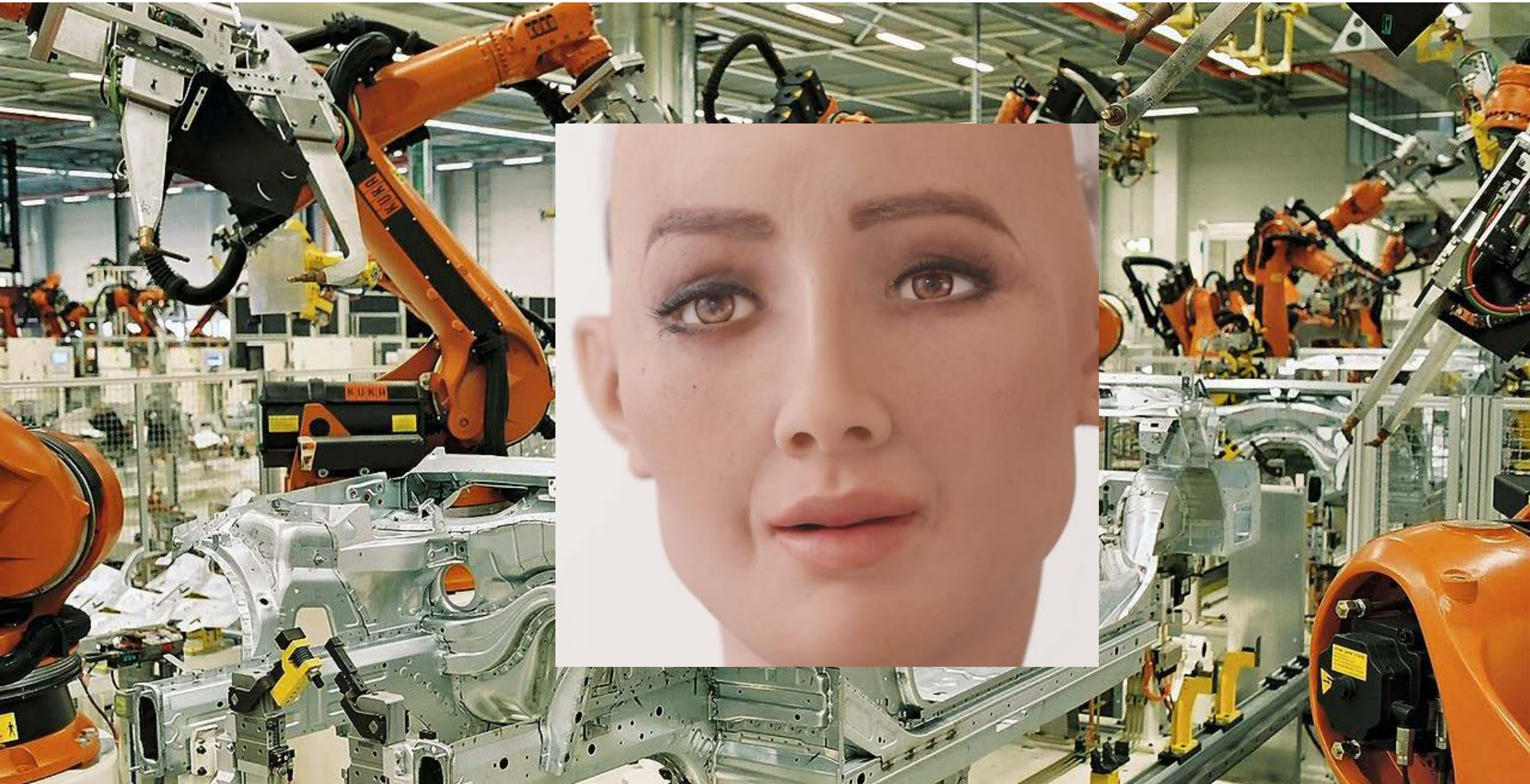
# *Why Office Work is Bad for Us and Fixing Things Feels Good*

Matthew Crawford, 2010



***The production of so many useful things results in too many useless people***

Karl Marx



She learned from her grandmother, who learned from her mother.  
Her daughter *“will have to continue this tradition so humankind can benefit from it”*

Paradiso, 2015, photo: BBC, London



*We didn't come up with the wish to build this house.  
It is a wish preserved from our ancestors*

Villager/builder; <https://vimeo.com/34499848>, 2010

# UMA LULIK

A  
CASA  
SAGRADA  
THE  
SACRED  
HOUSE

directed by  
Victor  
de Sousa

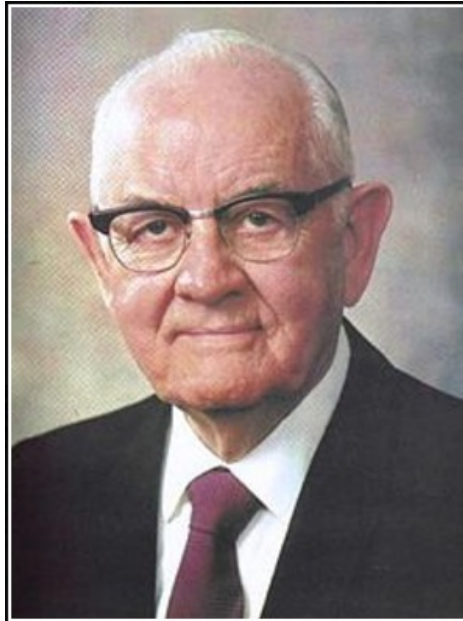


## Craft: a life praxis

*“A craft product, when well designed and produced by a good craftsman, is not merely useful, but also has such elements as balance, proportion and harmony”*

Aristotle

## Craft: a life praxis

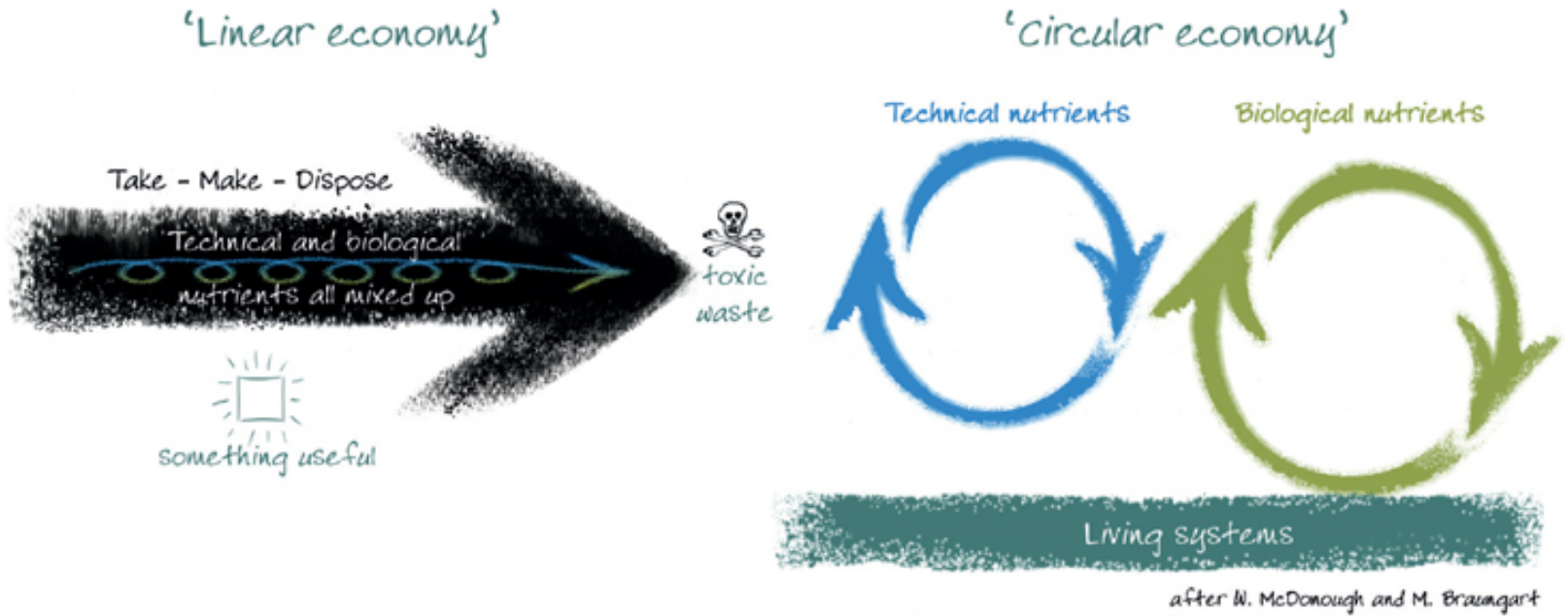


Real craftsmanship, regardless of the skill involved, reflects real caring, and real caring reflects our attitude about ourselves, about our fellowmen, and about life.

— *Spencer W. Kimball* —

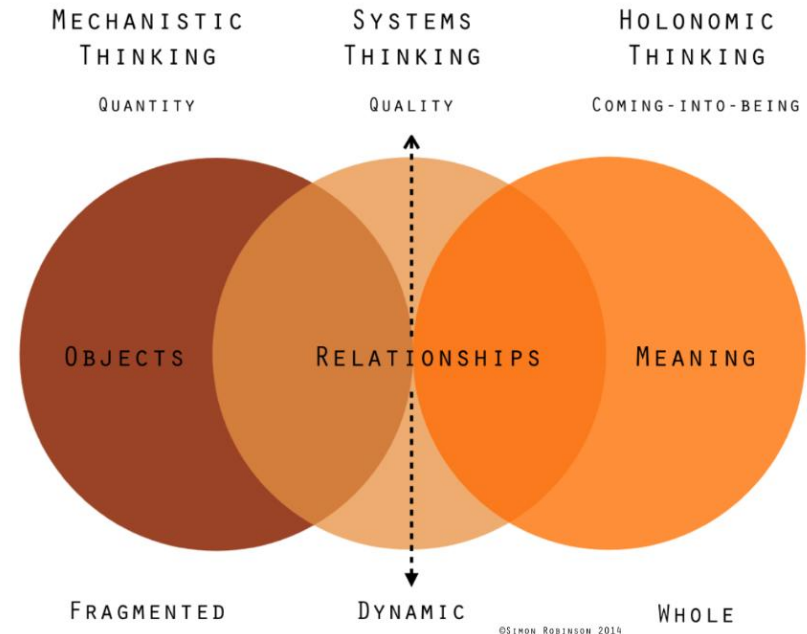
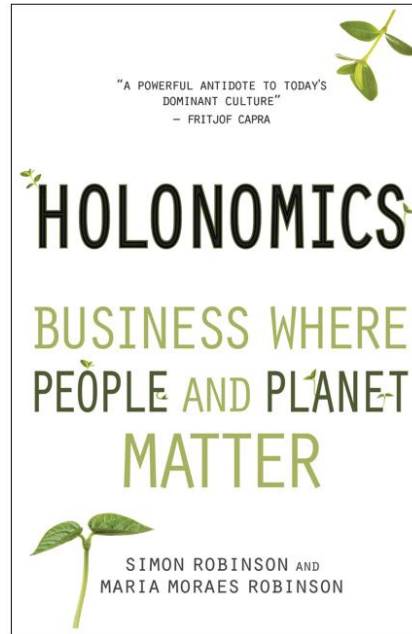
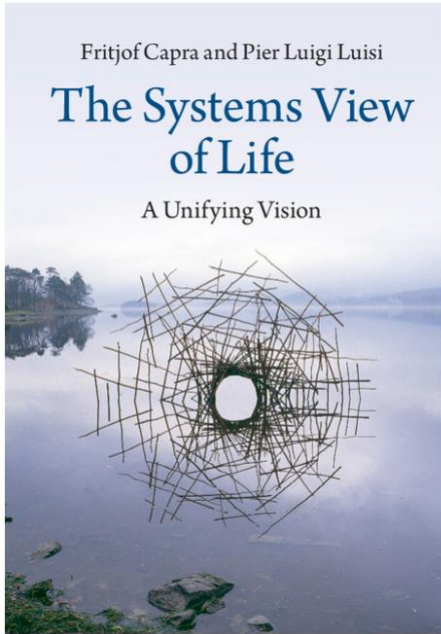
AZ QUOTES

# Understanding of Sustainability



Eco-effectiveness: waste = food

# Understanding of Sustainability



*“It is impossible to solve a problem within the same framework of thinking that gave rise to it in the first place”*

Orr, 2002

# Understanding of Sustainability

Cosmopolitan localism  
Small-local-open-connected  
Eco-communalism

Household



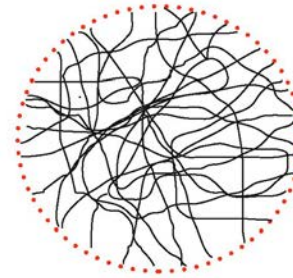
Village or Neighborhood



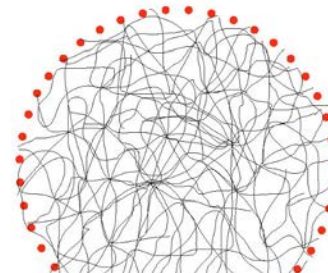
City



Region

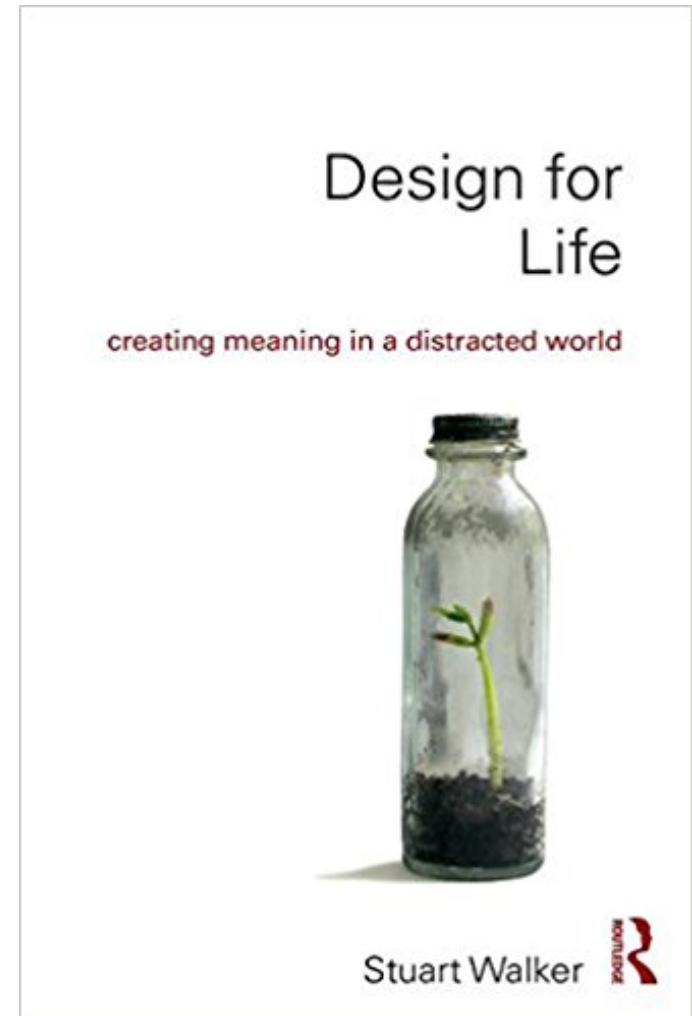


Planet



Kossoff, 2015

Revision of lifestyle and values



# Relationship between Craft and Sustainability

Accordances	Tensions
<b>Eco-effectiveness</b> Natural material, renewable resources, closed loop ecosystem	<b>Cosmopolitanism</b> Closed, isolated from technology and economy, lack of global view
<b>Localism</b> Local resources, knowledge, human needs, community-based living, diverse cultural identities	<b>Productivity</b> Pre-industrial technique, uncompetitive, while modern production generally ignores social and environmental costs.
<b>Resilient system</b> Small-scale, diverse, distributed, resilient to risks and crises	<b>Economic viability</b> Low-paid, low price, value diminished, cost-income gap
<b>Lifestyle</b> Authentic, relevant, creative, responsive, contextualized	

# Scoping study of craft-sustainability context in the YRD



Craft as a means for economic sustainability



Unequal and unbalanced development (income, support)



High enthusiasm of commercial activities (risk)



Lack of principles, criteria and direction (assessment)

## Deeper leverage for transformative change

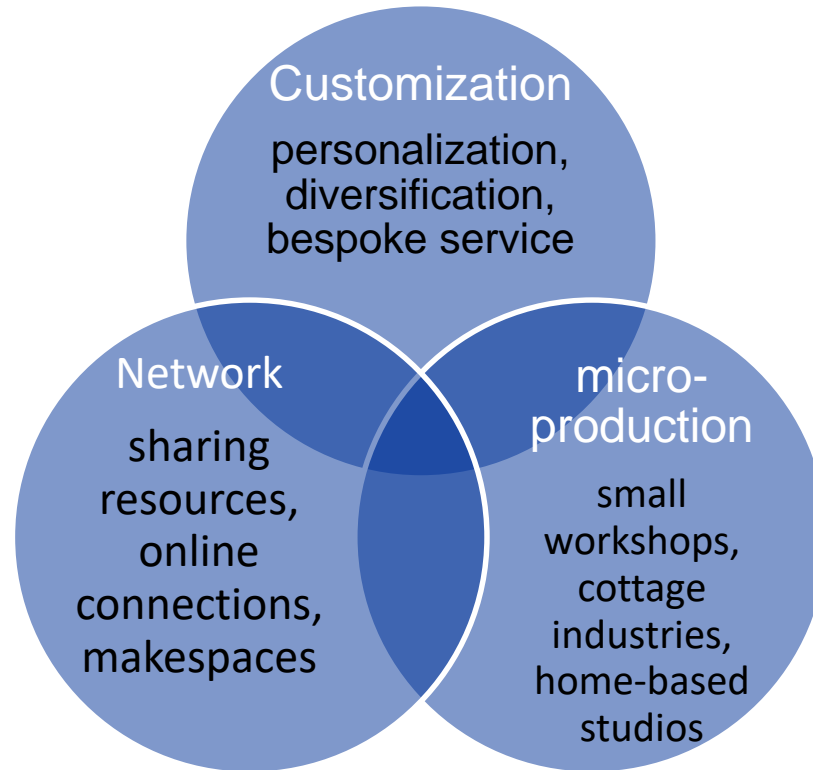
**People-nature** reconnections

**Knowledge** recreation

**Institution** restructure

(Abson et al., 2016)

## Leverage point 1: craft model of production & economy



‘making a living’ and ‘living a creative life’

# Leverage point 1: craft model of production & economy



extraction from nature



integration into nature

## Leverage point 2: craft model of knowledge and education

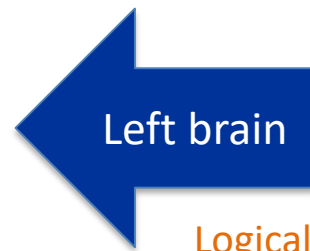
*“questioning existing perceptions of legitimate knowledge in science and politics opens up the potential to identify gaps in and strengths...”*

Abson et al., 2016

## Leverage point 2: craft model of knowledge and education

### Reductionism

Parts  
Structure  
Prove it  
Hierarchy  
Categories  
Separate  
Future/past  
Precise  
Static  
Dehumanized  
Mechanistic



Logical  
Analytical  
Objective  
Rational  
Fragmented

*meanings & purposes vs. causes & effects*

## Leverage point 2: craft model of knowledge and education

### Reductionism

Parts  
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Logical  
Analytical  
Objective  
Rational  
Fragmented

Intuitive  
Imagination  
Emotional  
Synthesizing  
Subjective

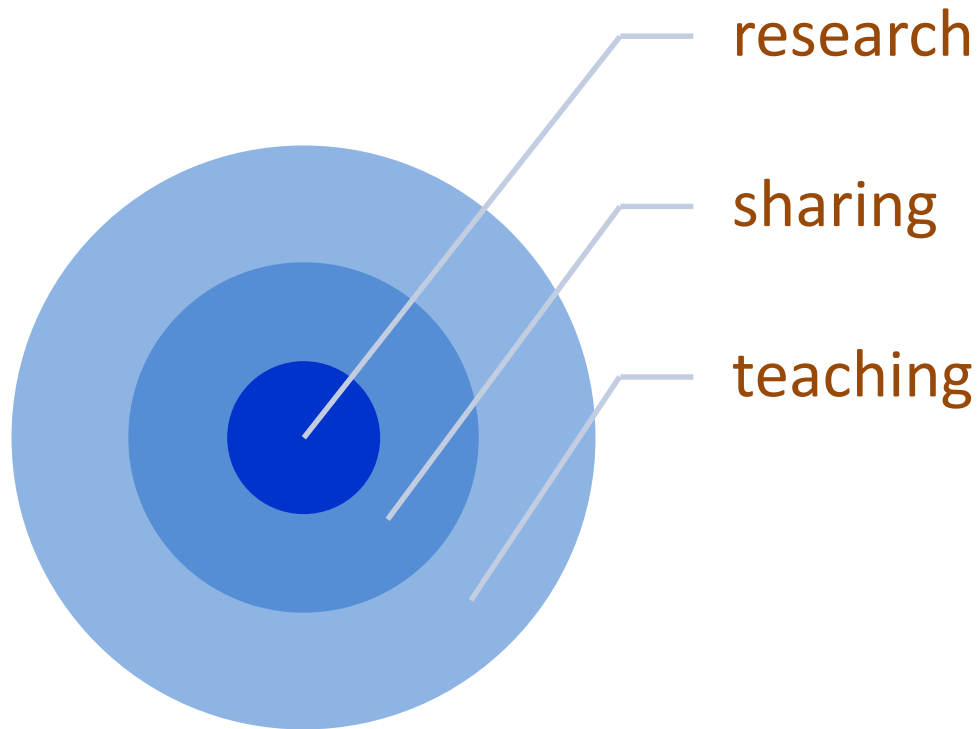
### Holism

Whole  
Creative  
Intuitive  
Synergy  
Individual  
Connected  
Complex  
Dynamic  
Self-organizing  
Now  
Harmony  
Organic

*“engagement” with the materials, the tools and the wider context where the creative process takes place”*

Ingold, 2007

## Leverage point 2: craft model of knowledge and education



Holistic model of teaching and learning

## Leverage point 2: craft model of knowledge and education

*“The first condition of education is being able to put someone to wholesome and meaningful work.”*

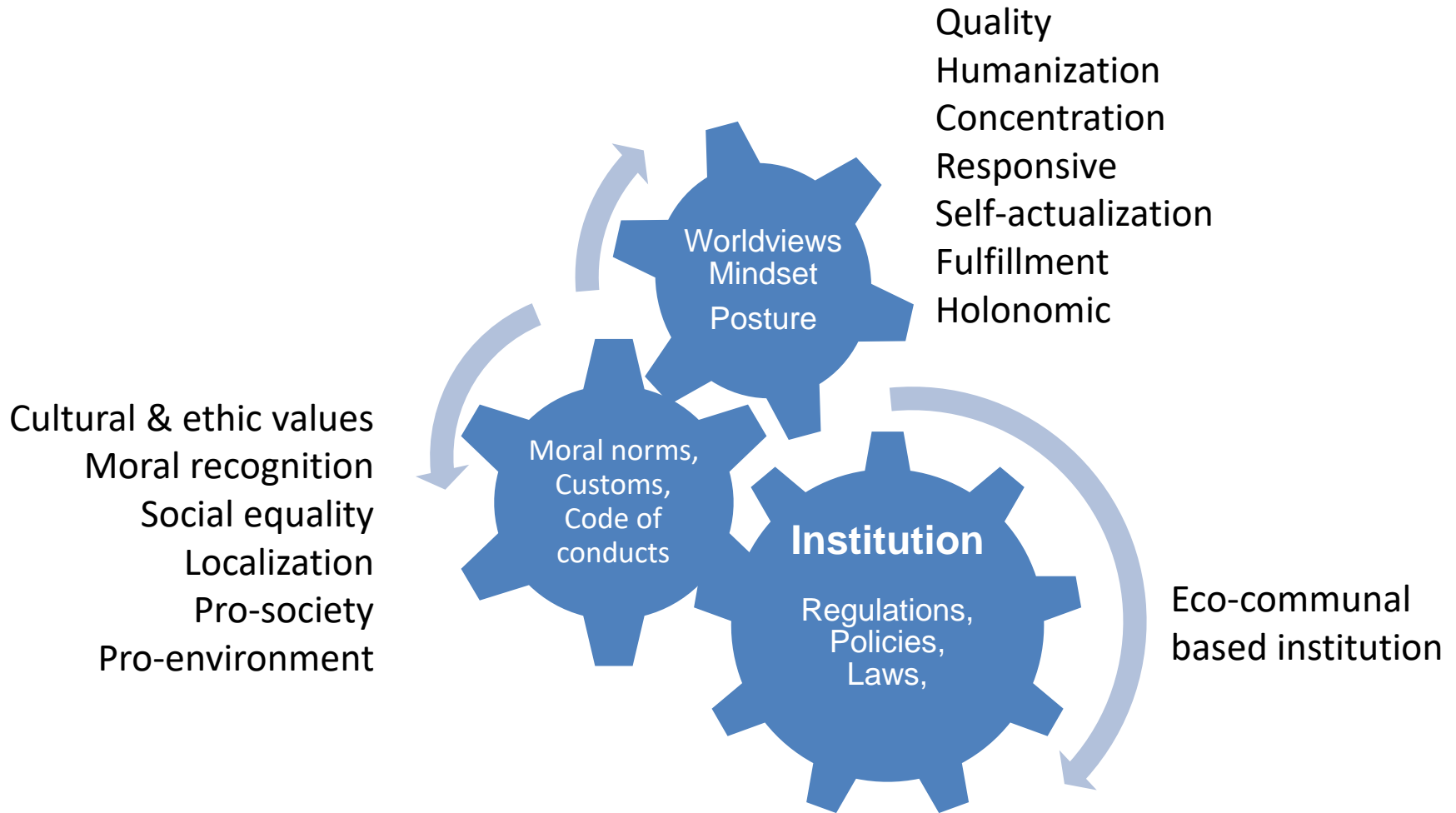
John Ruskin

Leverage point 2: craft model of knowledge and  
education

*“learning to transform  
oneself & society”*

UNESCO, 2010

# Leverage point 3: nurturing institutional change based on craft ideology



***“Without Craftsmanship, inspiration is a mere  
reed shaken in the wind.”***

-Johannes Brahms

Xiaofang Zhan

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