Seminario

“Mobility turn”.
Nuovi strumenti storiografici, dalla preistoria alla modernità

Usare la storia per costruire il futuro dei trasporti

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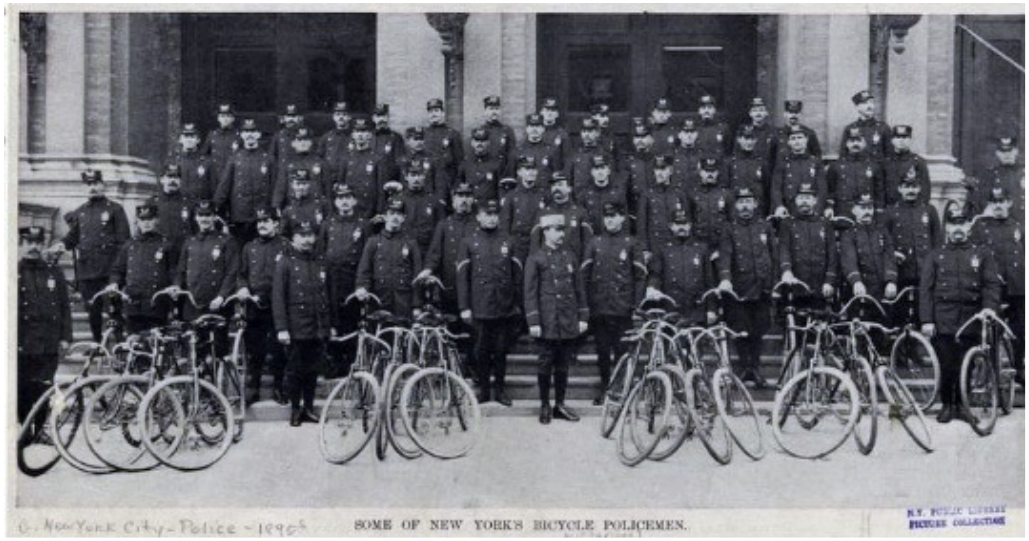


This Seminar

Seminario 1. **Concetti chiave, significati e critiche del Mobility Turn**

Seminario 2. **Archeologia dei movimenti: ripensare la stanzialità**

Seminario 3. **Affinità elettive tra modernità e mobilità**

Seminario 4. **Usare la storia per costruire il futuro dei trasporti**

Seminario 4. - 29 Maggio 2019 – 10-13

Usare la storia per costruire il futuro dei trasporti

Belloni, Eleonora (2018). “Mobilità sostenibile. Una rilettura della storia dei movimenti in bicicletta”, *STORIA E PROBLEMI CONTEMPORANEI* no.77, pp. 39-59

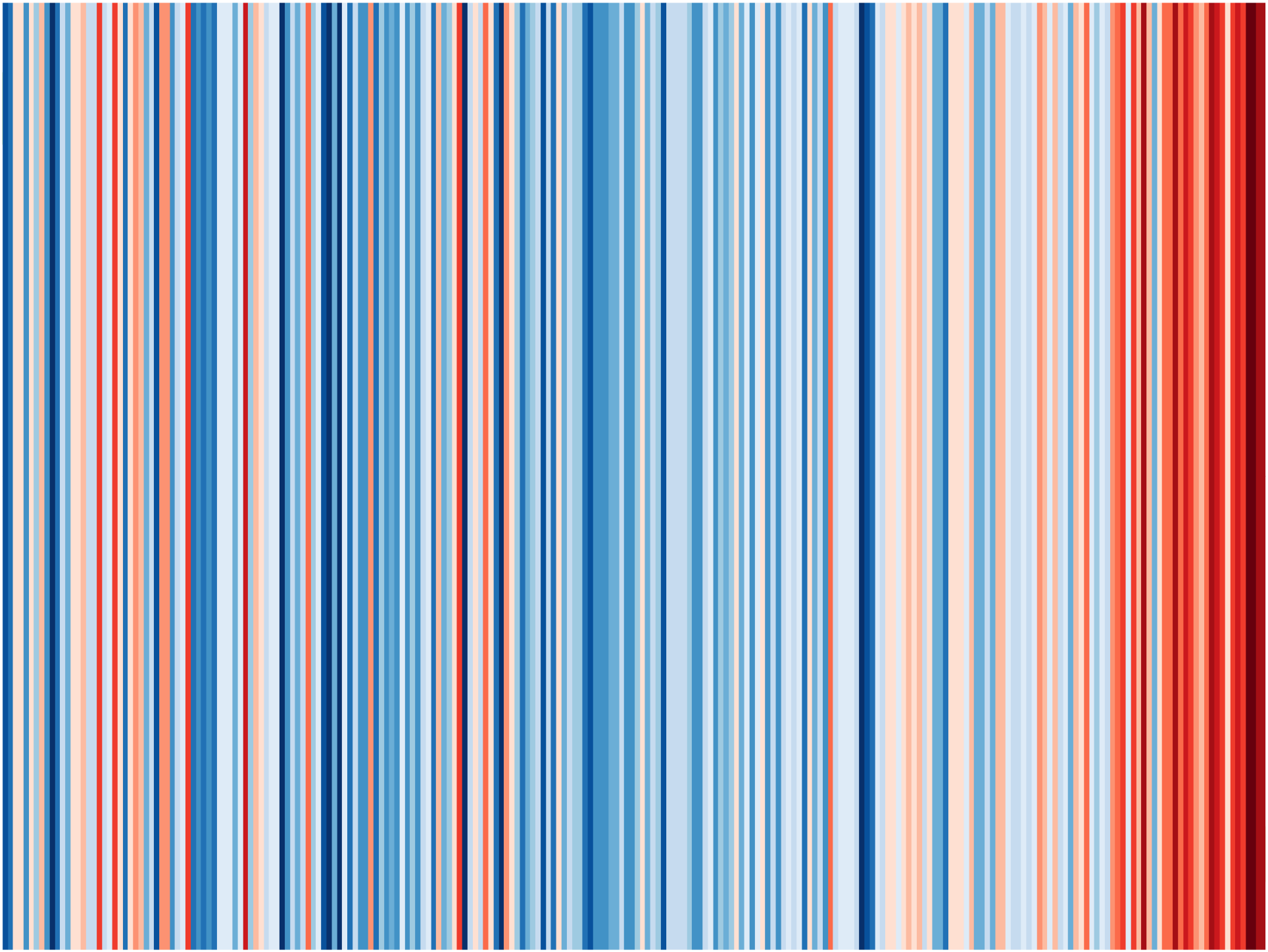
Il concetto di ***usable past*** di Colin Divall, un presente «better oriented to the future because it is sensitive to the past».

C. Divall, *Mobilizing the history of technology*, in «Technology and Culture», 2010, 4, pp. 938-960

Il concetto di ***usable past*** di Colin Divall, un presente «better oriented to the future because it is sensitive to the past».

«Passato e futuro si illuminano a vicenda a partire dal presente», W. Benjamin

Why now it is time to change?



A transition is necessary, but to activate any transition, we need to understand where we stand. And to do so, we need to understand the roots of today´s situation, that is, making its history.

Why “Back to the past”?

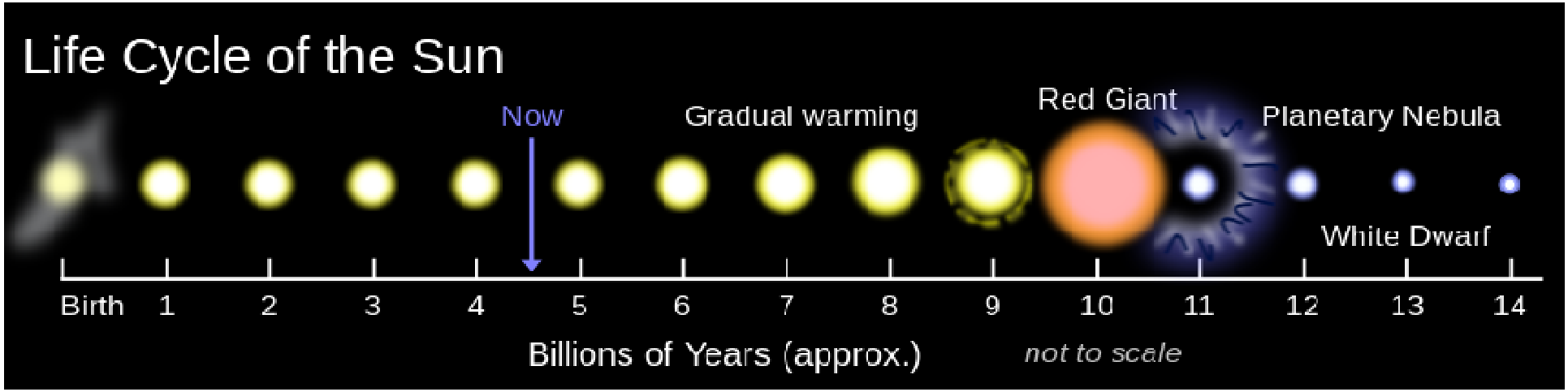
a. Lack of teleological trajectory
b. Lack of Progressivism
c. End of Darwinism selection apply to tech
d. Critique to Tech Darwinism

Forecasting

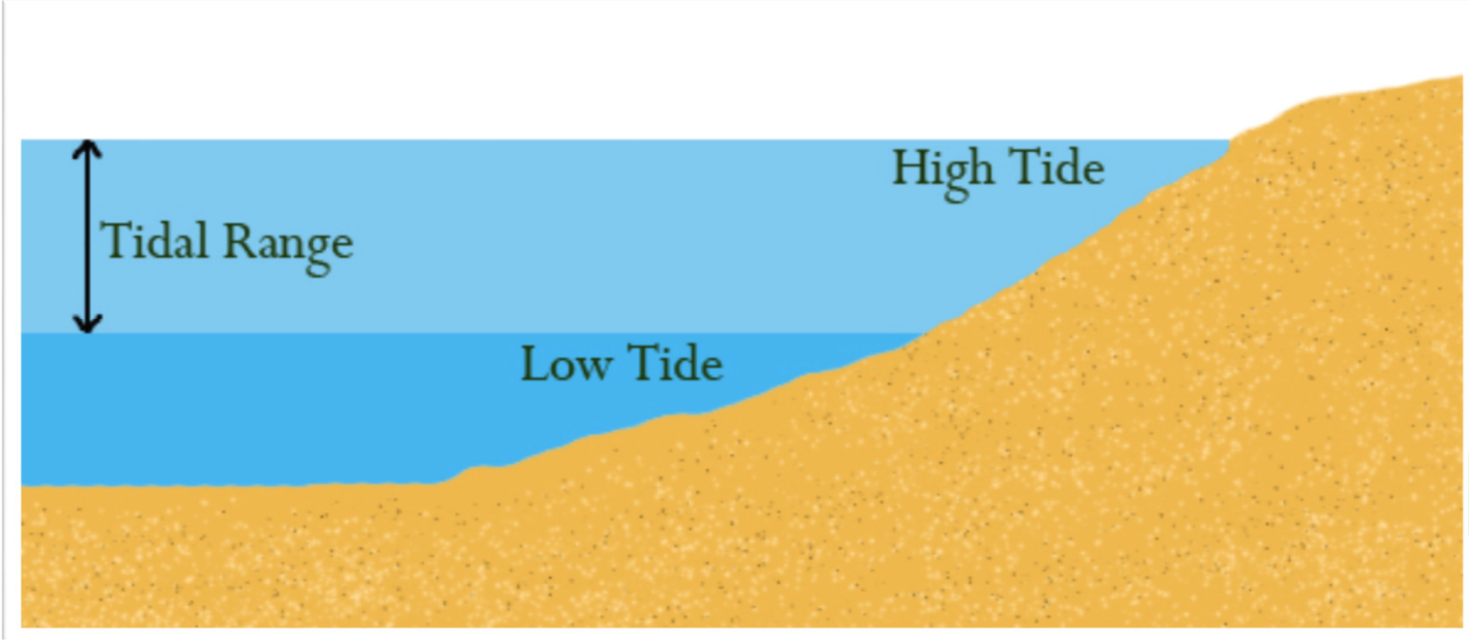
1. Forecasting: how and why we forecast
2. What if…? The future is full of (unexpected) surprises…

Is forecasting a modern times activity?

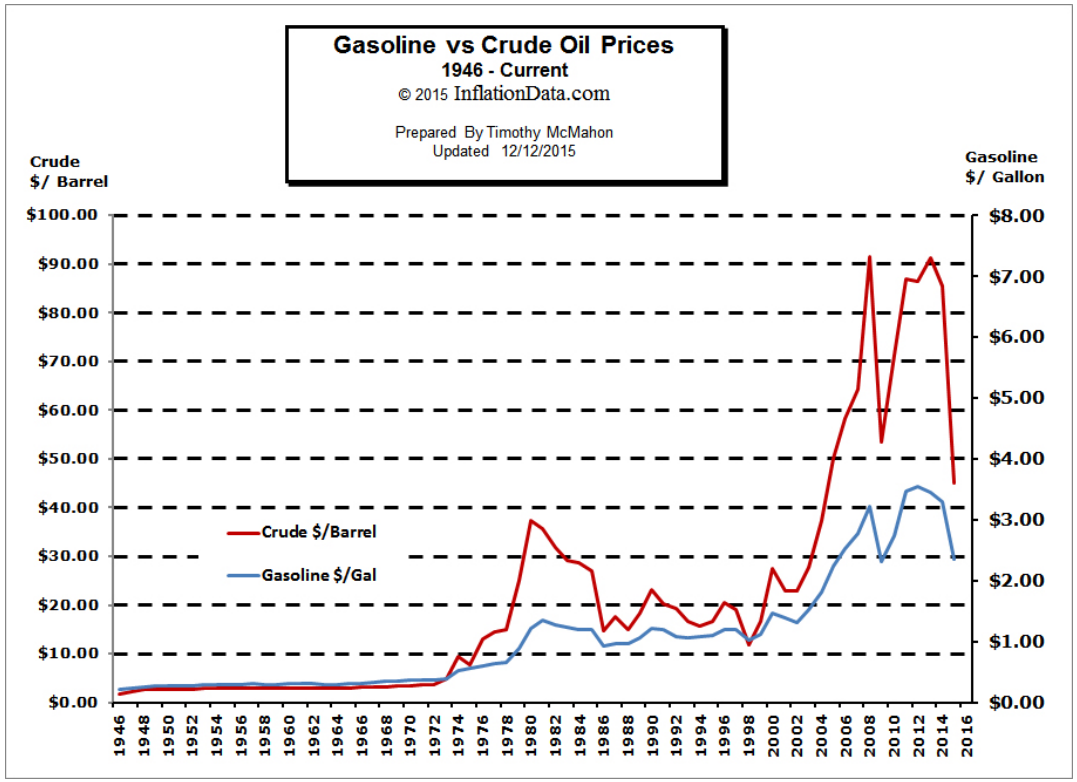
So, why do we forecast?



Some forecasts are very useful is allowing everyday activities. In many cases, those are based on mathematic analysis.

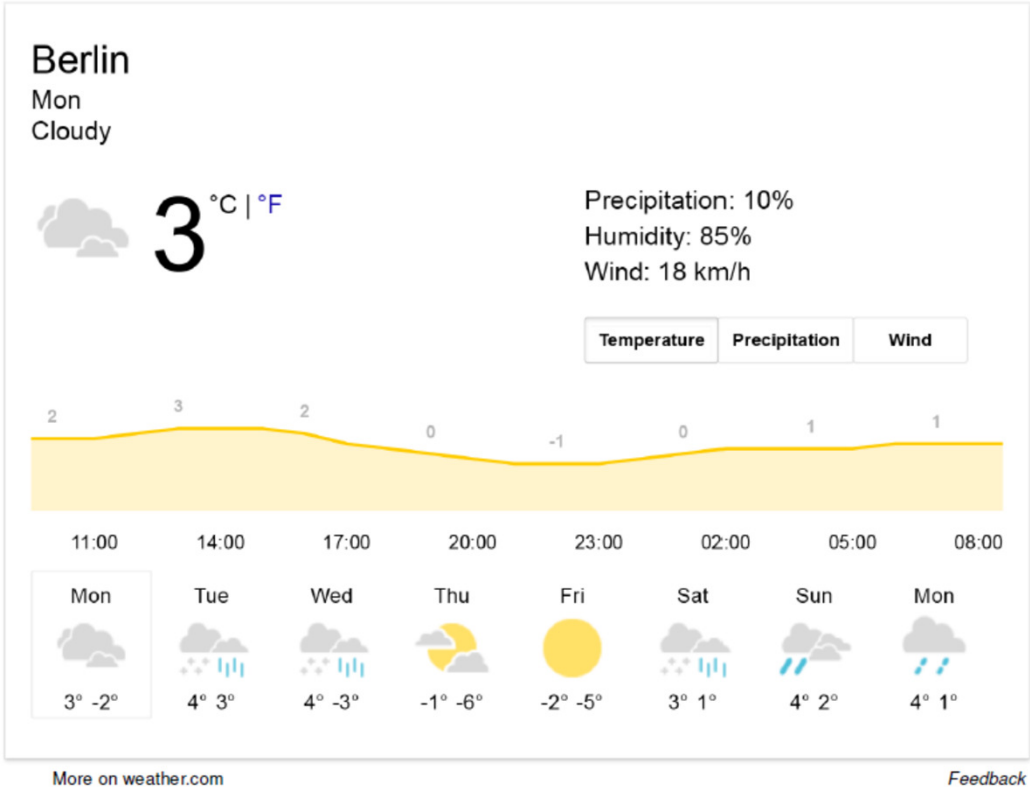


But other forecasts are a lot more complex, not based on linear mathematic analysis…

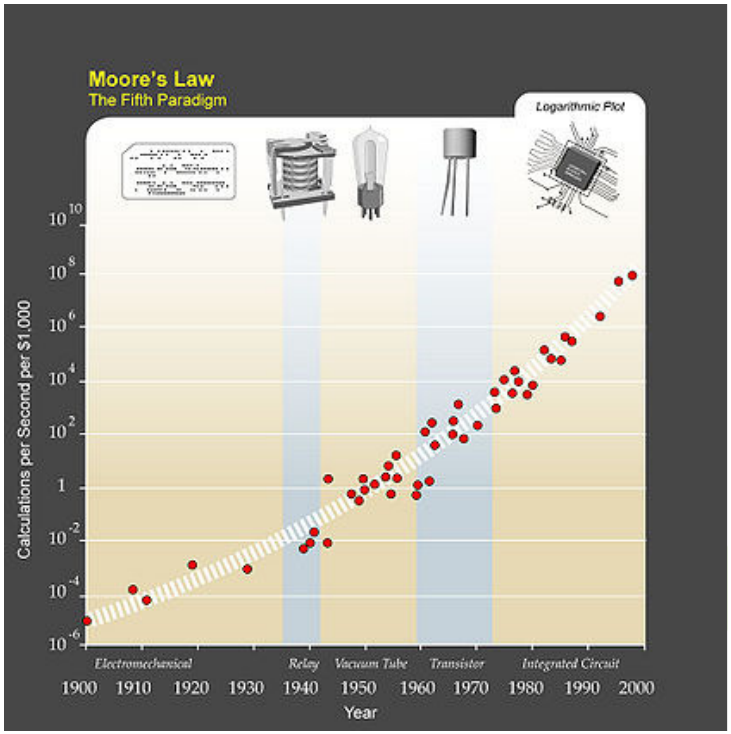


And even more unpredictable in the short run… So, Math or “Business as Usual” approach is not applicable, or if applied, it will offer great surprises.

Weather forecasts are indeed a good example of unpredictable and unstable system, and any forecast beyond 6-7 days is useless…

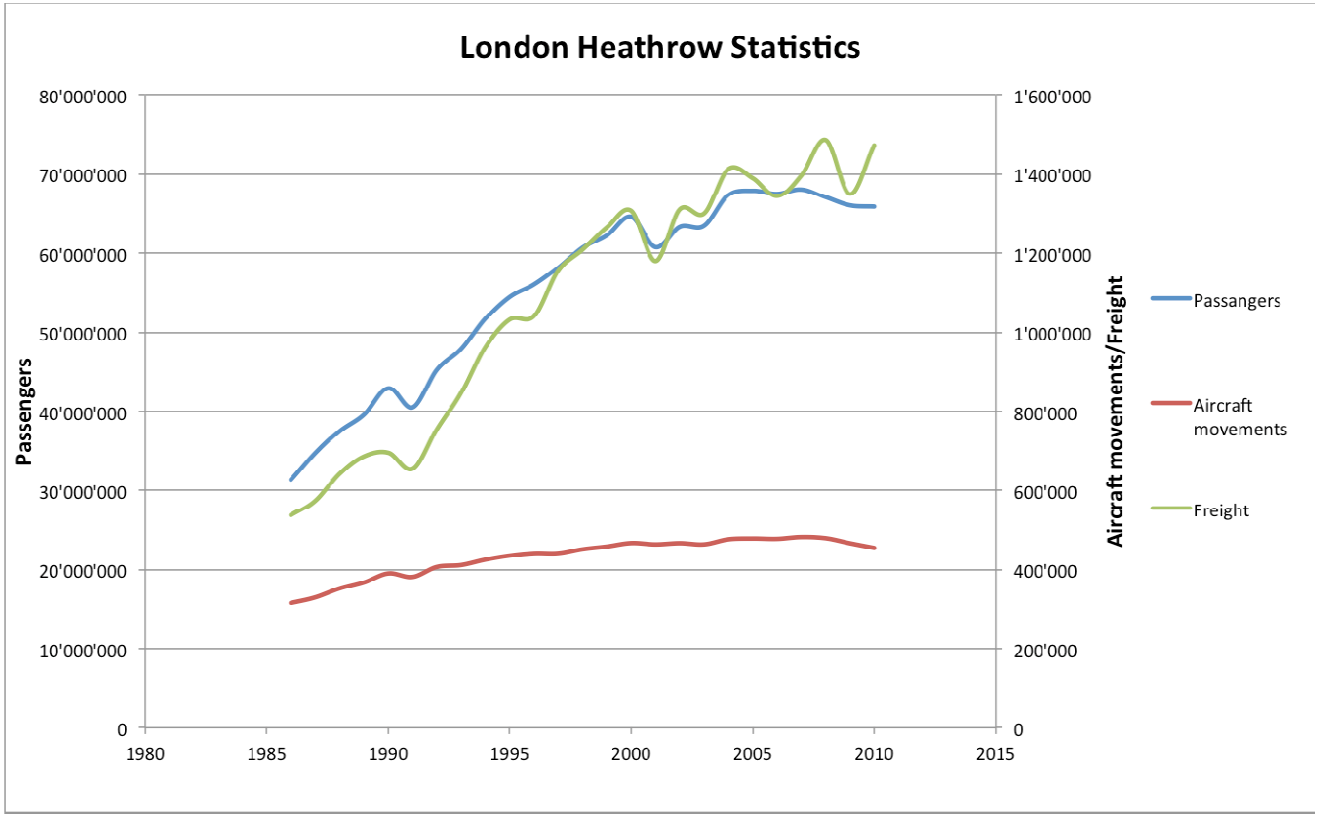


To make everything worst, we can even have some self fulling prophecies, alike Moore´s law on computer power… which is to say, forecast can be normative, that is they can even nudge humans to act in a given way.



Which strategies to cope with forecasts (beyond star long-term development and tide´s rise)?

We have a main distinction between qualitative vs. quantitative methods.



We can naturally still use (historical trends) e.g. numbers + Business as Usual´s approach, extrapolating historical data and forecast the future.

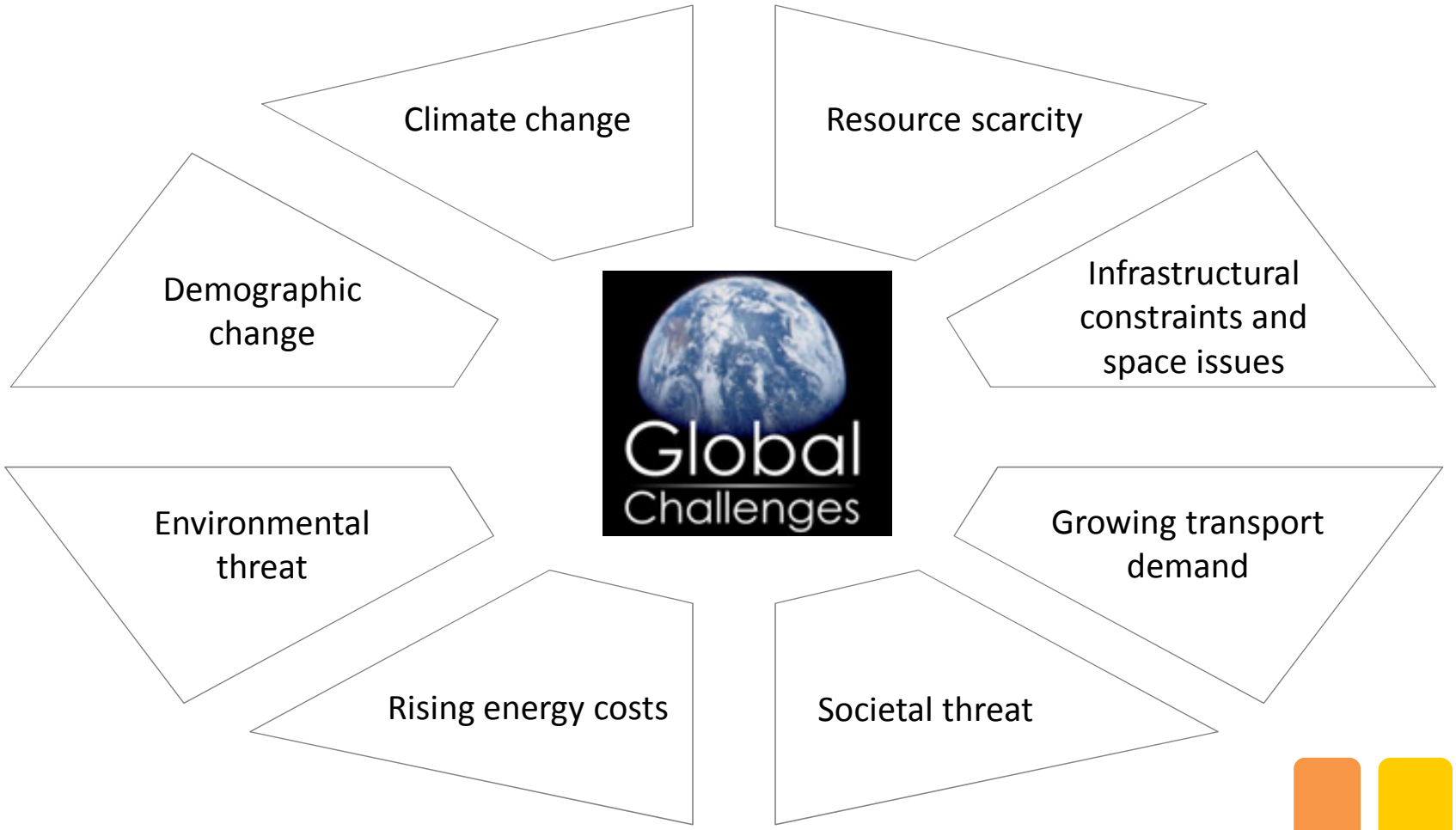
Among the qualitative methods:

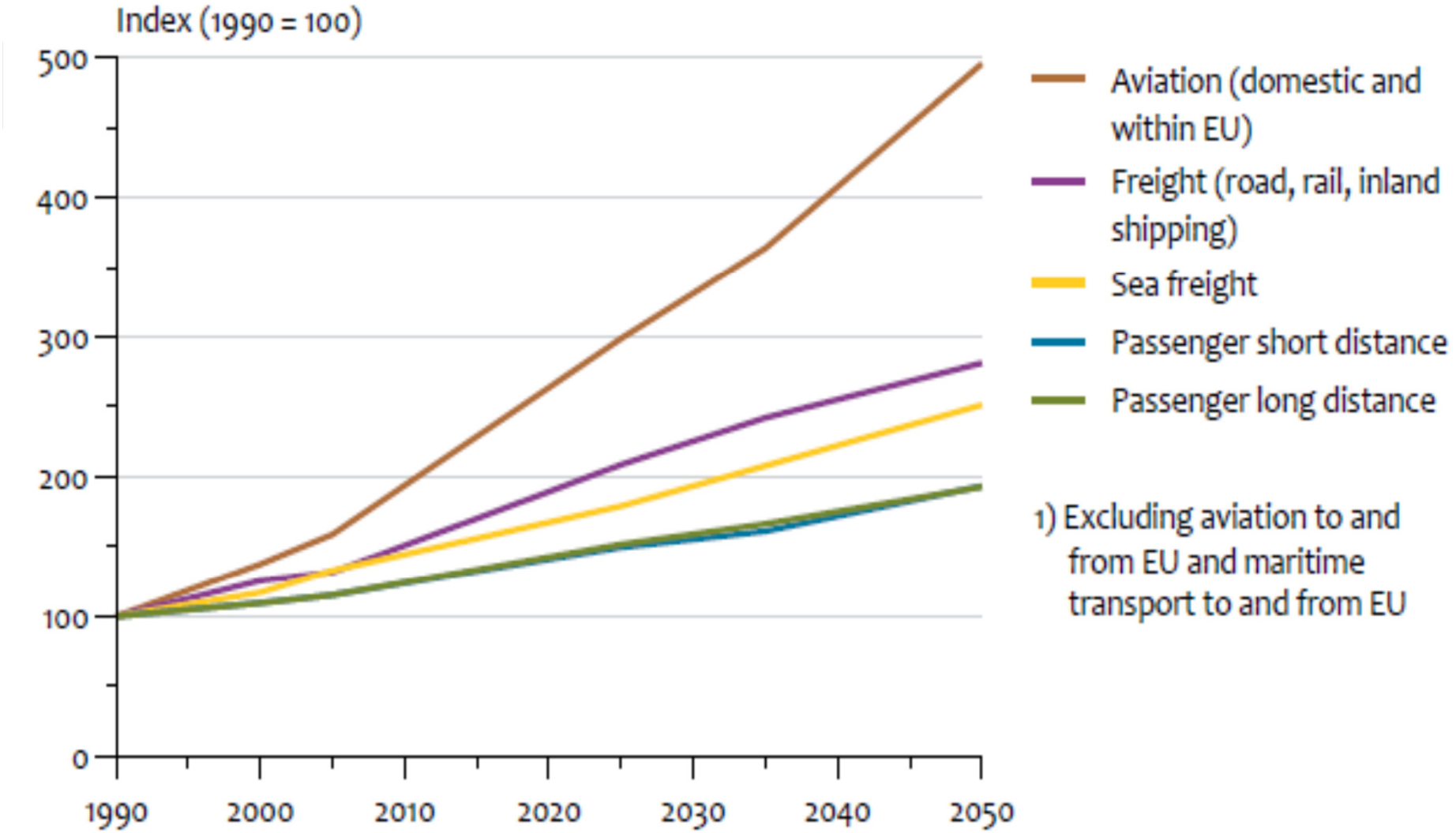
- One future
- Delphi method
- Normative Scenarios

What if…

A “black swan” phenomenon, or wild card: The disproportionate role of high-profile, hard-to-predict, and rare events that are beyond the realm of normal expectations in history, science, finance, and technology.

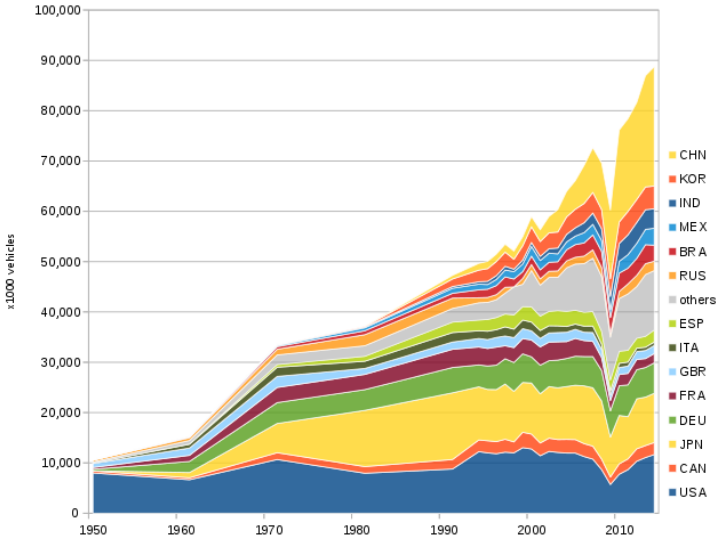
Megatrends


Climate change
Resource scarcity
Demographic change
Infrastructural constraints and space issues
Global Challenges
Environmental threat
Growing transport demand
Rising energy costs
Societal threat



Transport trends up to 2050

(NEAA et alii 2009, 70)



1. Huge inertia of the sector,

and against this,

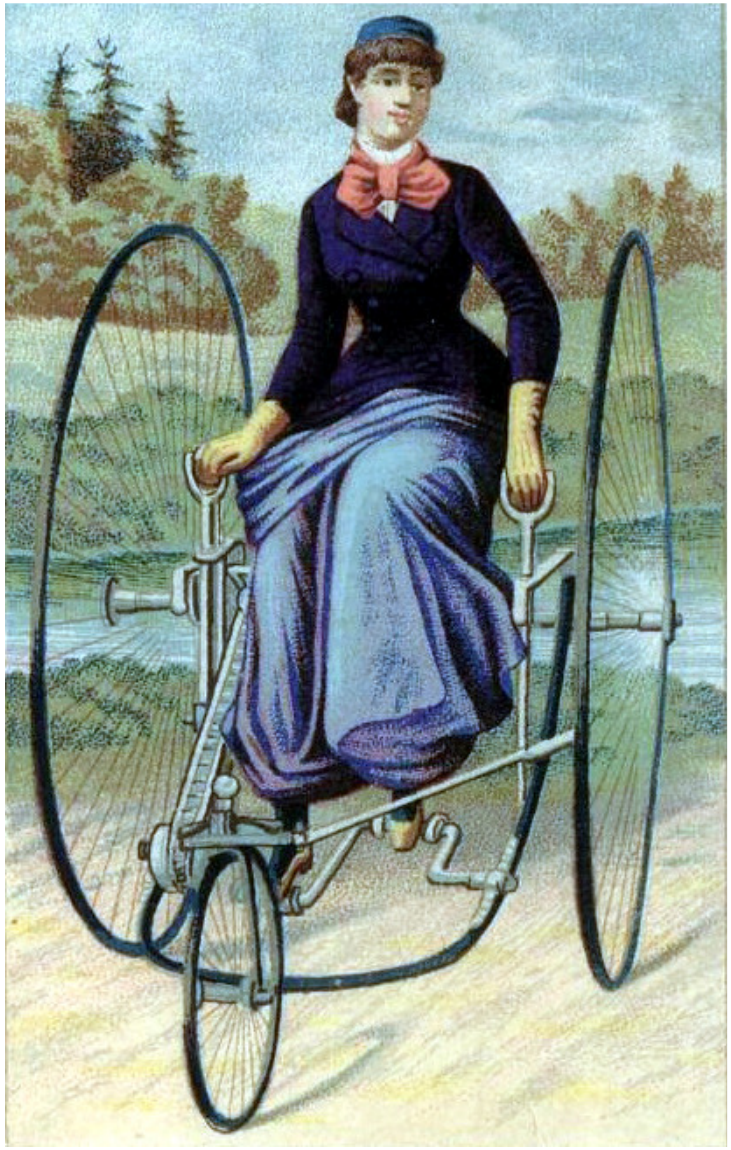
2. current times as a turning point for the industry

Further crumbling of border between service and equipment industries. Due to sharing economy trends?

Two speed markets, e.g. mature and emerging economies (except premium segment).

The bicycle born as expensive, male, athletic toy; inconvenient for our eyes, but fitting the expectation of the users, so to show off in public or test their imaginary on strength and masculinity.

A technology does not succeed, because it is technologically superior, but it is considered technologically superior because it has sociologically succeeded. (Edgerton 1999)



In order to offer access to other layers of upper class (e.g. children and women), the tricycle was introduced…

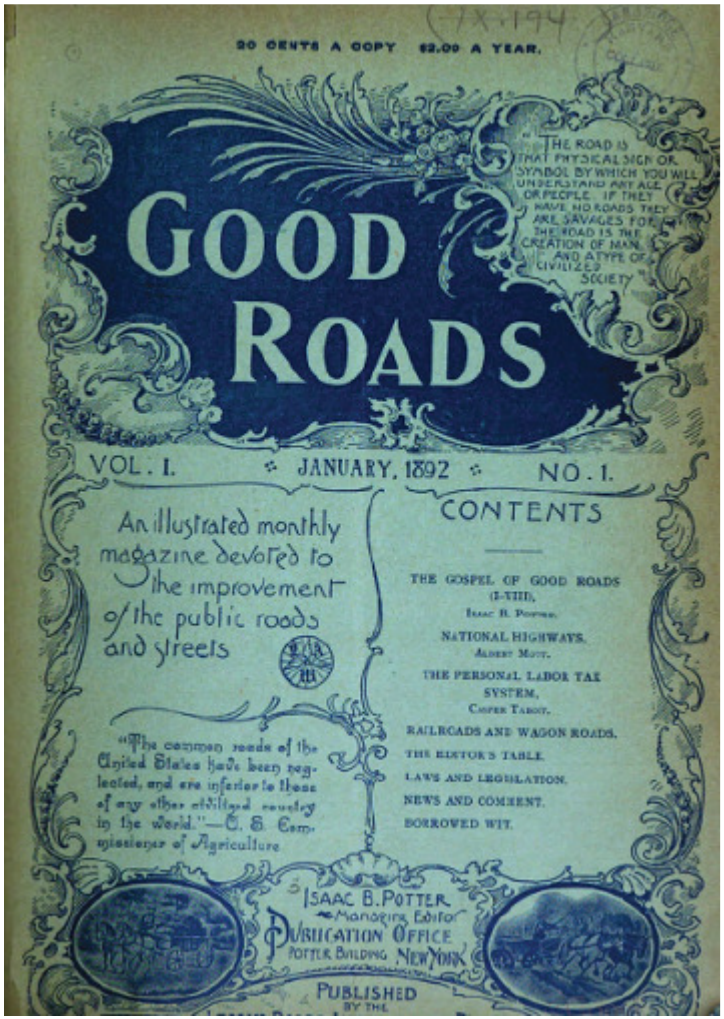
Which paved the way to the “today” bicycle: Today´s bike is the outcome of the tricycle!

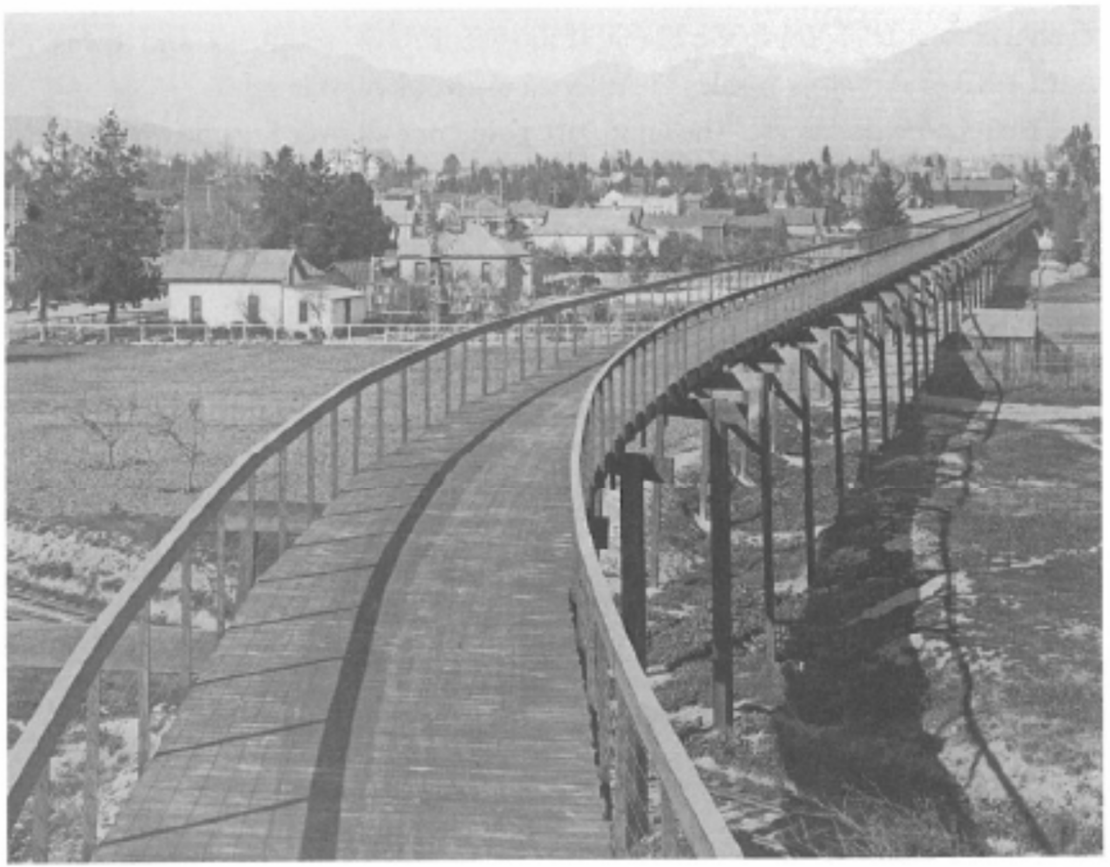
This shaped and forged a switch in the cycle use, perception and usage.

(Which possibly pushed the males upper class to cars?)

Speaking of paving the way…

The “Good Roads” movement in USA was an outcome of the bicycle diffusion and democratization, which *preceded* the arrival of cars.





California Cycleway, Pasadena, 1900.
(Pasadena Museum of History)

In other words, the social invention of roads for traffic only was an outcome of the bike diffusion (further developed by car use).

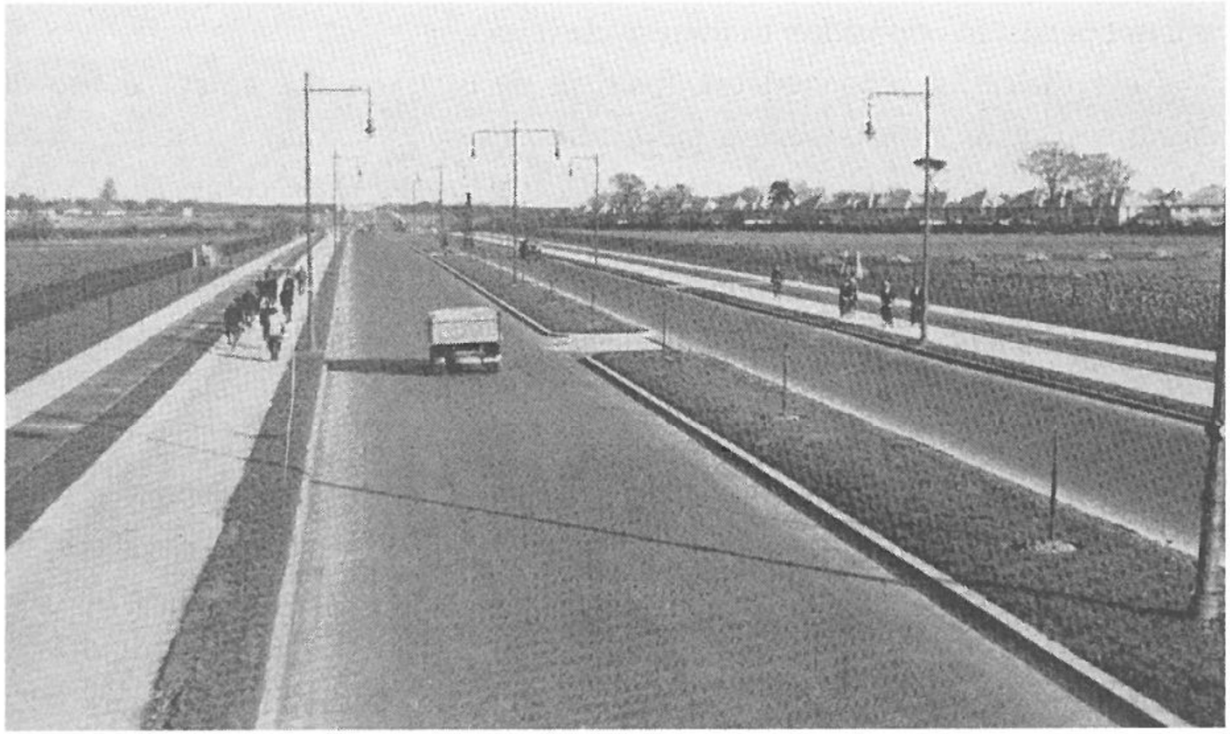
In USA, outside the big cities, the bike was declining already in 1910s,

And in Europe?

The bicycle was the dominant transport mean for the working class and for lower strata of middle-class.

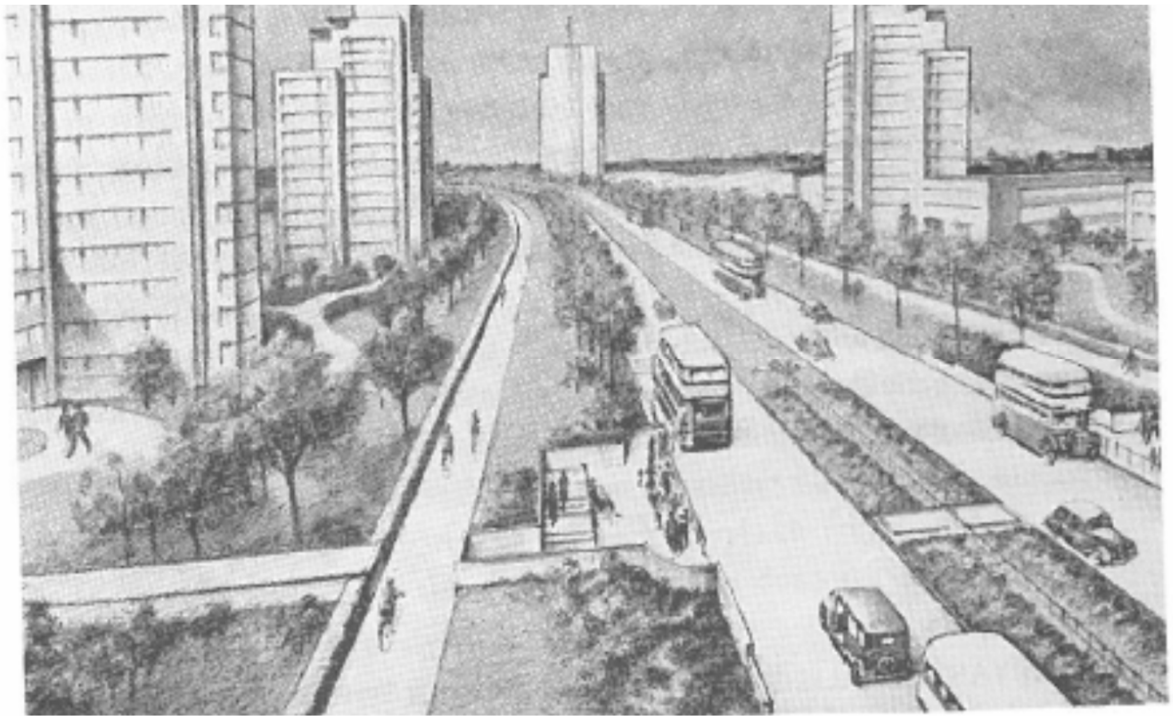
And assumed iconic value along the 1940s and 1950s. In De Sica´s movie, this assumed the value of class struggle.

This was not limited to South Europe. On the opposite, while car was the core of attention for planners, bikes were also in the frame



London's Western Avenue cycling tracks, c. 1936, before the surrounding fields were turned over to factories and houses.

All around Europe, in the late 1930s, there was a huge bike path network. (in The Netherland, according to Oldenziel, this was also a lip service so to legitimize motorway investments)

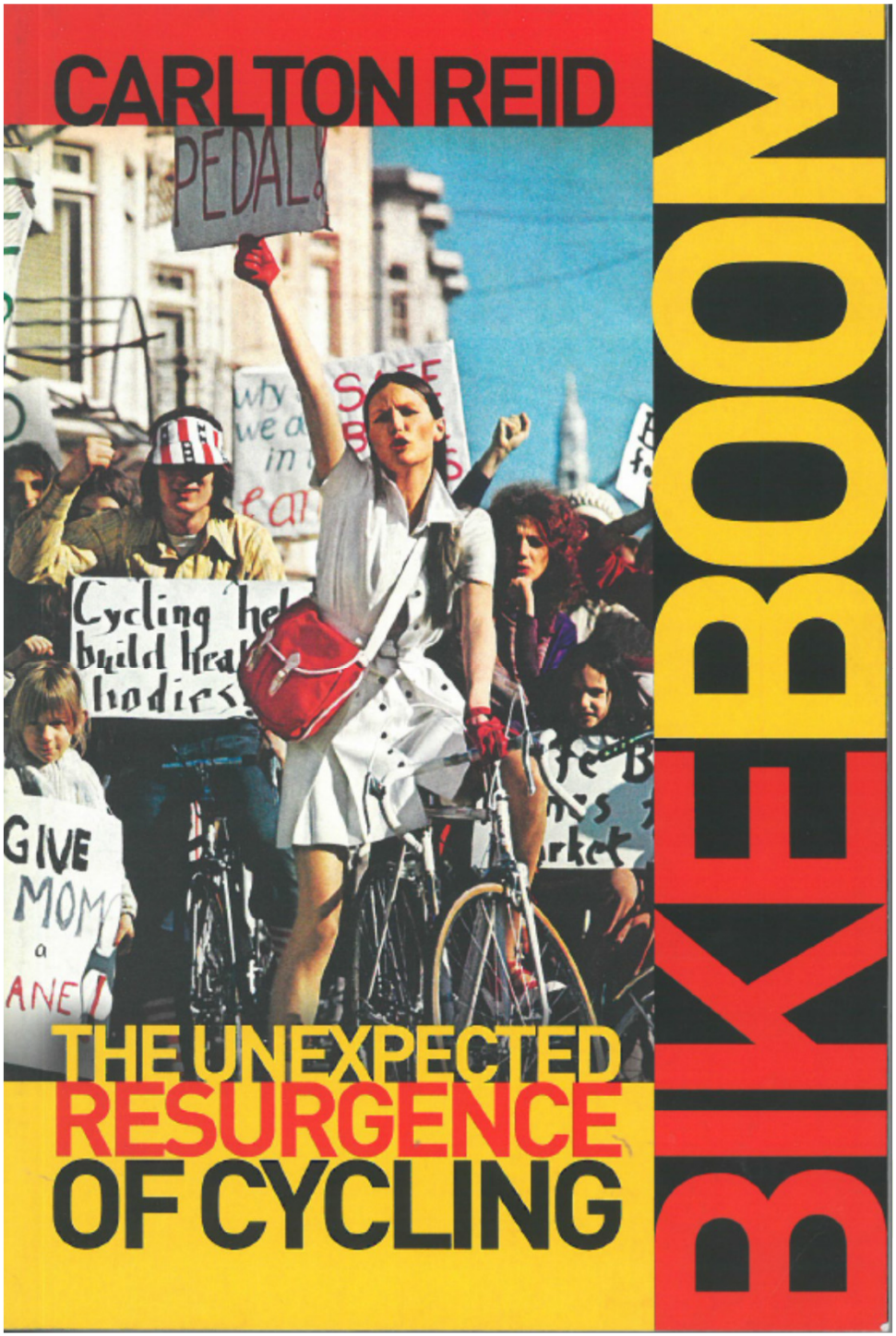


Bike lane were still part of the transport network planning in the late 1940s.

And such a large diffusion explains the relevance of racing with bikes, with its hype in the 1940s.

But then, mass motorization!

Leading to a ephemeral USA renaissance in the early 1970s.



PROVO

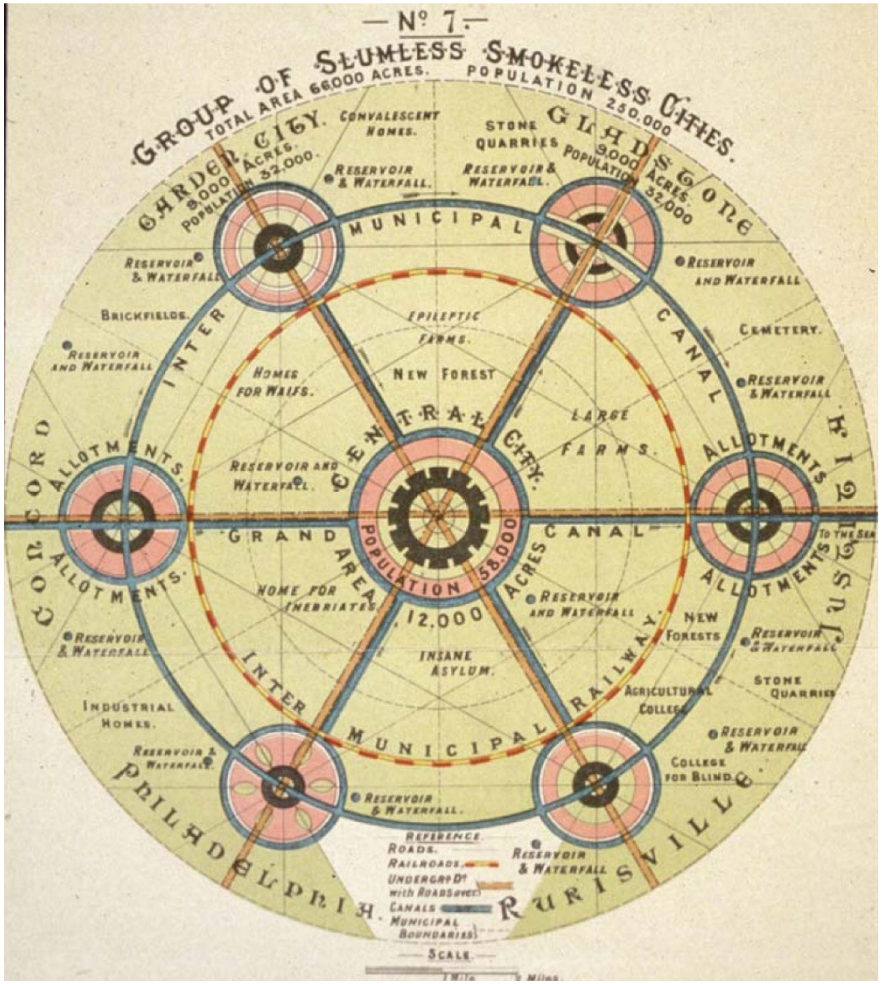
Amsterdam 1966: the white bicycle plan proposed the closing of central Amsterdam to all motorised traffic, including motorbikes, with the intent to improve public transport frequency.

Taxis were accepted as semi-public transport, but would have to be electrically powered and have a maximum speed of 25 m.p.h.

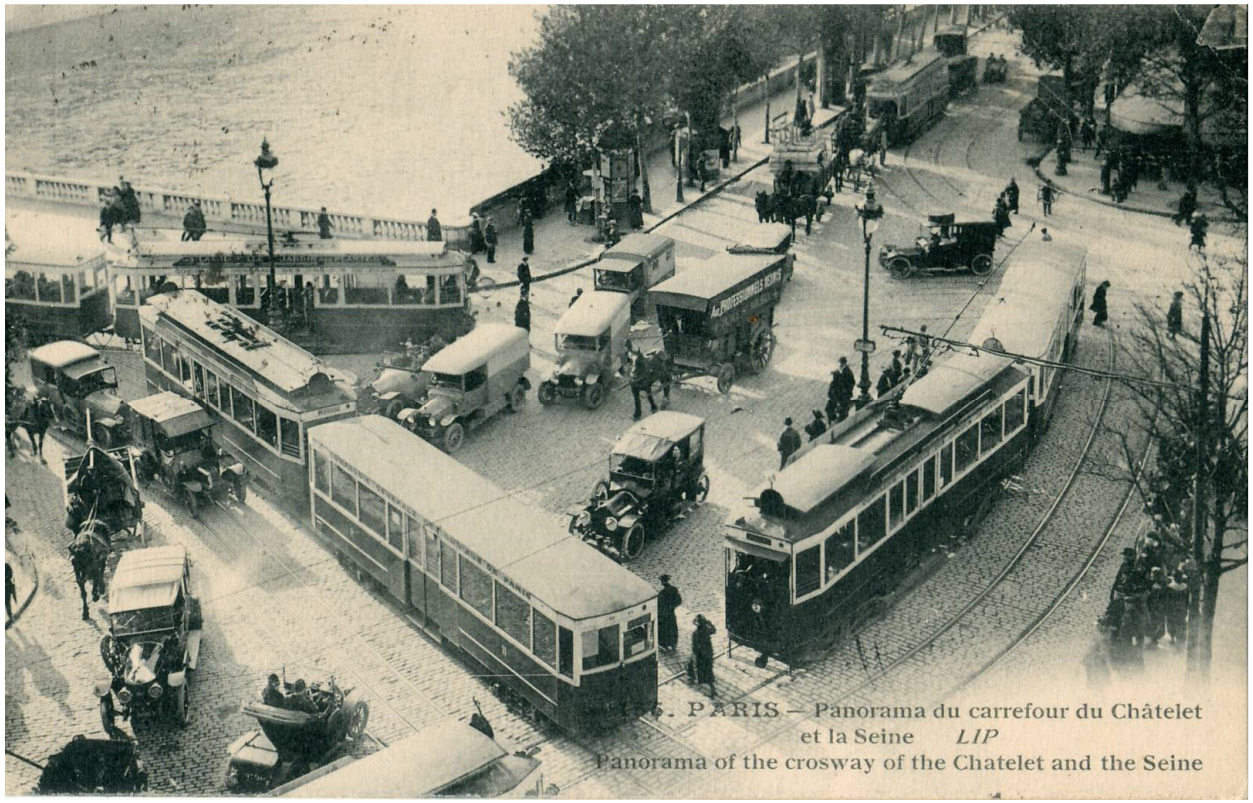
The Provos proposed one of the first bicycle sharing systems: the municipality would buy 20,000 white bikes per year, which were to be public property and free for everybody to use.

After the plans were rejected by the city authorities, the Provos decided to go ahead anyway. They painted 50 bikes white and left them on streets for public use.

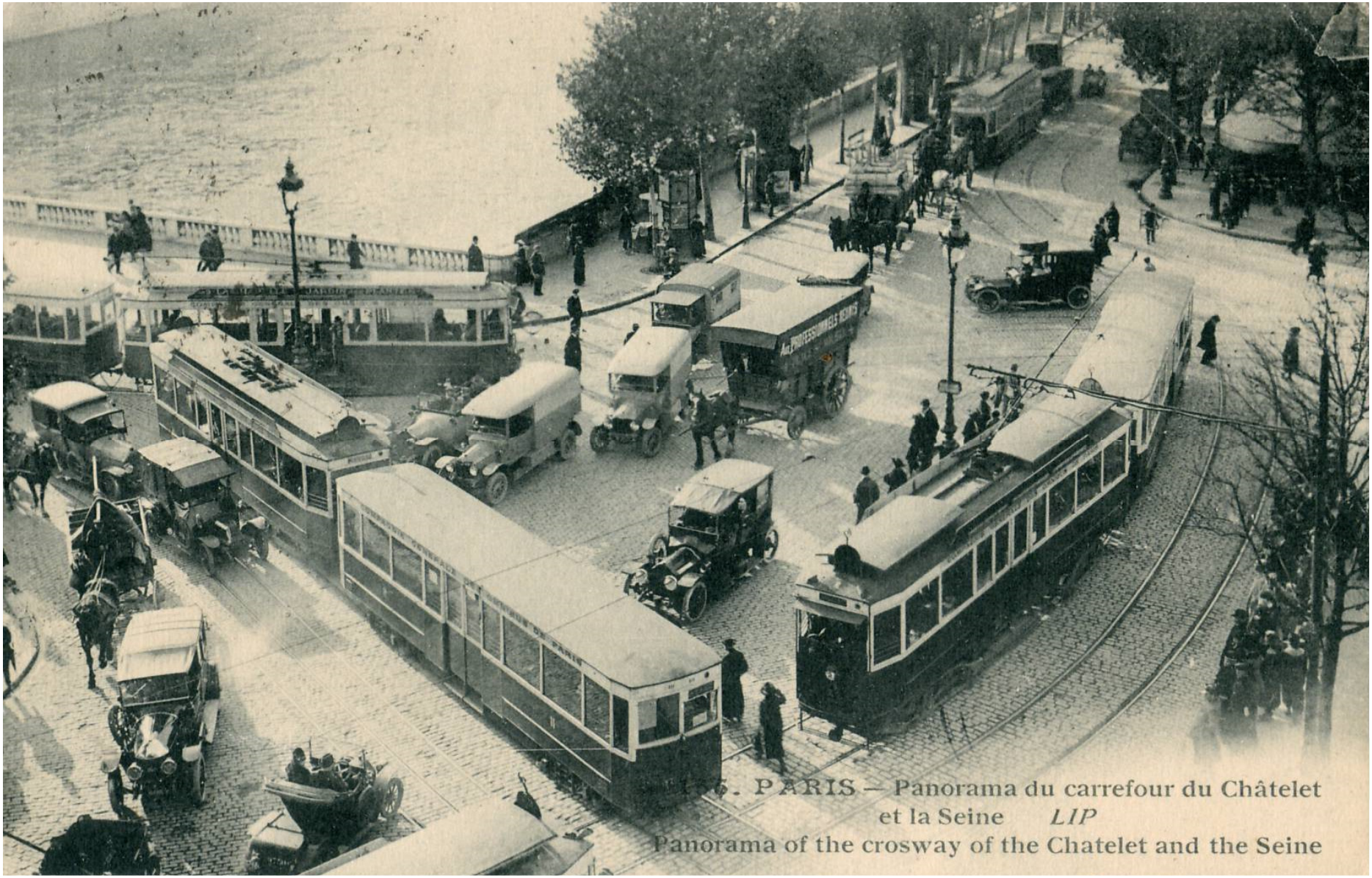
Siemens´ first electric tramway, Berlin 1881



It had a huge impact on the transport regimes of cities and on the urban sprawl.



But after the Great War, there was a reversed attitude: that is, a limitation to the speed and freedom of cars. Trams queuing was the expression of lack of circulation and movement. (A biological metaphor)


. PARIS — Panorama du carrefour du Châtelet
et la Seine LIP
Panorama of the crosway of the Chatelet and the Seine

So, London and Paris first, they removed trams, labelled as Cumbersome, slow and “old”.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rc9gtJndKE4

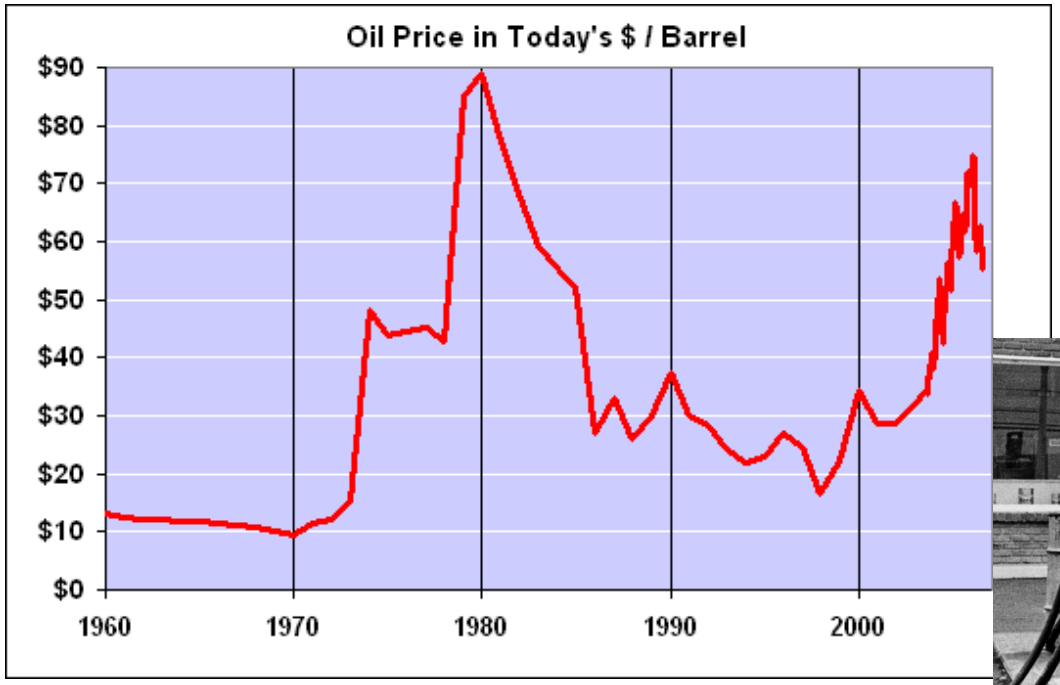
And then all around the globe the tram was removed…

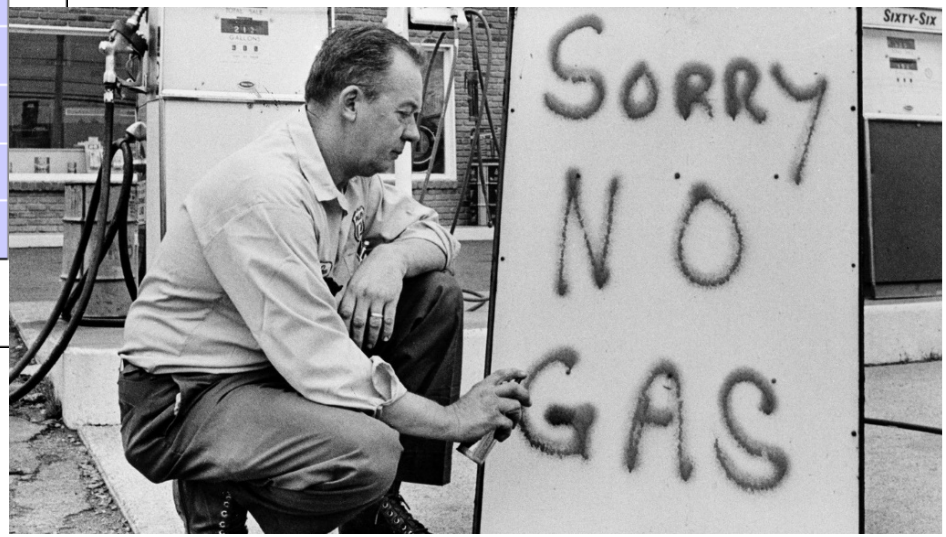
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nkLemmHs7jE

But, not everywhere…

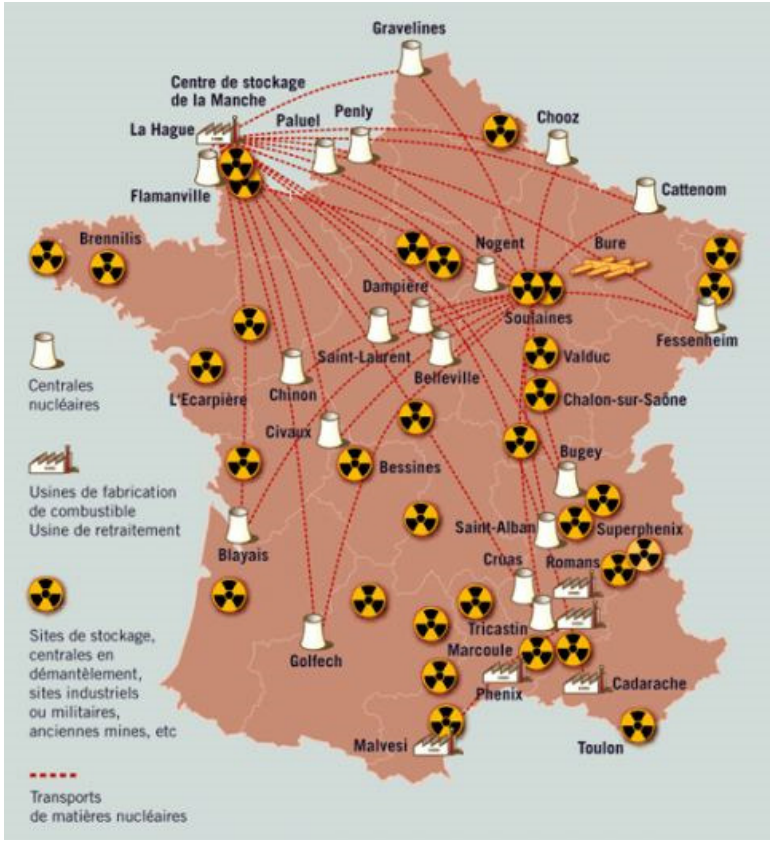
Torino and Göteborg kept the trams (and they were the car company towns!)

So, why the French government relaunched the trams in the mid 1970s? (Nantes was the first French city to reintroduce the trams. (with a lot of protests)).





The oil crisis was impacting the transport industry very heavily…

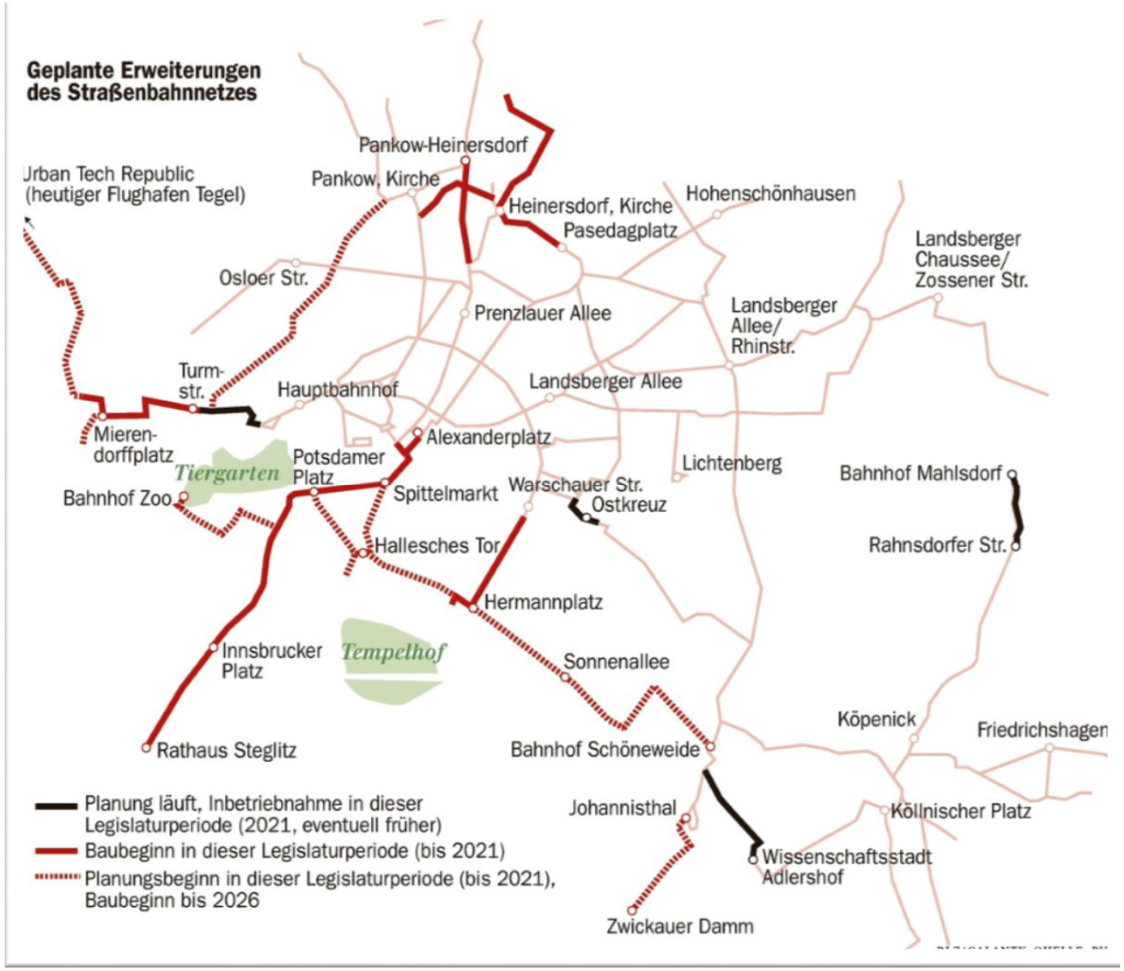


Buses use fossil fuel, and tramways use electricity, so…

But already in the 1990s the French tram was used as a tool to redraw the urban fabric and to redesign downtown. The tram was thus an instrument to develop larger urban policy (Strasburg is iconic).

In Grenoble, the tram was a tool to offer accessibility to people with reduced mobility (due to the development of low floor trams)

In Dublin the new tram was used to reduce the power and the monopoly of the bus urban (public) company.



And in Berlin…?