



Interaction between aesthetics and economics in the design process: Miniaturization as an intermediate concept

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Published Online on: 19 Feb. 2022



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Abstract

This work offers an initiation of a research on the interaction between aesthetics and the economics of design based on miniaturization as a phenomenon to be analyzed. On the one hand, it responds with its aesthetic appearance to the appreciation of the mini, the compact, the fragmented design that may be due to several psychological, cultural and social factors. On the other hand, it meets the needs of the economy in terms of cost reduction ...etc. In short, it exploits the desires and affections of the consumer to convey them on an acceptable design with a completely advantageous economic strategy. This can be summed up in a single term: the

immaterial economy, which have different challenges and targets.

Keywords: interior design, aesthetics, interaction design

* Introduction

In the immediacy of the exchanges, wasting time is no longer tolerated. The perception of space is not the same. We are then faced with new forms of perceptions of the notion of space-time, which creates new needs. Consumption patterns are thus changed. Recent designs then take place.

To save space and time everything is reduced ... this is a current trend: miniaturization. This reflection was born from an observation that comes from our daily

experience and which, in my opinion, carries a whole philosophy behind it. This is the "mini design". This work therefore offers an initiation into research on the interaction between aesthetics and the economics of design based on miniaturization as a phenomenon to be analyzed. We are talking about the start of a trend that is not yet strictly defined. This is due to the fact that it is so current that it is still lost between the variety and the overlapping trends and styles.

After having embodied the brilliance of industrialized countries in the 1960s, when the shortening of skirts and cars was a social phenomenon, then creating the fashion for the word "mini" in the West, the compact object is measured today in term of the cute, the disturbing and the resistant. This orientation is found to take a mediating position between the aesthetic and economic requirements of the time.

On the one hand, it responds with its aesthetic appearance to a taste appreciated by consumers, which is the mini, the compact, the fragmented, which may be due to several psychological, social factors. On the other hand, it takes into account the needs of the economy in terms of cost reduction ... etc. In short, it exploits the desires and affections of the consumer

to convey a friendly and acceptable design with a completely advantageous economic strategy. This can be summed up in a single term: the economy of the intangible. What will be its challenges and its targets?

We will then try, in this "mini research", to examine this "mini movement»

The design of the small, the compact, and the fractional: is it a universal phenomenon? Perhaps, but we have to see the reasons for this taste for design, which are multiple. What will be the causes and benefits of miniaturization? How does it affect the consumer and society? What consequences will it have for design?

* **Miniaturization**

Pierre Bourdieu had said that: "the future was in the niches". In supermarkets, we see mini cans of canned vegetables, mini cans, mayonnaise in tubes, cereals, cookies, chocolate... at least fifty different products, all in single doses. There we find the desire to taste everything. Cell phones, computers, mice, USB drives tend to shrink more and more. We see this remarkable attempt at miniaturization most among foreign brands even if Tunisian products tend more and more to share it. For transport, the time has come for the mini car. There is the famous two-

seater Smart, but Peugeot and Renault are also starting to target people carriers. For spaces too, we see the real estate development companies are multiplying more and more and the buildings are part of the urban landscape of the city, the small apartments are part of the growing consumer demand for more practicality, convenience or speed. Small can be beautiful, easy and practical. Many homeowners, including honeymooners and singles are opting for small spaces.

The media and communication are also affected by this wave of the mini. The trend towards 10 and 5 second commercials is also going in the same direction. Even magazines are sold in mini format to offer the comfort of reading and handling. It all fits in with the same trend of being quickly consumed, quickly digested, quickly discarded, and re-consumed again. This appearance does not depend on the economic status of the country, rich or poor; it is always present and preferred.

So, as a design object that defines space, one should observe the aesthetic aspect of this trend as aesthetics play an important role in how a design is used.

*** The Mini: an aesthetic sense**

Aesthetic designs more effectively bring positive attitudes.

Thus, people express feelings for objects that are charged with positive aspects while they rarely do with objects that are charged negatively. These relationships with objects evoke affection and the good interaction between the consumer and the object.

Consuming, Jean Baudrillard taught us, is not making use of things but enjoying the signs interposed between things and us and which triggers the act of buying more than the things themselves. Because of this, this miniature design brings an aesthetic taste or sense to be appreciated or belittled by the consumer. We can understand the notion of appreciation in two ways, from the aesthetic point of view, it is the capacity to judge directly and with certainty the value of things, their correctness and their finesse, thus De la croix says that appreciation makes guess the beautiful where he is.

On the other hand, from a sociological point of view, taste includes the tendencies, preferences, habits that an individual or a group manifest in their life and lifestyle. Aesthetic sense is therefore a certain way of perceiving things, which shows that one belongs to a certain group to enter or distinguish oneself from a class. This taste of the mini then presents a fashion and a recent trend followed by the consumer.

*** Factors of miniaturization in design**

The factors of miniaturization can be multiple. We will then address several hypotheses of a social, economic, technological nature ... Speaking of miniaturization, the first idea that comes to us only links the mini to technological development. However, this miniaturization, we do not see it limited to technological objects but it cuts across all areas of design, everyday objects, spaces, advertisements, consumer products ... So, technology will only be treated as a guess amongst others...

*** Socio-cultural context: Fashion and trends**

Fashion is a socio-cultural phenomenon of focusing on a thing or a behavior. The process affects the object world and the non-object world: from the moment there is formalization of any object, there can be mode. Its logic therefore concerns all sectors of applied creation: styling, but also product design, space and architecture, graphics. Second, fashion also touches the non-object, insofar as it also concerns the setting and the lifestyle and dies in general: ways of eating, traveling, speaking etc.

In our case of miniaturization, it is a complex phenomenon involving both the work of economists and the

choice of the public, the two influencing each other in a collective process. Fashion depends on the aesthetic and societal context and it can touch the object world in terms of aesthetic appreciation of the mini and the non-object in terms of lifestyle. If we examine this notion of fashion and trend in relation to the beauty of the female body, we find that the aesthetic canons are appreciated according to criteria which are constantly changing throughout history. Formerly, beautiful women were more those with generous forms. But in recent decades the model of feminine beauty has completely reversed....

Thus, this notion of miniaturization can be observed even at the level of female beauty. Through artistic representations, we see that in the past beautiful women were more those with generous forms. But today the model of feminine beauty has completely reversed, we rather prefer the slim woman with fine forms.

*** Object and body**

Object and body, body and space, are dualities that put the body at the center of the design process. The design object, to be effective, must first ensure ease of use. Today's man does not want and cannot waste time any more. We can speak here of the maneuverability of the design object

which is a matter of simplification and sobriety of design.

"All modern objects are first of all intended to be manageable ... Objects stand out from their sides according to this abstract morphological meaning. There is a system of collusion of forms where it is no longer allusion to man.

In short, nowadays there is a tendency to miniaturize the form on the one hand and to minimize the constraints of use on the other hand. We are then in the "mini" in its two forms: the mini material which reduces the form and the mini-immaterial which reduces the effort.

*** Object and space**

When we talk about the miniaturization of the design object, we question its occupation of space, its shape and its size. The notion of full and empty finds its field of application here.

There is recent research suggesting an inversely proportional relationship between the horror of a vacuum and the perception of value. In other words, the more the space is filled with elements, the less these elements are worth. To create an impression of value, prefer minimalism. Consequently, the emptiness created by the simplicity of

the "mini" becomes a sign of luxury and prestige...

*** Detail philosophy**

Throughout history, design has been influenced by different artistic currents. We can see this notion of miniature crossing the fields of the arts in particular the plastic arts, literature, poetry with the notion of "fragment" or "detail". From the "mini" derives the detail. This notion of detail in design could have philosophical backs. The "philosophy of detail" is a philosophy based on the postulate of the necessary reduction from the whole to the element, from the collection to the atom, from the whole to the part.

For the plastic arts, the notion of detail appeared in the vocabulary of the Renaissance. Daniel Arasse, the art historian, distinguishes two types of fragments in painting, the "Particolare" which is part of an object or a figure and the "Dettaglio" which is the fragment isolated and circumscribed by the painter or the sculptor. We find that this spirit of miniature and detail is not restricted to the field of design but has already been defined in the fields of the arts such as the visual arts. The issues and purposes are different between those of design and the arts, but the general concept of the mini, whether as a miniature or as a fragment, is still present.

*** Symbolism of "mini"**

The mini and the small have multiple meanings. Indeed, the smallest is considered precious; we commonly speak of precious detail. It is with the detail that the uniqueness of nature is formed. The composition always starts from the little one and comes back to it. The detail can thus be perceived as the germ of composition. The predominance of the singular over the plural reinforces this tendency towards particularization and manic precision. It can also be associated, in the imaginary, with the feminine ... Consequently, the primacy of detail can be considered as a trace of a relationship with the sensitive.

Among other things, the detail can mention by its presence a nuance or a diversity compared to the big one. "The promotion of the lowercase often has a subversive value, especially the contrast between the large and the small redoubles the confrontation between the divine and the terrestrial". With the mini, the man becomes powerful again. The mini must be seen up close and force the focus. Because the little one empties around him to be seen, he needs space. It always takes up more space than its size suggests. All of these metaphors can be harnessed by "mini" design to reach the consumer in an indirect way.

*** Psychological factors**

We can discern behind the miniaturization, the expression of the search for play and toys. From the point of view of psychologists, humans still have the desire to return to their childhood, to escape the complexity of their daily lives and to find objects and spaces that offer them a certain lightness and tranquility. Objects that recall the characteristics of children and babies are associated with attributes: naivety, fragility, honesty, innocence...

So, the mini, would there be a way of disguising himself as a nice kid, friend of the consumer? Let's also not forget that what appeals to children automatically pleases their parents. At this stage, we can perceive an intelligent marketing strategy that takes advantage of the mini to satisfy the most intimate desires of the consumer.

*** A consequence of technological development**

Technological development renews our relationship with things. Objects empty of their weight, they condense and split up.

*** The digital age**

Decrease; shrink, thin, a series of verbs that reflects the major trend of the time, which is to gain in lightness in order to gain in freedom. After a

period of Promethean expansion of a technique aimed at occupying the world and space, we come to the age of a technique which operates the world in depth.

In this regard, the field of high-tech has become a challenge where the sole stake of putting forward technological trials is no longer enough because everyone is copying. That is why the goal remains to always make things smaller and more stylish. Taking care of the finishes is the most important target to visually make you want to buy the product. Our time is one of a famous mix between a desire for the beautiful, the small and the practical.

We can see that the concern of miniaturization technology is to narrow the distance between man and the design object in order to create a kind of personal relationship between the two.

* **Nano sciences**

Nanotechnology has helped amplify the phenomenon of miniaturization in design. It concerns the study of the phenomena observed for objects whose size is a few nanometers and whose properties derive specifically from this nanometric size. Nanotechnology brings together all the techniques used to manufacture, observe or measure

these objects. It affects several sectors such as Electronics, materials, medicine, energy, space, environment, defense.

Miniaturization in nanotechnology is a so-called "top-down" approach, otherwise called top-down. It is about making smaller and smaller objects (microelectronics chips and circuits, for example). Smaller, they would take up less space, consume less energy, cost less and could be used in greater numbers.

* **Social reasons**

We can justify the appearance of miniaturization by social reasons such as city life in reduced housing, active life which leaves less time, the ease of storing and taking everywhere that miniaturized objects offer... Nomadism as well is a phenomenon contributing to the miniaturization of objects and spaces, it is a way of life based on movement for professional or vital purposes. There is a tendency to organize everything, spaces, objects... etc. This general organization, which is imposed by the acceleration of modern life, finds miniaturization as an adequate solution. The principle of maximum organization that leads to miniaturization techniques has the parallel function of chronic scarcity of space on a daily basis.

* Economic reasons

Today, economic wealth is no longer based on raw materials and material capital but on another asset that is abstract: it is the economy of the immaterial. It is the ability to innovate, to create concepts and to generate ideas that has become the essential competitive advantage. The intangible capital or, the capital of talents, knowledge, knowledge.

Design therefore participates in a strategic positioning of differentiation and in building a competitive advantage based on the economy of the intangible. This new context promotes thinking based on scenarios and metaphors, on added values which aim to change the industry and which only brings the consumer closer to the design object. This design takes care of the sociological context in which the consumer fits.

Innovative is this emerging trend of the designer "sociologist of objects" from post-modernism, the aestheticization of everyday life and sociology which wants to grant a symmetrical role to the user and to the object in innovation. The mini trend then asserts itself as it bears sociological and intangible cultural backs, and this is for economic purposes.

* Marketing

With the mini you feel like you are spending less, so you buy more, hence the importance of marketing. The mini allows brands to offer their products in new distribution channels present on the journeys of nomads such as vending machines for example. The mini thus makes it possible to multiply the offered offer. Economists have found that consumers prefer buying products in small quantities. There were many reasons for them, the main ones being: apartments, living alone, wanting many different products, nomadism, city life...

Even for rich countries, mini-portions are the result of too much diversity and richness. In short, the economy creates the same types of products to meet opposite needs and behaviors. Miniaturization can also allow you to strengthen a high-end positioning. The mini also responds to the individualistic trend, the consumer no longer needs to get together with friends to share the same meal or the same product. It is also about playing the practical card but also that of hygiene. All of this has the effect of accentuating the impulse buying sought by all economists.

*** Consequences of miniaturization**

Miniaturization has had several effects, whether on the subjective individual level or on the social level.

*** Miniaturization and fetishism**

Miniaturization led to the appearance of the pocket object. The further away you get from the pocket object, the closer you get to it. Because the pocket object exerts a power of seduction while keeping its distance from us and other objects, it retains its uniqueness. Thus, it escapes the accumulation of production that characterizes our time and it forces us to come together. It thus affirms its economic fetish side. Will this fetishism have negative effects on humans and their behavior? What would be the economic impact of this phenomenon?

*** Industrialization of taste and aesthetic capitalism**

This appreciation of the little one, due to one of the factors mentioned, has industrialized and spread all over the world. We are facing the industrialization of taste. It is the industrialization of enjoyment favors the superfluous over the necessary, sensitivity to reason, and seduction over the faculty of judgment.

This industrialization of taste leads to a kind of aesthetic capitalism. The aesthetic future of capitalism is

based on capturing and converting what it would have most individual into measurable, exchangeable and massive values, capable of colonizing every nook and cranny of existence and culture. The stakes of aesthetic capitalism go beyond the angelic territory of amenities: aesthetic battles are at the heart of an economic war for the control of emotions and affections. Capitalism could then use aesthetic pleasure to turn it into a vector of profit.

Does capitalism contribute to the weakening of creation in design? What would be the effect of this trend, which exploits everything for economic reasons, even human emotions?

*** Conclusion**

To conclude, we can say that the unique minis, their dimensions, their materials, their conceptual prowess make them endearing, stimulating for the eye and the mind. They surprise and impose themselves. We have tried in this essay to identify this miniaturization of the various personal, social, aesthetic and economic sides. The mini adapts to the situation. It can be a matter of economy, technology, fashion.

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