

ON THE SOCIAL VALUE OF PUBLIC SCULPTURE DESIGN IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED CITIES IN THE NEW ERA

Wu Lan¹
Foo Ai Peng²

¹Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia,
(E-mail: 15096791@qq.com)

²Senior Lecture of Faculty of Languages and Communication, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI), Malaysia,
(E-mail: aipengfoo@fbk.upsi.edu.my)

Article history

Received date : 18-12-2024
Revised date : 19-12-2024
Accepted date : 25-1-2025
Published date : 15-2-2025

To cite this document:

Wu, L., & Foo, A. P. (2025). On the social value of public sculpture design in Small And Medium-Sized cities in the new era. *Journal of Islamic, Social, Economics and Development (JISED)*, 10 (69), 386 - 391.

Abstract: *In the new era, the art design of public sculpture in small and medium-sized cities has unique social significance and aesthetic value. However, at present, the public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities in China is facing some problems, such as the lack of systematic planning, the poor management, the fault effect of publicity and promotion, and insufficient financial assistance. To effectively promote the development of small and medium-sized cities, it is necessary to continuously strengthen urban planning, improve the overall layout, continue to provide legal support, strengthen urban supervision, strengthen publicity, build a coordinated communication mechanism, enhance financial security, and build stable investment channels.*

Keywords: *Small and Medium-Sized Cities, Public Sculpture Design, New Era, Visual Feeling*

Introduction

In the new era, the public pays more and more attention to the art design of urban public sculpture. The art design of urban public sculpture can not only improve the beauty of the city, but also promote the coordinated development of human beings and society. The continuous development of urban public sculpture design in China is mainly due to its unique social significance and aesthetic connotation. At present, the number of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities in China is on the rise. Some public sculptures have become famous scenic spots in the city, and even play an important role in promoting the urban development. However, there are still many problems in the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities in China, which need to be solved quickly, so as to improve the quality of the public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities.

Significance of Public Sculpture Design in Small and Medium-sized Cities

Social Significance

Throughout history, the public art with the most distinctive feature is public sculpture art. Urban public sculptures can not only carry forward and spread civilization to some extent, but also restructure the images of small and medium-sized cities. At present, most small and medium-sized cities establish a good image for themselves with the help of urban public sculpture design, and improve the overall material and cultural level of the whole city. On the one hand, the design of public sculpture in small and medium-sized cities plays an important role in the religious field. Urban public sculpture is a medium for publicizing religious knowledge and popularizing religious beliefs. Some people who have no religious belief can deeply understand a belief through urban public sculptures. China's rock cave statues, sphinxes and other sculptures provide support for the promotion of religious knowledge. On the other hand, the public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities can provide the public with an important way to understand the historical stories of their cities. Some urban public sculptures tell the historical stories experienced by small and medium-sized cities in the most intuitive way, making urban residents clear about historical changes. Residents can know the major historical events and outstanding historical figures of a city through urban public sculptures. For example, there is a stone tablet in Qiqihar that records anti-Japanese war. By visiting this kind of sculpture, residents and tourists can deeply understand the history of the city in a specific period. The urban public sculpture is like a mirror, not only showing the culture of the whole city, but also telling historical stories.

Aesthetic Connotation

Public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities can not only leave a good visual experience to the public, but also bring joy to people, allowing them to feel the charm of a city. Moreover, bad public sculpture design can leave a bad impression to the public. Beautiful urban public sculptures will have a profound impact on beautifying the environment and enhancing residents' sense of enjoyment. First, public sculptures are often composed of colorful, and light and shadow elements, all of which bring vitality and energy to small and medium-sized cities. Residents within small and medium-sized cities, as well as tourists visiting during holidays, will be attracted to urban public sculptures. Second, public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities can provide development space for environmental construction. When the overall atmosphere and environment of a certain area bring a relatively quiet and oppressive feeling to residents, urban public sculptures can effectively solve this problem. Public sculpture design in some small and medium-sized cities can change the traditional environment, thereby creating a brand new environment and enhancing the overall urban appearance. Third, public sculpture art design in small and medium-sized cities can not only adjust the traditional environmental structure, but

also further optimize the environmental composition of small and medium-sized cities. At present, there are imperfect areas in small and medium-sized cities. Public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities can effectively coordinate the layout and structure of the entire city, improve the urban environment, and thus achieve the unity of urban and residential life.

Problems of Public Sculpture Design in Small and Medium-sized Cities

The lack of systematic planning

When a city is being built, it is necessary to plan the layout. As a key link in the city, the public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities also needs consider the overall layout, and relevant departments need to cooperate for overall development. However, at present, the overall layout of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities in China lacks systematic planning. On the one hand, with the vigorous development of small and medium-sized cities, a large number of artworks, including public sculptures, have emerged in small and medium-sized cities. However, due to the influence of time, capital and manpower, many artworks have great problems in their quality. They are designed in a rough way, which affect the overall layout. Because the works with poor quality can't fit the style of the whole city, a large number of works can't be applied to urban construction, resulting in a lot of waste of resources. On the other hand, due to the lack of coordination and communication between urban departments, the number of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is small. The layout of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is unreasonable. This has a great negative impact on urban construction and development, which is not conducive to urban development and cultural spread.

Poor Management

At present, the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities can reflect the overall artistic level of the city, which is not only reflected in the theme of the sculpture, the quality of the selected materials, and the degree of integration with the environment, but also in the external aesthetic level. Moreover, the management and protection of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities are also important issues. First, there are few regulations to regulate the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, and many public sculptures are not protected. Faced with the damage caused by some groups of people to public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, there are no targeted laws and regulations to restrain their behaviors. Second, the management of public sculpture art design in small and medium-sized cities is relatively poor. Currently, there are some tourists with low quality who often assess damage to sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, leading to long-term damage to public sculptures. For this phenomenon, it can be concluded that the urban management is poor, and various departments have insufficient awareness of the design and protection of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities. Third, the allocation of responsibilities for the maintenance and management of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is unclear. Due to factors such as wind and rain erosion and sunlight exposure, public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities have suffered certain damage. The management and repair of public sculptures in cities are relatively backward, and there is a lack of professional personnel for regular maintenance and repair. This problem is mainly due to the unclear allocation of responsibilities. Unreasonable allocation of responsibilities of various departments have led to slow progress in the maintenance of public sculpture art design in small and medium-sized cities.

Fault Effect of Publicity and Promotion

Although the design of public sculpture in small and medium-sized cities has risen rapidly in recent years, there are still many problems in the specific construction process. There is a fault

effect phenomenon in the publicity and promotion of public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities. First, there are similarities in public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, but these sculptures lack details and cultural shaping. This not only brings great waste, but also brings some negative effects to urban publicity and promotion. Designers ignore the city memory function in the process of designing sculptures, and the sculptures created on the basis of not knowing the city features and culture elements have limited the city image building and cultural communication. Second, with the economic and social development, the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is affected by the market. Constrained by factors such as theme and materials, sculpture works are patterned. The design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is adapted mechanically to meet the development of modernization, which hinders the publicity and promotion of cities. Finally, the communication mechanism between the public and workers has not been established in small and medium-sized cities, and there is a lack of a good supervision model for the creation process of sculptures. Due to the weak openness of urban sculpture design, the public has a poor understanding of sculpture, so it is difficult to provide useful suggestions for sculpture construction, which further leads to the fault effect phenomenon in the promotion and publicity of public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities.

Insufficient financial assistance

With the acceleration of social development, the art design of public sculpture in small and medium-sized cities is in the process of prosperity and development. During this period, the government's support for public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities is particularly important. On the one hand, due to the government's less investment in public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities, some designers use cheap materials to save money, which leads to poor quality of sculpture works and poor visual effect. Moreover, due to the use of low-cost and inferior materials, there are risks of damage and safety hazards in sculpture works. On the other hand, there is a big gap between Chinese designers and international designers. To further promote the public sculpture design of small and medium-sized cities in China, the quality of designers should be improved. However, due to the limitation of funds, designers rarely have the opportunity to study abroad, which makes the public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities still have a certain gap compared with international sculpture.

Improvement Measures of Public Sculptures in Small and Medium-sized Cities in the New Era

Strengthen Urban Planning and Improve The Overall Layout

In the new era, the layout of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is often not well planned, which brings restrictions to urban development. To improve the overall layout of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, small and medium-sized cities should constantly improve urban planning and design. On the one hand, the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities should be innovated and developed on the basis of urban planning. Designers should combine the development characteristics of small and medium-sized cities to design sculptures with unique styles and improve the quality of their works. On the other hand, the relevant government departments should make cooperation. In the process of integrating public sculpture design into urban planning in small and medium-sized cities, relevant departments should consider the connotation and theme of sculptures, and consider the overall layout. On this basis, the design of public sculpture in small and medium-sized cities can be effectively combined with urban planning.

Provide Legal Support and Strengthen Urban Supervision

In the new era, in the face of problems in the protection and management of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, the government needs to provide legal support and strengthen supervision to provide a good institutional guarantee for urban development. First, the government should formulate relevant laws and regulations for the public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities, and take corresponding measures to supervise the production of sculptures. Second, due to the imperfect content of some laws and regulations, the regulatory authorities are hindered in the process of law enforcement. Therefore, relevant departments should predict the possible problems in advance, and then put forward more targeted regulations or systems to regulate them. Finally, government departments should set up special public sculpture maintenance and management institutions to regularly repair and maintain public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities.

Strengthen Publicity and Build A Coordinated Communication Mechanism

With the continued advance of civilization, the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities is gradually integrated into residents' lives in the new era. Because the appreciators of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities are mostly local residents, it is a key measure for the government to continuously strengthen publicity and build a coordinated communication mechanism. On the one hand, small and medium-sized cities should constantly enhance citizens' appreciation ability and artistic level in the new era. Relevant departments can openly attract people who love sculpture and art to design sculptures, and hold exhibitions and competitions. In this process, citizens' artistic enthusiasm and sculpture appreciation ability will be effectively stimulated, and publicity will be carried out for public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities. On the other hand, the government should also build a coordinated communication mechanism, so that people's opinions and views on sculpture can be understood.

Enhance Financial Security and Build Stable Investment Channels

In the new era, the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities cannot be separated from the support of funds, especially the internationally competitive sculpture works also need strong financial support. Therefore, in order to effectively improve the quality of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, the government needs to continuously enhance financial security and provide stable and effective investment channels. On the one hand, the government should build stable investment channels, investing in public sculpture design regularly. Moreover, special funds need to be allocated for the maintenance and repair of some older sculptures. On the other hand, the government can call on the capital investment of large enterprises in society and public donations to effectively solve the constraints of funds on public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities. On the basis of solving the problem of insufficient funds, designers can be provided with opportunities to study abroad, and the quality of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities can be improved.

Conclusion

In the new era, as the key link of urban construction, public sculpture design in small and medium-sized cities plays an important role in promoting urban modernization. The design of public sculpture in small and medium-sized cities not only reflects a city's style and cultural background, but also tells its historical story. If the creativity and cultural background are not taken into account in the design of sculptures, the city will become a boring place. Therefore, China should vigorously promote the design of public sculptures in small and medium-sized cities, and promote urban development.

References

- China Architectural Decoration. (2022). The Beauty of “Cross-border” Urban Public Art. Retrieved from: http://m.thepaper.cn/baijiahao_17166091
- Eflux Journal.(2012). Translated by Chen Peihua and Su Wei. What is Contemporary Art. Beijing: Jincheng Publishing House.
- He, W. (2019). Public sculpture design strategy from the perspective of rural revitalization [J]. *Journal of Anshan Normal University*, 6, 78-81.
- Kang, Y. (2023). “Contemporaneity” and the Narrative Construction of Li Er's Yingmou Brothers. *Contemporary Writers Review* (05), 144-150.
- Li, W. (2019).The hidden educational value of public sculpture-Comment on Urban Public Art [J]. *China University Science and Technology*, 8, 105.
- Lu Shanshan. Analysis of public art problems in modern cities and its countermeasures [J]. *Beauty & Times*, 2019 (6): 62-63.
- Luo, B., & Song, R. (2019). Research on the Core Value of Public Sculpture in the Construction of Jingmen Cultural City [J]. *Doors & Windows*, 10, 169-170.
- Mao, X. (2019). The application of sculpture art in urban public space [J]. *Home Drama*, 20, 143.
- Pu, J. (2013). Why Contemporary Art. Shanghai: Shanghai University Press.
- Sun, Q. (2014). The Role of Inheritors in the Productive Conservation of “Nonheritage”. Master's thesis of Zhejiang Normal University.
- Wang, X. (2020). Comment on the application of sculpture design in public environment and the aesthetic value of technology: Comment on Sculpture and Architecture and Environment [J]. *Environmental Engineering*, 12, 186-187.
- Wang, Z. (2020). Public Art in Chinese Cities (Next) - History and Future. Retrieved from: https://www.sohu.com/a/394855589_241989
- Xu, C. (2019). On the development of contemporary sculpture design in China from a cultural perspective [J]. *Family Life Guide*, 4, 60.
- Xu, J, Wang, Y & Yue, J. (2019). On Urban Sculpture Creation Strategy under the Construction of Ecological Civilization [J]. *Appreciation*, 33, 170-172.
- Xu, Y. & Zhu, M. (2009). Examining and analyzing traditional handicrafts: A study of Dongyang woodcarving. *Art Education*(09),79-84.
- Zeng, Z. (2021). Public Art as an Expression of the Soul of the City. Retrieved from: https://www.sohu.com/a/464799298_121062277