# TOWARD SUSTAINABLE CITIES THROUGH FUTURISTIC DESIGN MODEL: A CONCUMERISTIC SOCIETY PERSPECTIVE

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## ABSTRACT

It is undoubtedly impossible to discuss sustainable design without taking into account the tempting world of consumption and the desire for variety and new products. In this study, by collecting data from observations, it is attempted to first investigate the challenge of "citizens as consumers" and then study into the places which are specially designed for the use and benefit of the upper-class citizens. In the current study which has a minimalistic approach, we researchers try to suggest a sustainable model for urban design and even lifestyle to minimize objectification of urban spaces and to present a prototype of future cities.

Key words: Urban Design, Public Places, Sustainability, Consumerist Society

## 1.INTRODUCTION

Consumption and consumerist matters are not only correlated to object systems and individuals chronically consume objects, spaces and places in the city context. Authors, tried to recommend a model for urban design, which is going to neutralize consuming thirst in Iran and worldwide. Truly, in the current postmodern societies, which approach, style and finally life style can handle and rescue this chronic dissatisfaction of consuming.

## 2.CITY AND CONSUMERIST SOCIETY

Clarke (2003) believed that, the core of urban life is consumerism, in fact it reshapes the identity and urban design. It is not surprising that "consumption" is not as a right or pleasure, it defined as a citizen's assignment in a consumerist society and also an automatic task (Clarke, 2003), and if we dig into its causality, we will find that people consume because they want "new things" chronically (Baudrillard, 1998). Why do we keep wanting new things? Boredom with familiar things stems from certain aspects of our neural networks. Brain recognizes a lack of this variance once we get used to having it. Variances or changes are necessary for people to recognize stimuli. This is why we often find ourselves after we have owned something for a while. Whether you buy a ring that costs $100, $500 or $3,000, the level of happiness that you'll feel is basically the same. Your smile is not going to be five times larger. There are emotional limitations. Your dissatisfaction runs, and you reach out for something else (Sasaki, 2017).

According to Barthes's assertion as a theorist (1976), having new one is not only into fashion matters, it is a base of all critics and also our assessment of the universe. "A new thing" is a value (Barthes, 1976). It is needed to mention, that consumerist matter in this present article, is extended to consumption of public places and in general to consumption of urban spaces.

## 3.DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL GAP IN CITY

In this article, regardless of age and sexuality component, we will pay attention to other components; economical-social gap. In comparison to other fields of art, architecture has the most nearest intrinsic relation with economy, so that in the commissions forms and value of lands, has almost immediate connection with economy. It is not unlikely, in the big cities turn up liberal democracy, since these cities are some places, in which multinational companies and government bureaucracy exist much more than any other cities. Urbanism architectural facilities and abilities are dominated simply by advanced capitalism (Elliott, 2010). On the other hand, transformations happen in the center of folklore (Wilson, 2003). For substantiation of a fair conversation in liberal democracy; firstly, it is needed to fight with inequalities in the materialistic privileges and powers. In this way, indeed collective praxis will be achieved. The question is; how these two grads encounter with place and space elements in the city context, in fact if it goes observing with philosophical approach of consumerist society, how each grad(poor and rich) consume time and space in the same city context. For the first world people, it is a name given to rich and wealthy people; a space loses its limiting feature in both reality and virtual world. On the contrary, for the second world people, meaning poor people, who are structurally considered as surplusage, real spaces immediately block. To recapitulate, first world people live at the present time and the others do not. Furthermore, the second world people live in the slow, inflexible and inaccessible spaces, in which time has blocked. Their time is empty, boring and extra. They are not able to control the space. A postmodern city is a city where predisposed for only satisfaction of first world people (Clarke, 2003).
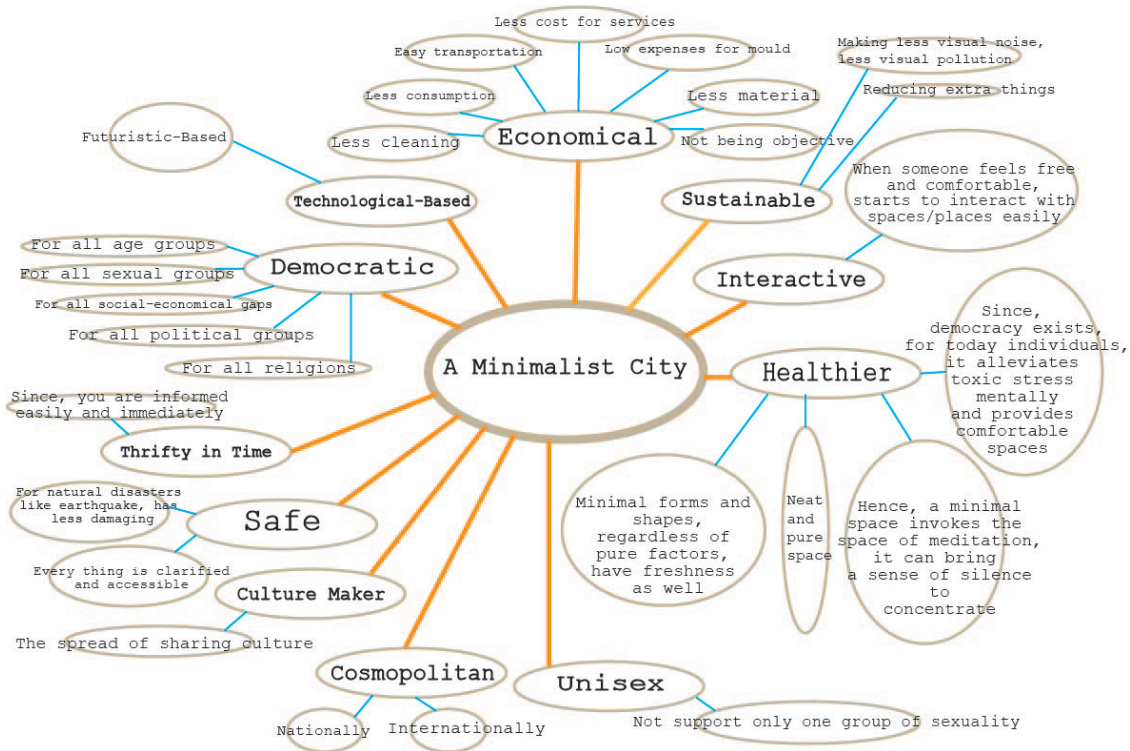
## 4.CITY AND SUSTAINABLITY

A 21st Century postmodern city must be a sustainable city (Terlinden, 2012). When sustainability in the city has been proposed, researchers mostly have been focused on green materials and creating artificial spaces for making a city sustainable, while at first and foremost it must have to probe in the consumption world. If we observe consumption world in a large scale in current big cities, we will find that there are a lot of magnificent shopping places with splendid names as: Arcade, Galleria, Passage etc. Where its design just to demonstrate capitalism; in which firstly has been designed for consuming not for staying into it, and finally not growing and enjoying (Terlinden, 2012).

## 5.METHOD

In this descriptive study, authors with minimalism approach observed and conveyed public spaces, and if you would ask; why minimalism?! Because regarding the challenge of this article "the pattern of consuming less" is look like "minimalism pattern" in eliminating extra things.

## 6.RESULTS

As it can be seen in the brainstorming (figure 1), it has shown that minimalist urban design approach can be a response for sustainability of a city. This model can eliminate and blur the lines and boundaries of sexuality, age, social gaps etc. The notable point of this present results is that minimalist urban design even in a visual perspective is less consuming; since it prevents of visual pollution (Loreta Cercleux, 2016). We have emphasized visual pollution, be-



cause minimalism approach eliminates all the negative visual signs as showing off power and capitalism in some levels. Figures 2 and 3are some samples of commercial-shopping towers in the north Tehran (Capital of Iran) in which



*[Figure 2] Commercial-shopping towers in the north Tehran (Capital of Iran)*



*[Figure 3] Inside of commercial-shopping towers in the north Tehran (Capital of Iran)*

there are some cafes and restaurants. The other beneficial point of minimalistic urban design is that; this approach in design with creating less visual frictions, keeps factor of "fresh and new" well.

[Figure 1, 2 and 3 is cited about here]

*[Figure 1] Brainstorming (source: authors, adapted from Sasaki.F 2017)*

## 7.CONCLUSION

In this research, authors with the help of minimalism have suggested a sustainable model for today consumerist societies. In the right to the place, some organizations must eliminate capitalism as powers through cities in order to serve user friendly cities for all. Minimalism urban design is neutral, democratic, less consuming through creating less visual noise, cost lower and bringing high flexibility of spaces can be a beneficial model for today urban design. However, solution for decreasing consuming is not out of consumption but without any doubt it needs changing life style as well by means of creating new culture for "minimalism life style" and living simply in a compact way, what for sure needs to afford some other experts in other fields to be truly happened.

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