

Research on Public Art Planning in Macao from the Perspective of Urban Cultural Communication

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Abstract. Public art is not only beautifying the urban environment, but also a medium of urban cultural communication. Urban public art in Macao constitutes a beautiful landscape. Still, there are some problems in its planning and construction. According to these problems, combined with the relevant theories of urban cultural communication and the actual situation of Macao, through field research, this paper summarizes several basic characteristics of urban public art in Macao and proposes the planning process of urban public art in Macao.

1. Introduction

Macao was the first place where Western culture entered. More than 400 years of Western culture have made Macao a city with a unique cultural charm and harmonious coexistence of Chinese and Western cultures. The development of urban public art is not only a means to disseminate Macao's long history and culture, but also an effective way for Macao to build itself into a "world tourism and leisure center, and an exchange and cooperation base with Chinese culture as the mainstream and multi-cultural coexistence" in the Outline of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Development Plan.

There are successful cases of public art planning in many countries. In 1956, Philadelphia approved the first "percentage art" ordinance, which required 1% of construction funds to be spent on art and encouraged artists to invest their work in the city, a policy that was later adopted by other cities around the world ([1]). In practice, the "Plan de Cerda" of 1860 transformed Barcelona, which was lacking in public space, into a city with modern urban characteristics through point-like public art planning and layout. In terms of operation mode, both the Japanese government and the private sector promote the development of urban public art, so that Japan's public art still has a good development trend despite the long-term economic stagnation in the 1990s. Although there are many successful cases of public art planning around the world, in general, the construction of public art is always biased towards practice, and there are few studies on the overall planning of urban public art.

Based on the above, this study discusses the planning

methods of public art in Macao from the perspective of urban cultural communication, and discusses: What characteristics of public art planning can help the dissemination of urban culture and the establishment of urban image? What is the planning method of public art in Macao in the context of urban culture communication?

2. The spread of urban culture

2.1. Urban culture

"Urban culture" is a combination of the words "city" and "culture", and the relationship between the two is inseparable. Shan Jixiang elaborates on the relationship among "city", "culture" and "urban culture": City is the deposit, container, carrier and stage of culture, while culture is the identity, soul, driving force, cohesion and source of self-confidence of the city. Urban culture is the culture that comes into being with the development of cities ([2]). Lewis Mumford first mentioned village culture when he mentioned the origin of cities in the History of Urban Development ([3]). With the evolution of villages to cities, different cultures converge and merge to form a more stable and harmonious urban culture with a larger volume. For a city, this kind of urban culture can preserve the city's memory, clarify the city's positioning, determine the city's quality, show the city's style, shape the city's spirit and support the city's development.

The city is the place where culture is formed, and culture is the fruit of city development. Urban culture can appear in invisible forms or be reflected by tangible objects. It is public, open and inclusive, and can also

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reflect regional characteristics. Urban culture is the root of a city. The spread of urban culture helps build the image of a city and revitalize regional culture and is an important part of urban culture construction.

2.2. Urban cultural communication and public art

From the perspective of communication, urban culture can be spread through public art. Qingguang Guo defines communication as "the transmission of social information or the operation of social information system", and the process of communication is a process of "symbolization and symbol interpretation" ([4]). As a medium of urban culture communication, public art is one of the preconditions for the establishment of communication that both sides must have a common meaning space. Art has different forms of expression, but it is a common spiritual language and can become a medium of urban cultural communication. The object of spreading urban culture through public art is the public scattered members of the general society, and the content of spreading is also open. Therefore, this kind of communication behavior is mainly a kind of mass communication behavior.

As shown in Figure 1, Maletzke proposed a systematic model of the mass communication process in his book *The Psychology of Mass Communication* ([5]). In the process of public art spreading urban culture, the disseminators are the government, artists, enterprises, non-governmental organizations, etc. The message is urban culture, the medium is public art, and the recipient is the public. The process of mass communication of urban culture through public art is demonstrated, and the factors that affect and restrict the process of public art communication of urban culture are also clearly shown in the model: First of all, the communicator's self-impression, personality structure (personal personality structure of the communicator or internal system structure of the communication group), personnel group, social environment, organization, pressure or restriction from the public, spontaneous feedback from urban culture and public art are the factors that affect and restrict the communicator. Secondly, the public's self-impression, personality structure, social environment, audience group, the effect of public art and the pressure from public art restrict the public's acceptance of the transmission of urban culture. Finally, the restricted communicators' choice and processing of urban cultural content and the restricted public's choice and impression influence on public art content restrict urban culture and public art. Artworks themselves are private and open contradictions, and "public art" has more than "art" the word "public", it can be seen that public characteristics are the core difference between public artworks and artworks. When public art is entrusted with the responsibility of communication medium in the process of urban cultural communication, in addition to its personality, the overall planning of public art is also the embodiment of its publicity, which can help the transmission of urban culture and the establishment of urban image.

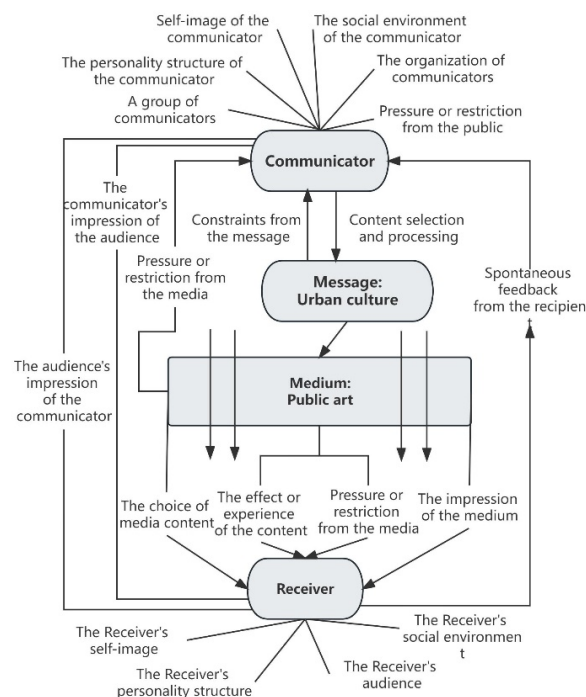


Fig. 1. "Maletzke Model" of public art from the perspective of urban cultural communication

3. Current situation and problems of public art in Macao

From a small fishing village, Macao has developed into an important port where Chinese and Western cultures meet today. It has become the first entrance for Western culture and ideas to be introduced into China. In the past several hundred years, the wind and rain it has experienced have made this small piece of land rich in material heritage and spiritual culture. Taking the historical event of Macao's return as the time node, Macao's public art can be divided into three parts: before the return, during the return and after the return.

Before the return of Macao, there were two types of urban public art, one of which was related to religion, which was similar to the development of public art in the Middle Ages in the West. The other is that private gardens and houses with historical significance and artistic value have changed owners through the changes of *The Times*, and the nature of the land has been transformed from private to public, adding "publicity" to these public arts with artistic value, making them public art in today's cities. These public works of art are endowed by Macao's rich historical and cultural heritage and symbolize the spirit of Macao. These public works of art are very important. Meanwhile, as they are located in the more important historical attractions of Macao today, they naturally follow the historical attractions and are mainly concentrated in the historical urban area of Macao and the important historical attractions of Macao, and most of them cannot be moved.

In 1993, before handing Macao over to China, The Macao Portuguese government left a series of Sino-Portuguese friendship monuments in Macao,

including a total of ten public artworks of different sizes and themes. These public artworks enhance the overall artistic atmosphere of the city and create several important landscape nodes in the city. This kind of public artwork is mainly installed in important squares and traffic nodes in Macao, and is relatively well-made, but there are problems such as too large volume, abstract works that are difficult to understand, and the meaning of the works is controversial.

After the return of Macao, due to the relocation of manufacturing in the city to the mainland, the status of the international trade port has been replaced by Hong Kong, and for other reasons, Macao's economy has been in a downturn for decades. In 2002, Macao opened its gambling rights, capital from Western countries flowed into Macao, and the mainland also opened the policy of free travel in due course. Macao's economy prospered rapidly under the lead of the gambling industry. Many buildings and public artworks of different styles appeared in the Cotai Reclamation area, which set off the luxury of these large resorts and attracted tourists to spend money. However, the local history and culture of Macao are rarely shown.

In addition, a large part of Macau's public art is related to important festival events. Public art in Macau is both innovative and traditional. Every time to a variety of traditional Chinese and Western festivals, the most attractive is the large lighting installation art in front of the council hall. In addition, the government will set up decorative lights on important roads and landscape nodes in the city, hold activities, cultural performances, etc., so that the city is decorated with lights and decorations, full of festival atmosphere. To enrich the lives of residents and attract tourists for sightseeing, the government also keeps innovating, holding various innovative festivals, such as the Macao Light Festival and the City Fringe Festival, to inject new vitality into urban culture.

In general, Macao's urban public art started late, and The real public art appeared in the Sino-Portuguese friendship monuments built by The Macao Portuguese government after the 1990s. Before that, the main urban public artworks were mainly religious sculptures and architectural decorations of historical significance in the city. Despite the large number and variety of artworks, the following problems can also be found:

1. There are fewer works by local artists

Local artists in Macao also had more space to play, and during this period, local artists such as Liang in his later years began to participate in the construction of urban public art. After the opening of gambling rights, foreign capital poured into Macao and built several large-scale resorts, and many public artworks by foreign artists also entered Macao.

Macao has a small area and a large population, so there is less land available for the development of public art in the city. Public art is one of the ways of urban memory and urban culture preservation and continuation. Local artists have more profound insights into the city's culture, so the participation of local artists can better express the city's culture.

2. There is not enough public participation

The publicity of public art is reflected by public participation. The lack of public participation in urban public art in Macao is mainly reflected in the following two aspects:

On the one hand, the government is mainly responsible for the planning, construction and management of public art in Macao, and the public can only visit it, without actual decision-making power. Without public participation, public art also lacks the basic nature of public art "publicity", which often causes public dissatisfaction.

On the other hand, the location of public art in Macao will also affect the sense of public participation in public art. Macao has a small land area, so a lot of public art is placed in the roadside green belt, the public can only ride through or across the road to enjoy.

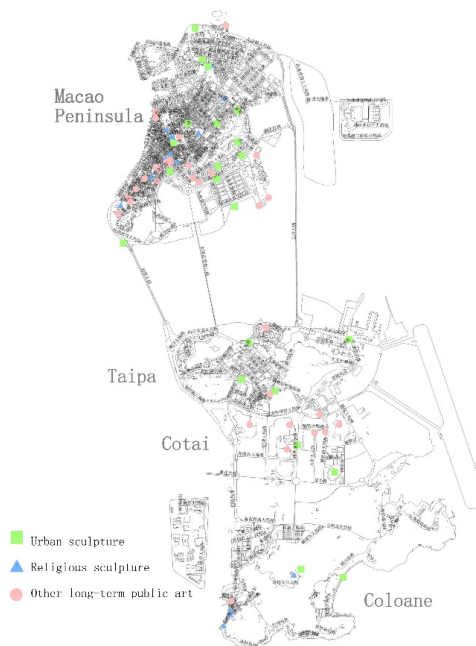


Fig. 2. Map of main public art in Macao

3. Lack of overall planning and legal policy support

In the United States, the birthplace of public art, the rapid development of public art cannot be separated from the support of the "percentage art" policy formulated by the government. At present, there is no clear policy to support the development of public art in Macao, so the distribution of public art in the city is uneven and the development is slow. At present, there is no detailed plan for public art in Macao. As shown in Figure 2, the distribution of public art in new urban areas such as Taipa and Cotaipa is less, which is in obvious contrast with the Macao Peninsula.

4. Late maintenance management is insufficient

The construction of public art in the city not only needs planning and construction, but also its maintenance and management in the later period. Take the sculpture "12 Chinese Zodiac: Pig" in Figure 3 as an example. The sculpture "12 Chinese Zodiac" is the last set of urban sculptures built before Macao's return to the motherland. It was designed by Macao native artist Liang in his late years and installed in the green belt of the Cotai Highway. With the construction of large gambling buildings in Cotaipa, these sculptures gradually become a supporting

role among large gambling buildings. Faced with problems such as stains on the surface of the sculptures, peeling of joint materials between stones and discoloration, these sculptures gradually lose people's attention.



Fig. 3. 12 Chinese Zodiac: Pig

4. Urban cultural communication and orientation and method of public art planning in Macao

Harold Lasswell proposed that mass communication should have the functions of environmental monitoring, connecting different parts of society to adapt to the environment, and inheriting social heritage. Wilbur Schramm added entertainment ([6]). Paul Lazarsfeld and Robert King Merton proposed three functions of mass communication, namely, the function of social status conferring, the function of social norms enforcing, and the "anesthetic effect" with negative functions ([7]).

Therefore, in addition to the basic environmental beautification function, public art in Macao should connect the communicators with various audiences in the process of urban cultural communication, repair the urban context, and strengthen urban positioning. At the same time, it should also pay attention to enhancing the educational, social and practical functions, and improve the negative impression given to Macao by public art.

4.1. Public art planning orientation

As a communication medium of urban culture, public art should conform to the characteristics of mass communication in the process of planning and construction. Therefore, the positioning of public art planning in Macao should be as follows:

(1) Publicity

The publicity of public art should be reflected in the formulation of public art policies, the selection of public art, the creation of public art and other aspects, involving multiple roles of communicators, artists, and the public. In terms of urban public art in Macao, in the past, it was more the government's direct decision-making on public art, and the public's participation was lacking.

(2) Uniqueness

The transmission of urban culture is essentially the transmission of cultural differences. As the "world tourism and leisure center" of the Greater Bay Area, the public art of Macao should reflect the integration and diversity of Macao culture.

(3) Historicity

Public artworks reflecting history should be added outside the historical urban area of Macao, and public art planning should highlight the historical urban area of Macao and show the essence of Chinese and Western culture over the centuries in Macao.

(4) Functionality

Large-scale public art installations with purely ornamental functions will occupy more land, which will cause disputes and dissatisfaction among urban residents. Combining public art and public facilities, functional public artworks will be added to the city, which will beautify the city and promote social interaction at the same time.

(5) Interactivity

In the communication model, public art is the materialized carrier of urban spiritual and cultural expression. To transmit the urban spiritual civilization conveyed by public art, emotional interaction with the public is needed, which can be realized by improving the functionality, interest and innovation of public art. Good audience feedback will also affect the whole communication process and make the communication process positive.

4.2. Public art planning ideas

As shown in Figure 4, urban public art planning in Macao can be divided into three stages: The first stage should determine the public art planning scheme in each area of the city. There are four areas in Macao, each with its different characteristics, which are fully combined with the characteristics of each area in the planning. From the point, line and surface, from the small facilities and green spaces in pocket parks between buildings to the green belt of urban roads, to the large parks and public buildings between parishes, Macao's urban public art forms a system. After the public art planning scheme for each region is proposed, it should be sent to the relevant units in each region for follow-up work. In the second stage, various regional execution units will bid for public art, and artists and private enterprises will put forward plans. After selecting suitable plans, the government, artists and the public will participate in the selection of artworks. Construction and acceptance can begin in the third stage. After the completion of public art construction, public opinions should be collected, and subsequent maintenance and management of public art should be carried out by relevant regulations of public art.

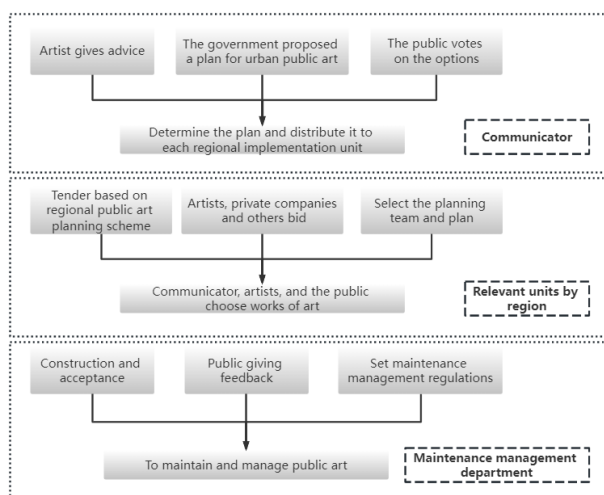


Fig. 4. Macau public art planning flow chart

5. Conclusion

Macao has a rich and colorful urban culture. Based on the positioning of Macao as a tourism center and cultural exchange center, the development of urban public art in Macao needs to take into account all aspects of urban conditions. Therefore, this study discusses the planning of public art in Macao from the perspective of urban cultural communication, and draws the following important conclusions: First, public art has the following problems: fewer works by local artists, insufficient sense of public participation, lack of overall planning and legal and policy support, and insufficient maintenance and management in the later stage; Secondly, public art needs to have the characteristics of Publicity, Uniqueness, Historicity, Functionality, and Interactivity to help spread urban culture and establish the image of the city. Secondly, through the perspective of mass communication, public art needs to have the uniqueness, historicity, functionality, and interactivity. It can be found that public art can be planned in detail from the three aspects of recipients, public art itself and audiences, and combined with past successful cases at home and abroad.

At present, Macao is still in a relatively early stage of the development of public art. Therefore, the development of public art can be combined with its own characteristics and learn from the development mode of regions with better development of public art, and gradually sum up the development mode of public art suitable for its own.

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