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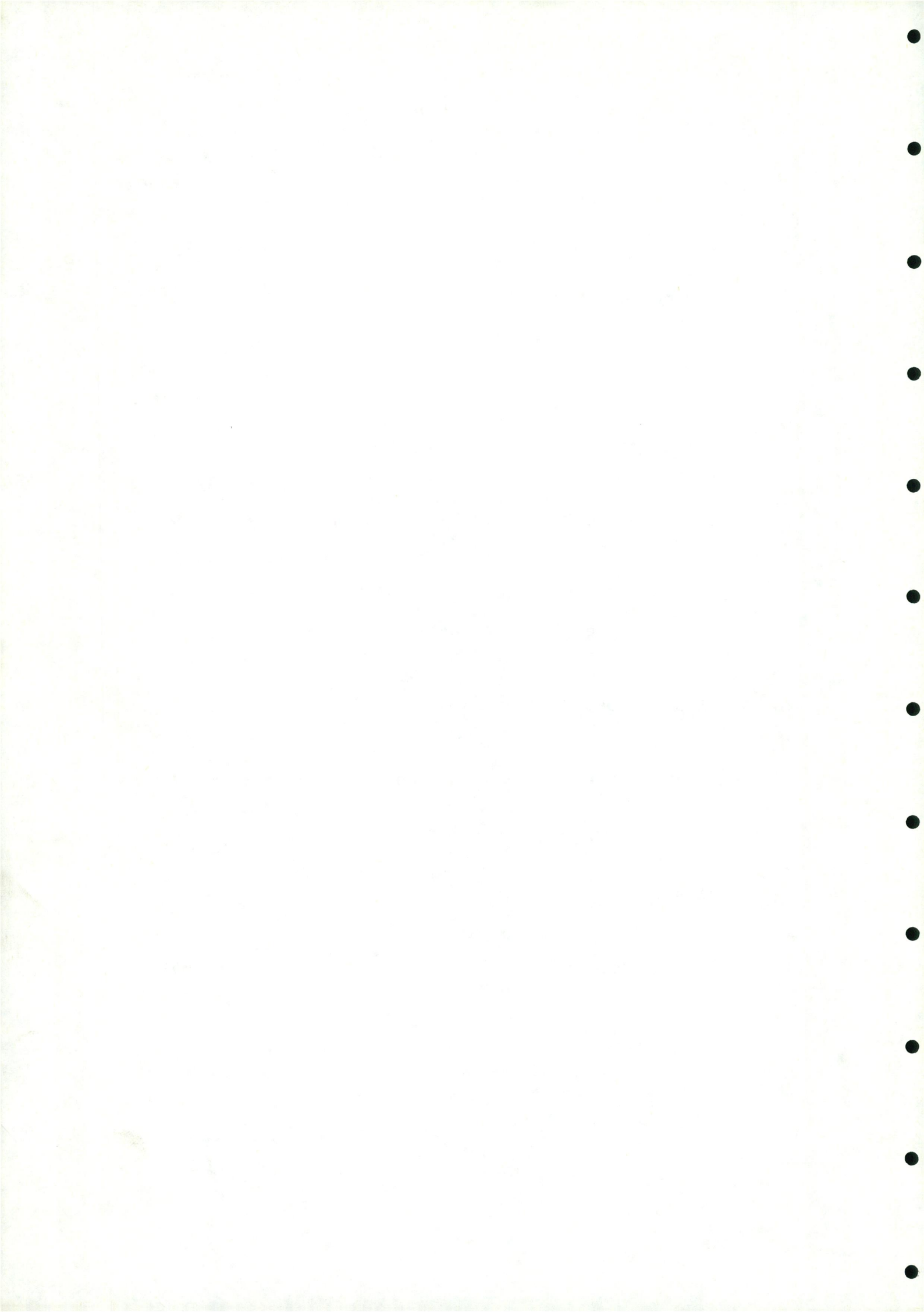
TITLE - THE DESIGNER STAR SYSTEM

DATE - 15 MARCH, 1991

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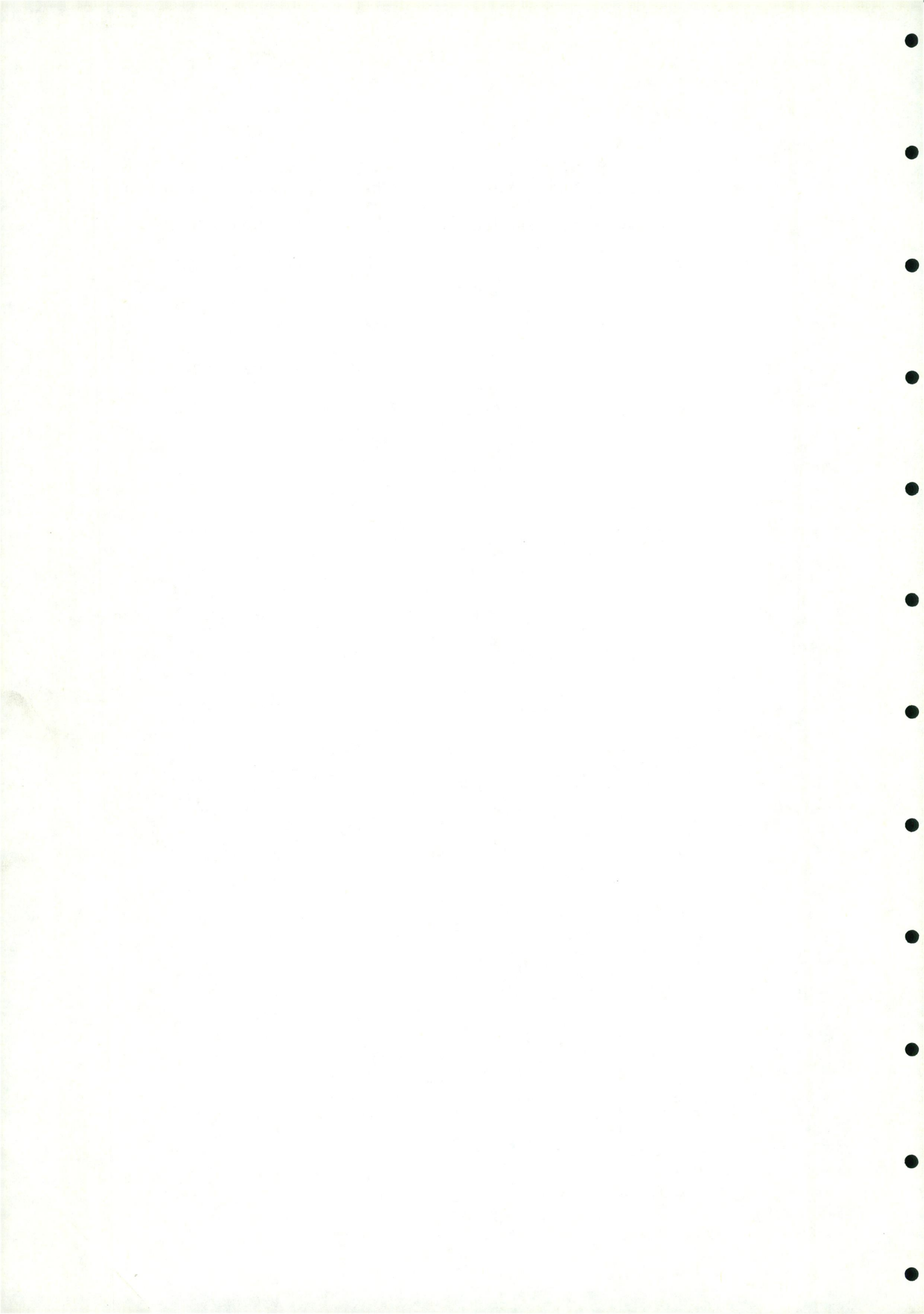
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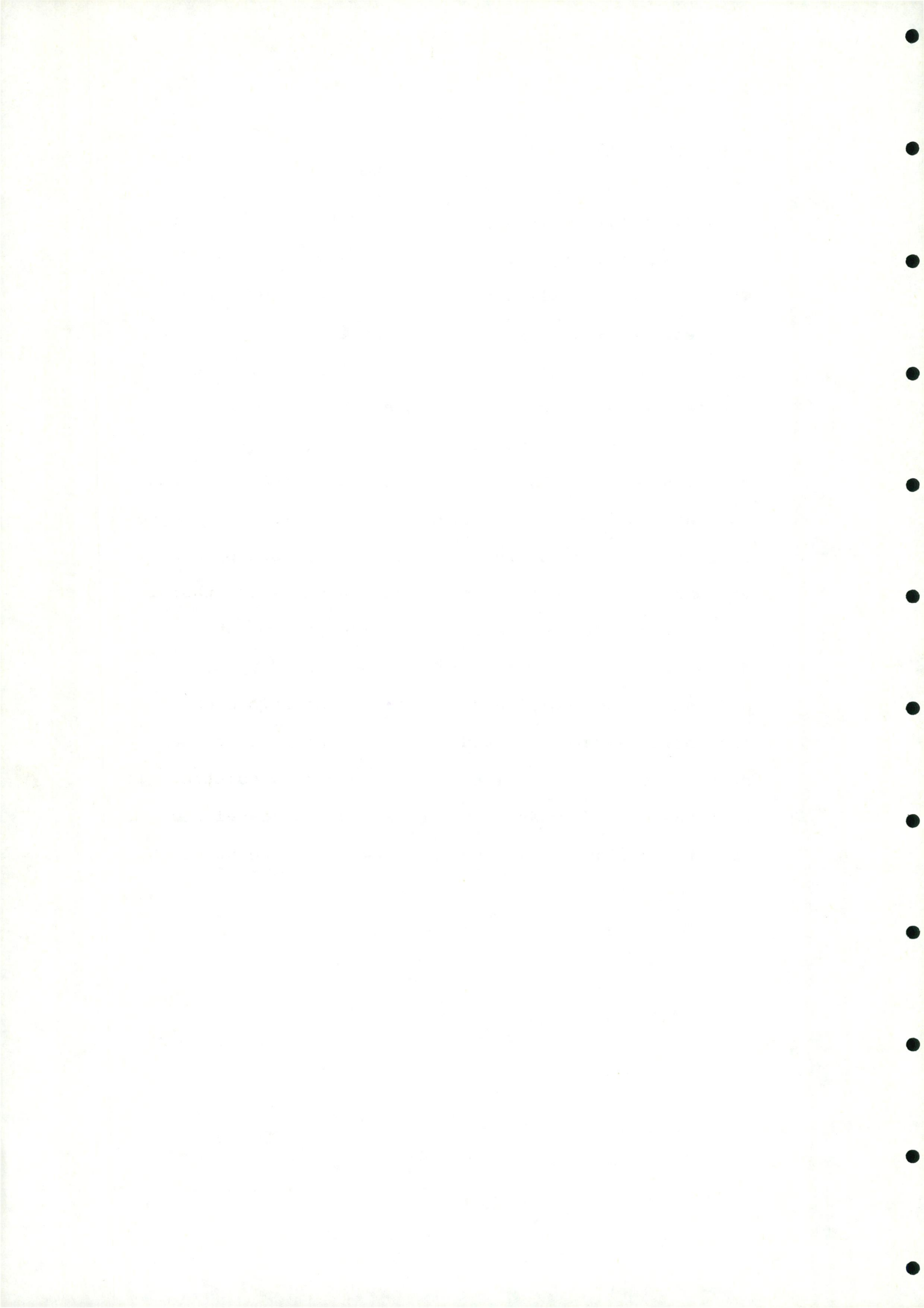
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Synopsis of Precis

This dissertation is a discussion of the designer star system which emerged in Western society in the 1980^s. The discussion deals with the three questions - What is the designer star system? What are the factors involved in raising a designer to star status? and Why do we get the particular stars we do? This discussion is based upon the framework used by Richard Dyer in Stars in relation to film stardom. It deals with the needs and aspirations of Western society in the '80^s, the designer stars themselves and the roles played by both producers (the media and manufacturers) and consumers in shaping the star phenomenon. A theoretical basis for the designer star system is laid out and backed up by an account of the social and historical conditions which led to its development and practical examples of the star system at work. The conclusion brings together all that has been discussed and shows what has developed from the designer star system as we enter the '90^s.



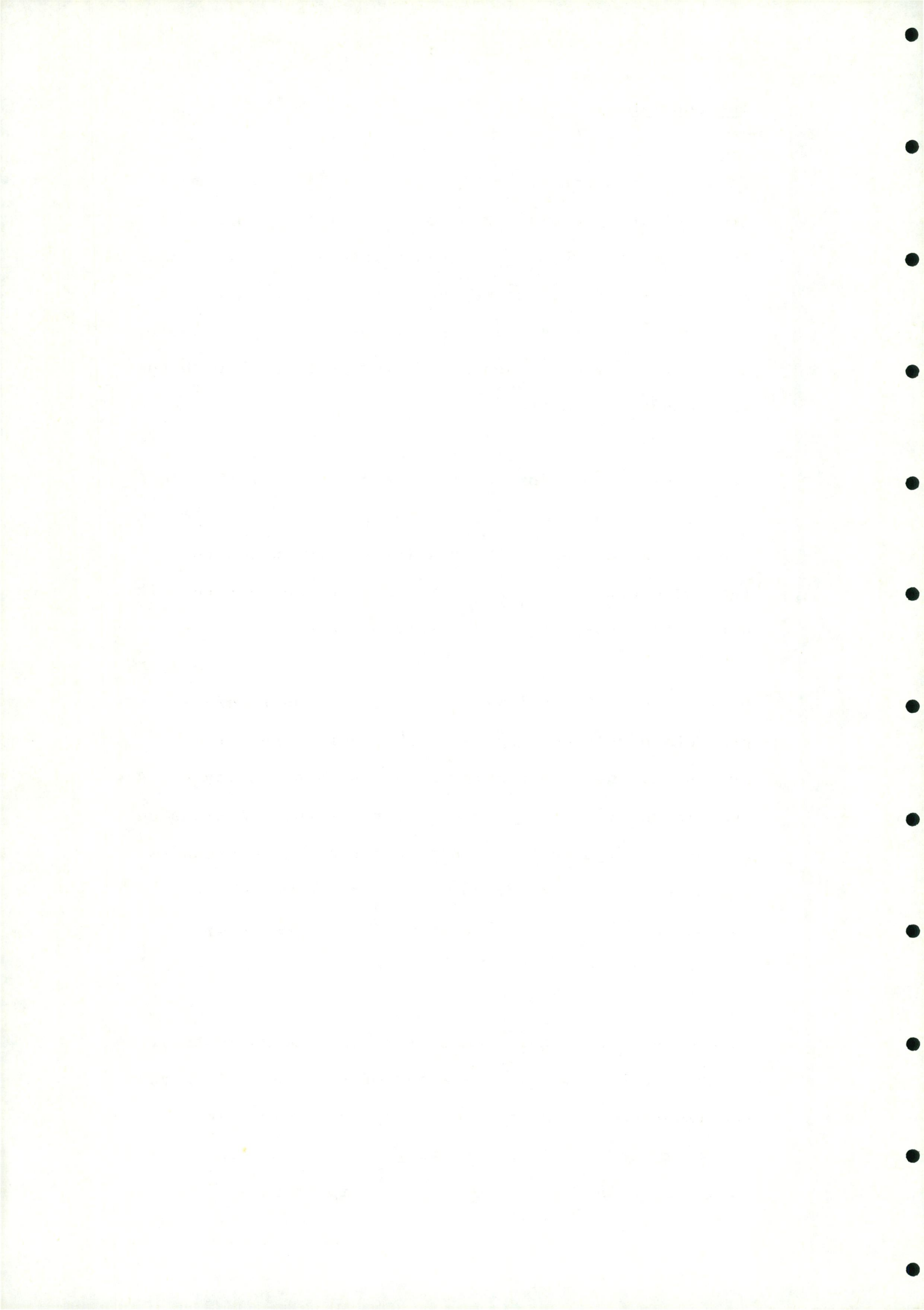
Introduction

Today the concentration of media attention on a small group of individuals has become so intense and powerful that they find themselves transformed into stars. This fame in itself has become one of the most sought after and perishable commodities and is usually put to use by the stars themselves and manufacturers to sell even the most mundane products.

If it is possible through the exploitation of the media to translate an individuals fame from the specialist to the general audience, the discipline from which this fame originates is less important than the fact that it actually exists, in the majority of cases.

During the 1980's a small number of designers of products have become stars. For manufacturers the original value of employing such design stars lay not so much in their talent or the quality of their designs but in the prestige that attaching their names to products can bring. As we enter the 1990's the question of talent and originality has become an increasingly important issue.

It became increasingly common for firms to build their success, especially in the areas of tableware, furniture and lighting on a portfolio of products commissioned by designer stars. Alessi in Italy, Swid Powell in New York and XO in France are just the tip of this iceberg

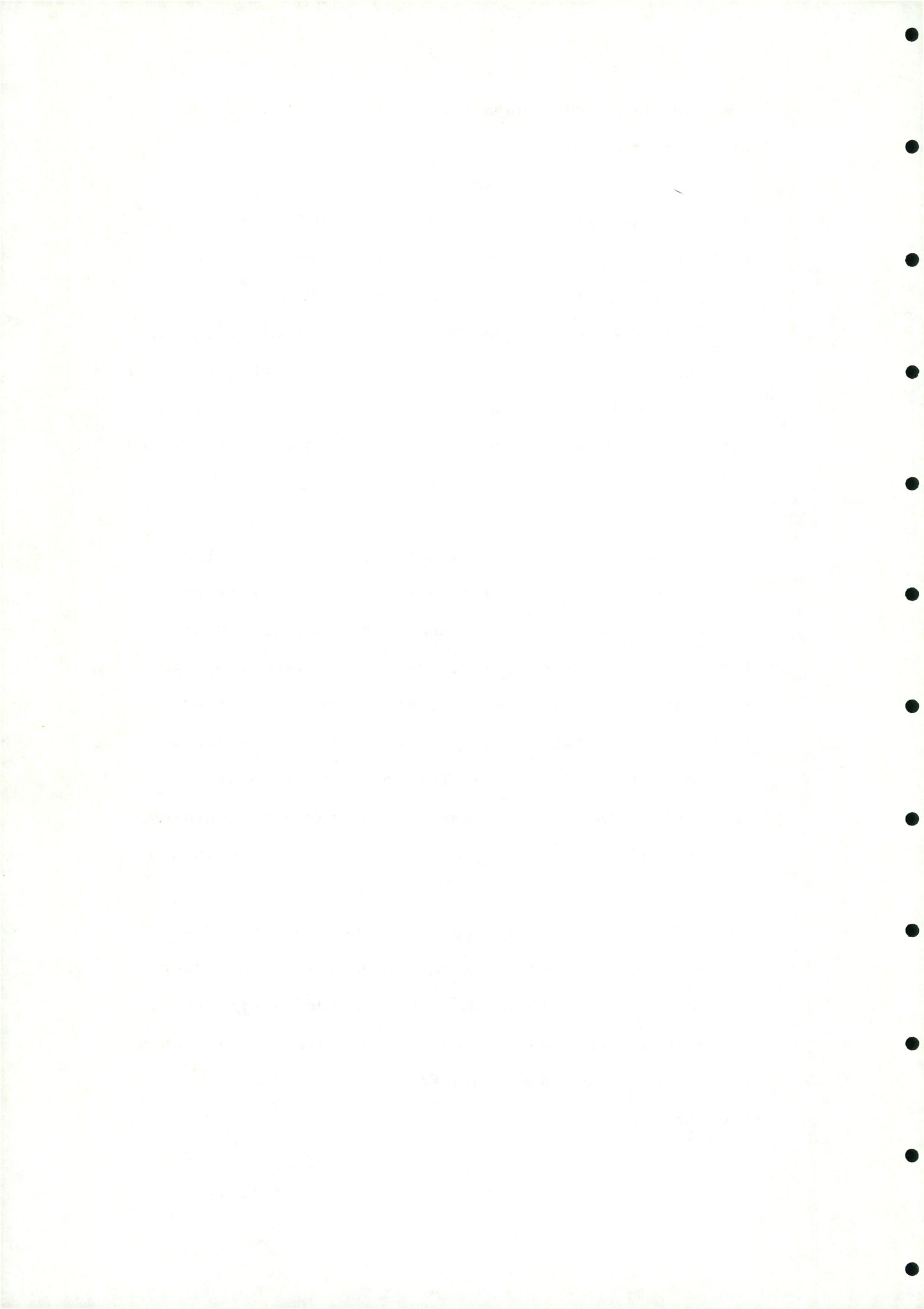


and the number of manufacturers joining their ranks is steadily growing.

In some ways design has moved more into the sphere of high speed fashion. Designers may achieve brief periods of fame and fortune but suddenly find themselves discarded in much the same way that their products may be discarded when they go out of fashion. As the social situations change and designers strive to keep up, they often find themselves sucked dry of innovative ideas and left behind.

The glamour of celebrity is not the only reason for manufacturers to use and endorse the designer star system. They realise that the personality or identity that their products project is of vital importance to their commercial success. Sometimes it is a matter of reassuring an anxious customer that his purchase will reflect well on his taste. The conspicuous location of the designer's signature may also be taken by consumers as a guarantee of quality of materials and workmanship.

What works for the reassurance of the customer works also for the confidence of the companies. A designer name can provide little known manufacturers with ready entry into developed markets. It can also be used as a form of capital and a guarantee against loss on investment.

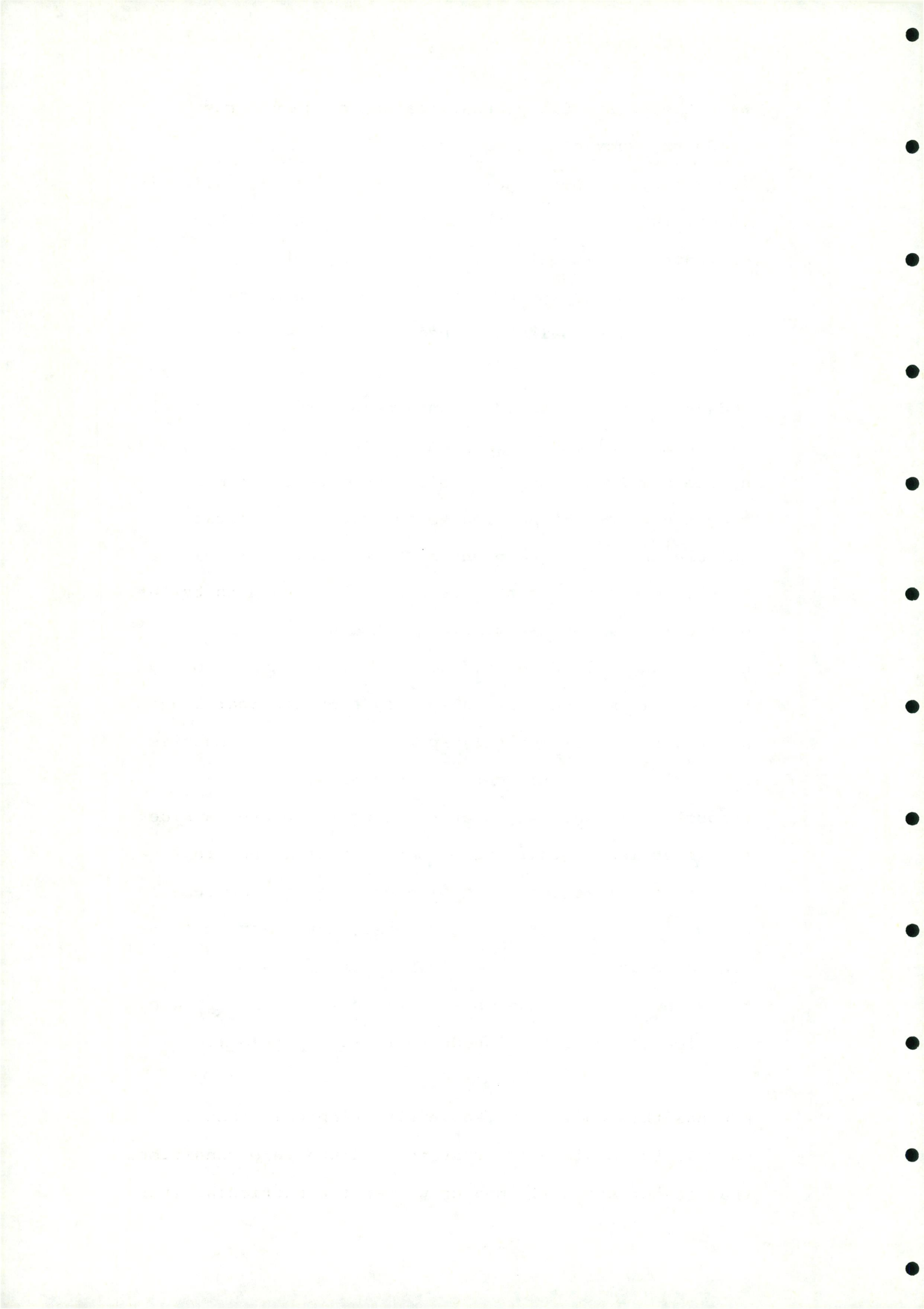


With the increasing standardisation of consumer products, many competing products have similar technology and performance, the only differentiation is in styling terms. If manufacturers use a bankable designer name it helps to assure them that the high costs of prototyping will be recovered when their product is eventually launched.

Today's stars play an important social and economic role within liberal capitalist western society, characterised by the power of consumer choice and a level of mass communication that has led to the decline of local culture and the development of a mass level of culture. In this context modern stars are identified with by the public in a way not unlike to the way the famous heroes and villains of old were. The difference being that within modern western society each new star and avant-garde is immediately appropriated (and sometimes even created) by producers to help to sell their products. In this way stars no longer operate outside the established order but become part of it and in a way define it. This idea is outlined by Herbert Marcuse in One Dimensional Man when he suggests that 'today's stars are no longer another way of life but freaks or types of the same life, serving as an affirmation rather than a negation of the established order' (1964, p 134).

How has this whole remarkable situation come about?

What is the designer star system and what are conditions that favour stardom? Why do we get the particular stars



we do? These are the questions which are discussed within this dissertation.

The dissertation is broken into five sections each dealing with a different aspect of the designer star phenomenon or approaching it from a different point of view. The five sections are as follows:

Section 1 - The Designer Star System

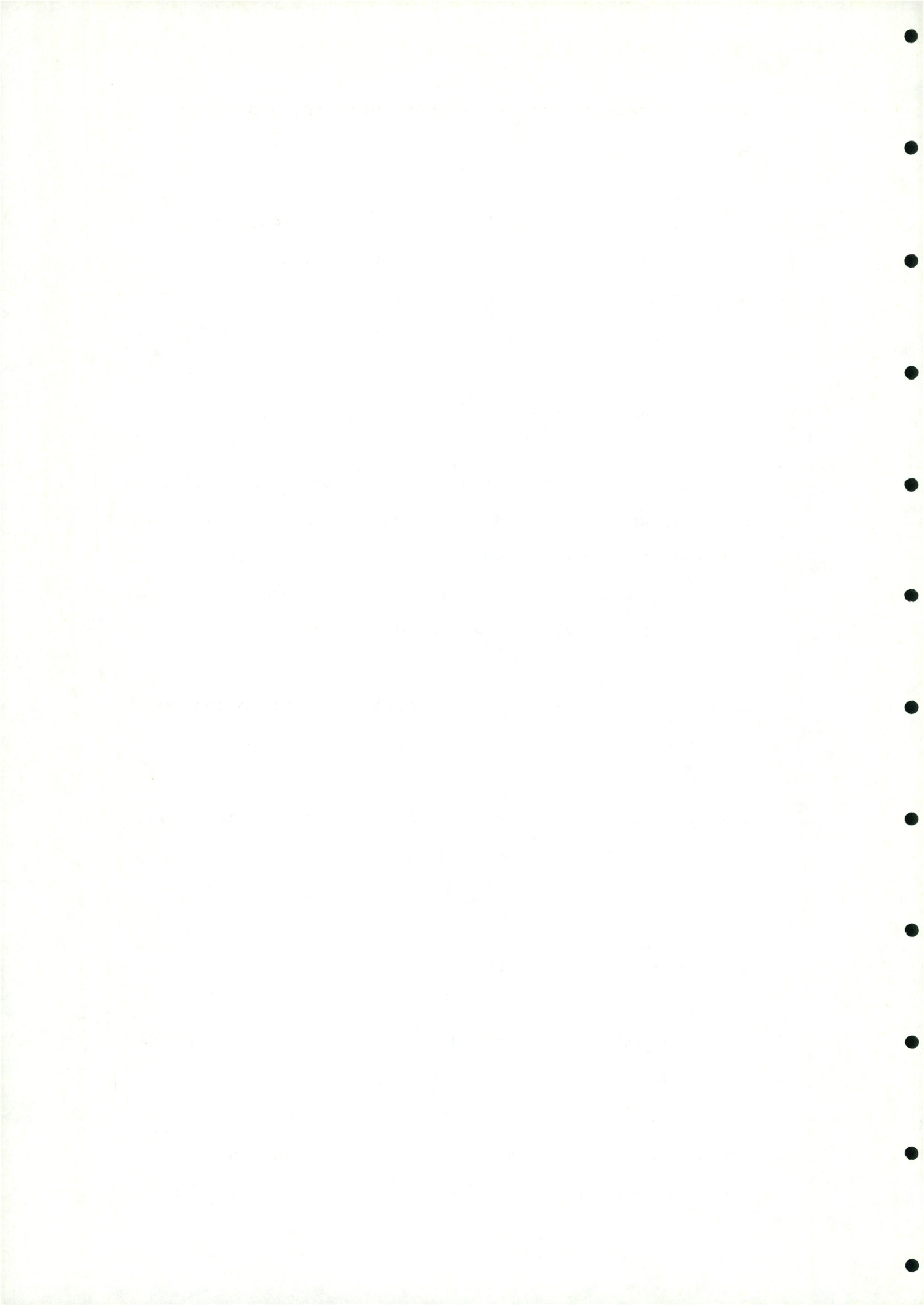
A discussion of the designer star system in an effort to find out what it is and how it works. This section outlines the interdependent factors involved in elevating a designer to star status and investigates why we get the particular stars we do.

Section 2 - The Designer Star System in its Social and Historical Context

This section gives an account of the events which since WWII have led to the development of a designer star system and designer stars in 80's western society.

Section 3 - Designer Stars

This section explores the designer star system from what can be seen as the first conscious attempt at manipulation of the system by Ettore Sottsass and Ernesto Gismondi to the systems ultimate '80s design star, the ubiquitous Philippe Starck. This exploration gives



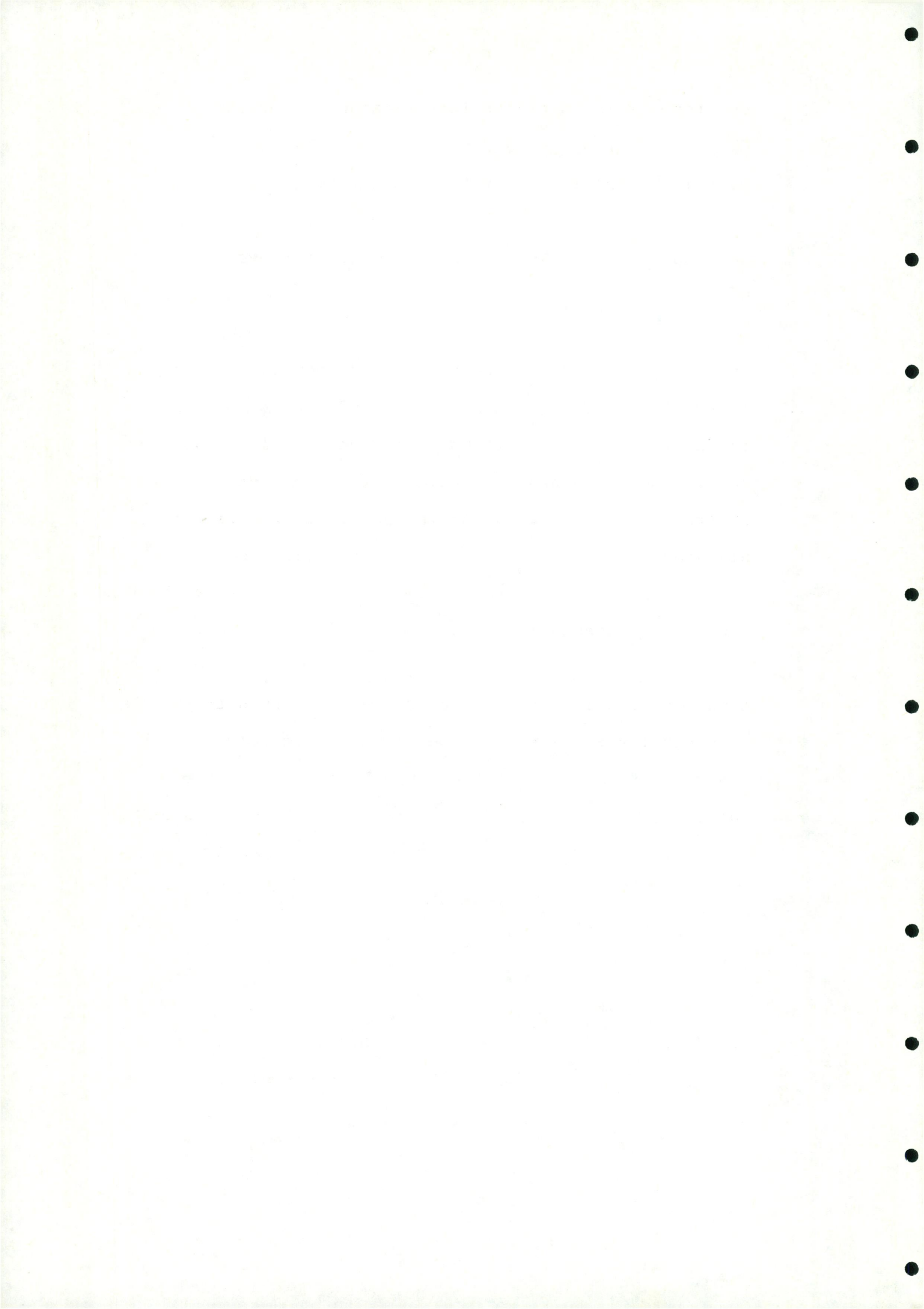
concrete examples of the factors at work within the designer star system and gives an insight into the star system as experienced by the stars themselves.

Section 4 - Case Study - The Designer Star System at Work.

The career of Borek Sipek, one of the newest stars to emerge in the design world, is traced within the framework of the production - consumption dialectic. It covers the needs and aspirations of society at the time and the specific events and factors that gave rise to his stardom.

Section 5 - Conclusion

A sum up of all that has been discussed within the dissertation and a prediction of how it is felt the designer star system and design will develop in the '90's.

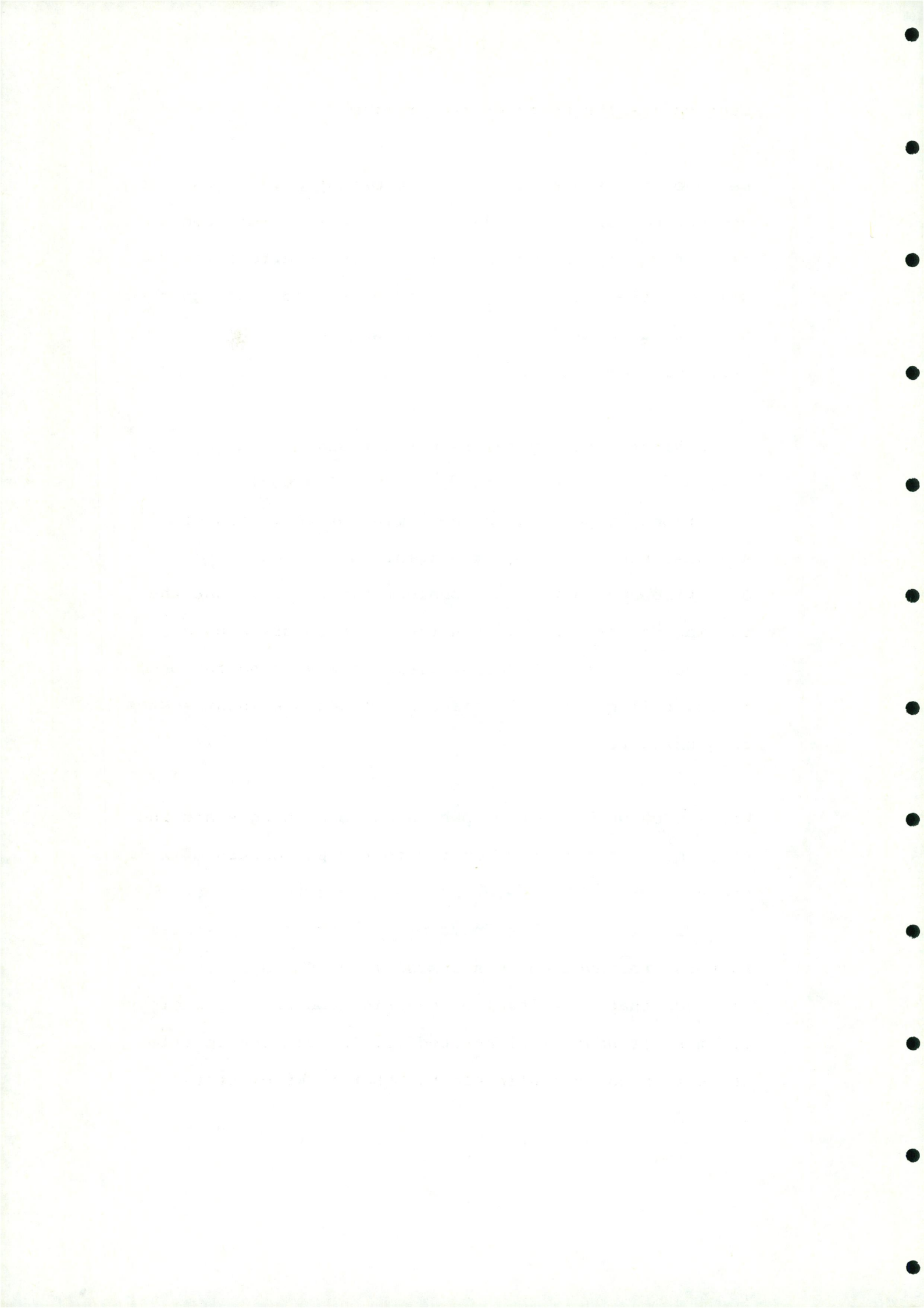


Section 1 - The Designer Star System

Designer stars are one of the important developments to come about during the 1980's in the West. This section discusses the designer star system in an effort to discover the factors involved in elevating a designer to star status and also to discover why we get the particular designer stars we do.

The designer star system is not a rigid unchanging system. Different designers, in varying social conditions, depending on the timing of their rise to stardom, their country of origin, their area of expertise and many other considerations all define the varying factors involved in the creation of each particular designer star. Given these varying factors, it is still possible to discuss the designer star system in general terms.

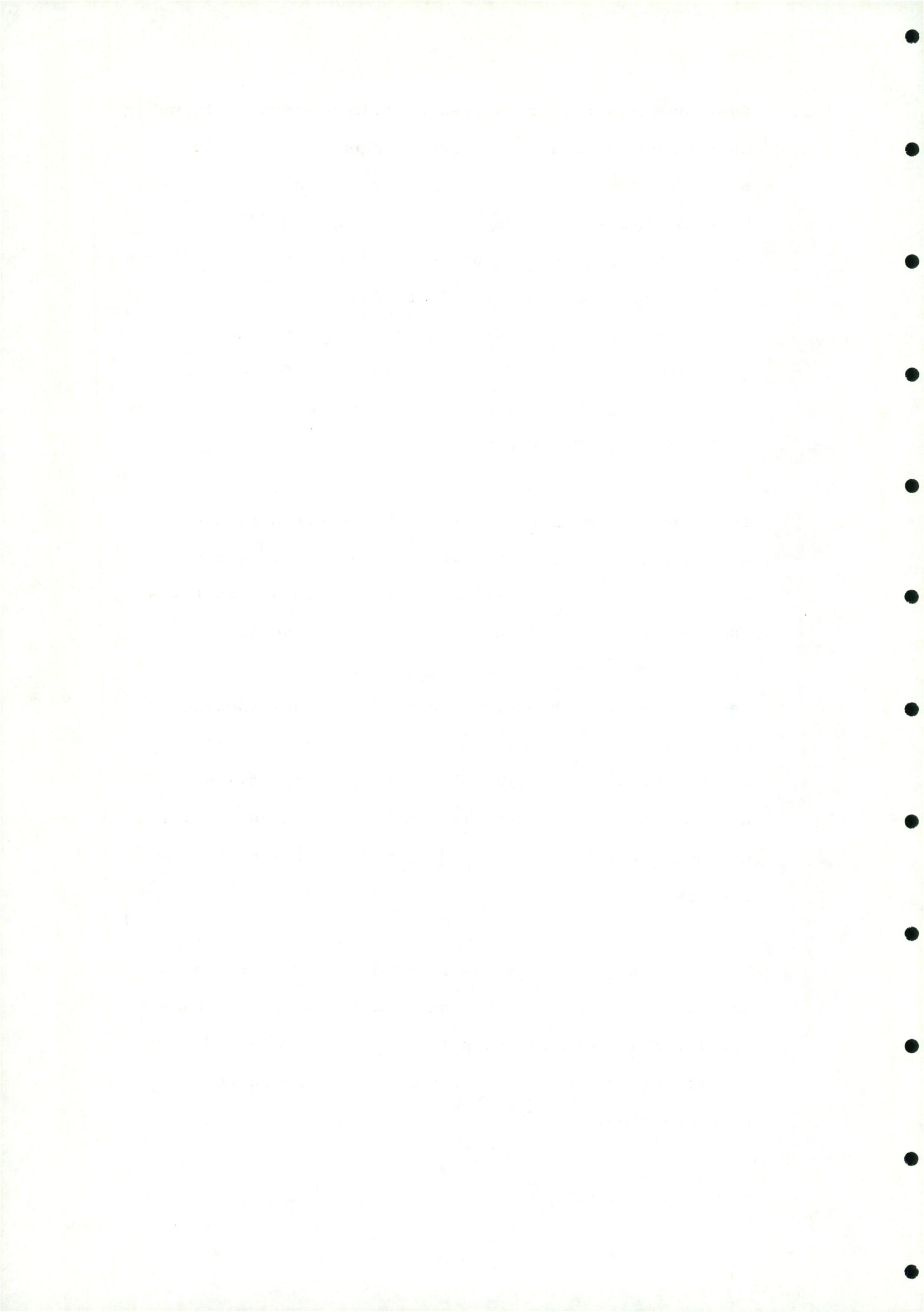
While much work has been published concerning stars and stardom, it has mainly dealt with the phenomenon of film stars. This work however has much to offer in the investigation of other forms of stardom as many similar factors are involved. In Stars (1979) Richard Dyer contends that at a level of theorisation and methodology ... most of what is elaborated ... in relation to film stars is broadly applicable to other forms of stars.



Dyer suggests that this area of film stardom falls under what he calls 'stars as a social phenomenon' (1979, p. 6). Under this heading he expands on the idea proposed by Alexander Walker that 'stars ... are the direct or indirect reflection of the needs, drives and aspirations of (American) society' (1974, p 96). Within the context of Walker's argument, designer stars and the designer star system can be seen as a reflection of the needs, drives and aspirations of the liberal capitalist society of the West during the 1980's.

This idea has much to offer in the investigation of the designer star system. It leads to a framework for discussion which raises important questions. What was the social situation in the West in the 1980's which favoured the development of designer stars and the designer star system? What part do factors such as production, consumption and freedom of choice (all typical traits of a liberal capitalist society) play within the designer star system and how do they combine to choose which particular designers will attain stardom?

This is the general framework used by most authors for the discussion of stardom, and indeed, Dyer also uses a similar framework in Stars (1979). This section is loosely based upon the skeleton of the framework which Dyer has used.



The majority of consulted works advocate the idea that certain general social conditions are necessary for stardom to develop. These conditions may be summarised as follows:

- Economic development above subsistence.
- Development of effective mass communications.
- Decline of local culture and the development of a mass level of culture.

These general social conditions were first achieved in the cities of the United States at the turn of the century. This coincided with the emergence of the first real stars, actors and actresses from the silent films, shown in the many nickelodians across the U.S.

As the twentieth century progressed, these general social conditions favouring stardom were achieved by most developed economies of the West. The fame originally attained by film stars spread to other fields of expertise. Sports personalities, musicians, artists, architects and eventually in the 80's designers, all began to achieve a level of stardom.

Although these general social conditions are necessary for stardom to be favoured they are by no means sufficient for the creation of stars. They cannot explain either why stars emerge in these fields of work or why we get the particular stars we do. So what are the other factors that influence stardom?

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Edgar Morin (The Stars, 1960) suggests that other determining factors are embodied within what he calls the 'production-consumption dialectic'. Morin's position is broadly consistent with Walker's. He does, however, go further than Walker in analysing the roles of both consumption and production in the formation of (designer) stars and the development of the star system.

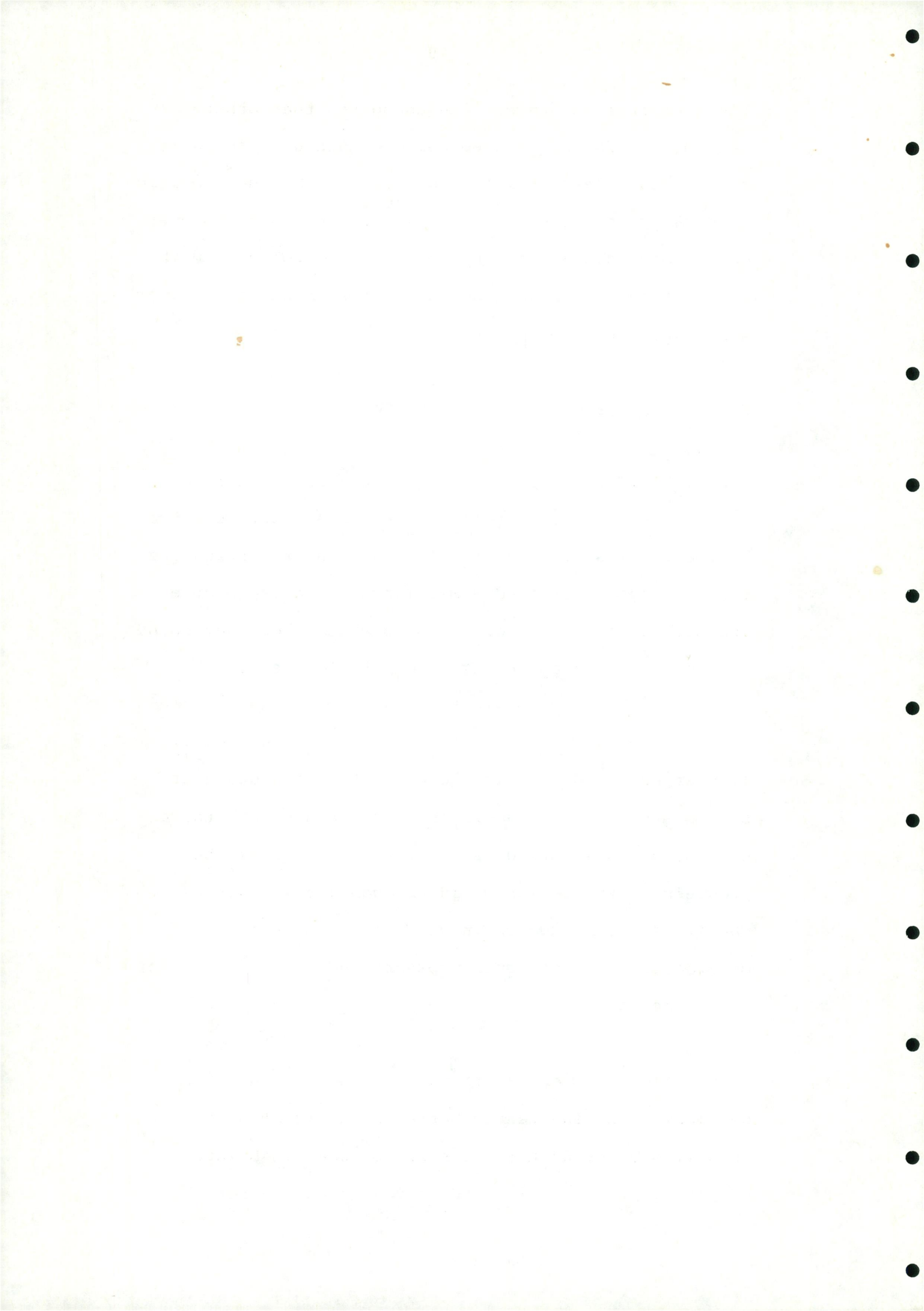
Stars as a Phenomenon of Production.

Since one of the basic conditions necessary to favour stardom is economic development above subsistence, two of the results of this are a production of surplus and the development of a consumer market with expendable income. This leaves consumers to choose how they spend this extra money and creates competition between producers by vying to win the custom of these consumers.

It must be noted that in the context of the designer star system, the consumers in question are both those who buy designer products and those who follow the progress of the design world through the media.

Therefore the producers in question are the manufacturers of designer products and the producers of design media texts.

Competition between manufacturers leads to the development of inherently better products of a standard usually way beyond the needs of consumers. Eventually competing products reach an optimum standard for the



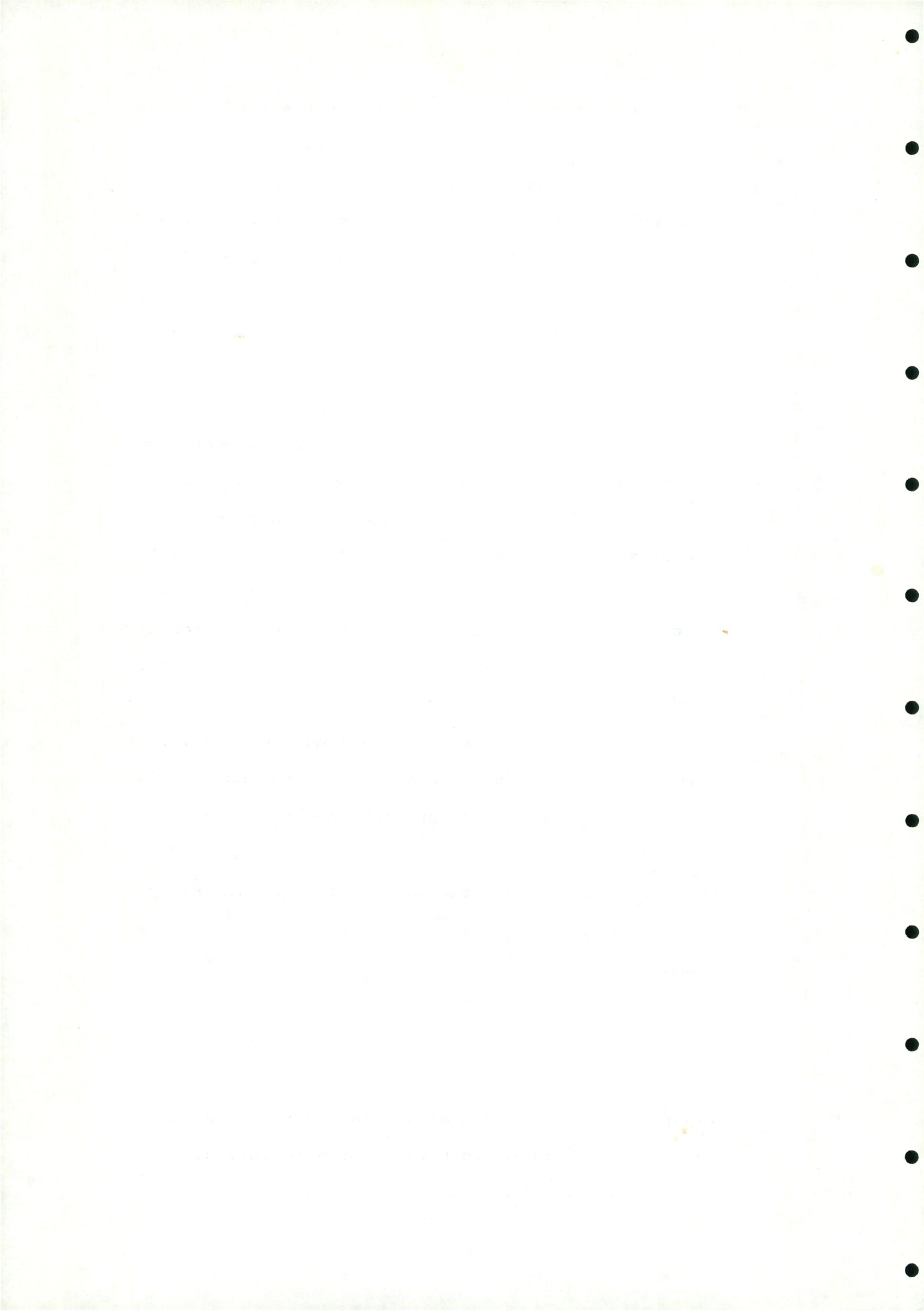
time and other means are needed to win the favour of the consumers. This advantage may be achieved through styling, advertising or by endorsement of a product by a popular public figure. In the 1980's the attachment of a designer name and the use of that designer's particular style of design became an effective means of gaining this competitive advantage.

This trend also had an influence on the producers of design media texts who began to rely on a constant flow of new products, styles and designers to capture and maintain the custom of their consumers. In this perspective, designer stars and the designer star system must be seen in terms of their role in the economy of production, including their role in the manipulation of the consumer market.

This economic argument tends to overlook the theory that although stars may be used to sell products and organise the market, their emergence and subsequent survival as stars could be attributed to either some intrinsic property of the products they design (their talent) or the special magic of the stars themselves (their charisma).

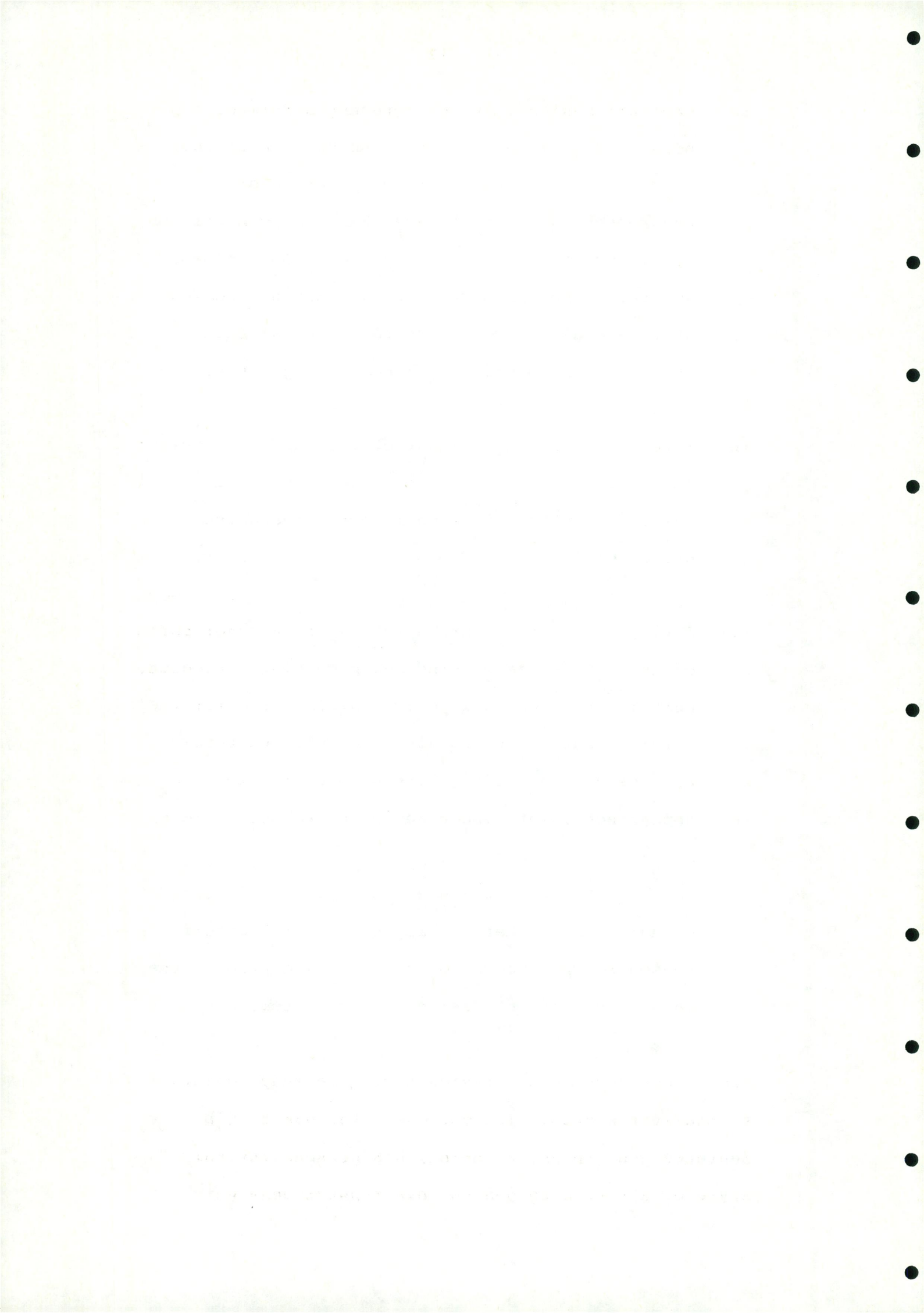
The Role of Economics in the Designer Star System.

Designer stars can be seen as a vital part of the economics of production in terms of the following:



- (a) Capital: Designer stars represent a form of capital possessed by manufacturers. An example of this is Alberto Alessi's return from the brink of bankruptcy caused by cheaper Far East competition by producing products designed by famous names, something the Far East could not match. Designer stars are also part of the raw material used by the design media to sell their books, magazines, etc.
- (b) Investment: For both manufacturers and the design media, the use of a designer star can act as a guarantee against loss on investment and even a profit on it.
- (c) Outlay: For manufacturers, stars are a major part of the cost of developing and producing a product. Certain stars not only charge a fixed sum for their services but demand royalties on each unit sold. For the design media, stars also charge for appearances, interviews and photographs.
- (d) The Market: Stars are used to sell products and organise the market. This is the main economic reason for producers to use stars and promote the development of the designer star system.

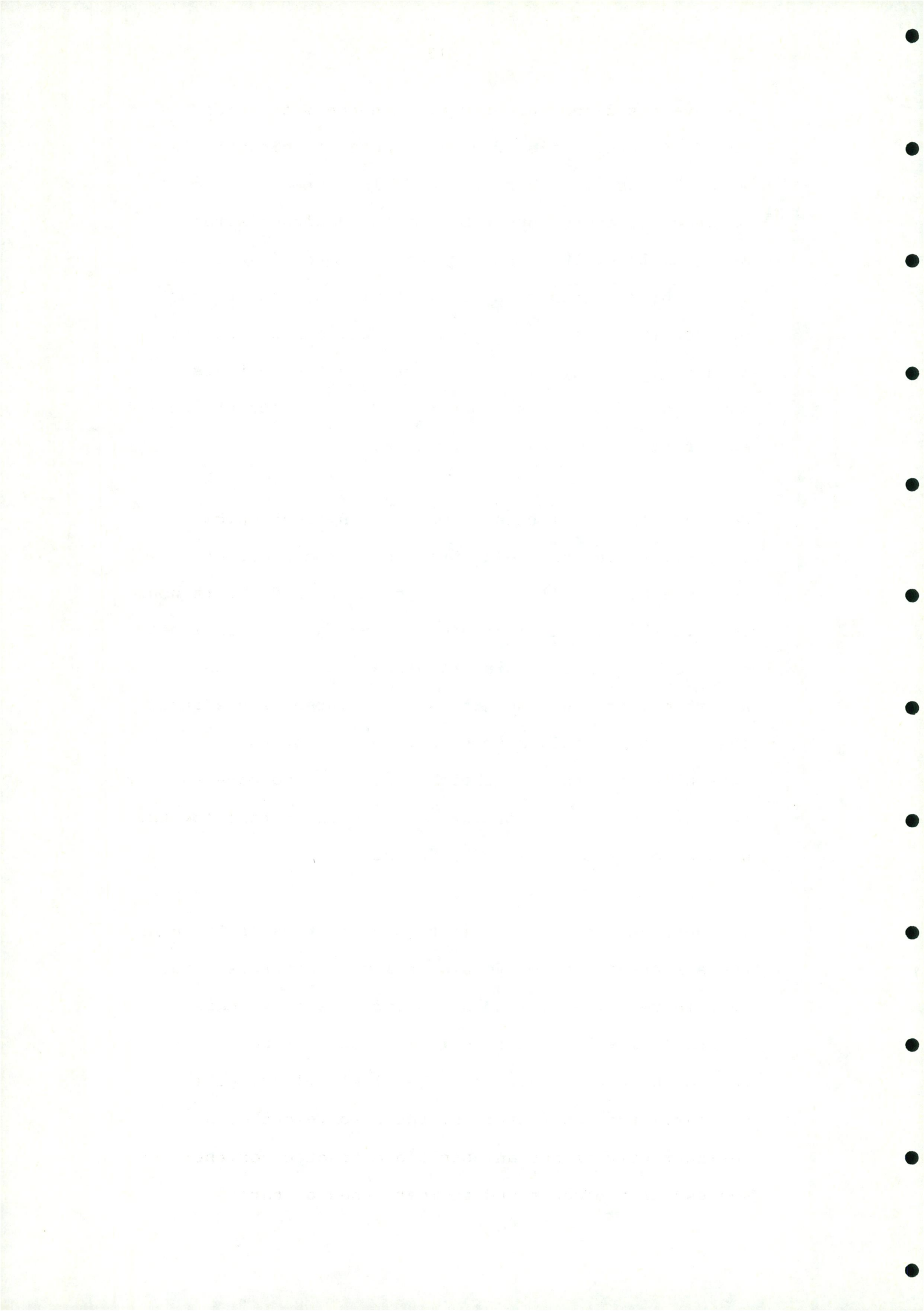
From a business point of view there are many advantages to the star system. The designer star has tangible features - his physical being, his personality, his style or attitude to design, his reputation - which can



be advertised and marketed by both the media and manufacturers. This provides a quantifiable formula which is easy to understand and also serves to protect manufacturers from questions of the designer's talent and quality of the designed object, both of which are intangibles. Producers are left with a standardised product (in general terms) which they can understand, advertise and sell and which not only they but also banks, suppliers, distributors and retail outlets regard as a form of insurance of profits.

For example if a little known Eastern electronics company, trying to break into the European market, employed Mario Bellini to design their product, it would immediately give them an economic advantage. Bellini's name would attract media attention, consumers, suppliers and stockists would see it as a guarantee of quality. These factors would also be seen by investors as a guarantee of return on their investment and pave the way for the introduction of future products by that company with a reasonable hope of success.

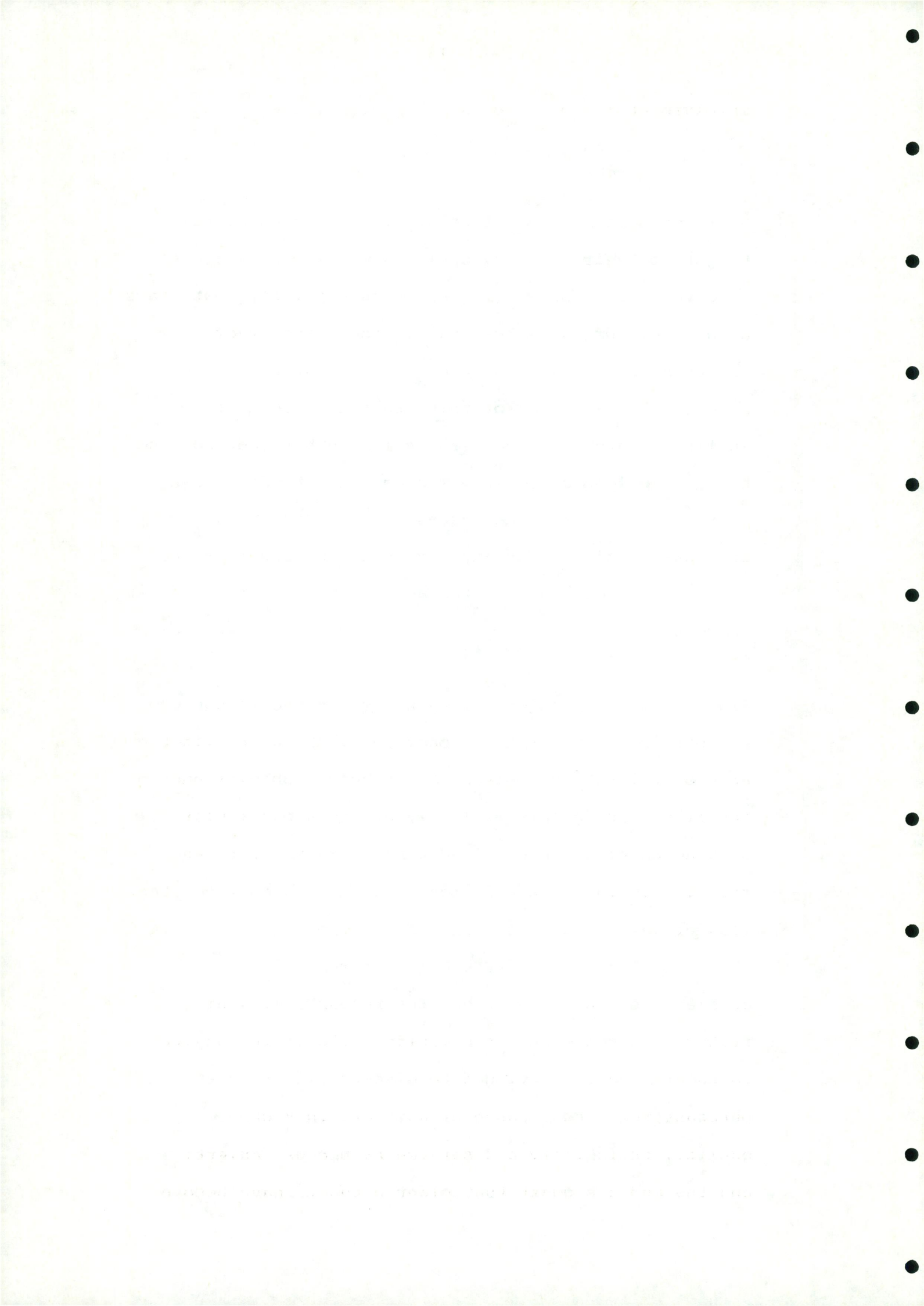
The designer star system in this context may be seen as the answers to the prayers of all manufacturers. But Dyer in relation to film stars urges us to remember that 'a star's involvement is neither necessary nor sufficient for the success of a film'. (1979, p. 12) Similarly for manufacturers, the involvement of a designer star is not an absolute guarantee for the success of a product and in most cases a star's



involvement is not a necessary prerequisite for a products success.

Stars move in and out of popularity and even at the height of their fame may design something that doesn't receive acclaim or sell. This does not imply that stars do not sell products but that in the majority of cases products do not have to be designed by stars to be successful. Examples of this are the failure of Philippe Starck to successfully launch his Yen and Yong happy face loop at the New Trends exhibition in the Centre Pompidou and the success of the Sony Walkman originally sold not on its design or the power of the Sony name but because it was an innovative entertainment concept.

Since WWII the idea of built-in obsolescence has become an intrinsic part of the economics of the West. In the area of film stardom, it is the inherent obsolescence of the film (most people will only attend a particular film showing once) which provided a ready market for new films. Similarly, the design media depend on a constant flow of new designs, styles and designer stars to retain their level of sales. For manufacturers also, obsolescence guarantees them future markets. This factor of obsolescence can manifest itself in many ways. Consumers can be convinced to discard old products and purchase new ones because of advances in technology, quality, reliability and service or because advertising and the media suggest that older products have become



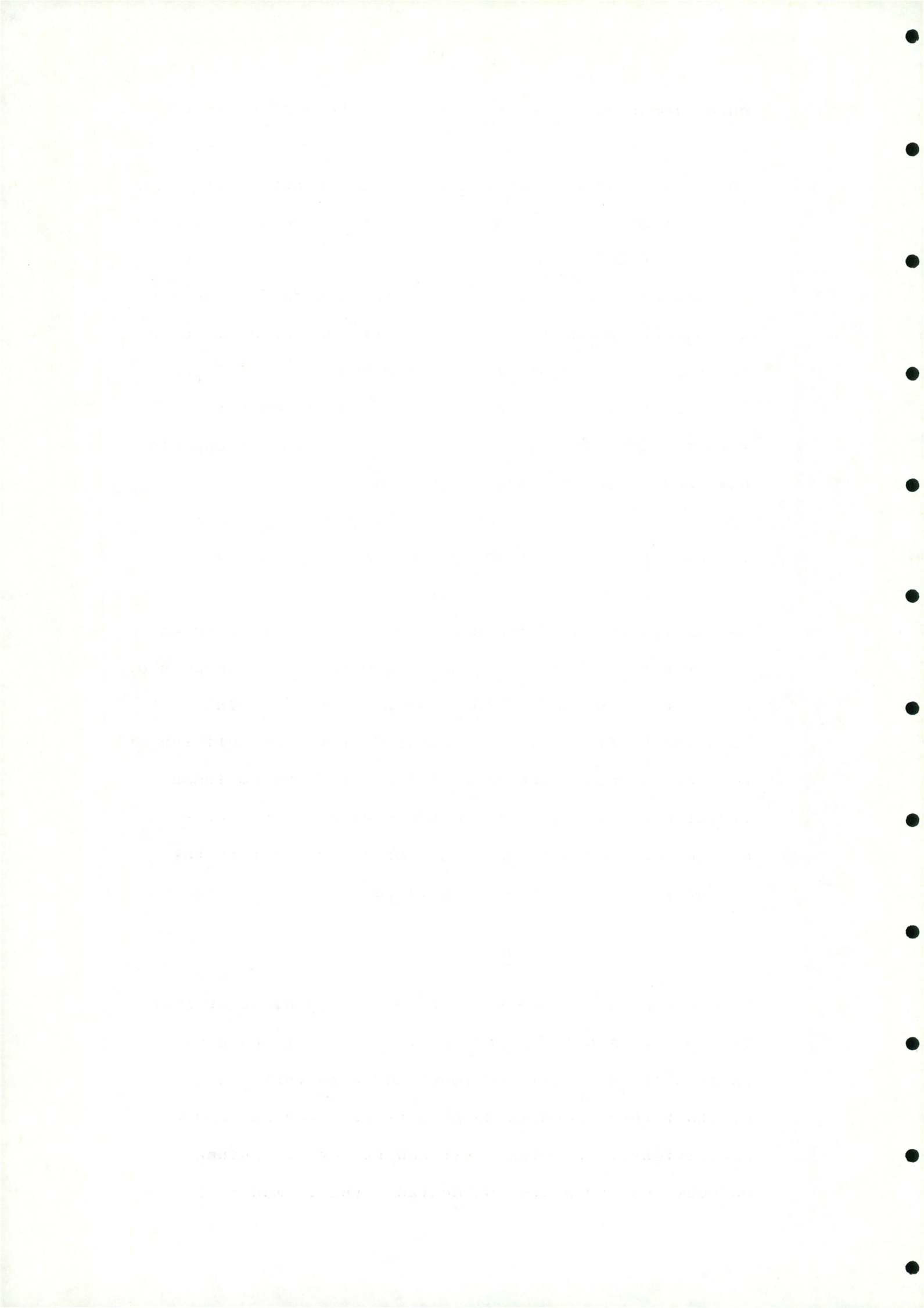
unfashionable.

So it can be seen that the economic importance of designer stars plays an important role in their rise to stardom, using them to guarantee return on investment and organise markets. But the rise and fall of designer stars, the demands by manufacturers and the media of a constant turnover of new products and the use of the idea of obsolescence to create and guarantee future markets, indicates that economics alone cannot explain the phenomenon of designer stardom.

The Role of Manipulation in the Designer Star System

The manipulation of the market has been attributed as one of the major factors in the promotion and success of designer stars and the designer star system. In relation to film stardom, Thomas Harris (The Building of Popular Images) contends that 'the star system lends itself particularly well to the manipulation thesis, because of the enormous amount of money spent by the industry on building up star images'. (Quoted from Dyer, 1979, p.13)

This can also be seen to be true for the designer star system. It manifests itself every year at the design fairs at Milan, Paris, Cologne and Frankfurt. Manufacturers spend large amounts of money on exhibitions to promote their new ranges of designer objects and the stars who designed them. Manufacturers,



eager for media coverage, often pay reporters expenses to review their ranges and the media eager to sustain audience interest, comply with manufacturers' attempted manipulation.

It is through carefully controlled co-operation between manufacturers and media that a designer may be first launched onto the international design scene.

Interviews, photosessions and other media events are staged to build up a designer's star image and expose him to the consumers. Depending on the star in question, the control of a manufacturer over his image varies greatly.

As a designer star's fame and success increase, he tends to take control of his own destiny. He uses his fame to secure contracts with other manufacturers and broaden his area of work. In this situation the designer star controls his own image and may use his fame to address the issues he is most concerned with (whether these are making money or creating a new style, etc.) through his design work or through the media.

It is most often that a designer star may begin to fall from fame at this stage in his career. The reasons for this are many and varied. He may have over extended himself and suddenly become dried up of innovative design ideas needed to sustain media attention and manufacturers support. Overexposure or not enough exposure due to a loss of control over public

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appearances and interviews may also lead to a designer star's downfall.

This co-operation of manufacturers, the media and designers in an attempt to manipulate and organise the market for economic gain can be seen as an inherent and inevitable consequence of the competition for sales which is part of the nature of capitalist Western society. While this attempted manipulation of the market does take place and can be seen to be a contributing factor to the designer stars and the designer star system, some reservations may be voiced about how influential a role it actually plays.

Not all manipulation works and sometimes a designer may get the full promotional treatment but not make it. This feature supports Dyer's contention, noted earlier, that a star system is not a rigid formula for success. Dyer argues that if a star system were a rigid system and manipulation was a prevalent factor in the creation of stars, then it must be assumed that 'there is no content to star images, only differences in appearance' (Dyer, 1979, p. 15). As designers are all separate thinking individuals, with differing ideals and goals (as can be seen from the examples in following sections) this assumption cannot be true and therefore manipulation cannot be the prevalent factor in favouring stardom.

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Another assumption that must be made, if manipulation of the market is to be seen as the dominant factor in creating designer stars, is that promotional input through advertising and the media can have a certain effect on the individual consumer without taking into account that the consumer also has a thinking mind. Logically this cannot be true as consumers surely decode messages in different ways depending on many contextual factors, social economic, cultural, etc.

However, in the 1980's with changes in the social structure, young professionals with expendable income were nervously looking for objects to be used as symbolic capital and to give them cultural credibility. They were willing to give in to the promise of manufacturers and the media that the purchase of the right designer object would fulfil their needs and aspirations, their possession would attract attention and reflect well on their taste.

This suggests that although the role of manipulation of the market may not have been the dominant factor in the creation of designer stars, it certainly is an important contributing influence in most if not all cases.

The Role of Fashion in the Designer Star System

The idea that fashion may be a factor which influences the designer star system comes from the observation that designer stars may fall from fame just as suddenly as

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In the second section, the author details the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both manual and automated processes. The goal is to ensure that the information gathered is both reliable and comprehensive.

The third part of the document focuses on the results of the analysis. It shows that there is a clear trend in the data, which suggests that the current strategy is effective. However, there are some areas where improvement is needed, particularly in the way resources are allocated.

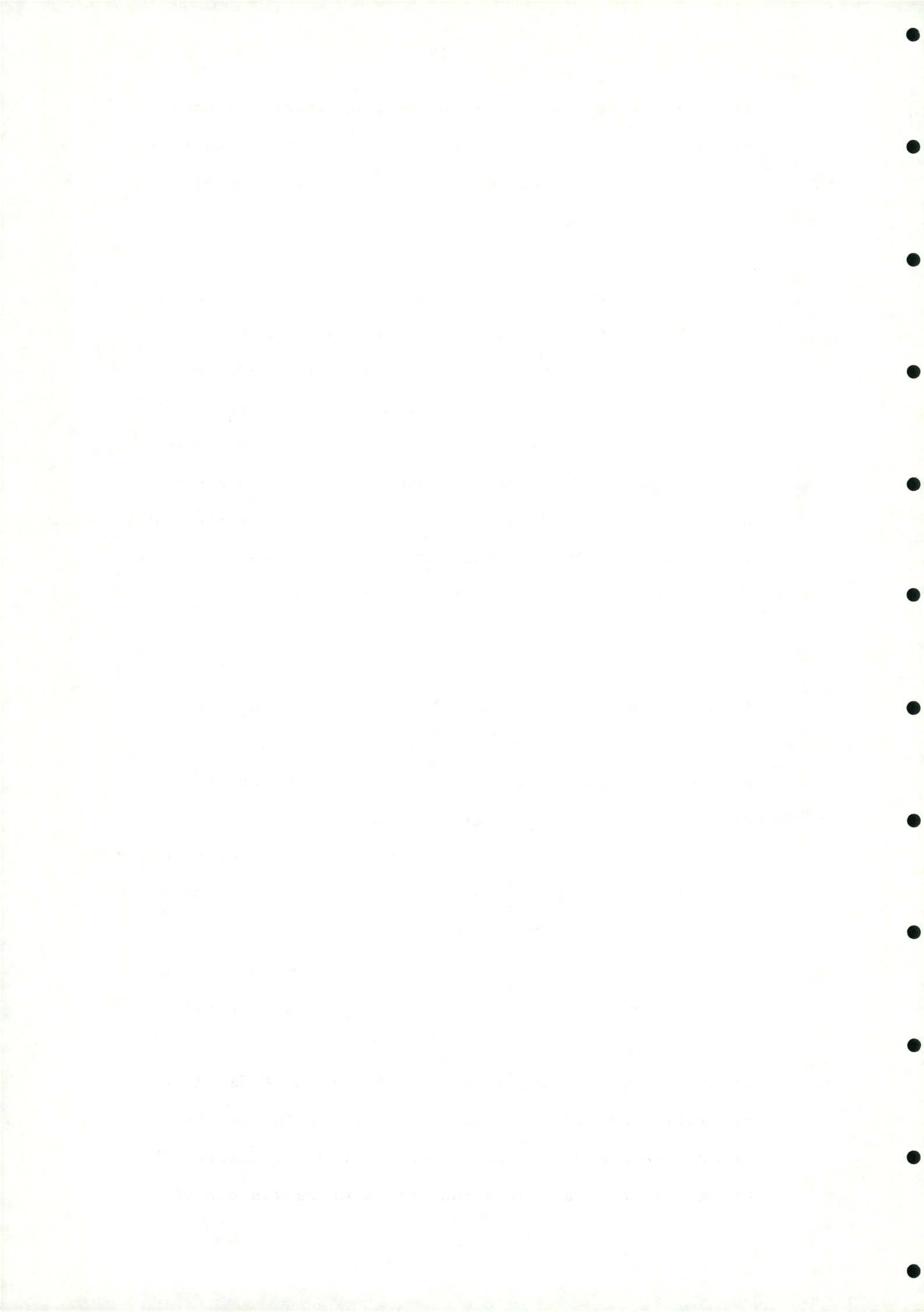
Finally, the document concludes with a set of recommendations for future actions. These include implementing new software tools to streamline the data collection process and providing additional training for the staff involved in the analysis.

they rose to stardom. Since designer stars are used to organise markets and sell products, this trend must also be considered for the role it plays in creating or sustaining markets.

This fashion trait could be seen as a result of manipulation by two parties. First, manipulation by manufacturers needing to constantly sell more products, who feel a change to a new designer and new style may prompt customers to consider their previous purchases old fashioned and encourage them to replace them with newer more fashionable items. Manipulation by the media who rely on a steady stream of new designs and new designers to entertain their customers and maintain their level of sales.

This view of the role of fashion, however, is a very cynical one based on the economic role of the designer star system alone and as such is subject to the same shortcomings outlined earlier in relation to manipulation of the market. As such the role of fashion is as limited as the role of manipulation of the market in the designer star system.

A much less cynical view is that fashion is a result of the change in attitude or emphasis of consumers. In this context, fashion appears much less superficial and trivial. This idea is embodied in Walker's view that 'stars are the direct or indirect reflection of the needs, drives and aspirations of (American) society'



(Walker, 1979, p.96). Of course the amount of choice afforded to the consumers is limited by the designers and design they are offered but within this limitation it is the consumers who choose what and who will ultimately succeed.

It must be noted, however, that manipulation does play a role, especially in the 80's (as outlined previously), in shaping the changes in attitude or emphasis of the consumers. In this way, manipulation plays a role in deciding which designers achieve star status. Similarly this manipulation of the market by manufacturers and the media has a role to play in influencing which designers and styles go out of fashion.

The role of manipulation in fashion is most effective when a designers fame has been built on one manufacturer and one style. In this situation a change in attitude or emphasis by consumers can leave the designer behind and facilitate his fall from fame. If a designer can maintain a fresh attitude of diversity and innovation in his work, it is usual for his fame and popularity to spread. Under these conditions the vulnerability of a designer's career to changes in fashion trends (induced by manipulation by producers or not) tends to diminish.

This ability of a designer star to develop and tailor his style and approach to the new dreams and aspirations of consumers may ensure his existence as a designer star within the star system. This trend of change can be

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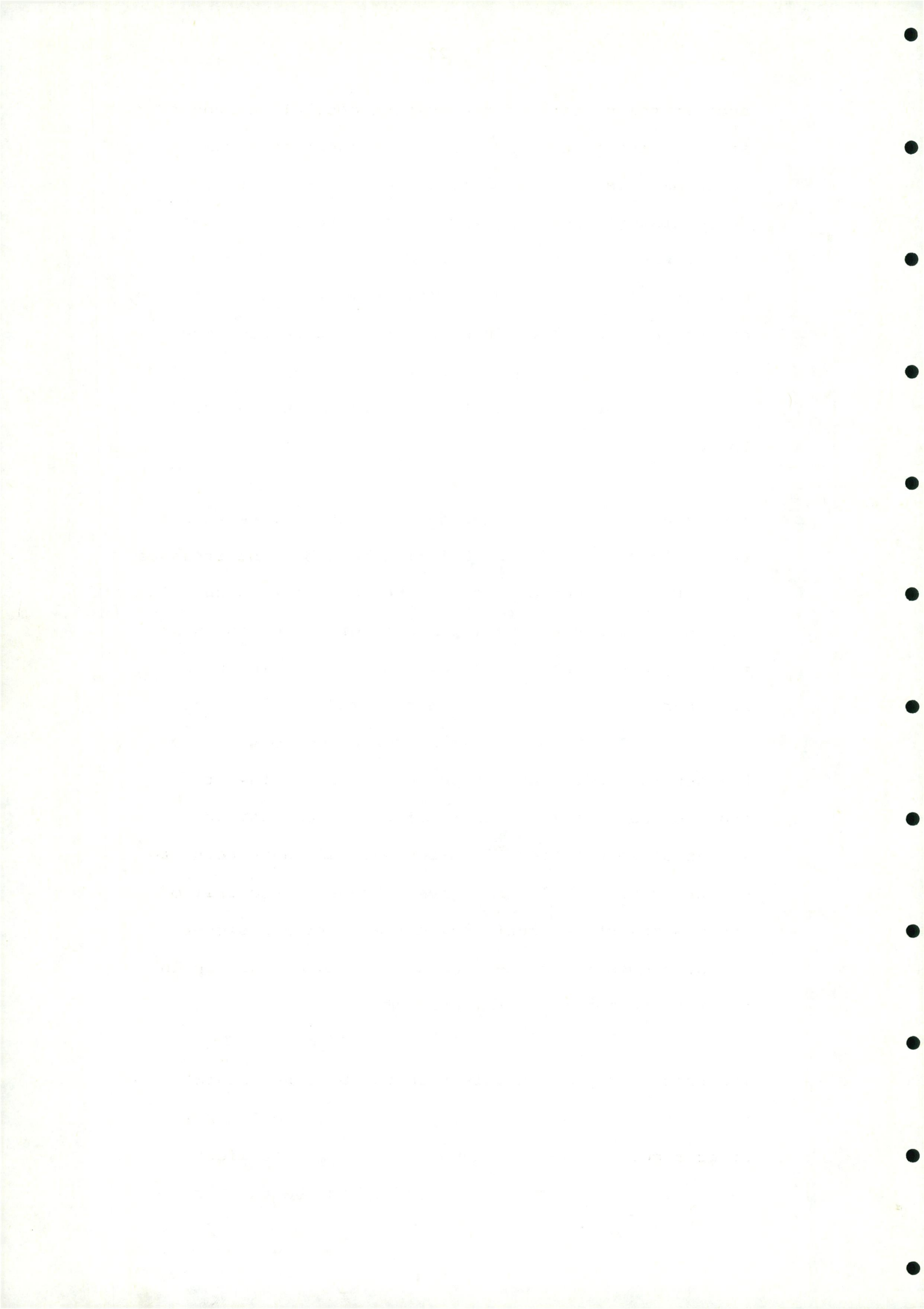
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seen in the careers of the most successful designer stars. With talent and experience their fame can be sustained over a long period. Longer established designers whose design expertise was recognised before the 80's boom in designer stardom, such as Vico Magistretti and Achille Castiglioni, are prime examples, having survived as designer stars right through the 80's. In the field of newer stars, Maurer, Sapper and of course Starck, also fit this pattern, always seeming to be one step ahead.

The role of fashion in the designer star system can be seen as a central factor bringing together the areas of production and consumption. [The role of fashion outlines the respective importance of these other factors in shaping the system and choosing which designers attain and continue to command a level of stardom]. In the 80's as mass communications, one of the general social conditions necessary to favour stardom, has developed increasing the quantity and spread of information, fashions and fads have begun to be burned out in closer cycles. The rise and fall of the Memphis style, outlined in the section Designer Stars, demonstrates the increasing role of fashion in the rise to and fall from stardom.

The Role of Magic and Talent in the Designer Stars.

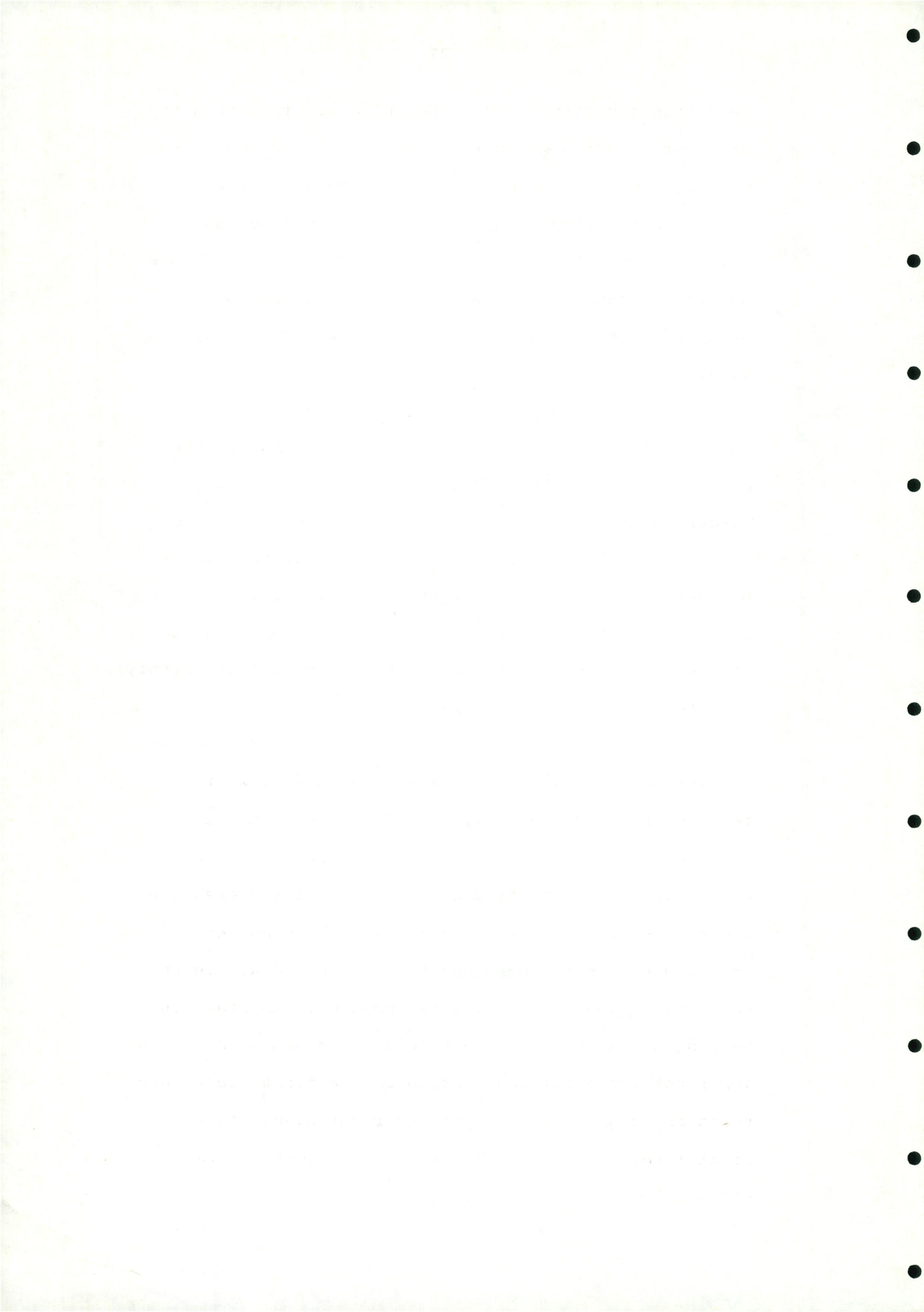
It is a common view, although considered intellectually naive, that designers become stars because they are



exceptionally gifted and wonderful etc. That from the midst of a design world full of mediocre products, they rise to the surface and project, through sheer will, talent and charisma, images of great artistic and design ability. In relation to film stars the producer Samuel Goldwyn expressed a version of the view claiming 'God makes the stars' (The Movie Stars) (Quoted from Dyer, 1979, p.18).

There is an element of truth in this view but in the context of the factors which have already been discussed, there are many other considerations to be taken into account. One fundamental objection is based on Dyer's discussion of talent and charisma in creating film stars, is that not all highly talented designers attain stardom and of those who have, not all are highly talented.

However much one wants to believe in this view it remains the case that only very few 'great unique individuals' have attained stardom. Perhaps this can be attributed to the fact that the only designers to be given a chance to attain stardom are those chosen and promoted by manufactures and the design media. In this case talent and charisma, while possibly important in helping a designer sustain a level of stardom, are less important for attaining stardom in the first place than being the right designer, in the right place at the right time.

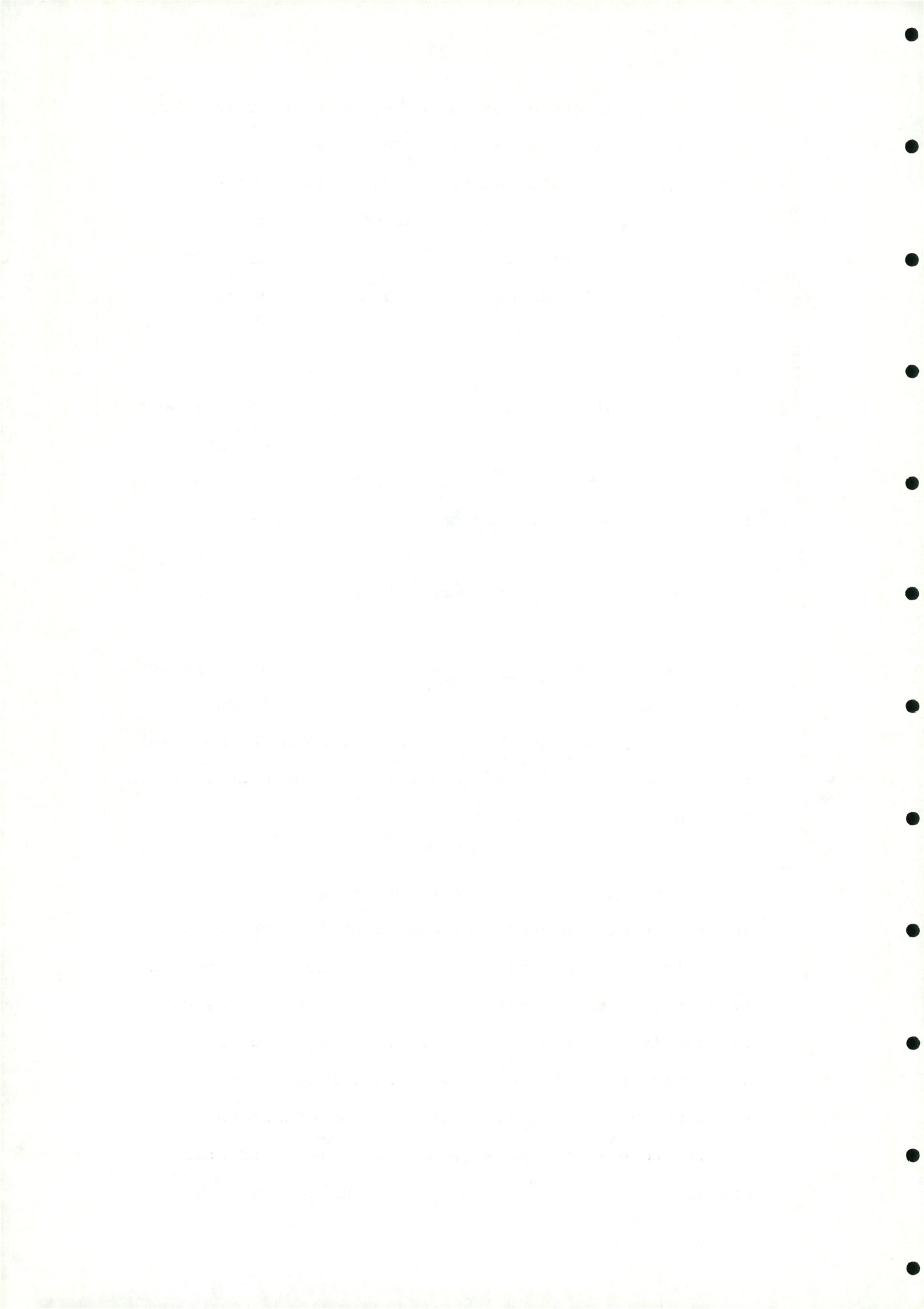


Certainly once chosen and promoted as a designer star, the more talented and charismatic a designer is, the better his chances of sustaining a level of stardom. However, the label of 'great unique individual' can be applied only to a limited number of designers. Even in the case of talented designers such as Maurer and Starck, the element of luck and coincidence in co-operation with the forces of production and consumption plays a crucial part in a designer's rise to fame. An example of this is outlined in the section: Case Study - The Designer Star System at Work, involving Boret Sipek's rise to designer stardom.

Stars as a Phenomenon of Consumption

Consumers can be considered a determining factor in the creation of design stars. Therefore, when discussing stars as a phenomenon of consumption, both the consumers of designer products and consumers of design media texts must be taken into account.

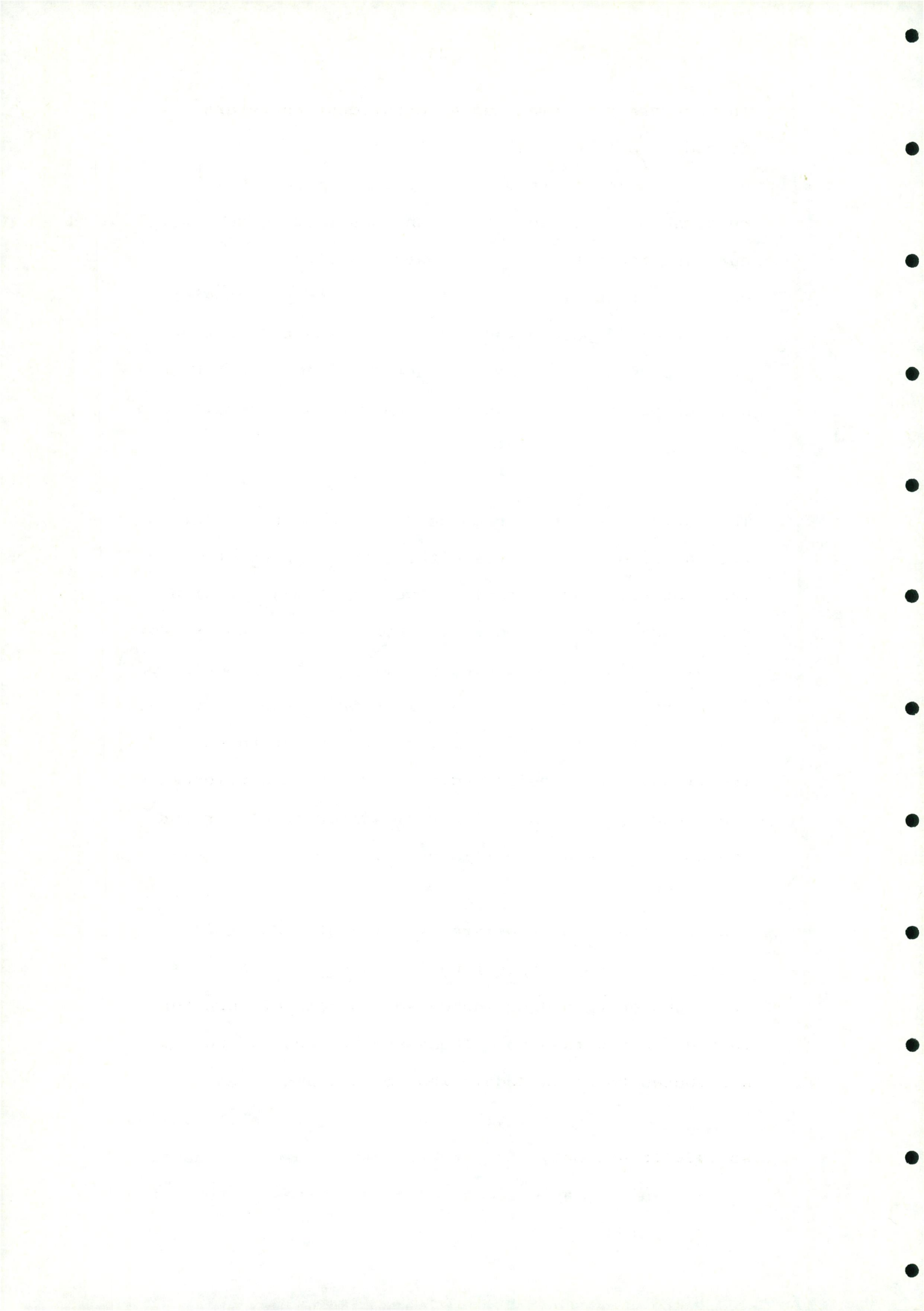
For manufactures, it can be taken for granted that the importance of designer stars is directly proportional to the effect they may have on sales of the manufacturers products, either by direct involvement or in some cases by association (e.g. Company X produces designer Y's goods therefore all goods by Company X can be considered to be of this standard) so in this way consumers play a crucial role in the promotion of a designer to star status.



In the case of design media texts, designer stars, as discussed before, are of vital economic importance helping the media to secure and maintain a level of readership by attracting design conscious consumers to purchase these texts. The power and size of this consumer group is great as is shown when you consider the number of people who would recognise a Starck chair, having possibly never sat in one, let alone bought one as compared to the amount of consumers who actually own one.

The curious fact that some designers can attain fame within design media texts without the support of a manufacturer or ever having appeared at major design fairs, suggests that possibly this second group of media consumers plays a much greater role in the promotion of designers to star status. While this may be true, it is plausible that the original introduction of these individuals into design media texts can be attributed to the preference of an influential writer or editor for the work of the designer in question.

Ron Arad and Danny Lane are examples of these kinds of stars. They began appearing in Blueprint Magazine while still designing and making one-off pieces of furniture in their own workshops. These appearances can be attributed to Deyan Sudjic who founded and edits Blueprint and is an influential person within the design world. It was only after they became known by Blueprint readers and had appeared in other magazines because of



the Blueprint coverage, that manufacturers became interested.

Manufacturers such as Vitra and XO saw the opportunity to take advantage of and build upon Arad and Lane's exposure for their own economic gain. It was only then that Arad and Lane became fully fledged stars more dependant on support from consumers of all types than on the support of one influential individual, namely Sudjic.

The above arguments expand on points raised earlier in the discussion of fashion. They show the importance of the role of consumers in creating a designer's stardom and begin to point to the reasons why we get the stars we do.

In The Powerless Elite Albertoni suggests a solution to the problem of how stars are created and the role of consumers in this process. He proposes that 'the star system ... never creates a star but it proposes the candidate for election and helps retain the favour of the electors'. (Quoted from Dyer, 1979, p.22)

This statement is very useful in that it sets out the complex interdependent roles played by both producers and consumers in the formation of stars.

As Dyer points out:

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- (i) Organising an election is a way of defining and delimiting choice
i.e. the only designers that consumers can elevate to star status are ones already chosen by manufactures or influential people, within the media'.
- (ii) Both those who propose candidates and those who elect them are shaped by the particular ideological formations of their situation in society
i.e. the emergency of designer stars in the 80's and the particular stars we got were formed by the changing social needs and aspirations of the consumers, the media and the manufacturers at the time'.

It can be seen therefore that the role of the producers (media and manufacturers) plays a far greater part in the original shaping of the star phenomenon. But once designers are proposed as stars, the choices of the consumers as to who succeeds is of great importance. It is the consumer choice that forms the basis of producers decisions as to who to propose next. To propose and use the right designer is of paramount economic importance to producers and for this reason, they tend to help retain the favour of the consumer for particularly successful designer stars.

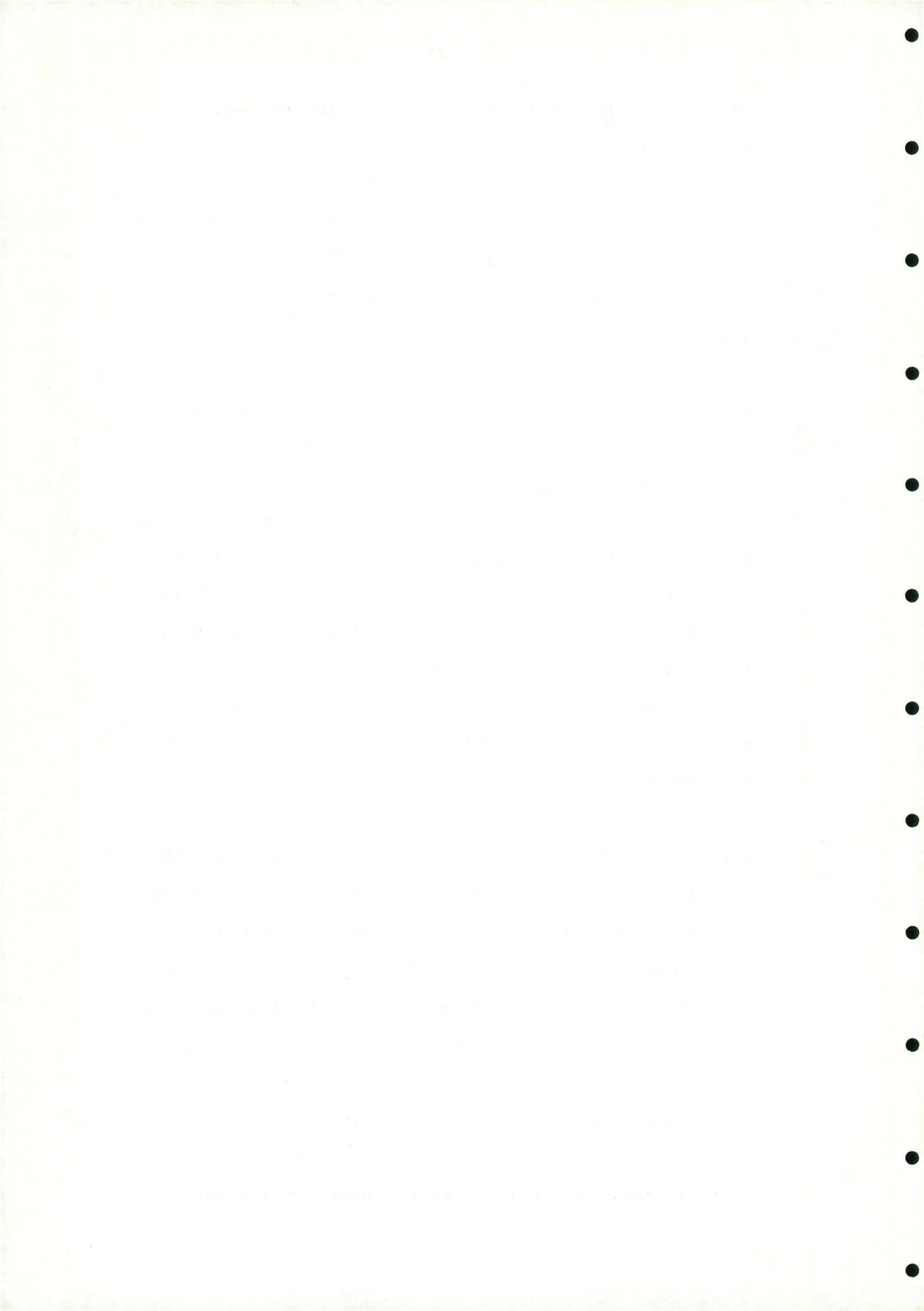
Section 2 - The Designer Star System in its Social and Historical Context.

This section gives an account of the events which since WWII have led to the development of a designer star system and designer stars in Western society in the 1980's.

With the increasing availability of consumer credit in the 1980's, it can be argued that the traditional markers of ones, socio-economic position (i.e. class background and occupation) became less important. A new young upwardly-mobile professional class emerged whose social position came to be defined more by what they bought. In a nervous effort to confirm their status, the newly expanded middle classes began to buy objects which they wore as badges to symbolise their newfound wealth and success. These objects were signs of belonging, markers of social identity.

Consumerism, however, existed as far back as the 17th century in large European cities. But it was only after WWII that built-in obsolescence coincided with a burgeoning consumerism in the US and the modernist dogma that 'new is good' (Heisinger, 1983) became a structural feature of the West's economy.

This new competitive economy forced manufactures to constantly try to better their products to correspond with the changing attitude of consumers, value for

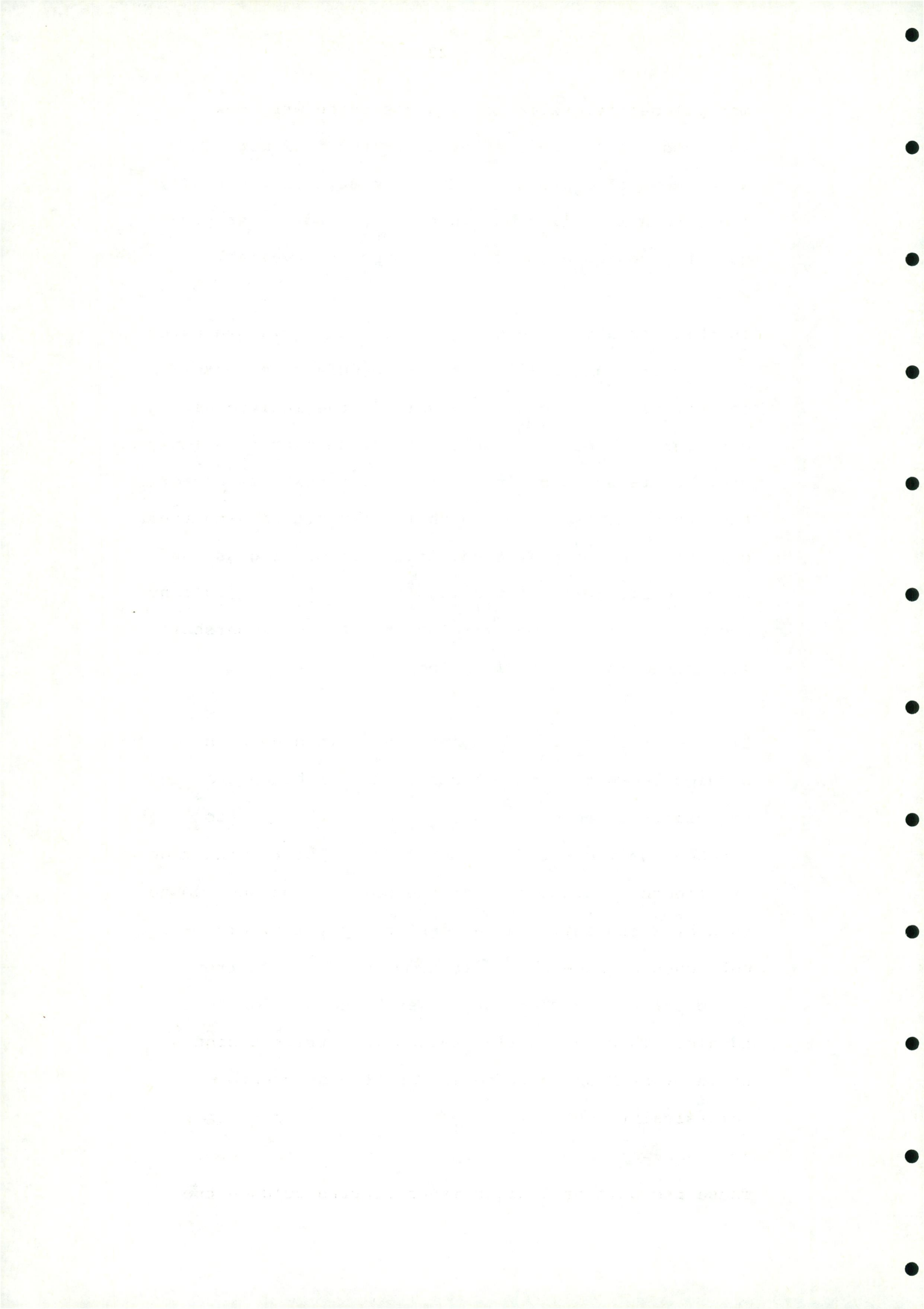


money, quality, reliability and service were now regarded as important as price in the consumers assessment of a product. This competition eventually leads to a levelling out in the standards of service, quality, design and variety of products available.

In this situation the designer came into his own using his services and skill to help a manufacturer outbid a competitor in capturing the whim of the individual consumer. Nowhere was this more evident than in Italy where there was a heritage of small industries based in the urban courtyards of North Italian cities with their concentration of craftsmen working in metal glass and wood. While WWII dealt a massive blow to the Italian economy, a strong post-war Government and US Marshall Aid helped to re-establish industries quickly.

Small entrepreneurial companies hand in hand with design studios began to turn out short runs of batch produced handcrafted pieces with a speed and sophistication that matched the modernist movements dreams of machine made excellence. But because of the policies pursued up to then by Mussolini, Italian design was relatively untouched by modernism. It had grown instead from a style called Novecento which was based on classical ideals. This gave early Italian industrial design a style of its own characterised by the Novecento 'classical touch'.

These products by Italian manufacturers sold on the

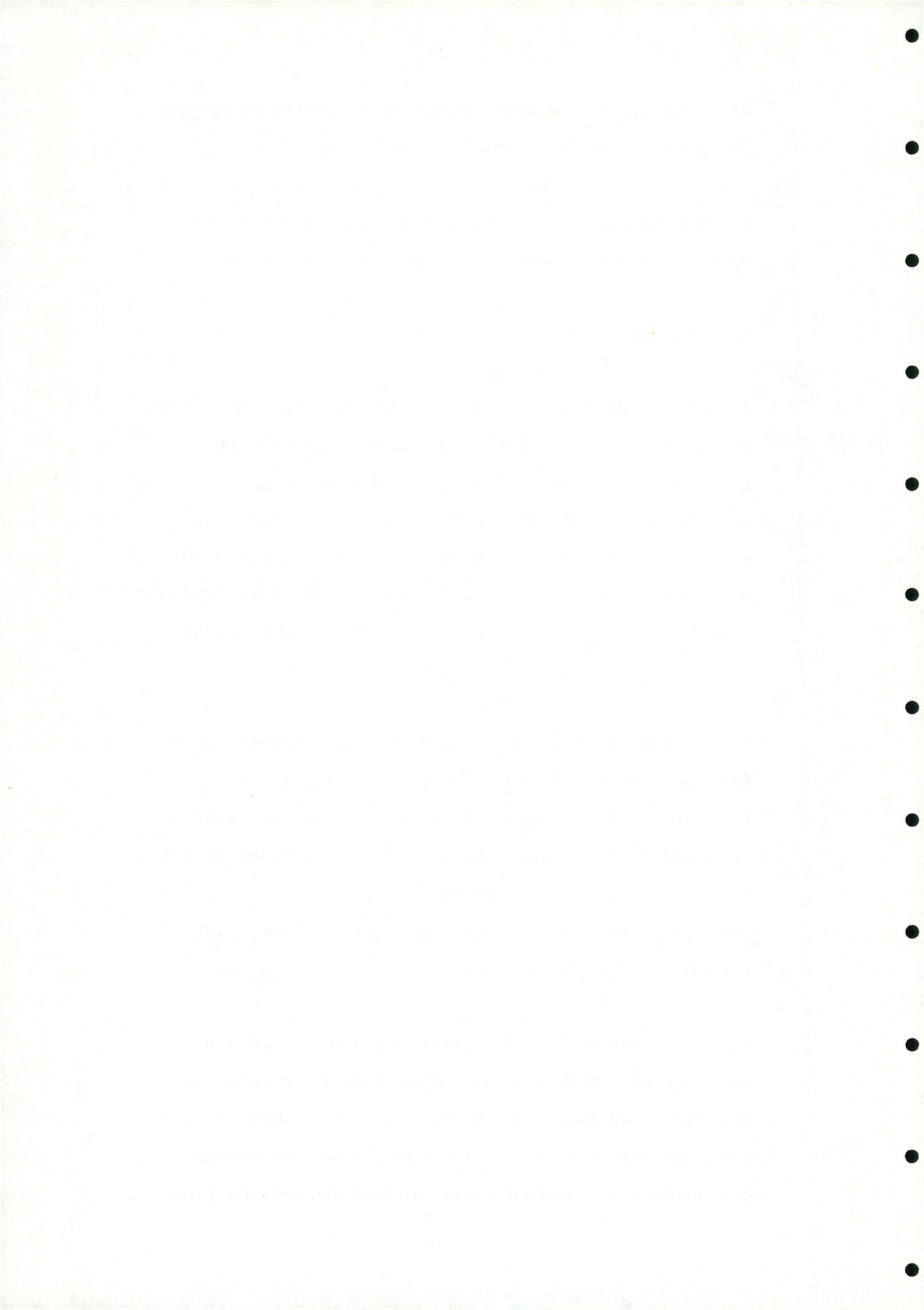


merit of their design and Italy's designers began to assume an unusual degree of importance. Thus traditional coach building works turned into car styling studios and old fashioned upholsterers and cabinet makers moved into modern design. Northern Italy, especially Milan, became renowned for its design culture, designers and the quality of its manufacturers.

This trend of Italian designers to dominate the design world continued through constant experimentation and exploration into the 80's. This dominance can be attributed to the fact that Italy never fully embraced modernism from the WWII classical touch, through anti design by groups such as Archizoom in the late 60's and Alchymia in 1971 up to the post-modernism of Memphis in 1981.

By the 1980's Italian manufacturers had developed advanced manufacturing processes employing new technology which allowed them to manufacture mass produced products with the quality of their earlier hand crafted objects. By the late 1980's it became almost impossible to tell whether the products they produced were machine or hand produced.

Advances in manufacturing technology were not confined to Italy or indeed Europe and by 1970 many European manufacturers were coming under increased competition from Eastern companies. The success of the Eastern companies was based on their ability to produce products



of an equal standard which European manufacturers could not match for price.

In 1979 the Italian manufacturer Alberto Alessi hit back at this Eastern threat with products that the Far East could not match. The first of these were eleven silver tea/coffee services by internationally respected architects. These were like craft items, made on a limited scale and sold for huge prices. These products attracted a lot of attention in the architectural world but had very little effect outside of this.

This move by Alessi came from his passion for design and his understanding of trends he could see happening in the world of architecture. His next project was to produce a range of kettles, priced cheaply relative to the preceding tea/coffee services and designed by a group of already internationally famous names. First was Richard Sapper with a domed kettle with two tone steam whistle; then Michael Graves with a red plastic bird on the spout; and lastly, Aldo Rossi with a cone.

These kettles sold extremely well, especially Michael Graves', mostly to the new yuppie class who saw them as status symbols. Although not hand crafted, these products were seen to have two distinct advantages over normal brand name kettles. Firstly, the quality of the materials and manufacture was as good as anything that could be afforded by the extremely rich. Secondly, they had a designer signature attached which seemingly gave

them an immediate cultural credibility over Eastern products and was seem to reflect well on the taste of the consumer.

At this time in the East, the reputation of the architect star still reigned supreme over that of his poor relation the designer star. Although designer stars became during the 80's more economically important to small manufactures than architects ever were to large developers, it could be argued that the emergence of designer stars was helped immensely by the cult of celebrity created by the architects.

With the economic upturn of the late 70's cash rich corporations wanting to make their mark, found that hiring the right architect 'to build them a symbol of their corporate virility' (Sudjic, 1989, p.59) gave them a cultural credibility and an untold amount of publicity. Many also found that it did not cost much more than a standard developers box.

Post-modernism as an architectural style was being developed as a reaction to the prevailing style of modernism. Modernism had held a firm grip on architecture since WWII and was the most common style used for large developments up until the mid 70's. The large corporations saw their chance and many of the new buildings were built in the post-modern style. This sudden change caused large stirrings not only within the architecture and design world but also within magazines

The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country. It is a very interesting and detailed study of the economic and social conditions of the country. The author has done a great deal of research and has gathered a wealth of material. The report is well written and is a valuable contribution to the study of the country.

The second part of the report deals with the specific details of the country. It is a very detailed and thorough study of the country's resources, its industries, and its people. The author has done a great deal of research and has gathered a wealth of material. The report is well written and is a valuable contribution to the study of the country.

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The fourth part of the report deals with the conclusion of the study. It is a very well-written and thoughtful study of the country's future. The author has done a great deal of research and has gathered a wealth of material. The report is well written and is a valuable contribution to the study of the country.

and newspapers who up to this point had shown very little interest in contemporary architecture.

The resulting publicity focused not only on the new building or the corporation involved, but also on the architect. An example of this is the Humana Tower commissioned by Humana Corporation 'as a monument to private medicine in general and Humana in particular' (Abrams, 1989, p. 50) from one of the leading proponents of post-modernism, Michael Growes. Growes' Humana Tower is just like many other office buildings but it is hidden beneath a designer skin. The building cannot be described as Growes alone since hundreds of others were also involved. It is the image that Growes is responsible for the resulting building, being the architect which focuses media attention on him and 'casts him in the role of a solitary genius' (Sudjic, 1989, p.48).

Charles Jencks, the architectural historian claimed that the biggest thing to happen to design since the War was the death of modernism. He dated its demise to 1973, the moment when the Pruitt Igoe flats, in St. Louis were dynamited. A just end he thought for a development planned as a modernist utopia, but turned into a slum before it was finished. But it is probably more true to say that the day in 1984 when Michael Graves appeared in W, a weekly supplement of Women's Wear Daily in the company of Stephanie of Monaco, Klaus Von Bulow and other celebrities, will probably be seen as a much

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry should be supported by a valid receipt or invoice. This ensures transparency and allows for easy verification of the data.

In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The primary data was gathered through direct observation and interviews with key personnel. Secondary data was obtained from internal company reports and industry publications.

The analysis of the data revealed several key trends and insights. One of the most significant findings was the impact of market fluctuations on the company's performance. The data shows a clear correlation between external economic factors and internal operational efficiency.

Based on these findings, the author proposes several strategic recommendations. These include diversifying the product line to reduce dependency on a single market, improving internal communication channels, and investing in research and development to stay ahead of the competition.

The document concludes by summarizing the key points and reiterating the importance of continuous monitoring and adaptation in a dynamic business environment. It is hoped that these insights will be helpful in making informed decisions for the future.

greater architectural landmark than the timely demise of Pruitt Igoe.

Graves was depicted sitting, smiling and partly, obliterated by a red cross with the word 'out' scrawled across his portrait. The picture was accompanied by Groves earlier quote to Vanity Fair 'I've been out for so long it seems like in to me'. This was proof positive that architecture had become part of a star system subject to the same fluctuations of rapidly acquired popularity and even more rapid falls from favour that were part of the careers of many other types of stars. Some of the more prolific photogenic and entertaining architects had finally gained the kind of celebrity previously enjoyed only by royalty and successful sports and film stars.

Until this time architects hadn't been used to such exposure. Famous architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier had been part of a tiny elite. But the audience for their post-modern successors had grown immeasurably. By the time Philip Johnson had got on the cover of the London and New York Times and Time Magazine with his design for the AT & T skyscraper before even one brick had been laid, architecture had become a high profile subject. As Sudjic comments, 'given the fact that less than five years earlier W's readers would have been hard put to tell who Frank Lloyd Wright was let alone a living architect, it was a remarkable development' (1989, p. 91).

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DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

LABORATORY OF ORGANIC CHEMISTRY

RESEARCH REPORT

NO. 100

1950

BY

ROBERT H. WOODWARD

AND

ROBERT B. WOODWARD

ET AL.

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

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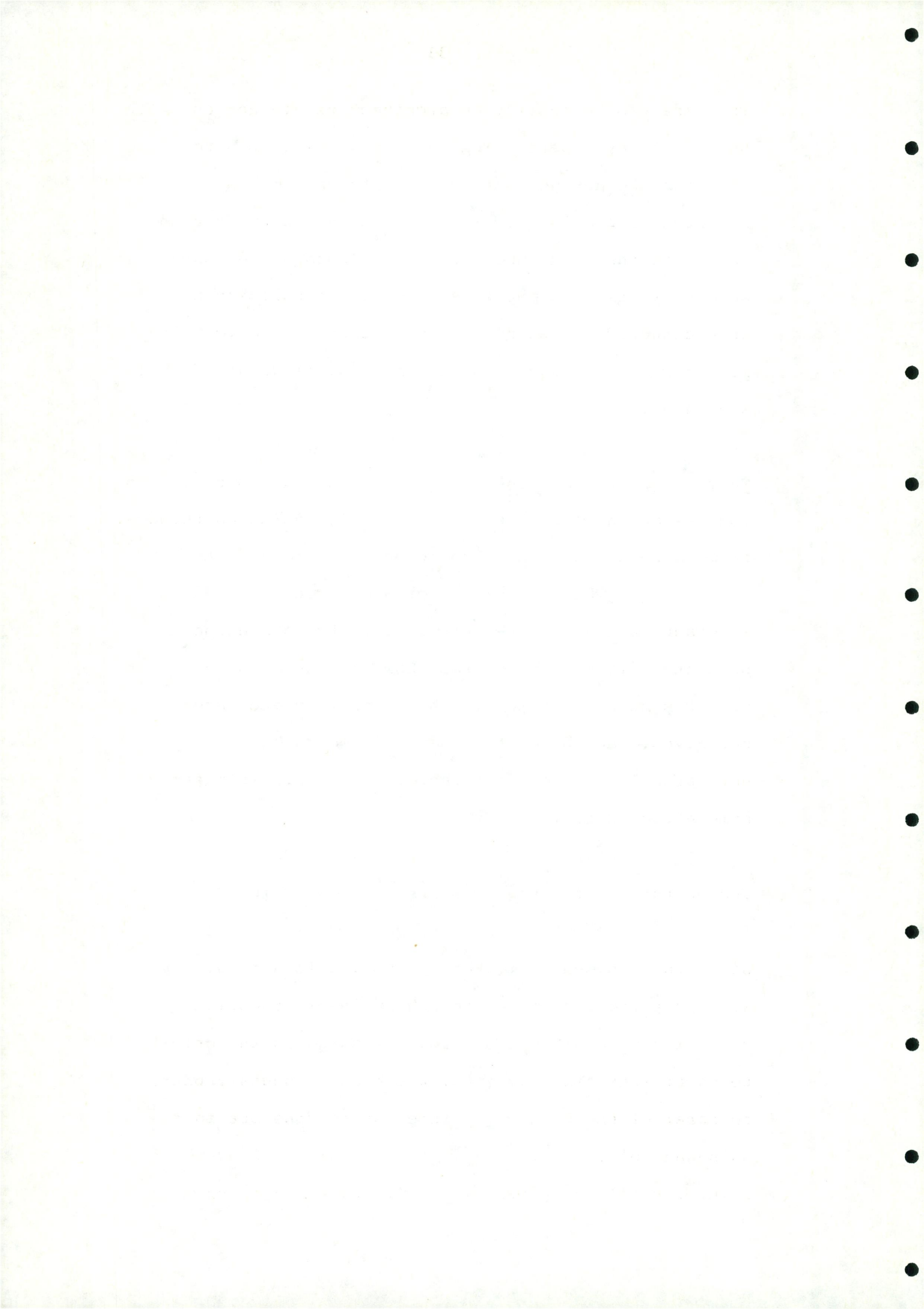
ILLINOIS

1950

The impact of celebrity on architecture did not end with the large developers. The idea of signing up a top name architect to design your shop, restaurant or cafe occurred to people quickly. So suddenly a profession that less than a decade before was 'burdened down by the weight of its self appointed mission of building a utopian world of eternally sunlit towns' (Sudjic, 1989, p. 99) was soon busy producing exquisitely crafted bars and cafes.

Many architects saw their chance to make a short step to success and applied their skills to designing anything from shopping bags to cuckoo clocks or indeed kettles for Alessi. This phenomenon of architect designed artefacts began to have curious effects on consumer products. It has transformed how once anonymous products such as watches, chairs, cutlery etc. are perceived. An object that normally would be unremarkable is seen differently when there is a famous name attached to it.

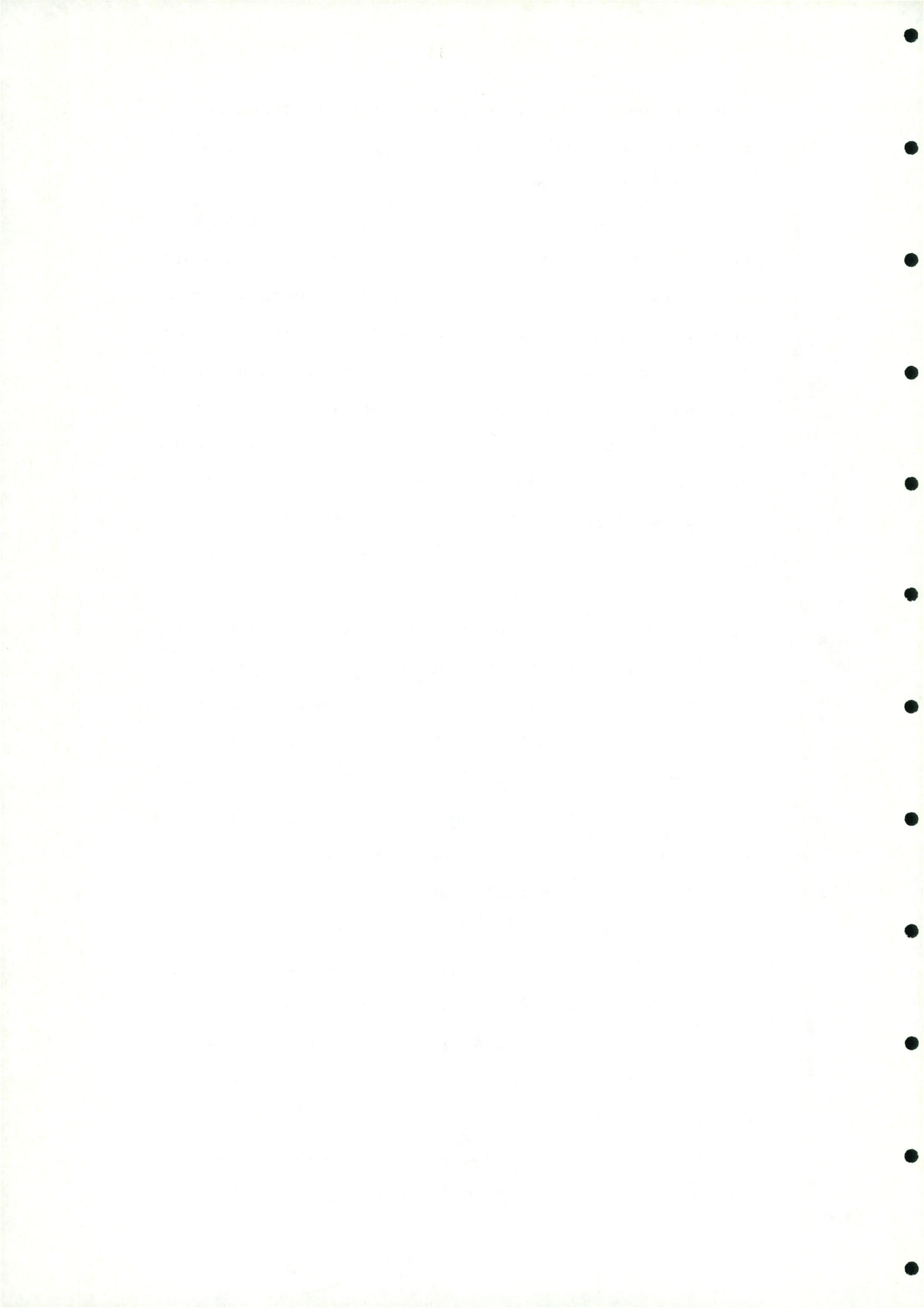
The emergence of designer stars was also helped by other factors. Since WWII the increase in design awareness has been phenomenal, marked by publications on almost all major figures of nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The 1980's upsurge in design as an activity to participate in, buy into, watch and discuss appears to parallel the upsurge in interest in fine art in the 60's and 70's.



Fine art was turned into a commodity via thousands of books, posters, postcards and catalogues and also widespread newspaper and magazine coverage. This comparison can be taken a step further. In 1917 Marcel Duchamp exhibited his *Fontaine*, a mass produced urinal, as a work of art. Even though it was arguably Duchamp's intention to demythologise art and bring it down to the level of mass produced prosaic utilitarian objects, it may indeed have had the opposite effect breaking the ground for mass produced artefacts to be raised to the level of art. In 1934 The Metropolitan Museum of Art approached Raymond Loewy to display an idealised replica of his office and some of his designs.

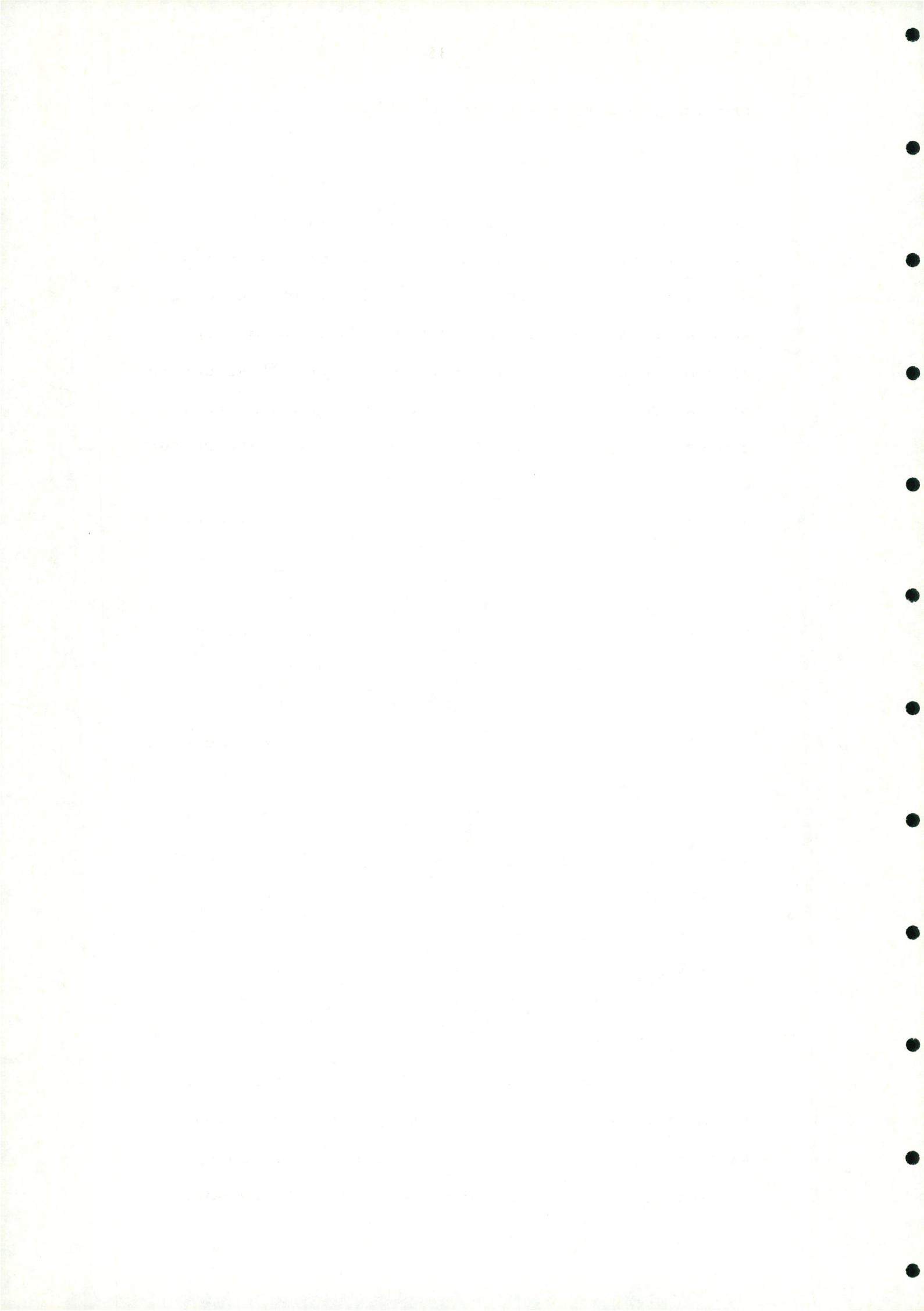
It was a short step therefore for modern marketing to seek to elevate designer objects to art status, by comparing them to art and displaying them in museums and galleries. Richard Sappers *Tizio* lamp for instance has been part of the Museum of Modern Art, NY, permanent collection since 1961. There also emerged in the 80's museums, such as London's Design Museum, which concentrates solely on design.

So by the beginning of the 80's design conscious, wealthy young consumers eager to possess symbolic capital that would reflect well on their taste, were being offered relatively cheaply priced objects, with designer names attached. These objects had the added advantage of being instantly recognisable because of the fame of their designers, media coverage and often



because the object was part of a museum collection somewhere.

It can be seen therefore that the creation of designer stars and the existence of a designer star system was during the 80's of vital economic importance to certain manufactures and sections of the media. This trend can also be seen as a crucial part of the social structure of that decade, affording the new rich an opportunity to express their newfound status and confirm their cultural credibility.



Section 3 - Designer Stars

This section explores the designer star system from what can be seen as its first conscious attempt at manipulation by Sottsass and Gismondi to the systems most extravagant product to date, the ultimate 80's design superstar Philippe Starck. This exploration gives concrete examples of the roles of manipulation, fashion and magic and talent at work and gives an insight into the star system as experienced by the stars themselves.

When Ettore Sottsass Jr. began the Memphis movement in 1980 he was already quite a famous person. A seasoned designer who had created such classics as the Valentine typewriter for Olivetti and had worked with Studio Alchymia.

Sottsass was fully aware of the power of the star system and the possibilities of exploiting the media's weakness for celebrities and sensationalism. He was not alone in this knowledge, Ernesto Gismondi, founder owner of the lighting company Artimide and key figure within the Italian design community, had first-hand experience of the advantages of employing famous designers and architects to create products for him.

Both Sottsass and Gismondi could see that the fever of the Anti-Design movement had left Italy struggling to maintain its dominance of the design world. They realised that the design media and most of the world

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The third part of the report details the results of the analysis. It shows a clear upward trend in the data over the period studied. This suggests that the current strategy is effective and should be continued.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations for future work. It suggests that further research should be conducted to explore new opportunities and optimize the existing processes.

audience were tired of the intellectualising of anti-design and bored with the remnants of modernism. The time was right for a new avant-garde.

Sottsass was to be the main driving force being this avant-garde and the hook that would attract media attention. He collected together a group of young, unknown designers and architects (Mattheo Thun, Michele De Luchi, Aldo Cibic and Marco Zannini) with him in a cramped apartment building in Via Borgonuovo in Milan. This group went by the name Sottsass Associati, the name leaving no doubt as to who was in charge and immediately doing wonders for its reputation.

This reputation was again boosted when Gismondi sponsored and manufactured one-off's of their first furniture projects as avant-garde items. These items were a development on styles developed by Pop and Anti-Design and employed laminates and surface decoration in their manufacture. It was claimed that using these materials and processes would make the style accessible to all because it was cheap. This should have been the case but in reality the first Memphis pieces were sold for huge sums as collectables.

They had joined the circus of celebrity and media manipulation to get the bandwagon rolling and in five years had grown to employ 30 people and participate in fullscale Memphis architectural work despite their avant-garde beginnings. This success however became

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Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations for future actions. These include increasing the frequency of data collection and exploring new markets. The author believes that these steps will lead to even greater success in the future.

their downfall. The archmanipulators became themselves consumed by the response that their designs prompted. More a stylistic than intellectually rigorous movement, the Memphis look, easily borrowed, copied and stolen by endless pirates. Even the Memphis name was pirated for t-shirts and to name an apartment block in New York.

By 1986, Barbra Radice, Sottsass' right hand associate and spokeswoman explained that a change in direction was needed. 'Memphis are getting rid of Memphis' she said. They had all too suddenly become the victims of fashion, neutralised by the mechanisms they had themselves exploited with such skill.

This trait of the star system (fashion) was highlighted by Radice when she spoke of 'the increasing quantity and spread of information which has established and is in the process of breaking the sense of continuity and steadiness left to culture ideas. Theories and programmes loose credibility from day to day. Fashions and fads are burned out in closer cycles' (Sudjic & Starck, 1987, p. 32)

In this one example, the rise and fall of the Memphis style, all of the conditions necessary to favour stardom can be picked out. The importance of Alexander Walker's quote 'Stars are the direct or indirect reflection of the needs, drives and aspirations of society' can be illustrated. What is also illustrated in this example is that no one condition is more important for stardom

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The third part of the report details the challenges encountered during the data collection process. These include issues with data quality, incomplete records, and the time-consuming nature of manual data entry. The author suggests several strategies to mitigate these challenges, such as implementing automated data collection tools and regular audits.

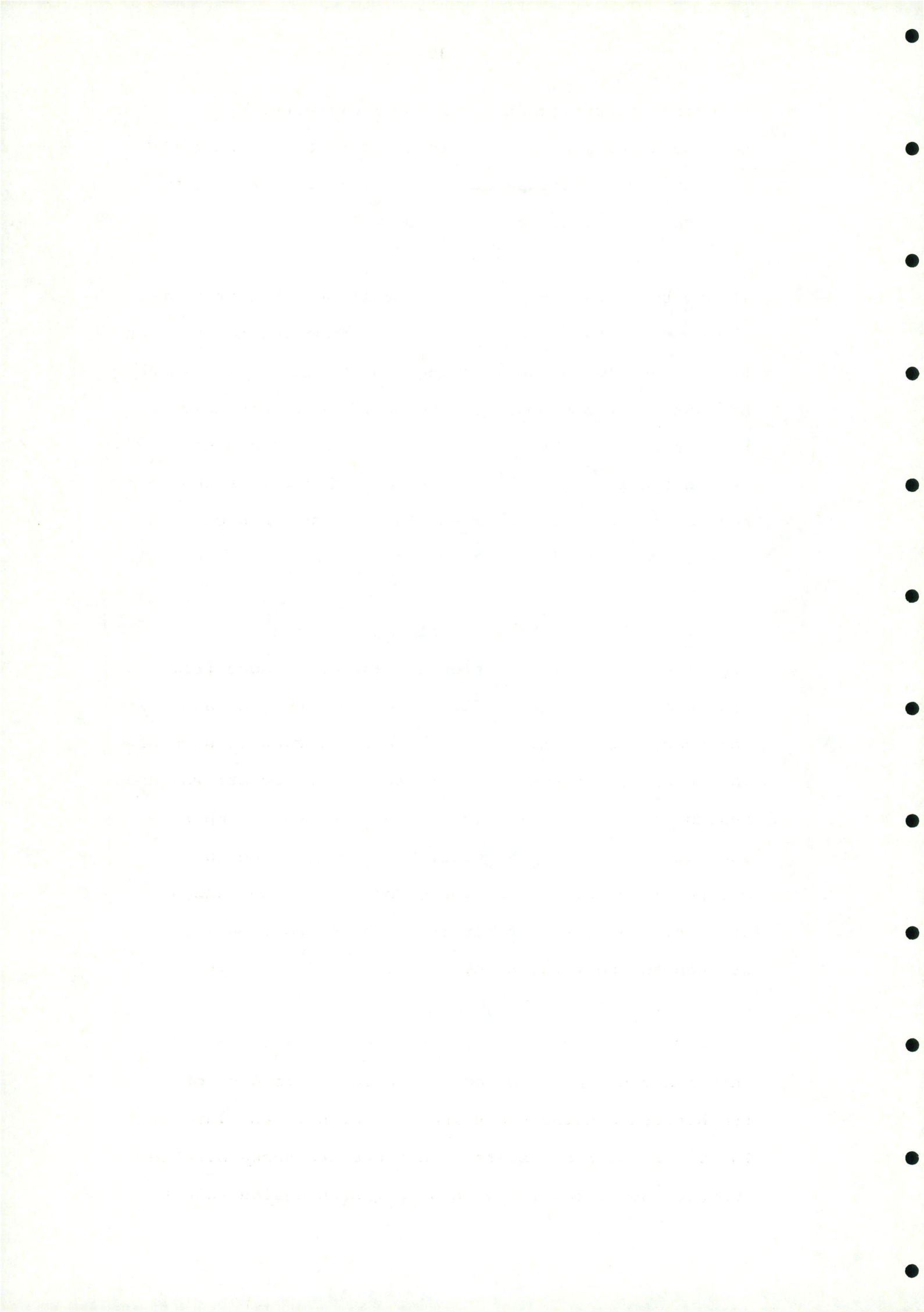
Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the findings and recommendations. It highlights the need for continuous monitoring and improvement of the data collection process. The author also provides a list of resources and references used throughout the study.

to exist, at different times under different circumstances one may come to the fore but without the simultaneous existence of all conditions on some level in each particular case, stardom will not be favoured.

It was the existence of these conditions that brought the Memphis style and the designers involved to the fore but it was also a subtle change in the conditions which brought about its downfall. Memphis could not sustain the interest of the media and as a result could not retain the favour of the audience. With this taken into account it can still be seen that Sottsass Associati had a tremendous effect on the design world.

Firstly it helped Italy to maintain its position pre-eminent centre of design despite challenges from France and Spain. Secondly although Memphis as a style has gone, its notoriety ensured a ready flow of work of many kinds for the members of Sottsass Associati who now design more as individuals than as a group. Members such as Nathalie du Pasquier, Michele de Lucchi and Matteo Thun have themselves become stars much sought after by manufacturers for their names and reputations as much as their talent or ideas.

The fact that foreign designers began to make inroads into Italy's domination of the design world did not trouble its manufacturers who were by now familiar with the use of designer stars as a ticket to success. They accepted new German, French and Spanish design talent

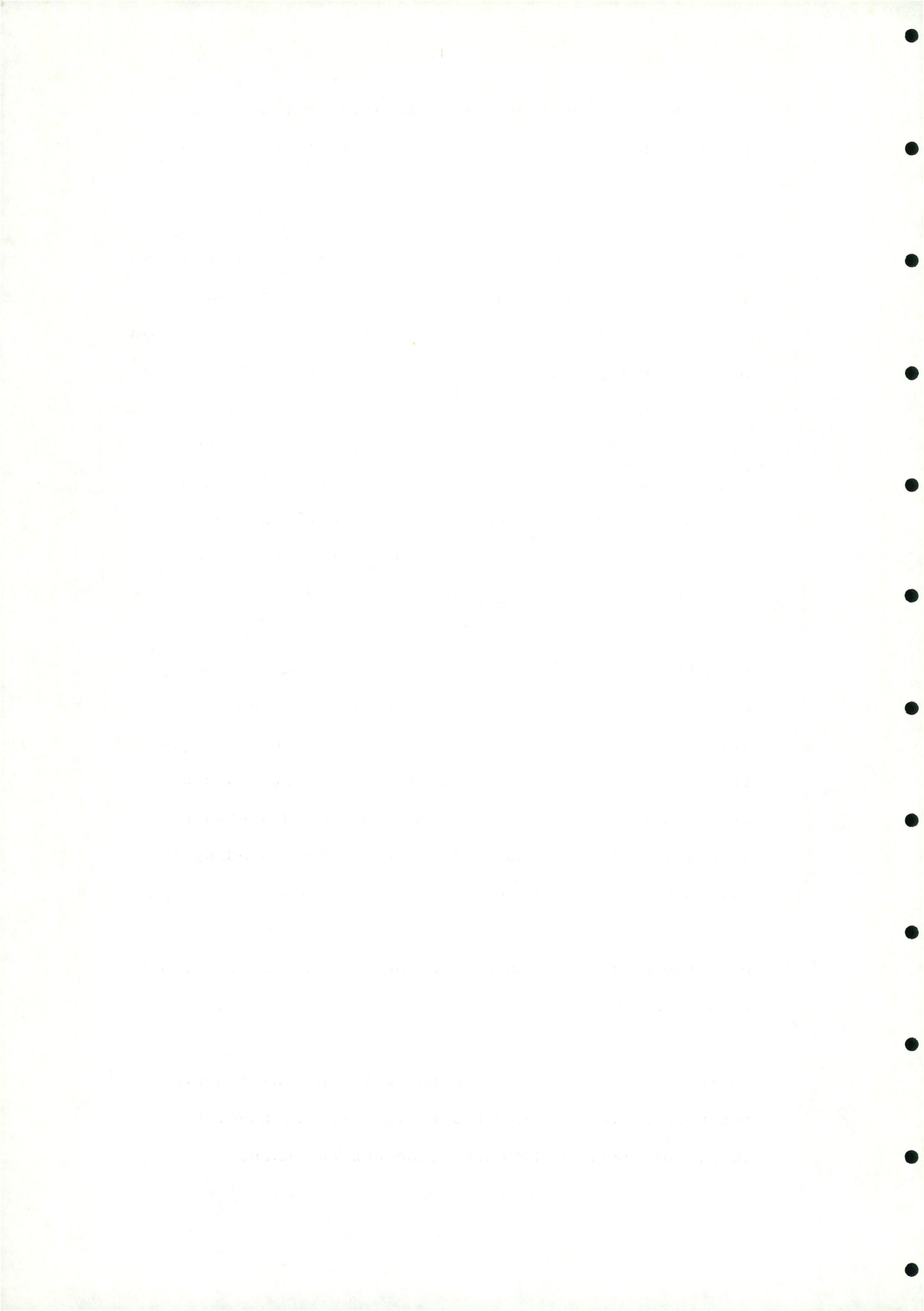


with open contracts and often actively pursued or courted them, such was the importance of the designer signature.

The most noteworthy of the new 80's non-Italian designer stars is the ubiquitous Philippe Starck. Starck, unlike many of his fellow designers, seems to revel in the star phenomenon for the opportunities it brings. He has the uncanny knack of being able to turn every development to his advantage. He has not only designed every key object and space in the 80's that has been labelled designer (from cafes and nightclubs to boats and pastas), he has also practically invented the term 'designer superstar' (Martin, 1990, p.52)

From the very beginning, Starck has been an accomplished self publicist and a compulsive performer. He was introduced to the manipulation end of the business early in his career when he was working for Pierre Cardin. He realised the importance of fame and making a name for yourself as he churned out goodies to be graced by the Cardin signature. He has learned this lesson well and today rarely does anything important without the presence of photographers, journalists and possibly a TV crew to play to.

Starck's own road to fame began when he designed two of the hottest/coolest nightclubs in Paris in the late 70's. His work on La Main Bleue and Les Bains Douches ensured for him an audience of 'stylish ravers' and also



established the street cred upon which his image is built. In 1983 because of his popular following in Paris, he was asked to redesign and furnish a suite of rooms in the Elysee Palace. This was one of President Mitterand's first acts in pursuing a policy to redevelop French (and especially Parisian) culture and created such a stir in the French media that it guaranteed Starck's route to stardom.

At first Starck's popularity was mostly based upon his originality and highly individual talent and also his rejection of the new Memphis style. Although this popularity existed among a limited group, he was not shy about capitalising upon it within the media, saying variously 'I try to design the French way', 'I do not want to make copies of Italian design', 'I have no interest in past aesthetics, therefore I have no taste'. This can surely be taken as a claim to total originality! The success of Memphis was also based on originality and rejection of the past, but Starck's claims seemed more believable since he was also speaking from outside Italy.

With the media reports of his commission for the Elysee Palace, also came reports of Starck's wild youth (an art college dropout) and stories of drug related deaths in La Main Bleue and Les Bains Douche. Suddenly, Starck became a household name and besides his original small following, became famous to a larger audience.

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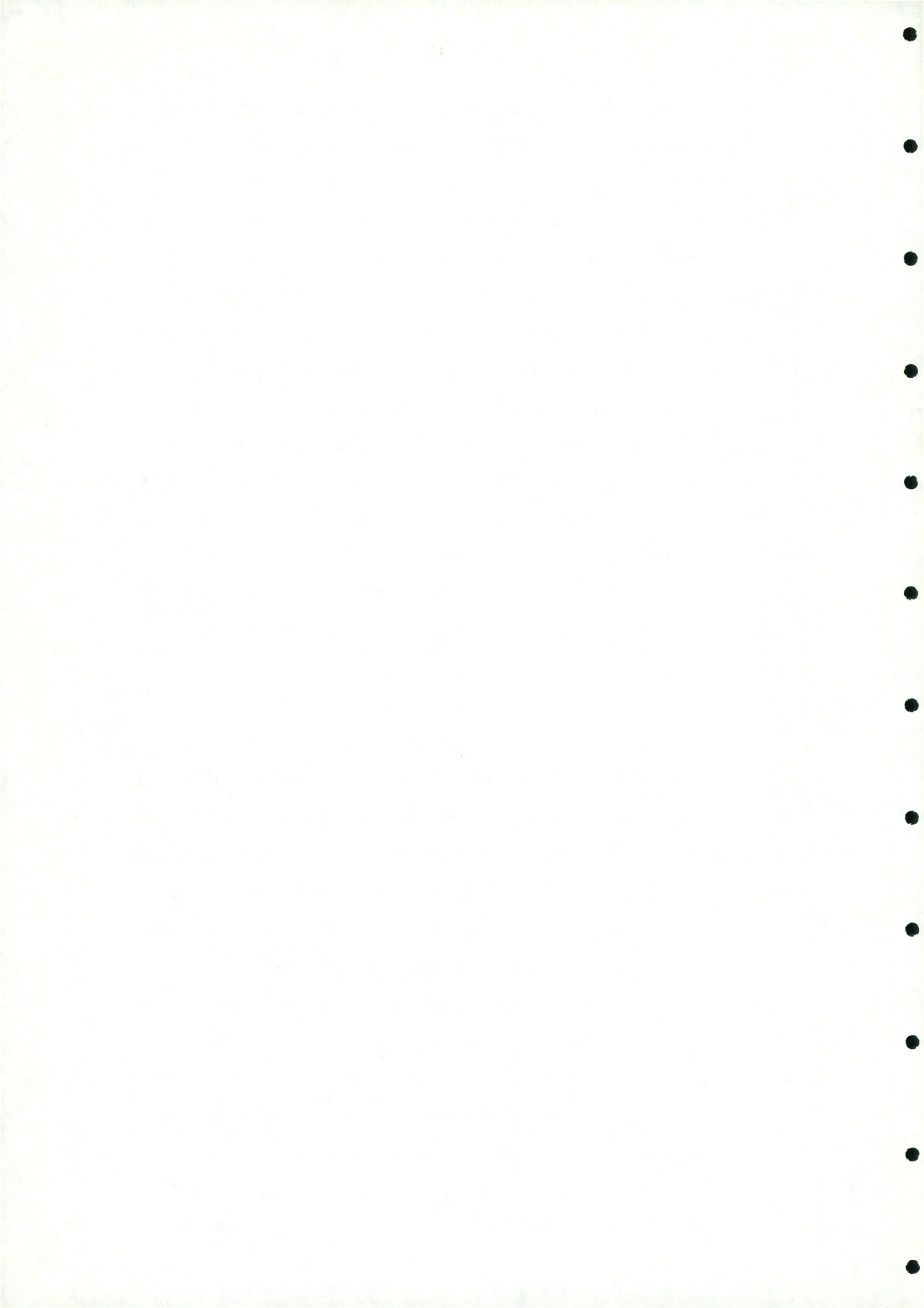
In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both manual and automated processes. The goal is to ensure that the information is both reliable and up-to-date.

The third part of the report focuses on the results of the analysis. It shows a clear upward trend in the data over the period covered. This indicates that the current strategies are effective and should be continued.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations for future actions. These include further investment in technology to improve data collection and more frequent reviews of the data to catch any potential issues early on.

This fame began to convert itself into commissions from manufacturers, nightclubs and restaurant owners worldwide concerned more with the advantage of associating such a famous name with their product than with his talent or design ability. While all of this was happening, Starck realised the potential his image of individuality and rebellion had. He was portrayed as an unlikely candidate for design stardom, paunchy, stubble beyond 'designer', sporting Doc Martens, jeans and a black t-shirt. He has a passion for motorcycles and has said 'I like sleeping, drinking and designing in that order'. All of this corresponds with his claims to aesthetic innocence. He has never lost control of this image. Whether it is the real Starck or not is debatable but it remains constant for fans, the media and his clients.

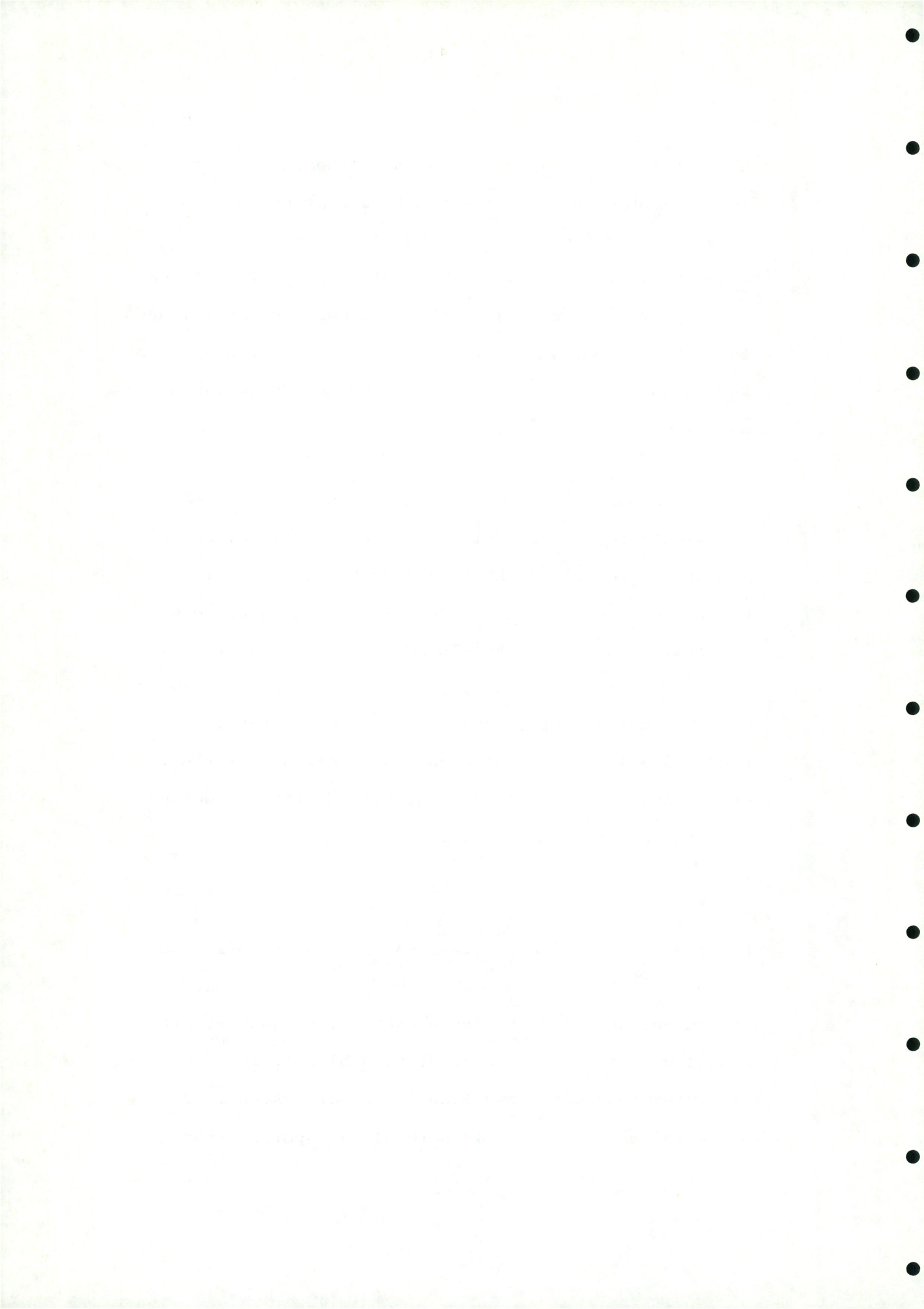
Because of his rebellious image, Starck seemed to be breaking all of the social rules but is still operating and succeeding within the established social order. The general public identify with this image just as they did with James Dean's 'Rebel Without a Cause' image in the field of film stardom. Although no firm conclusion can be reached from this single example, Starck's more broadly based celebrity status may be attributed in part to his cultivation of this image of rebel or outsider. His association with motor cycles as well as his constant references to his physical appearance (which is hardly handsome by conventional criteria) are some aspects of this image.



Herbert Marcuse has suggested that 'today's stars are no longer another way of life but freaks or types of the same life serving as an affirmation rather than a negation of the established social order'. In this way Starck may be tapping into the more perverse social need for anti-heroes, while at the same time never steps too far so as to pose any real threat to the established social order.

So having been proposed as a design star by the media and manufacturers, and elected by the audience, Starck now needed to retain the favour of the audience if he was to survive. Again for Starck this seems to be no problem, when being interviewed or photographed, he is in full control, seemingly relaxed, charming and always one step ahead of the interviewer. For clients, he has produced a large body of highly original work (often, quirky and seeming to poke fun) graced with the golden combination of his ideas and name.

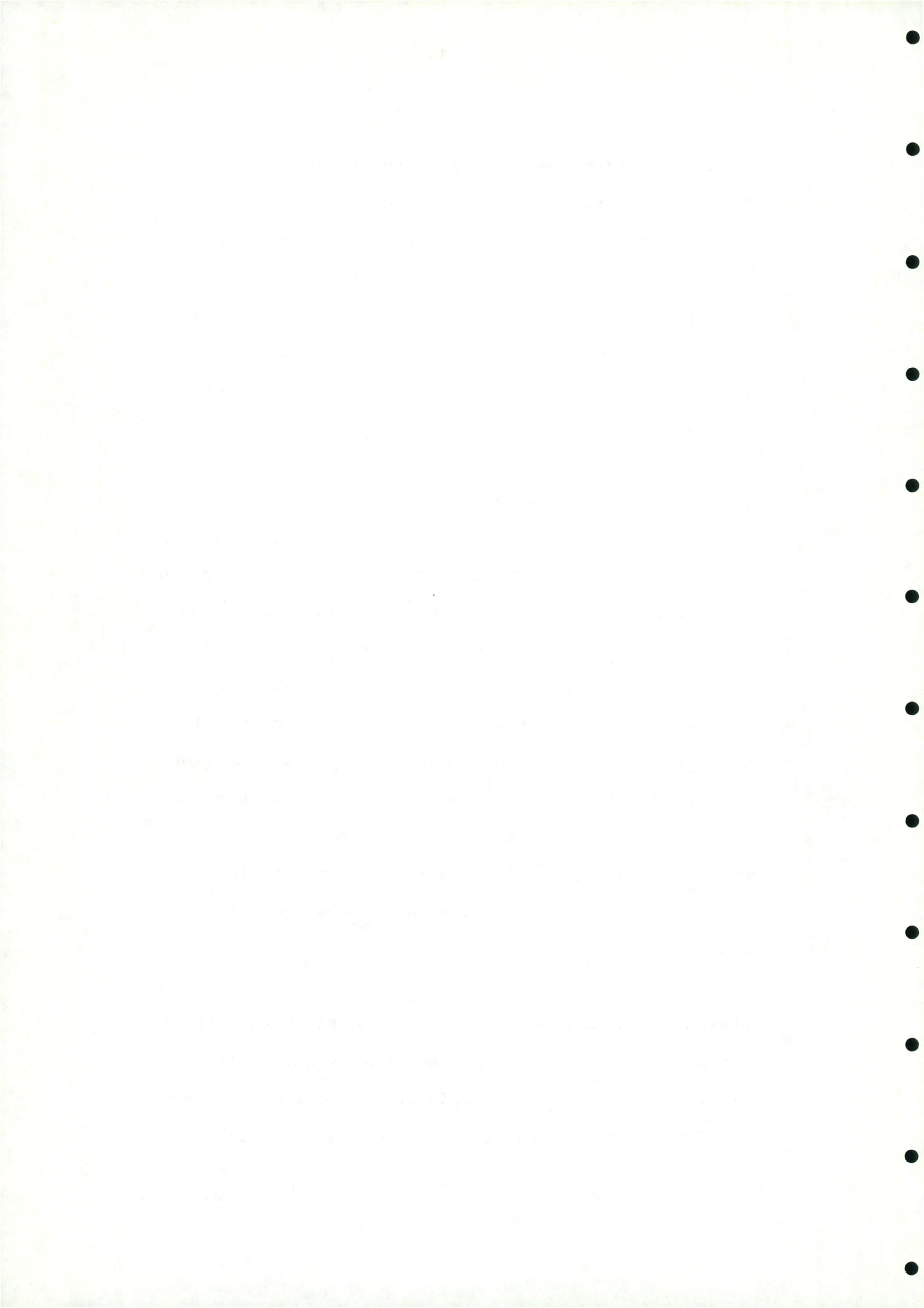
For the design media, while always assessing his work seriously, it seems to be his quoteworthiness that makes him so valuable. He tends to babble incessantly, often changing direction or contradicting himself in mid-interview, with gems like 'I do not design', 'I have no taste' and 'My brain it work along 'appily without



me'. All of this makes for quite interesting and entertaining reading in a world often burdened with boring over intellectualisation. He speaks not only of design but his childhood, his lifestyle and his stardom. He appears as often in general publications (Sunday Times Magazine, Elle, Vogue, etc.) as in design publications, all ensuring an audience to keep him afloat.

While it is all very well to talk of Starck's quoteworthiness and control over the media, without a constant supply of new products and manufacturers and hotel owners PR budgets the media would quickly lose interest. In this respect Starck is also very lucky. After his work on the Elysee Palace and his Cafe Costes, an agent called Arturo del Punta saw his potential, introduced him to Milanese manufacturers and many deals were made. In subsequent work on hotels, such as the Royalton and Paramount, both in New York, many of the objects he designed were manufactured by Italian companies (e.g. Ara and Luce Fair lamps produced by Flos).

Starck has been employed by Governments, manufacturers, hotels and even beer companies of many nationalities and his image and method are indulged in full measure by all of them because of the guarantee of success his name



brings. The massive body of work he has completed in such a short time includes furniture, especially chairs, some for the rich some for mail order, pasta, a bridge for the TGI, luggage for Vuitton, salon fittings and equipment for l'Oreal, a sports waterbottle, toothbrushes, paperweights, lighting, a prizewinning yacht for Beneteau, clocks, computers for Commodore, interiors of clubs, hotels and restaurants. He has even entered the field of architecture designing the Flame d'Or for the Asahi beer company and the Nani Nani both attributed to be loved more by the Japanese followers of design and architecture than buildings by Rogers, Foster and other internationally famous architects.

At this stage it must be pointed out that Starck, although painted as the solitary genius behind all of these projects, has a skilled team working with him in the three consultancies he owns (Paris, New York and Tokyo). He may be the inspiration behind it all but as Kristian Gavaille, one of the architects in his Paris studio said 'Starck is not an architect, 'e designs buildings - is different'. In practice, Kristian draws up the site limitations for the project, Starck designs the building within these and at the other end his architects on the job execute the building in precise detail maintaining the spirit of the design.

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In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. These methods include direct observation, interviews, and the use of specialized software tools. Each method is described in detail, highlighting its strengths and limitations.

The third section presents the results of the study. The data shows a clear trend of increasing activity over the period observed. This is supported by statistical analysis and visual representations of the data. The findings suggest that the factors being studied have a significant impact on the overall outcome.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and recommendations for future research. It suggests that further studies should focus on the underlying causes of the observed trends and explore potential interventions to address them.

The question now remains how long can this all last? Surely Starck will soon go down the same road as Memphis did. This is not necessarily true because a few basic differences are apparent. Firstly Starck has never limited himself to using specific materials or processes. Secondly although his style may have toyed with certain trends, three legged furniture, horns and wiggles for a while, it is always developing and changing. Lastly as Barbra Radice said 'Fashions and fads are burned out in closer cycles', so assuming Starck maintains his originality, there will not be enough time for anyone to profit from pirating his style and neutralising its effect, as by then it will already have changed.

What it all comes down to is that as long as Starck can retain the favour of the media clients and the consumers (his tribe as he says) then his career is safe. Without any one of the above groups supporting him, his fall from fame will be guaranteed. Starck himself has always been quite confident of retaining this interest and claims that when he designs it is always in an attempt to communicate with people. Perhaps this has been the secret of his success because for effective communication, your method of communication must be tailored to the social situation of the time - something that Starck seems to be able to constantly achieve.

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Furthermore, it is noted that the records should be kept in a secure and accessible format. Regular backups are recommended to prevent data loss in the event of a system failure or disaster. The document also mentions the need for periodic audits to ensure the integrity and accuracy of the information stored.

In addition, the text highlights the role of technology in streamlining record-keeping processes. Modern accounting software can automate many tasks, reducing the risk of human error and saving valuable time. However, it is stressed that users must be properly trained and that the software is regularly updated to address any security vulnerabilities.

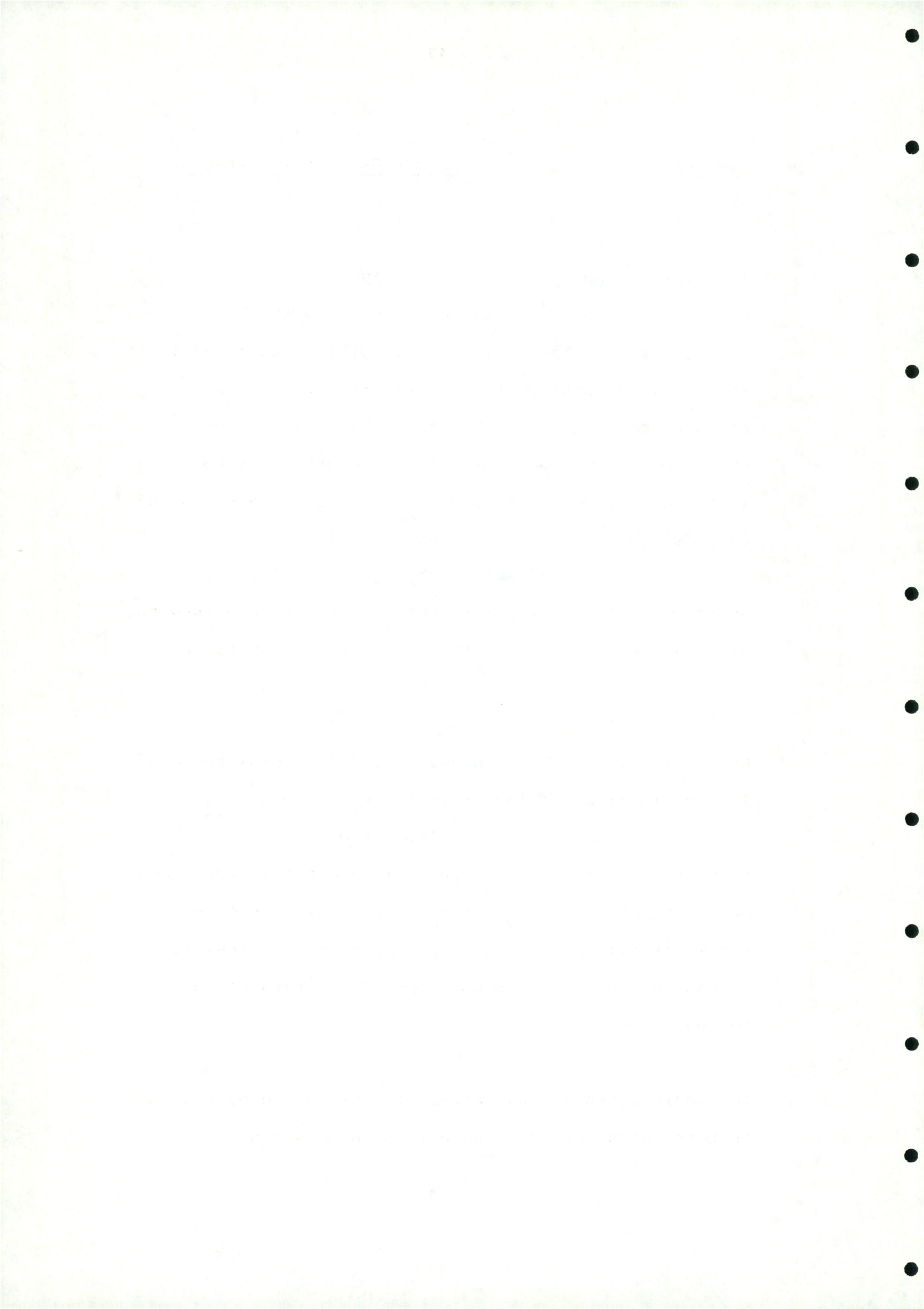
Overall, the document serves as a comprehensive guide for anyone responsible for managing financial records. It provides clear instructions and best practices to ensure that all data is captured, stored, and reported accurately and securely.

Section 4 - Case Study - The Designer Star System at Work

This section accepts that in the 1980's the social conditions favouring stardom existed and that a star's rise to fame is based upon the conditions outlined in Section 1 The Star System, within the production-consumption dialectic. Within this framework the career of Borek Sipek, one of the newest stars to emerge in the design world is traced. It covers the needs and aspirations of the audience at this time and the specific events and factors that gave rise to his stardom. This section sets out to prove nothing new but gives a clear example of the designer star system at work.

Borek Sipek, a Czech born designer, first came to international attention in 1985 after releasing a range of glassware produced in collaboration with Glashutte Sussmutt. This range achieved limited but international media attention being mentioned originally by Glaswerke but eventually appearing in a number of magazines right across Europe including Domus and ID: International Design.

The media attention was originally triggered by the fact that the work seemed to have much in common with the



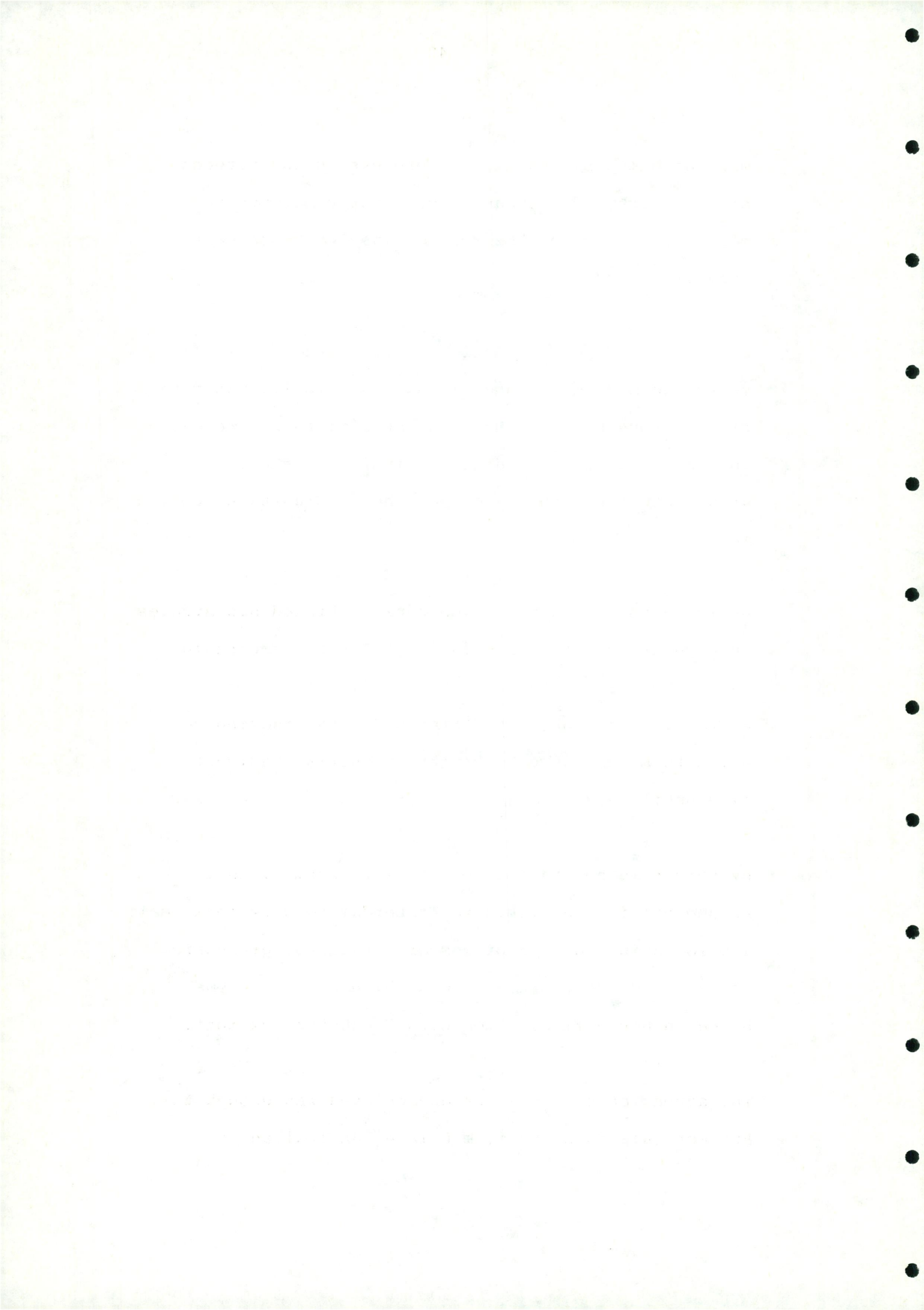
work of Memphis. Parallels were even drawn between Sipek's work and Sottsass's collaboration with the master craftsmen of the Murano Glass Workshop near Milan.

Until this, Sipek, an untidy intense man, already 36 years old had led an unexciting academic life in cities right across Europe. He first studied furniture design in Prague and in 1968 after beginning to study architecture had to leave when the Russian tanks rolled in.

He moved to West Germany where he continued his studies in architecture at the Academy of Art in Hamburg in 1969. He then went on to study philosophy at the University of Stuttgart. Finished with studying he moved to Essen where he taught Industrial Design from 1979 until 1983.

By this time he was fed up both with Germany and academic life. He moved to Amsterdam to work in a small studio making one-off pieces of furniture, glassware, ceramic and metalwork. It was while working there that he began his collaboration with Glashutte Sussmutt.

The attention that this range achieved was enough to attract talent scouts from Driade, an Italian



manufacturing company with a reputation for producing high quality designer objects. Driade already had a portfolio of products designed by international stars such as Starck and Arad and was always searching for new talent.

Driade was by this time employing a skilled staff and had developed a high technology manufacturing works. This allowed them to produce short runs of products which look like handcrafted objects but combine the accuracy and efficiency of mass production. Sipek's work and his undoubted skill and experience suited them well. Combined with the media attention he had already received this made him an ideal candidate for stardom.

At the 1986 Milan Design Fair, Sipek was introduced with a flourish by Driade. His furniture was displayed alongside the sleek elegant pieces of Philippe Starck's Driade collection. This juxtaposition highlighted the disturbingly raw quality of Sipek's work. This is what Driade had intended. It was a celebration of their new manufacturing ability with a new style and new designer.

Sipek suddenly became the design discovery of the year. He appeared in Design and ID: International Design and was displayed by Driade at all the major design fairs. His work was included in The International Design

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The third part of the document provides a detailed breakdown of the results. It shows that there has been a significant increase in sales over the period covered by the report. This is attributed to several factors, including improved marketing strategies and a focus on customer service.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations for future actions. It suggests that the company should continue to invest in its marketing efforts and maintain its high standards of customer service. This will help to ensure long-term success and growth.

Yearbook 86/87 as part of 'a showcase of unique and highly stimulating domestic design'.

The general editor of The International Design Yearbook was Deyan Sudjic, who as editor of Blueprint Magazine has always shown great interest in the designer star system and its workings. Sudjic praised Sipek's work as highly original and highlighted the fact that Sipek was a skilled craftsman. He was Sipek as a designer with 'a distinctive and personal vision on which deliberately subverts the mechanistic perfection' (Sudjic, 1988, p. 201) of what was then the conventional form of industrial design.

By this stage Driade's investment had begun to show returns. There was Sipek's appearances in design magazines, a good response at the design fairs and most importantly, orders had come from showrooms for some of Sipek's chairs. Sipek had been well and truly proposed as a candidate for stardom, all that was left was for consumers to elect him.

Driade were not the only ones confident of Sipek's success. He also began to work with other manufacturers Sanaya and Moroni, Vitra, Cleto Munari, Leitner and Altereao. That year Sipek went to Manila to learn how to weave rattan for his new collection for Driade. This

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The analysis of the data revealed several key trends and patterns. One significant finding was the correlation between certain variables, which suggests a causal relationship. This insight is crucial for understanding the underlying factors influencing the outcomes.

Based on the findings, the author proposes several recommendations to improve the current processes. These include implementing more robust data management systems and enhancing the training of staff involved in data collection. Regular audits and reviews are also suggested to ensure ongoing accuracy and reliability.

In conclusion, the study highlights the critical role of data in decision-making. By providing a clear and detailed analysis of the current state, it offers a solid foundation for future improvements and strategic planning.

company had paid for the trip and used it to publicise Sipek's unique skill and devotion to his design work.

In 1987 the media event of the design year, the Milan fair was marked by the eventual death of Memphis and the beginning of the revival of old classics by Reitveld, Eileen Grey, etc. The design media as a whole came away from the fairs in Milan, Valentia, Paris and Cologne disappointed in general but showering praise on special editions by Mendini, Arad, Starck and Sipek.

In a review of the Milan Fair in *Blueprint*, Deyan Sudjic included Sipek with Arad, Starck and Ingo Maurer as examples of the most original work. Sudjic claimed that possibly after an overdose of sophistication, it looks as if the carefully contrived rawness of Sipek will be the design look of the 1990's and that Sipek was 'well on the road to international star status' (Sudjic, 1988, p. 202).

Driade and the other manufacturers were delighted with the success and their order books began to bulge as Sipek's popularity grew. The design media also sensed this interest and as a result Sipek began in 1988 to be quoted in articles.

He was now truly accepted as an international design

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The third part of the report details the findings of the study. It presents a clear and concise summary of the results, highlighting the key trends and patterns observed in the data. The author also discusses the implications of these findings for the field of study.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations for future research. These suggestions are based on the limitations identified during the study and aim to guide other researchers in their work.

star, no longer in need of introduction but of investigation. Each interview delved deeper into his interests, his influences, his design philosophy and his method of working. The picture these interviews painted was of an artist and deep thinker. He was articulate and didn't contradict himself like Starck. Like Starck, he didn't have a style as such but an attitude towards his work.

He approached all his designs by prototyping because as he said 'the pieces look so ugly in drawings and I like the feeling of materials'. This attitude allowed him to work instinctively and with many materials making each piece he did quite unique.

His popularity and fame have grown year by year and a measure of his success are the five pages devoted to his work in the 1990/91 International Design Yearbook. Mario Bellini, this year's editor, points to Sipek's glass designs as being at the forefront of a new trend in design. He believes they respond to the demand for 'beautifully handwrought items to satisfy individualistic yearnings' caused by trends in the past decade to replace tableware items such as the milk jug by the carton and plate by the polystyrene carton.

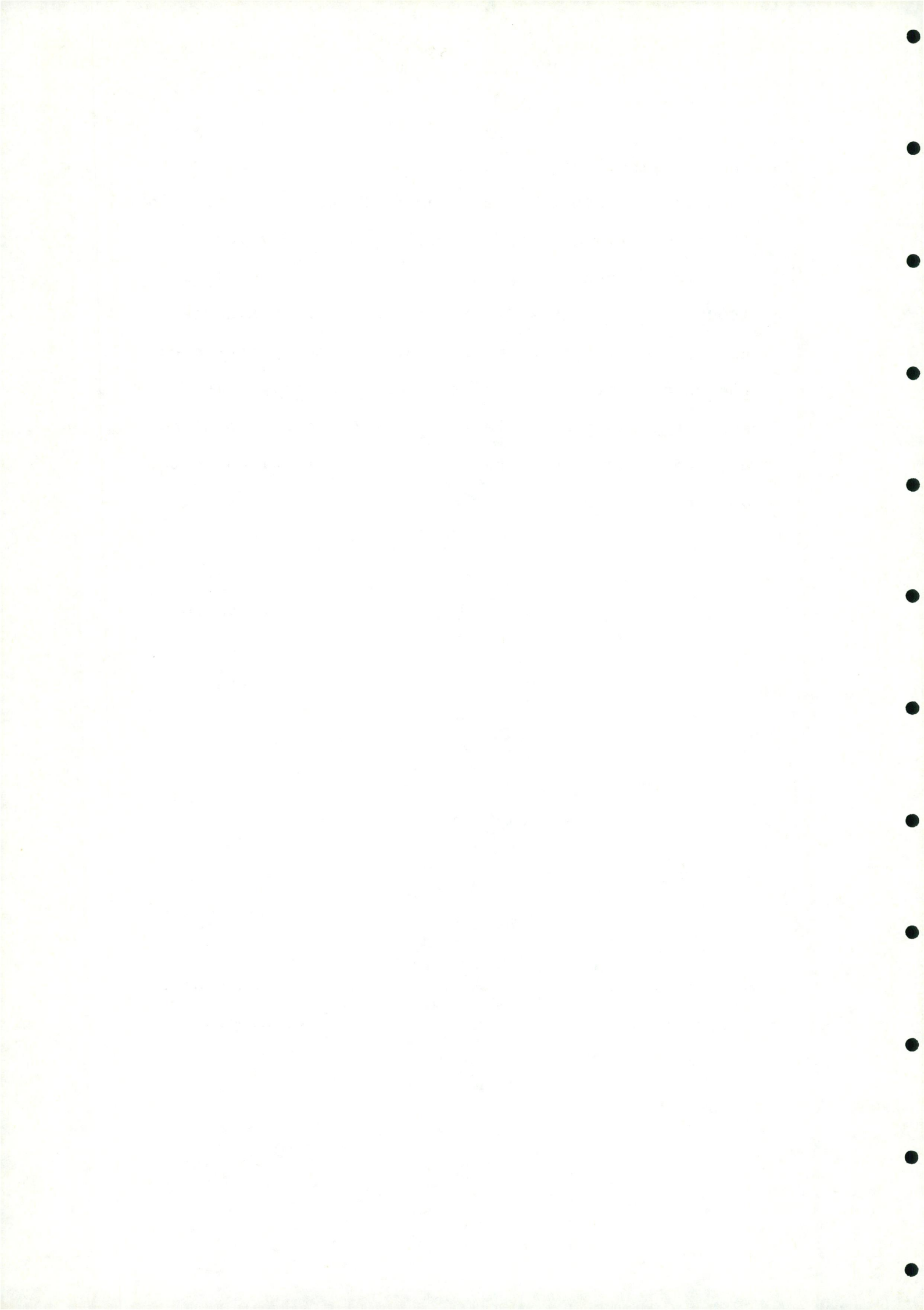
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In the second section, the author outlines the various methods used to collect and analyze the data. This includes both primary and secondary data collection techniques. The analysis focuses on identifying trends and patterns over time, which is crucial for making informed decisions.

The third part of the report details the challenges encountered during the data collection process. These include issues related to data quality, such as missing values and inconsistencies. The author provides strategies to address these challenges, such as data cleaning and validation procedures.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the findings and recommendations. It highlights the key insights gained from the analysis and suggests areas for future research. The author stresses the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure the long-term success of the project.

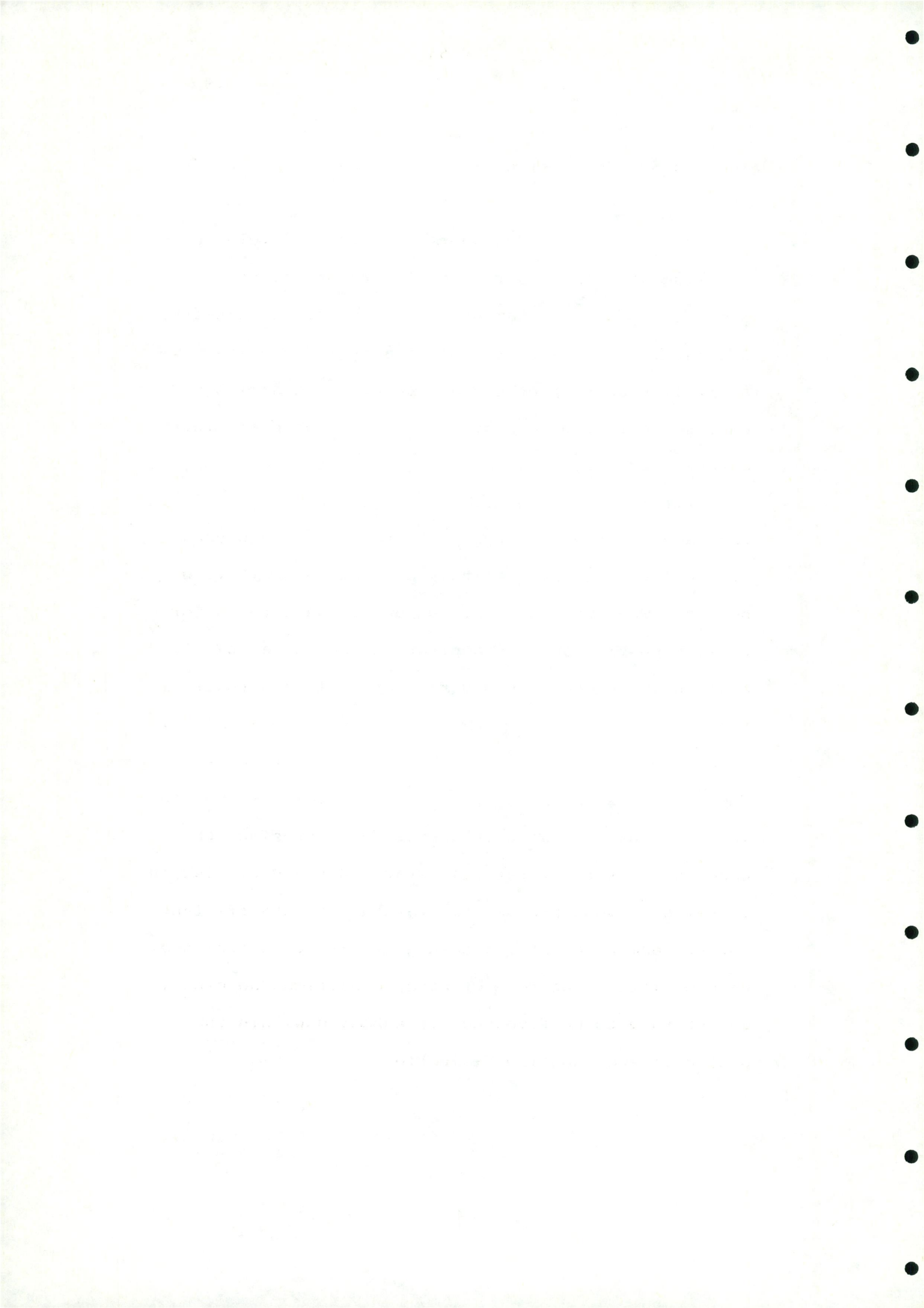
What is important to note is that this trend has only been made possible by 'a triumph of technology allowing forms to defy conventional mouldings so they look handcrafted but are in fact mass produced' (Bellini, 1990. p. 171). This development along with Sipek's highly individual talent is what originally attracted the support of Driade and the design media. This support made it possible for Sipek to be proposed and elected as a new designer star and has resulted in the advent of a new design trend.



Section 5 - Conclusion

During the 1980's a designer star system developed allowing a small number of designers of domestic products to attain star status previously attained by film stars, sports stars and royalty. These stars were actively sought after by manufacturers to design and so endorse their products giving them an advantage in the market place. They became subjects for discussion not only within the design media but also general media in the same way previous types of stars were used because of the level of interest they aroused in the buying public. They were used by the public as a focus for their hopes, dreams and aspirations and as a guarantee that their purchases would reflect well upon their taste.

The general social conditions for stardom outlined in section 1 have existed in Western society since the appearance of the first film stars in the early 1900's. These conditions are necessary rather than sufficient for stardom to exist and hold good for stars from any walk of life. The role of other conditions necessary for stardom to be favoured are embodied within the production-consumption dialectic.



The designer star system grew from the architectural star system at the beginning of the 1980's and was based upon ease of access to consumer credit and the general public's quest for social identity through consumption leading to an increase in interest by manufacturers and the media mostly for economic and marketing reasons. Aspiring design talent were then picked out by the media and manufacturers and presented to the buying public as candidates for stardom.

If a designer aroused enough interest in the buying public then his route to stardom was ensured. To retain star status a designer had to retain the interest of the buying public, his effort to do so was helped by manufacturers producing more of his products and the media giving him more exposure. A designer star could fall from fame just as quickly as he rose to stardom.

If the interest of any of the three groups was lost because of over exposure, a change in style or loss of sales, the chances of a designer maintaining his fame quickly diminished. Gaining the favour of influential people within the manufacturing or media world greatly increased a designer's chances of attaining stardom as only a limited number of designers actually were proposed as candidates for stardom. In this way the choice of the public in who became stars was actually

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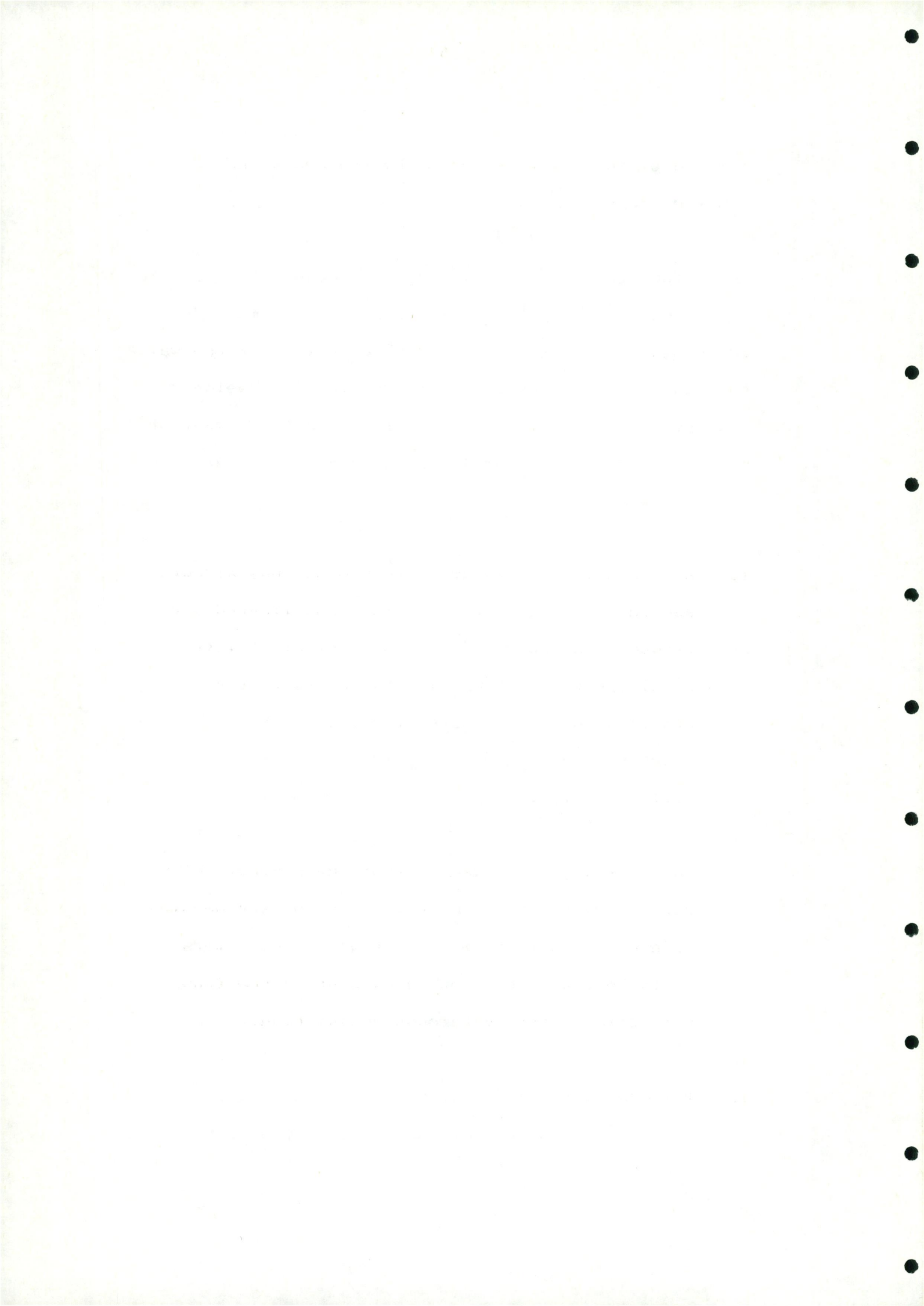
The third part of the report details the findings of the study. It presents a comprehensive overview of the results, highlighting the key trends and patterns observed. The data indicates a significant increase in certain areas, while others remain relatively stable.

Finally, the document concludes with a series of recommendations based on the findings. These suggestions are aimed at improving the efficiency of the current processes and addressing the identified challenges. The author believes that implementing these measures will lead to more effective outcomes in the future.

limited by the prior selection by the media and manufacturers.

These factors outlined still apply today in the creation of designer stars but some essential developments have taken place in Western society which may point the way towards a slightly different future for the designer star system. There is potential for a larger number of designers to attain star status in the near future for the following reasons.

1. Advances in manufacturing technology has allowed shorter production runs of more complicated products to become economically viable. This development will tempt manufacturers to risk proposing more candidates for stardom than at present because the losses incurred due to failure will be smaller.
2. There is a greater demand from the buying public for a larger variety of styles as society becomes more educated in terms of design and consumers begin to trust their own judgement in their quest for social identity through consumption.
3. The demand for a larger variety from the public and an increased number of candidates proposed by

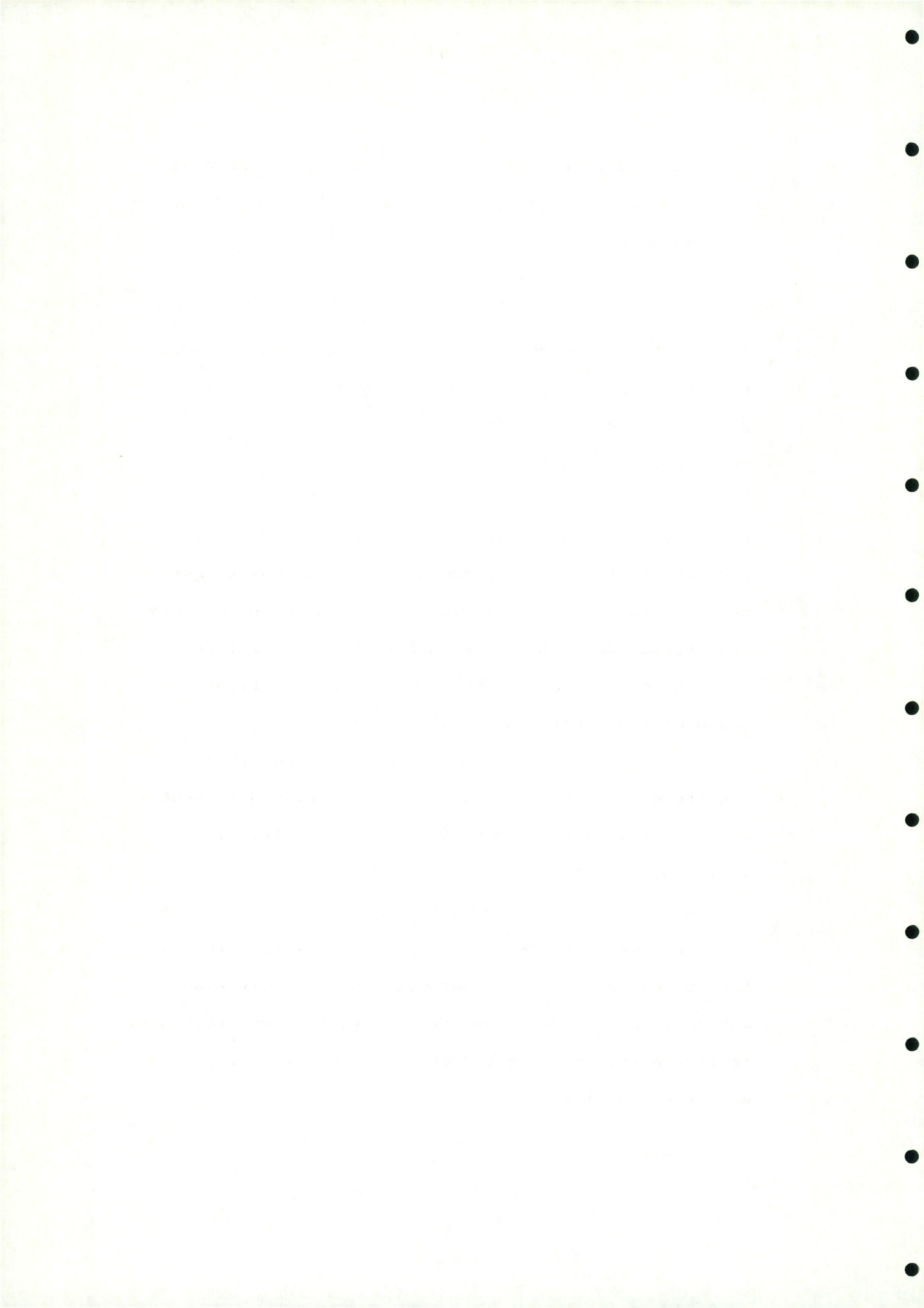


manufacturers will tempt the media into proposing little known designers as candidates for stardom in an effort to cater for and maintain public interest.

If this trend was followed through, there is a tendency to think that Andy Warhol's prediction that 'everyone will be famous for fifteen minutes' could come true in the field of design.

But an overview of current trends in the market place suggests that the new social developments may be more far reaching actually creating a type of manufacturers star system where manufacturers themselves will be subject to the same fluctuations in popularity as designer stars were in the 80's.

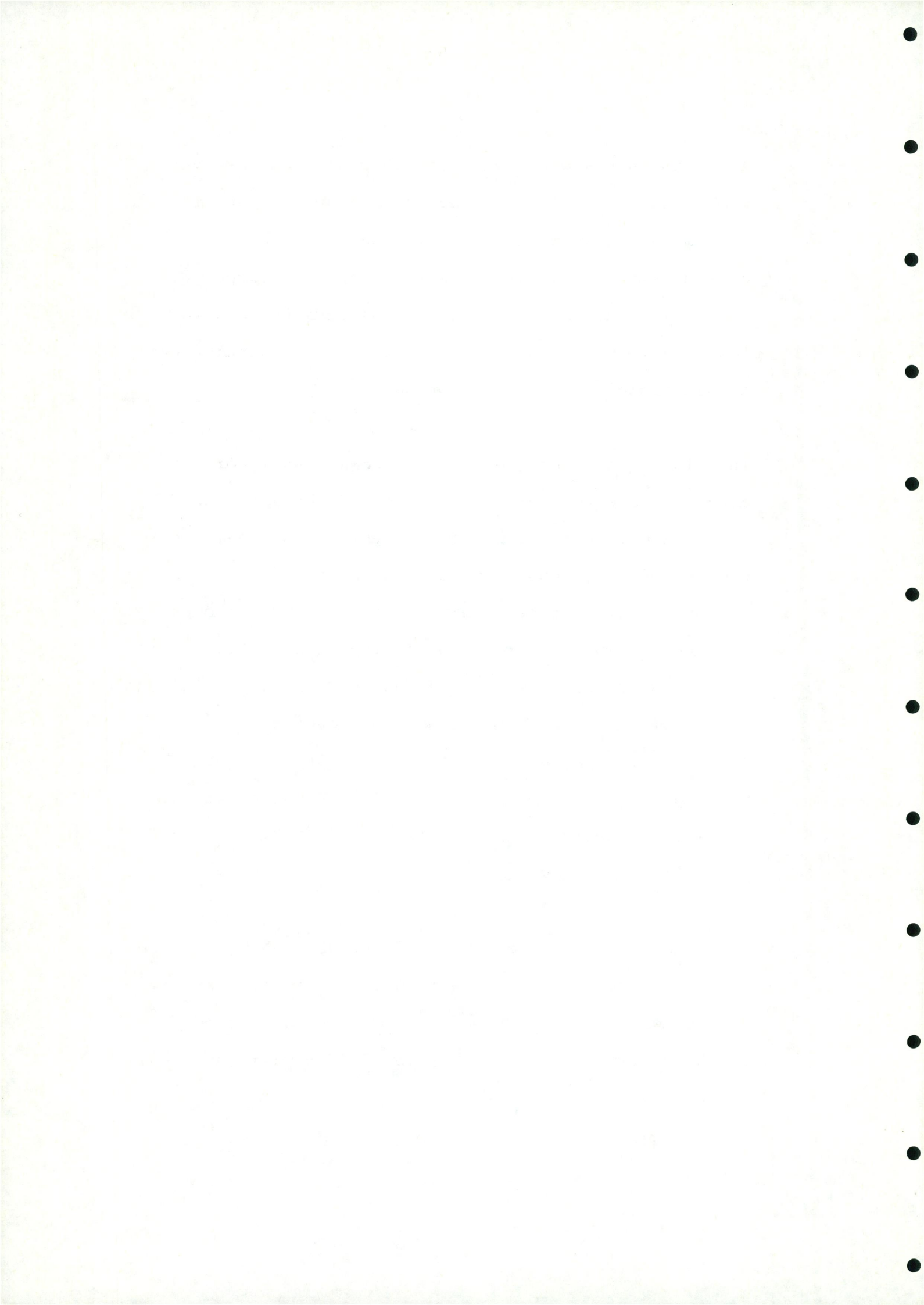
The trends that point to this development can be seen most clearly in the areas of consumer electronics (walkmans, stereos, tv's) and sports and leisure equipment and accessories (bicycles, skis, tracksuits) where a high speed fashion cycle has evolved. This fashion cycle means that each year/season competing manufacturers produce new products with slight technical improvements, new gadgetry and in a new style in an effort to survive.



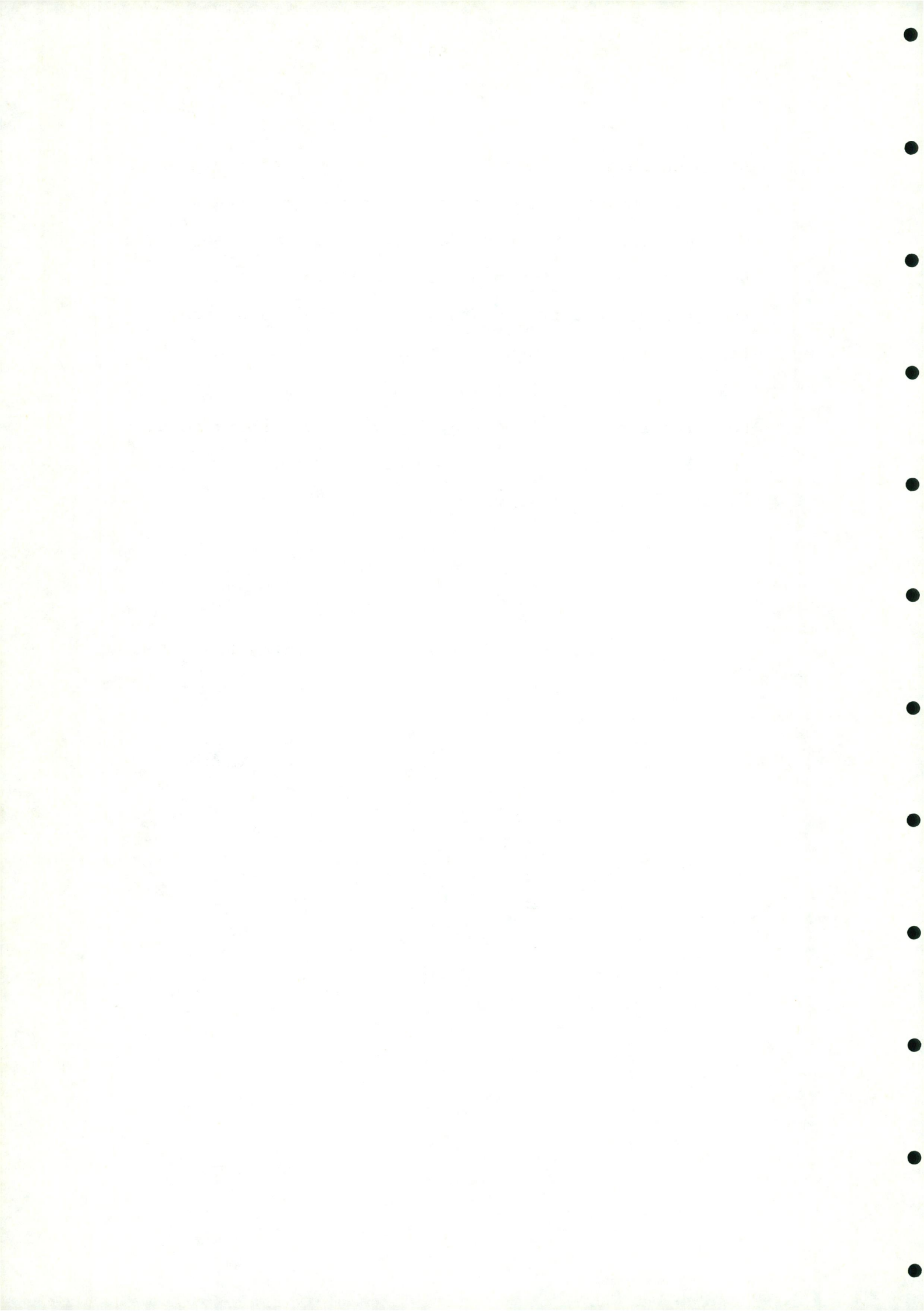
It is consumers who have encouraged this and as ever, whole new areas of media have opened up to cater for the system. Increasing leisure time has encouraged consumers to become dedicated to a greater extent with their hobbies, constantly buying new, better and more fashionable products, a quest for identity within their chosen field through consumption.

In this context designers have become less important as a public face to the products and have been replaced by brand names. But the success of these brand names has been based upon innovative design and designers have become more important within the manufacturing company structure. This new role for designers is outlined by Yoshizo Shimano, President of the US Corporation Shimano Cycle Components the 'one time manufacturer of a single-speed freewheel which has now out-designed, out-engineered and outsold all of the big traditional names in cycle componentry'. (Walmsley, 1991, p. 140-141).

'When the customer sees our product, we want him to feel that it has fulfilled his wishes and given him exactly what he wanted. Even though he couldn't have described it in the first place ... ' (quoted from Walmsley, 1991, p.140-141)



Although this development does not mean that designer stars in the same mould as the 80's designer stars will disappear, it shows what the designer star system in the 80's has led to. Designer stars will now become part of the group of accepted stars joining with stars from film, sport, music and I suggest as Dyer does in Stars (1979) in relation to film stars, that a level of theorisation and methodology the factors elaborated here in relation to design stars is broadly applicable to these new kinds of stars.



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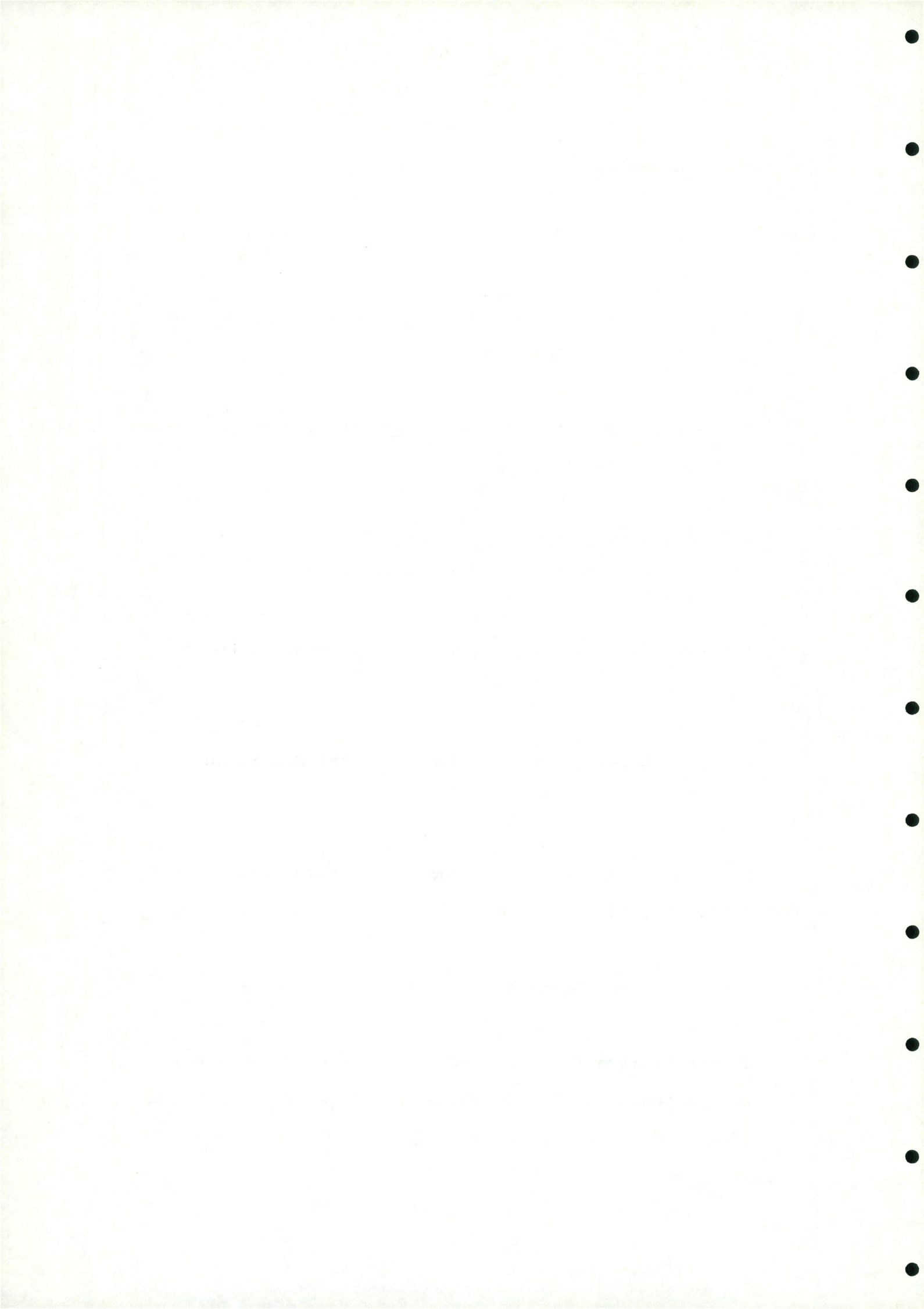
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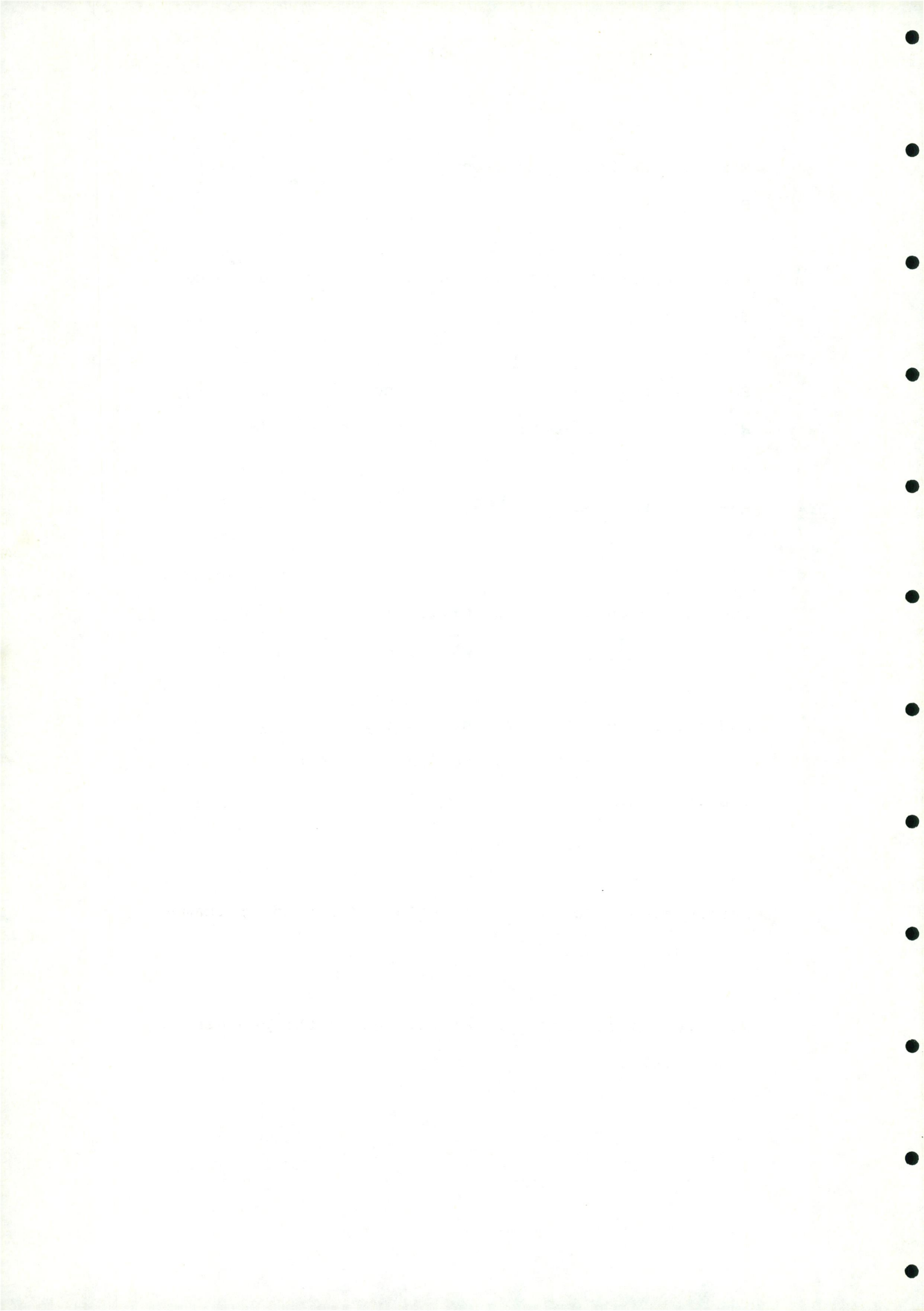
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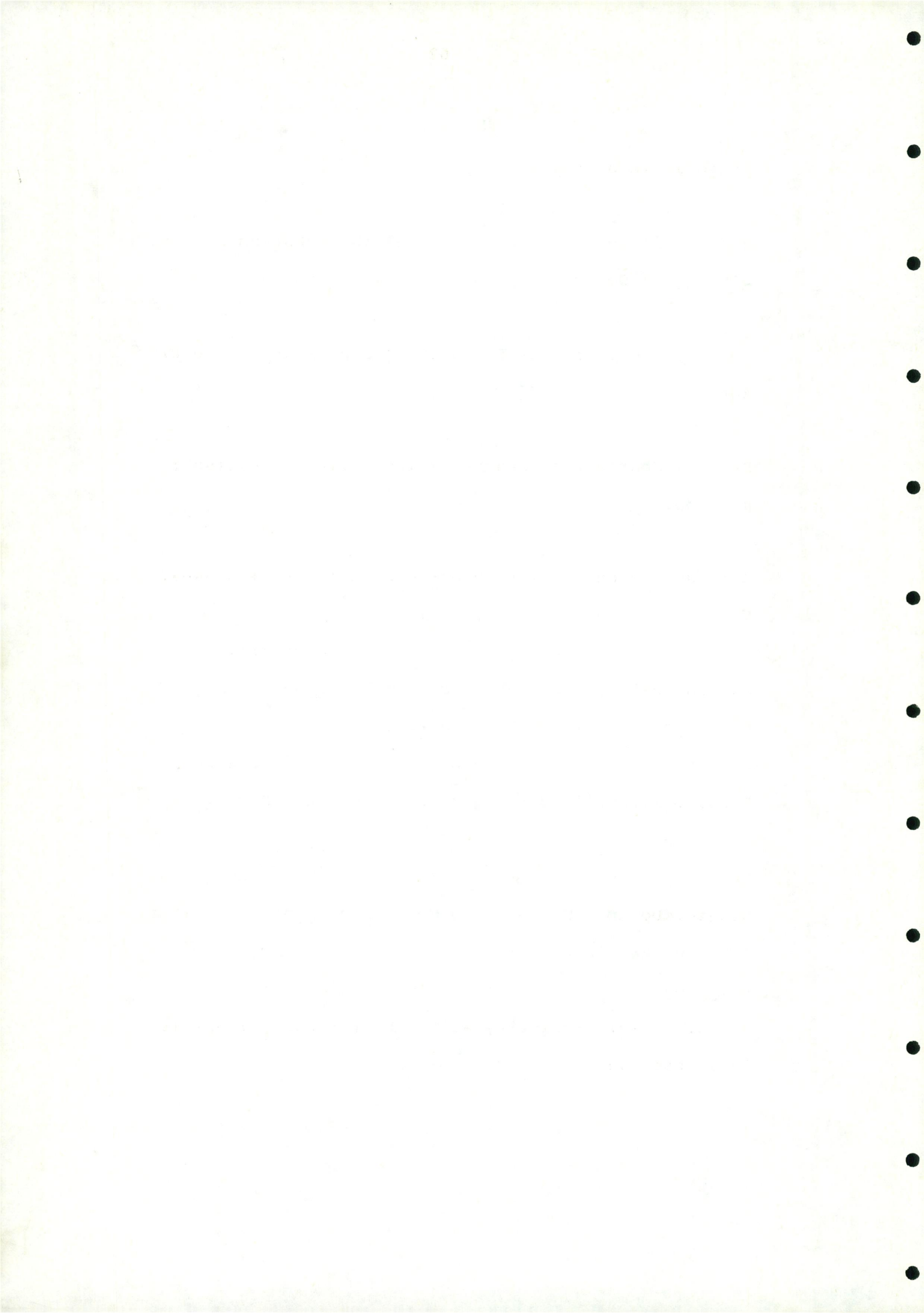
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