



Research on Public Art Design of University Campus in Gansu Province

Wenjing Zhao

Northwest Normal University, Lanzhou 730070, Gansu, China

DOI: 10.32629/asc.v3i2.918

Abstract: The public art in the campus environment of colleges and universities is characterized with speciality because of its presence in the campus. In addition to meeting the necessary material foundation conditions, it also has the function of art education and influence students imperceptibly. As an important place to cultivate high-level talents in Gansu province and to attract students from other places, public art on campus represents the campus image to a certain extent, the campus public art to a certain extent, represents the image of the campus, which shows its functions in spreading campus culture with regional characteristics to adapt to the basic idea of environment. This paper analyzes the characteristics of campus public art design in colleges and universities in the province, discusses the field spirit of campus public art design, understands the design principles of campus public art, and finally draws the reasonable suggestions of campus public art design which can help to establish the spiritual connection between teachers and students and the campus.

Keywords: university campus, public art, public art design, campus environment

In recent years, public art has attracted more and more attention from the society, which is closely related to the continuous advancement of social democratization and the rapid development of urbanization construction, as well as the increasing attention of the whole society to human landscape and natural landscape. China's higher education reform is accelerating, and the requirements for the construction of campus environment are also gradually improving. The construction of campus environment has become an important carrier of carrying and inheriting campus culture and campus spirit. Campus based public art design plays an important role in the aesthetic education of colleges and universities, as it has the important responsibility of establishing the image of school culture, improving the quality of campus culture and spreading the spirit of campus culture.

Gansu is one of the important provinces in western China. In recent years, with the support of some policies given by the state to Gansu, Gansu's economy is booming. As an important place to cultivate high level talents and attract students from other places, the construction of campus environment has become the focus of university construction in Gansu province. This paper mainly takes the campus public art design of colleges and universities in Gansu Province as an example, through the different development and construction of colleges and universities in Gansu Province, deeply excavates the characteristics of campus public art design, summarizes the field spirit of campus public art, and discusses the rationalization of campus public art design.

1. Concept of public art and campus public art

The concept of "public art" was first introduced into China in the early 1990s, and appeared in urban structural space mainly in the form of urban sculpture and murals. People often think that public art is art placed in public places, including sculpture, painting, photography, etc. In addition, some performances, singing and dancing are also included in public art. In fact, this is a broad understanding of the concept of public art. Therefore, some architectural attachments, environmental sculptures, landscape art, public facilities, installation art and video art are naturally regarded as public art. The primary premise of public art is publicity, and it should be connected with the public. This connection should be combined with life, improve public participation, and make the beneficiary groups feel connected with the works of art, so as to achieve the effect of spreading aesthetic concepts and improving the spiritual realm of the public. Therefore, what is important is not the form, but the contemporary cultural value orientation reflected by public art.

Public art in university campus environment has its special characteristics because of its existence in university campus. It is targeted for contemporary university teachers and students with knowledge, literacy, morality and ideals under the influence of higher education. This group has physical and spiritual needs different from the general public in life and study, and has unique aesthetic and values for their environment. Campus public art, to some extent, represents the image of the campus, spreads the campus culture, and establishes the spiritual connection between teachers and students and the campus with its unique artistic language. In a sense, public art in the context of campus culture is a special cultural landscape. It bears

the responsibility of beautifying and improving the temperament of campus environment with materialized public art works, imperceptible aesthetic education for students, cultivating students' aesthetic perception and cultivating humanistic and artistic feelings. It bears the responsibility of creating a field space full of academic atmosphere, shaping the unique cultural characteristics and spiritual taste of different colleges and universities, and creating the school's unique character card.

2. Case study of public art design in colleges and universities in Gansu Province

In this study, Lanzhou University, Northwest Normal University, Northwest Minzu University and Hexi University are the representative universities of Gansu Province. After visiting representative colleges and universities in Gansu province for investigation, this paper summarizes the current situation of campus public art design in colleges and universities as follows.

Lanzhou University is located in the golden city of Lanzhou, the ancient capital of Yellow River. Founded in 1909, the university was selected as one of the world's first-class universities in 2017 (Class A). Now there are two campuses in Chengguan and Yuzhong. In the course of more than 110 years, the university has stuck to the western part of China and strived to become a national university, striding out of the way to establish a world-class university in the economically developed areas.

In the alumni Square of Chengguan Campus, the commemorative columns of Gansu Politics and Law School for 1909 (Figure 1), national Lanzhou University for 1946 (Figure 2) and Lanzhou University for 1949 (Figure 3) respectively stand on behalf of the founding of Lanzhou University. The alumni memorial corridor is also built on the north and south sides. The inner and outer walls are engraved with the names of all the alumni since the founding of Lanzhou University. The completion of alumni Square is undoubtedly to integrate the cultural connotation of public art into the school philosophy, historical context and spiritual culture to build a new campus space. Different school cultures give different information meanings to the public art in campus space, so that the space has identification and symbolic significance[1].

Campus public art can not only beautify the campus environment, but also deepen people's cognition of the campus environment space and play a role of cultural guidance. Therefore, campus public art is endowed with the important responsibility of aesthetic education. However, the cognition of campus environment space and the role of cultural guidance are realized through the symbolic materialized image that people have for the space, so as to achieve the purpose of campus space's subtle influence on people's education. In the central axis of the campus public space landscape belt with landscape gardens — Yuxiu Lake, Zhongling Garden.

Due to the influence of Chinese traditional culture, this design is in line with the public landscape construction mode of waterscape green land in most universities in China. Such works not only shape the green and ecological campus public space, but also play a function of regional division, providing a comfortable and beautiful environment for teachers and students to study, work, live, rest and activities. It is a public art form applied by many universities.



Figure 1. Memorial column of Gansu Politics and Law School



Figure 2. Memorial column of National Lanzhou University

What is worth mentioning here is the public landscape in the style of school emblem at the entrance of Yuzhong Campus (Figure 4) and the establishment of ethnic columns in the campus (Figure 5). The public landscape in front of the campus will place the emblem of Lanzhou University in the center of the flower bed, so that students can perceive the cultural temperament and character of the school before entering the campus. For the construction of campus environment, the establishment of pride and the confirmation of the sense of belonging of teachers and students reflect the embodiment

of the campus spirit and culture by public art. The school stands 56 stone columns, named national Columns, symbolizing harmony, tolerance and friendship between ethnic groups.

The theme sculpture "Persevere · Struggle" was jointly donated by alumni, which reflects the tenacity of Lanzhou University to cultivate talents for the motherland and stick to the west. It is also an expression of the fine style of study of "diligence, practicality and enterprising" of Lanzhou University (Figure 6).

Flying eagle sculpture is the spiritual embodiment of School of Management, Lanzhou University, representing the essence of school culture. Students are encouraged to become pioneers, pioneers and devotees in the forefront of the times through the cultivation and edification of school of Management (Figure 7). It can be seen that campus spiritual culture is expressed through every piece of public art in the campus.



Figure 3. Memorial column of Lanzhou University



Figure 4. The emblem of Lanzhou University



Figure 5. Ethnic column



Figure 6. Persevere · Struggle



Figure 7. Flying Eagle

Northwest Normal University, located in Lanzhou, the capital city of Gansu Province, has a history of more than 100 years with profound cultural heritage. As a key normal university in northwest inland region with relatively backward economic development, Northwest Normal University plays an important role in northwest China both in terms of social influence and contribution.

The forms and carriers of contemporary public art are more diversified, and the display forms of campus public art are not limited to sculpture, horticulture, waterscape and square. Because, public art is not simply a work of art in public space, but more importantly lies in its cultural value. Campus architecture is also a symbol of university culture, as an important carrier of the accumulation and inheritance of school culture, and a positive factor to promote campus construction.

During the restoration of the old building, Northwest Normal University retained the architectural style and carved patterns of that year, as well as the site of the old school with the foundation and part of the architectural framework (Figure 8). As the preservation and continuation of historical memory, both of them have become the public art landscape with a sense of history on campus, which has aroused the resonance of teachers and students. The statue of Chang Shuhong (Figure. 9), the first president of Northwest Normal University Li Zhenghe, who was a pioneer in the research and protection of Dunhuang grotto art and the establishment of Dunhuang Studies, stands in front of the school history Museum and the Academy of Fine Arts. "If a work is to be displayed in a public place, the artist will take into account the correspondence between the work and the spatial structure of the display, and pay attention to the historical and cultural context, and even reflect the thoughts of the times such as environmental problems," said Minamjo Shisei, a famous public art curator in Japan. [2] Campus public art is not equal to the general landscape of the city street square. Its shaping should echo the spatial structure of the campus and play an important role in creating a humanistic and artistic atmosphere and establishing the cultural identity of teachers and students. These sculptures standing in the campus environment are mostly commemorative, which are an important part of reflecting the construction, development and accumulation of normal University culture. They are also the response and visual manifestation of the specific space as the campus public art, and the spiritual identity of the campus space.



Figure 8. The ruins of the old school



Figure 9. Portrait of Chang Shuhong

The public art design of the new campus of Northwest Normal University is mainly based on modern design elements, including the point, line and surface that constitute the shape, as well as the space, size, color and texture, which can be seen from the architecture and layout of the campus. The fountain water feature (Figure. 10) near the library is surrounded by massive square stones. The perfect integration of modern design and ancient classics vividly reflects the strong academic atmosphere of Normal University as a century-old school.

Generally speaking, there are obvious differences in public art between the old and new campuses of Northwest Normal University. The campus is mainly composed of monumental sculptures and old architectural sites. These public works of art play a positive role in encouraging teachers and students and improving the level of campus public art construction. The new campus is based on the modern design architecture landscape, in full consideration of the shape, materials and other elements of the surrounding landscape and green plants to form a harmonious whole, to create a sense of integration of natural scenery and cultural atmosphere.

Northwest Minzu University is the first institution of higher learning for nationalities established after the founding of the People's Republic of China. It is a high-level university construction unit determined by Gansu Province. The campus culture of colleges for nationalities is a mixture of different nationalities. It emphasizes mutual understanding, mutual trust and mutual tolerance among ethnic groups from different cultural backgrounds. It is a place where all ethnic cultures gather



Figure 10. Fountain water

together.[3] The campus environment of Northwest Minzu University integrates many factors such as school philosophy, school characteristics and campus culture, forming a unique campus public art design.

Campus public art landscape is the material carrier of campus culture display, and is the aesthetic space for teachers and students to enhance school emotion, cultivate students' aesthetic consciousness and more scenes and phenomena, and receive the most intuitive material of cultural education. In terms of the architectural design of the school (Figure 11), the eaves of each building are decorated and carved with ethnic characteristics, especially the large-scale classical architectural complex of the school, which is in harmony with the traditional gate of Northwest Minzu University (Figure 12). In order to create characteristic cultural landscape, the school specially designed and produced campus sculptures such as "Happy Festival" and "Flying Apsaras". The relief "Happy Festival" made of white marble depicts the scenes of festivals and daily life of han, Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur, Hui and Kazak, the largest ethnic groups in northwest China (Figure 13).

The apsaras are made up of two lifelike apsaras in the shape of hollow spheres. Apsaras are one of the symbols of Dunhuang art treasure house and silk Road (Figure 14). These two groups of sculptures reflect the strong northwest ethnic characteristics of Northwest Minzu University and the regional culture located on the ancient Silk Road. The school strives to integrate the sense of history, national characteristics and modern sense, so that every landscape in the school has its own characteristics, and fully displays the cultural charm of the school for nationalities.



Figure 11. Teaching building



Figure 12. Gate of Minzu University



Figure 13. Festive Day

Hexi University is located in Zhangye City, a state-level historical and cultural city in the middle of the Yellow And Gold Section of the Silk Road and Hexi Corridor. The school was founded in 1941 in Lizhangye Normal School of Gansu Province. After several historical evolution, it has formed a teaching mode with three major pillar disciplines: education, agriculture and medicine. Because of its unique geographical advantages, unique natural resources and cultural endowment, it has a wide space for education and education, just like the oasis pearl on the boundless Gobi Desert, known as one of the most beautiful university campuses in Gansu.

Compared with other colleges and universities in the province, Hexi University has a wide green area on campus, which is rationally planned as teaching area and living area by using the public garden landscape. Artificial lake excavation, rockery construction, shaping public art sketch, using the trend of green space, water flow formed sound, light, shadow and other characteristics, to build a rich natural landscape, beautify the campus environment. The artificial lake looks like a map of Gansu province, with fake mountains on the north and south sides and waterfalls in summer. Lakeshore has hexi corridor Qiao irrigation all kinds of plants and large green lawn, spring, summer, autumn and winter scenery is also each have a lasting charm, like in the poetic picture scroll, feel the campus quiet zhiyuan indifferent beauty and Zhong Ling elegant cultural atmosphere. In addition, as Gansu province is an inland area, the climate is dry and green vegetation is scarce. The construction of artificial lakes can increase the humidity in the air, and the large area of green vegetation also creates an ideal campus environment with lakes and mountains (Figure 15).



Figure 14. Flying to Sky



Figure 15. Beautiful scenery of Hexi University in summer

The construction sketch in campus landscape is the public art of man-made landscape. Such as "Qin Xue Yuan" (Figure 16) and "Jiu Long Bi" (Figure 17). The lawn in front of the teaching building of the Academy of Fine Arts also placed public art pieces created by students. Plastic arts, such as "sheep" woven with rattan and "deer" welded with discarded mechanical parts (Figure 18), add some aura to the campus environment.

Thematic relief walls are erected on both sides of the main entrance of Hexi Lecture Hall (Figure 19) to depict the characters in "The Eastward Evolution of Buddhism", "The Alliance of Liangzhou", "The Silk Road" and "Zhang Qian's Mission to the Western Regions". The important historical events in the Hexi Corridor will be vividly displayed by using narrative description, and the granite blocks are shaped by round carving on the upper side of the wall. There is also an ancient building in the Ming and Qing Dynasties called "White Pagoda Temple Pavilion" (Figure 20). Because of its own

unique historical properties, ancient architecture, as a special campus public art, does not need to give it any meaning artificially, and it is the best confirmation of history.



Figure 16. Qin Xue Yuan Figure



Figure 17. Jiu Long Bi



Figure 18. A deer made of iron



Figure 19. Embossed wallpaper



Figure 20. White Pagoda Temple Pavilion

3. The field spirit of campus public art taking public art in colleges and universities in Gansu Province as an example

With the gradual expansion of the meaning of public art, when public art design is practiced on campus, it brings more possibilities for campus environment design, and the concept of campus furniture arises at the historic moment. Campus furniture, derived from urban furniture, refers to all kinds of environmental facilities set up in campus streets, courtyards, squares and other public Spaces to facilitate the outdoor activities of teachers and students.[4] The campus environment and public facilities are mainly functional features, and the service groups are for all teachers and students. Therefore, humanistic care is reflected in the design first, followed by the intervention of art forms, involving campus traffic planning, lighting system, leisure seats, pavilion corridor, guiding signs and many other aspects. Campus furniture should not only meet users' functional needs for environmental facilities, but also become participants and shaper of campus culture [5]. Therefore, campus furniture design is no longer a simple solution to the problems of form and style, but should deal with the multiple symbiotic relationship with various elements of the campus environment. Yuxiu Lake and Zhongling Garden of Lanzhou University have been designed into the university history memorial corridor, which not only provides teachers and students with rest and communication, but also participates in the establishment of university brand culture.

Sculpture works with visual beauty in campus space are the most intuitive public art design that reflects the campus spirit. According to the research results, university sculptures in Gansu province are divided according to their functions, mostly memorial sculpture, thematic sculpture and decorative sculpture. Commemorative sculptures such as Li Zhen white marble statue and Chang Shuhong statue in Northwest Normal University. The most typical one is the memorial column of Lanzhou University history mentioned above. The theme relief wall of Hexi University is organically combined with the environment, reflecting the characteristics of theme sculpture. Decorative sculptures generally appear in the form of sculpture sketches, such as the man-made landscape "Qin Xue Yuan" and "Jiu Long Bi" of Hexi University.

It not only enlightens students, but also plays an important role in decorating the campus environment and enriching campus life. Cultivating students to participate in campus public art construction activities can promote the cultivation of students' aesthetic creativity and the display and development of their own personality. In the survey, it is found that few public art creations involving students in colleges and universities in the province are placed on campus, and most of them are still created by teachers and students majoring in fine arts or some academic activities.

The animal prototype sculpture sketches in front of the art building of Hexi University and the art creative center transformed from the old boiler room are unique. The renovation of the old boiler room seeks the design opinions of teachers and students. On the basis of maintaining the original appearance, the space is maximized, and the Dunhuang element art works designed and produced by students are displayed inside. Cultural tradition is the great artistic source of modern art design, from the form of design to the spiritual core, cultural tradition gives us endless inspiration and help.[6] Due to the influence of China's splendid traditional culture on the art of landscape architecture, most of the campus space of colleges and universities in China will design some landscape architecture. In addition, our province is in the arid inland and northwest regions, the climate is dry, and the wind and sand are large in spring. According to the size of the campus, colleges and universities in the province will try their best to design landscaping in the campus space to improve the campus image, which has a strong regional color.

As the carrier of campus culture, the campus public space reflects the cultural significance of the public art design form of the school's historical context, which has gradually formed the campus culture of various colleges and universities through the precipitation of history. Such as the building site of Northwest Normal University. The "White Pagoda Temple Pavilion" in Hexi University is also preserved and maintained from the perspective of listening to history and reflecting cultural deposits. Different school cultures give different spiritual connotations to the public art of campus space, which is the concentrated embodiment of the school's spiritual outlook. Each university integrates its own school motto and style of study into the campus public art design to remind all teachers and students at all times so as to guide and restrain their own thoughts and behaviors.

This kind of campus public art design is mostly placed in the eye-catching area of the school, so as to create a good school atmosphere. Each university has its own characteristics and characteristic culture, and these characteristic culture contents mainly come from the school nature bias, or some commemorative events, as well as the educational philosophy of talent cultivation. Through the expression of these cultural connotations by campus public art based design, the audience has a fresh impression. For example, Lanzhou University "Persevere · Struggle" and "Flying Eagle" theme sculpture. Northwest Minzu University is endowed with building groups with ethnic characteristics, which reflects its characteristic culture as a college for nationalities.

Campus public art design is the hardware facilities of campus culture, and the integration of campus history culture,

spirit culture and characteristic culture. The above listed public art forms in colleges and universities in Gansu province do not reflect the characteristics of a particular field alone, but reflect the spirit of the public art field in colleges and universities through integration and communication. These public art forms are also widely used in the design content and direction of campus construction in China's universities, and have remarkable effects and achievements, which are worth learning and reference by many schools. However, while we are glad that public art in colleges and universities in China is constantly innovating, there are still many deficiencies and many problems need to be improved.

4. Gansu province campus public art design problems and rationalization suggestions

4.1 Problems

The construction of the new campus has been attached importance to and emphasized by colleges and universities, and public art design has been integrated into it at the beginning of construction. It is undeniable that the new campus has invested more public art design with current ideology and concept in the construction, which has the characteristics of pioneering. However, these public art works often ignore the historical context of the school, and lack the consideration of the original public art design style of the old campus, and the connotation of public art design lacks the cultural continuity of the school. The environmental facilities in the campus can be seen everywhere, from the basic public facilities to the ecological greening design of the public environment, which embodies the people-oriented design concept everywhere.

However, campus environment facilities are not related to public art, resulting in the lack of humanization of public art design. Lack of public art interaction, all kinds of colleges and universities are based on public art works inculcated experience, the attention and feedback of campus public art design can not get effective feedback, resulting in the lack of participatory experience of campus public art design. Most universities still adopt the same public art design in the same form. Ignoring the coexistence between the school's own individual culture and public art. The public can not feel the transmission of the school's cultural connotation and the expression of values, so that the public art design lacks the school's personality and characteristics, and the campus environment space cognition and cultural guidance ability is insufficient.

4.2 Rationalization suggestions

When designing campus public art, we should first start with the school spirit culture, historical context and value orientation, dig deeply into the cultural connotation that accords with the characteristics of the school, and design public art that accords with the corresponding cultural artistic conception of the campus by using the artistic expression forms such as architecture, afforestation, facilities and landscape sketch. In the design and construction of the old and new campuses, we should adhere to the principle of the relationship between the same vein, and should not simply pursue the sense of modernity and art and sever the inheritance of school culture. Secondly, the school's public art design can also maintain a certain degree of connection, which is mainly reflected in school buildings, landscape and other aspects. Because the architectural complex is the main body of the school space, the campus public art should be integrated with the campus architectural style, considering the coordination between landscape and environment, so as to further strengthen the cultural atmosphere of the school.

Finally, as the representative of the campus image, campus public art also bears the responsibility of carrying forward the traditional culture of colleges and universities, so the cultural accumulation and academic atmosphere of the school should be fully considered in the design. Public art creation is intrinsically related to its environment, and it is the response and visual manifestation of this particular space. In the process of setting and implementation, we should always pay attention to the aesthetic entertainment, physiological and spiritual needs of teachers and students about public art design, follow the principle of interaction, and enrich the campus public art forms. Compared with direct indoctrination education experience, participation in campus public art activities can more deeply mobilize the enthusiasm of students' creation. The principles of comfort and human culture are obviously embodied in the campus public art design in the form of public facilities and ecological greening.

In the design, artistic means are used to increase the attention of teachers and students and the sense of comfort experience, follow the principle of characteristics, highlight the school's personality, strengthen the concept of campus space public art design combined with regional characteristics, beautify the campus space while giving play to the educational significance and potential of the space for people. Gansu province is also a northern province, so we should consider the environmental characteristics that are completely different from the south due to regional issues in the campus space ecological greening, and fill in the unique landscape differences of the south while integrating northern characteristics, so as to add a lot of romantic artistic conception.

5. Conclusion

As the product of social development to a certain level, public art represents not only a common cultural concept, but also a contemporary cultural phenomenon. This cultural phenomenon promotes the new orientation of the relationship between art and city, art and the public, art and society. This new orientation emphasizes the process of "happening". It is no longer a form of space construction in a simple sense, but also the carrier of the whole public art plan, implementation, performance and culture and art. As the direct carrier of culture dissemination, the public art design in contemporary university campus is a special symbol of aesthetic culture, showing the positive, diversified and integrated excellent cultural environment and academic atmosphere of the campus.

These factors are influenced by social conditions and natural conditions, aesthetic concepts and value pursuit. Based on the research of the campus public art design in Gansu province, it put forward the construction of college campus should be closely related to the campus public art, a good campus environment in creating and promoting the quality of campus environment aesthetics and to exert a subtle influence on teachers and students at the same time have the effect of the aesthetic edification, so its design process rationalization proposal is particularly necessary. In fact, the campus public art design is a favorable platform to embody humanistic care and characteristics of colleges and universities. The use of campus public art design will link the school spirit connotation with public art, integrate campus cultural resources, improve the quality of campus environment and emphasize the emotional belonging of teachers and students in colleges and universities. Only in this way can we create more and more beautiful campus space environment.

References

- [1] Qiao Huijie. The spirit of inheriting campus culture[J]. *China Building Decoration*, 2010, 11(15): 187.
- [2] Wang Zhong. *Introduction to Public Art (2nd Edition)*[M]. Beijing: Peking University Press, 2014.
- [3] Chen Weiya. Discussion on the construction of campus culture in ethnic colleges from the perspective of structural function theory[J]. *Research on Ethnic Education*, 2012, 4: 34-35.
- [4] Li Kang. Research on outdoor furniture design of university campus[D]. Zhuzhou: Central South University of Forestry and Technology, 2013.
- [5] Ma Jun, Jiang Ying. short-term public art creation in the context of campus culture in comprehensive universities: a case study of zhejiang university of technology[J]. *Decoration*, 2014 (1): 143-144.
- [6] Li Yanzu. *Introduction to art design*[M]. Wuhan: Hubei Fine Arts Publishing House, 2009: 124.