

# **Semiotics Based on the Concept of Sustainable Development and Its Cultural Representation in Environmental Art Design**

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**Keywords:** Sustainable Development; Semiotics; Environmental Art Design; Cultural Representation

**Abstract:** An important part of human civilization is art. The expression style of environmental art and its cultural characteristics depend on some specific symbols. In the design of environmental art, the elements of semiotic principles always fill in. Environmental art design can not be separated from the application of semiotics. Symbols directly affect the artistic style of environmental art design, and can simply and clearly reflect the profound cultural connotation of artistic design. Based on the concept of sustainable development, this paper interprets the current situation of environmental art design from the perspective of semiotics, and analyzes the cultural interaction in design with semiotics as the breakthrough point. Semiotics is a tool for cultural communication in environmental art. It provides methodology for designers to deal with cultural elements in design and has guiding significance.

## **1. Introduction**

Judging from the world-famous environmental design cases, symbols are widely used in the humanistic environmental design of human society. No matter China's famous Temple of Heaven architecture or European Gothic style architecture, they all incorporate special cultural symbols [1]. Semiotics is a discipline that studies the general theory of symbols. It studies the essence, meaning, development law of symbols and the relationship between symbols and various human activities. The expression of the style and cultural connotation of environmental art needs some symbols [2]. For example, Gothic style is integrated with the pointed arch symbol symbolizing the solemn Christian. The environmental art design uses symbols as cultural representations to enrich the artistic connotation of the design works, give the works a unique emotional meaning, and profoundly convey the main purpose of environmental art design. It represents the deep-seated human cultural thoughts, and its artistic design style and functional expression are closely related to the traditional historical culture, and this style art design is often embodied in specific cultural symbols [3]. As we all know, an important design principle of environmental art design is to adhere to ecological sustainable development, which is also the key to environmental art design education. It can be seen that symbols play the role of cultural communication and representation in environmental art design and are an indispensable part of environmental art design.

## **2. The Historical Value and Connotative Significance of Semiotics in the Development of Environmental Art Design**

Mankind not only lives in the natural world under the primitive state, but also lives in the symbolic world created by himself. By enriching the symbolic ideas of various kinds of cultural symbols with the unique imagination of mankind, we can form cultural traditions and historical resources information with symbolic expressive nature [4]. Therefore, symbols are closely related to human life. Chinese traditional culture tends to use symbols to symbolize the performance, through some symbols to symbolize some specific culture. As early as in primitive society, people had practical and aesthetic needs, and had begun to engage in primitive design activities, enriching life with conscious or unconscious symbolic behavior. Symbols can be used as an element to symbolize

other things. By further understanding load elements and information transmission media, symbols can embody more valuable and meaningful codes and code systems [5]. The origin of connotation cannot be separated from the characteristics and attributes of things pointed to by symbols. For example, everyone has symbol connotation that belongs to their own characteristics and represents the basic information of individuals. The connotative meaning of symbols is generated on the basis of the denotative meaning of symbols. Its connotative meaning changes with the changes of some subjective factors. Therefore, the connotation and meaning of symbols are more open, inclusive and profound, and at the same time more complicated. Therefore, symbols can become carriers of information transmission, and can express richer cultural connotations in environmental art design, making the environment rich in cultural details.

Symbol connotation refers to the relationship between each potential feature and attribute of things, including the implicit context information such as the emotional thought, ideological feature and social and cultural ideological background of the symbol designer, and will be influenced to a great extent by the personal character, age, hobbies, national and cultural features, social status and educational level of the designer's users. Subjective thoughts reflect the ideological features of pluralism, openness and profound implication at a deeper level by combining with objective ideas [6]. In many uncivilized tribal cultures around the world, the symbols and symbolic expressions of the pre-culture are often the main direct means of communication. Symbols use their unique meaning to add color and vitality to environmental art design, and integrate environmental art design into new elements, making the development of environmental art design more extensive, and more vivid and lively in the expression of culture [7]. When designing an art, the designer integrates the symbols and transmits the information and expressions through the symbol system. When such a provision is recognized by a human collective and becomes the collective public agreement, the object becomes a symbol of the thing. In short, the symbol is like the same activator, which injects new power and vitality into the environment, greatly expanding the development space of modern environmental art design itself.

### **3. The Expressive Form of Semiotics in Environmental Art Design**

#### **3.1 A straightforward form of cognition**

In the design process, the soul of symbolic language is cognition. If a design is difficult for the audience to understand, such a design is meaningless. Language symbols are organically integrated into the design, combined with silent symbols, and jointly assume the important task of expressing the central idea of environmental art design. The concept of sustainable development will run through the whole design process, and the concept of sustainable development design will gradually be formed in this process, which can gradually form a complete set of sustainable development design system, so as to strengthen the understanding in the future design process [8]. Design symbols have the function of configuration, that is, endowing invisible human emotional experience, spiritual style and other design concepts in form, so as to facilitate people's perceptual perception; Symbols are a carrier in environmental art design, and symbols as carriers are of practical value. The treatment of culture in design is actually the processing of symbols. The symbol also greatly expands the extension of the ring art design [9]. The extension of extension is inseparable from the clear and explicit information of symbolic elements. For example, by observing the appearance and shape of a work, it is easy to see the meaning of its display. By scientifically setting and researching these elements, the designer provides a more valuable thinking creation space and context entry point for environmental art design, which is useful for positively reflecting the inner world's ideological characteristics.

#### **3.2 The universal form of public understanding**

Modern design serves the economic society, and the design works need to be widely distributed in the public. Design symbolic language can only be accepted by the public if it has universal characteristics. Only when the designer finds a design language that allows himself, customers and

consumers to understand and understand, can the design task be completed better. Design requirements [10]. The promotion and popularization of the concept of environmental sustainability means that environmental art design aims to enhance people's comprehensive understanding of design and environmental development, thereby enhancing environmental awareness and promoting environmental sustainability. Many designers have cut off the connection between context and history in product art design, which makes the lack of coordination between art design and traditional culture, and it is easy to bring more sense of loss and vicissitude to the audience. This style led the worldwide trend of design, so that it was called internationalist style after the war. No matter what kind of visual symbol has a certain cultural meaning, only when it is expressed in a certain emotional structure and organically combined around a certain theme can it be understood by more audiences. Environmental art design does not take viewing as its main purpose, but purposefully publicizes its values and ideas through symbols, which is quite different from pure art design. Therefore, if the symbols in environmental art design cannot be understood by people, then her aesthetic function cannot be well reflected.

### **3.3 A maverick expression of personality**

The sympathetic request of seeking common ground in symbolic expression is to make more people accept it. However, the key requirement for innovation is to “do something new and different” in design. Because comparing the external expression form with the internal transmission content, the former is more worth exploring. In the process of urban construction and expansion, the existing traditional national design and corresponding coordination relations are sometimes completely ignored, which makes China's environmental art present a pattern of one thousand people and seriously impacts China's environmental art design culture. The symbol of this state refers to both the reference and the object involved. Take the plum blossom-shaped window with flower leakage commonly used in atrium design as an example, the whole window is shaped like plum blossom, both in the form of window and under the decoration symbol. The corresponding aesthetic function in environmental art design is expressed by means of design technology and materials. It is the use of symbols to turn emotions into things that appeal to people's perception, rather than a symptomatic thing or something that appeals to reasoning ability. Environmental art design itself is a whole. The introduction of symbols in environmental art design can create a specific artistic atmosphere and reflect the designer's design ideas. However, this creative process has its own specific laws, and blindly copying rigid sets will often discount the value of artistic design.

## **4. Cultural Expressions of Symbols in Environmental Art Design**

### **4.1 Use a real object with a defined meaning as a design symbol element**

Exploring the cultural symbols in environmental art design is not just about the form of the symbol itself. From a deeper level, only by grasping the profound connotation of the symbol can the symbol be applied organically to the environmental art design. The form of art is isomorphic with the dynamic form of our senses, intellectual and emotional life. It should be noted that although the design symbol also shows a certain aesthetic state, its material carrier still dominates. Environmental art design is different from pure art design. Its main purpose is not to watch, but to promote the purposeful value and concept through symbols. In the design of environmental art, the resemblance symbols are mostly used directly to show their own connotation. For example, an onion-shaped dome designed at the top of St. Vassili's Cathedral has a variety of shapes such as spiral and rhombus, with yellow and green mixed in the middle of gold, simulating a cluster of flames rising and jumping, giving people a sense of “shape”. Therefore, designers should fully display the specific social value of aesthetic function in artistic design, integrate more types of rational factors into works in perceptual cognitive forms, and design their own quality, thinking mode and professional cultural background, so as to design deeper cultural logical thinking. It provides methodology for designers to deal with cultural elements in design and has guiding

significance. This is determined by the function and nature of design symbols.

#### **4.2 Direct use of symbols**

Symbols have various forms of expression. The use and creation of symbols in environmental art design can be appropriate so that they can be effectively unified with other modeling factors in the environment and form a whole. This is an important work to test the designers' artistic aesthetic foundation. Any visual symbol has certain cultural connotation, and they must be organically combined around a specific theme. Visual symbol is an artistic symbol and also an expressive symbol. In environmental art design, the association between symbols and objects is mostly reflected in the fact that they have the same attributes. Symbols show a well-known meaning and then realize the function of indication. What it shows is a perception. The structure of emotion and those more specific traces of brain activity, that is, a cognitive structure that is not affected by personal emotions. The symbols contained in the design works are customary and are basically the direct use of symbols. For example, the famous Church of St. Vasili, whose dome has a jumping flame pattern, is an example of the direct use of traditional symbols. Environmental art design is a whole. Symbolization is only a means of creating artistic atmosphere and expressing design ideas. It has rules to follow, but it can not be rigidly applied.

#### **4.3 Symbolic expression of storage**

Implicit symbolic forms are also frequently used in environmental art design. China especially advocates implicit beauty. Therefore, implicit symbolic elements are used in many environmental art designs for cultural expression. Symbols are not used directly in design works, but in an implicit way. It is constructed through the modelling of simulated objects, such as the figurative dragon decoration in the decoration of ancient Chinese architecture. As far as the design elements of architectural symbols in the world are concerned, the ancient Egyptian traditional pillar architecture has similar characteristics with the traditional Chinese pillar architecture in the sense of extension. They all rely on the gables as the support to form a longer corridor. Because of the different social background and regional customs of the two countries, the construction represented by them is different. Architectural symbols have different connotations. At a deeper level, it presents local culture and thoughts. The application of implicit symbols is highly advocated in our traditional culture, which regards implicit as beauty and only implicit has real appeal. The expression function of the whole design work to the cultural value and the driving function of the design work itself in use. Symbols are the medium to load and transmit information, and are a simplified means of understanding things. They are expressed as meaningful codes and code systems.

### **5. Conclusion**

Environmental art design belongs to a complex. Symbolic expression is to create an artistic atmosphere, express design ideas and highlight national culture. When using traditional design symbols, we should really understand the ideas and artistic conception it conveys, and give it new meaning to conform to the modern spirit, so as to “take its shape, extend its meaning and convey its spirit”. Therefore, designers must fully grasp the internal logical connection between semiotics and environmental art design in specific design work, not only focus on the symbol form itself, but also further grasp the cultural connotation contained in the symbol, and correctly and effectively create and use the symbol. Integrating the concept of sustainable development into environmental art design is not only the primary task of current art design teaching, but also a new subject. In the design, we need to consider the internal logic between symbols and the effect of the application of Symbolic Integration on the expression of ideas. Designers should break through the tradition, constantly inject new connotation into the symbol, and raise the environmental art design to a new realm at the symbol level.

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