

A Post-Structuralist Semiotic Interpretation of Flower Windows in Rural Homestay Design in Yangshuo

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Abstract: In contemporary rural homestay design, the flower window, a traditional Chinese architectural decorative symbol, is extensively employed. The significance of it as a cultural symbol has undergone profound alterations in the development of contemporary society. This paper takes the application of flower windows in contemporary rural homestay design in Yangshuo and the customer experiences as the research object. Through on-site case studies and investigations of customer emotional experiences, by applying Roland Barthes' structuralism and post-structuralist semiotics theory, it attempts to interpret the changes in form and content of the flower window as a traditional cultural symbol in homestay design and further analyze its implicit connotative function for the experiencers. It is expected to offer references for the cultural inheritance in homestay design.

Key words: Chinese Flower Window; Post-structuralism; Semiotics; Implicit Connotation

Roland Barthes (1915–1980) developed his semiotic theory based on the inheritance of Saussure's structuralist linguistic theory, criticism of literary works and popular culture, and a reaction against structuralist semiotics. This led to a transition from structuralist semiotics to post-structuralist semiotics^[1]. In his book *Mythologies: The Interpretation of Popular Culture*, Barthes argued that the signifier of popular culture consists of both the signifier and the signified of language. The rhetoric of the signifier in popular culture is not binary but presents a complex and variable form, with meanings endlessly extended through the combination of "texts"^[2]. The Chinese flower window, as an architectural element carrying traditional cultural connotations, is widely used in rural homestay design, and its significance has undergone profound changes in contemporary society. This paper, based on Roland Barthes' post-structuralist semiotics, interprets the transformation of the form of flower windows in rural homestays in Yangshuo and their implicit connotative functions for the experiencers, further exploring the cultural heritage value of flower windows.

1 Flower Windows

The origin of the flower window can be traced back to the early stages of ancient Chinese architecture. In ancient times, windows were primarily used for lighting and ventilation. Over time, people began to add decorative elements to windows to enhance the aesthetic appeal of buildings. The craftsmanship of flower windows is intricate and involves multiple steps. First, suitable materials such as wood, stone, or brick are selected. Then, the patterns are carved according to the design, and finally, the pieces are assembled and installed. The patterns of

flower windows are diverse, often including geometric shapes, flowers, animals, and human figures, as well as symbolic combinations that convey good fortune, such as bats (福, wealth) and deer (禄, prosperity). Flower windows serve various functions in architecture. First, they provide lighting and ventilation, creating a softer indoor light and better airflow. Additionally, flower windows can act as frames, bringing outdoor scenery into the interior and enhancing the overall landscape effect. Moreover, they can serve to partition spaces and add a sense of layering to the interior.

As a cultural symbol, the flower window not only carries cultural significance but also embodies subtlety. Regardless of its form, the flower window encapsulates both the logical design principles and the emotional experiences of the individuals interacting with it. If a flower window is solely regarded as an architectural component, its meaning becomes limited to a narrow social production scope^[3]. Therefore, it is essential to expand the perspective to include the interpretation of its implicit connotations and to focus on the emotional experiences of different viewers. By conducting field research and comparing the varying perceptions of tourists, we can identify the inherent differences in these experiences.

2 Flower Windows in Rural Homestays in Yangshuo and the Post-Structuralist Semiotic Analysis Model Yangshu

Yangshuo, as a world-class tourist destination, attracts visitors from all over the world due to its superior geographical location and cultural background, making it a popular spot for leisure and vacation. In recent years, cultural elements have become increasingly prevalent in homestay design, and flower windows, as cultural elements, undoubtedly contribute to the creation of the 'rural atmosphere' in homestay designs^[4]. The styles of flower windows in rural homestays in Yangshuo are diverse, encompassing elements such as text lines, animals, plants, human figures, and artifacts. The designs are simple and practical, with patterns depicting myths, historical stories, and life scenes, reflecting the northern Guangxi people's emphasis on virtues such as kindness, loyalty, courtesy, integrity, and shame, while also wishing for good fortune, happiness, and prosperity^[5].

Post-structuralist semiotics emerged in the 1960s and 1970s through a negation of structuralist semiotic theory. It both inherits and critiques structuralist semiotics^[6]. Post-structuralist semiotics inherits the emphasis on the ontological and foundational nature of language, asserting that language is based on pure differential relationships; it critiques structuralist semiotics by breaking the binary opposition established by Saussure and rejecting the idea of a cognitive system or ultimate truth^[7]. In *Mythologies: The Interpretation of Popular Culture*, Roland Barthes applied the binary opposition between denotation and connotation to popular culture, offering two analytical models. The first model uses denotation and connotation separately to interpret popular culture. Barthes argues that the signifier of a myth is composed of both the linguistic signifier and the signified. The signifier is a dynamic factor: when the signifier in the first system of denotation finds its signified and forms a symbol, this symbol then becomes the signifier of the next system and forms a new symbol with its new signified. The second model combines both denotation and connotation in analysis. When considering the object itself, three levels of double transformation systems are present: the real system (first system) transforms into denotation (second system), and denotation transforms into connotation (third system) (see Table 1)^[8].

Table 1 Three-Layered Signification System

Implicit Connotation	Sa		Se
Denotation	Sa	Se	
Real System		Sa	Se

Roland Barthes referred to the signifier of implicit connotation in non-verbal semiotic systems as rhetoric, and the signified as ideology. Rhetoric is divided into two groups: the first group operates within horizontal syntagmatic relationships, characterized by syntactical deviation; the second group operates within vertical paradigmatic relationships, characterized by semantic shifts and deviations ^[9]. Horizontal syntagmatic relationships primarily analyze the structural organization of narrative information, while vertical paradigmatic relationships focus on the study of implicit connotations ^[10]. Vertical paradigmatic relationships involve unconscious evocations or associative relationships that are formed through parallel or contrasting associations. These psychological associations coexist with other elements of language, either sharing commonalities in terms of concepts, signification, or meaning, or in auditory impressions, signifiers, or forms. These relationships, therefore, generate associations and are subconsciously produced ^[11].

Barthes revealed how society maintains its values through certain cultural elements, thereby exerting control over popular culture. The transformation of flower window forms and meanings is one way in which decorative elements of rural homestays evolve, embedding rich social metaphors. The process of form transformation shows that the functions and connotations provided by these decorative elements in Yangshuo rural homestays have far surpassed the original symbolic meanings. The signifier “original form” and the signified “beautiful vision” in the first instance form the symbol of “metalanguage,” which serves as the signified in the second instance. Thus, the first two elements together constitute the denotative layer. Meanwhile, the signifier “structural form” and the signified “metalanguage” in the second instance form the symbol of “conventional construction/form deviation,” which becomes the signifier in the third instance, and hence the third instance belongs to the layer of implicit connotation (see Table 2).

Table 2 Three-Layered Signification System

Implicit Connotation	Sa Conventional Construction/Form Deviation		Se Ideology
Denotation	Sa Structural Form	Se Metalanguage	
Real System		Sa Original Form	Se Beautiful Vision

3 Interpretation of the Transformation of Flower Window Forms in Rural Homestays in Yangshuo through Post-Structuralist Semiotics

3.1 Real System

3.1.1 Signifier: Original Form

At the level of the signifier within the real system, the window itself represents a tangible object in the real world, serving practical functions and embodying distinct forms. The flower windows in the residential architecture of northern Guangxi are typically crafted from locally sourced materials, such as Chinese fir and camphor wood, which reflect regional characteristics. The physical properties of these materials, including their texture and grain, are perceptible and real. Skilled craftsmen utilize traditional woodworking techniques, such as carving and joinery, to process the wood, creating the framework and lattice of the flower window ^[12].

For example, carving techniques are employed to depict intricate patterns on the window lattice, including floral motifs, animals, and geometric shapes. The depth, detail, and precision of these carvings are concrete manifestations of the real system. Additionally, the shape, size, and proportion of the flower windows form a crucial part of the real system. In the traditional dwellings of northern Guangxi, flower windows come in various shapes, such as square, round, and fan-shaped, each producing unique visual and spatial effects.

The size and proportions of the flower windows are carefully designed according to the architectural style, room layout, and lighting requirements. For instance, in spacious halls or public areas, large flower windows are used to maximize natural light and create an open atmosphere. In contrast, smaller flower windows are preferred in bedrooms or private spaces to foster a warm and intimate environment. The structural design of the windows, including the combination of frames and lattice arrangements (such as crisscross or diagonal patterns), not only influences the stability and robustness of the window but also forms a specific rhythm and aesthetic perception in the visual presentation ^[13].

3.1.2 Signified: Beautiful Vision

The patterns and forms of flower windows often carry traditional auspicious meanings and cultural connotations, which constitute the signified aspect. For example, the “return pattern” symbolizes safe return and blessings of longevity, while the “step-by-step brocade pattern” signifies continuous success and promotion in one’s career. The signified meaning is rooted in the established values and inherited traditions of Chinese culture, representing aspirations for a good life, auspiciousness, and the expression of particular values. In a rural dwelling in northern Guangxi, there is a Chinese flower window featuring patterns of “bat” and “butterfly” (Figures 1, 2, and 3). From the perspective of the signifier, the shapes of the bat and butterfly are visually evident and form the immediate visual elements of the window. In traditional Chinese culture, the bat (“fu”) is homophonic with the word for “fortune,” while the butterfly (“die”) is homophonic with “die,” which, in ancient times, referred to longevity in the phrase “mao die” (elder longevity). Hence, butterfly patterns often symbolize longevity. In this flower window combination, the juxtaposition of “bat” and “butterfly” symbolizes the auspicious wish of “double blessings of fortune and longevity,” arising from the established symbolic meanings within traditional Chinese culture.



Figures 1 Bat



2 Butterfly



3 Flower Window Combination

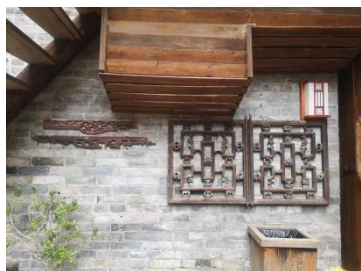
3.2 Denotation

In the context of rural homestays in Yangshuo, the interpretation of “flower windows” enters the second system. In the second system, the concept of “flower windows” expressed through the design language of the rural homestay no longer merely refers to a particular window form in the real world. Here, “flower windows” are abstracted into a concept, representing an object in homestay design, thus detaching from the real-world form of the flower window. The design language of the rural homestay then becomes metalanguage, the language of design symbols. The style of the design is simply the outward appearance of the form, while language is the mechanism. Much like how natural language derives meaning, formal language also depends on the transformation from surface structure (signifier) to deep structure (signified) ^[14].

3.2.1 Signifier

Yangshuo is a place known for its beautiful natural landscapes and unique regional culture. Rural homestays often blend local customs and traditions with foreign cultural elements. The traditional Chinese flower window, originally characterized by specific forms and symbolic meanings such as auspiciousness and classical beauty, has evolved in Yangshuo’s rural homestays. It now incorporates elements from the local Zhuang, Yao, and other ethnic minority cultures, or integrates modern design concepts and Western cultural elements ^[15]. For example, the patterns on flower windows may feature ethnic motifs or geometric shapes that contrast with the intricate carvings typical of traditional Chinese flower windows. This shift transforms the flower window from merely a symbol of traditional Chinese culture into a medium for cultural fusion.

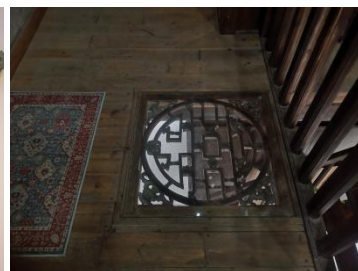
In traditional architecture, Chinese flower windows primarily served the functional purposes of ventilation and lighting. However, in the context of rural homestays in Yangshuo, the functions of flower windows may change according to the specific needs of the homestay. Their original function is gradually fading, being replaced by more diverse uses (Figures 4, 5, 6). Flower windows are now used as decorative elements with aesthetic value. On one hand, to better appreciate the beauty of Yangshuo’s natural landscape, the position and size of flower windows are adjusted to provide the best viewing angles. For instance, large flower windows may be placed in rooms facing the mountains and waters, allowing guests to fully enjoy the natural scenery. On the other hand, flower windows may be combined with modern building technologies, such as enhanced soundproofing and thermal insulation, to improve the comfort of the homestay. Furthermore, flower windows can be freely combined with other interior decorations, furniture, and architectural elements, enriching the symbolic possibilities.



Figures 4 Decorative Flower
Window



5 Decorative Flower
Window



6 Flower Window Used on
the Floor

With the progression of time, people's aesthetic concepts have evolved. In the rural homestays of Yangshuo, the design of Chinese flower windows needs to meet the aesthetic demands of modern individuals. Traditional Chinese flower windows typically feature a solemn and elegant style, but in the context of homestay design, the aim may be to create a more relaxed and natural atmosphere. Therefore, the color, materials, and shapes of flower windows may become simpler and fresher, in line with modern minimalist aesthetics. At the same time, homestay owners may personalize the flower window designs based on different styles, such as pastoral or Zen styles, integrating them as part of the overall decoration of the homestay. This integration creates a unique aesthetic experience through the interaction of various elements.

To adapt to Yangshuo's natural environment and the business needs of homestays, the materials and craftsmanship of Chinese flower windows also undergo changes. Traditional flower windows are predominantly made of wood, featuring intricate carvings and painting techniques. In Yangshuo's rural homestays, however, more durable and environmentally friendly materials such as aluminum alloy and fiberglass may be used. These materials not only offer better waterproof and corrosion resistance but also enable the creation of various complex shapes and patterns through modern processing techniques. Additionally, some homestays employ handmade techniques, integrating local traditional crafts such as bamboo weaving and rattan weaving to add unique textures and artistic value to the flower windows.

3.2.2 Signified

In the context of Yangshuo rural homestays, the meaning of flower windows is not limited to traditional cultural symbols but also closely intertwined with the local rural culture, tourism culture, and more. Flower windows have become a distinctive feature of Yangshuo's rural homestays, symbolizing the homestay's unique style and cultural essence, reflecting the owner's understanding and inheritance of local culture, as well as their focus on enhancing the guest experience. They convey a pursuit of nature and a leisurely lifestyle, along with the exploration of blending traditional culture with modern life. Flower windows symbolize a new way of life and travel experience, attracting visitors to immerse themselves in a distinct cultural atmosphere.

3.3 Implicit Connotation

The design language of rural homestays, as a new symbol, becomes the signifier in the third system. When "flower windows" are employed in homestay design, they carry emotional connotations, preferences, and memories, implying other meanings such as nostalgia, elegance,

and novelty. This constitutes the implicit connotation of the third system, which is complex, variable, and comprehensive in its evaluation. These implicit connotations of nostalgia, elegance, and novelty, in turn, guide the acceptance and consumption of the flower windows in the real world, which are part of the first system.

3.3.1 Signifier

Traditional Chinese flower windows are typically made from wood, carefully carved and polished to reveal an antique texture and exquisite craftsmanship. The grain and color of the wood give the flower window a natural beauty while also meeting the aesthetic requirements of traditional Chinese architecture. These windows often incorporate auspicious motifs from animals, plants, and geometric patterns, such as dragons and phoenixes, bats, peonies, and the "wan" symbol, along with traditional techniques like carving, hollowing, and inlaying. The carving technique is meticulous and intricate, showcasing complex patterns and details; the hollowed design enhances the transparency and light-shadow effects of the window; while the inlaying technique combines different materials, enriching the visual appeal of the flower window.

In addition to traditional wood, modern materials such as metal, glass, and plastic are also utilized. Metal flower windows present a sleek and sturdy modern style; glass flower windows improve lighting effects while creating a fashionable, transparent ambiance; plastic flower windows, with their cost-effectiveness, light weight, and ease of processing, can meet various design needs. The patterns of these windows are no longer confined to traditional auspicious designs but integrate modern or local elements. For example, they might incorporate simple geometric shapes, abstract lines, or modern artistic patterns to align with contemporary aesthetic demands. Alternatively, designs may reflect the natural scenery of Yangshuo, folk culture, and other local characteristics, such as patterns inspired by the Li River or Yangshuo's local legends. Additionally, traditional craftsmanship may be combined with modern techniques to create innovative flower window forms. For example, traditional carving could be enhanced with modern painting techniques to make the colors of the flower window more vibrant and rich, or traditional hollowing could be integrated with modern lighting designs to create unique light and shadow effects.

3.3.2 Signified

Yangshuo's rural homestays offer visitors a unique atmosphere, providing a retreat from the urban hustle, an immersion in nature, and the experience of rural life. Chinese flower windows play a key role in enhancing this atmosphere by creating an antique, elegant, and tranquil environment through their exquisite craftsmanship and meaningful patterns. When visitors enter a homestay and see the Chinese flower windows, they are filled with admiration for traditional culture and a longing for a peaceful lifestyle, evoking nostalgia or memories of happier times. Different visitors, based on their experiences and emotional states, will have various interpretations and emotional responses to the ambiance and emotions conveyed by the flower windows. Some may feel a sense of cultural belonging, while others may experience emotional comfort and relaxation. These diverse emotional experiences reflect the implicit connotation of the flower windows, which transcend their material form and direct symbolic meaning. They reach deeper into the inner emotional world of individuals, adding a unique

charm and appeal to the homestay, providing visitors with a more profound and unforgettable experience during their stay.

Thus, it is evident that these three meanings do not exist on a single plane, but rather represent a three-dimensional structure. The first layer of meaning is connected to the real world and functions as a practical object, the second layer of meaning is connected to concepts and is an abstraction, while the third layer extends the meanings of the first two and assigns subjectivity to the “object,” transforming it into an ideological object at the highest level. The transformation from the second to the third layer expresses human emotional needs. Therefore, this process can reflect the motivations for consumption driven by emotional needs. It further reveals that flower window design, initially guided by practical functionality, addresses practical needs, ensures physical safety, and meets social and self-actualization needs, aligning with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory (Figure 7).



Figure 7 Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs Theory and the Interpretation of Flower Windows



When the symbol transitions from the second to the third system, the psychological projection of the subject onto the object becomes the primary content. This means that the object transcends its practical function and becomes an “emotional object.” Aesthetic objects, antiques, and collectibles are typical examples of this. In some rural homestays, flower windows serve as antiques. While they may no longer serve a functional purpose, they carry the cultural significance of time and history as cultural markers. In contrast, contemporary objects, in their pursuit of functionality and fashion, often neglect to imbue cultural meaning. As a carrier of traditional culture, flower windows contain rich cultural symbols, values, and meanings. When visitors admire the flower windows, they are seeking a deep cultural foundation and spiritual essence to compensate for the cultural void often found in contemporary items. For example, visitors may feel that windows in modern architecture, while practical, lack the ability to convey cultural information and emotions in the way that flower windows do. As a result, they place greater value on the cultural significance represented by flower windows.



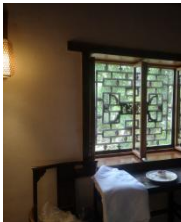

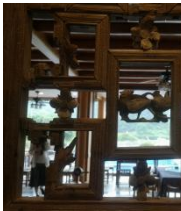

4 The Complexity of Interpreting Flower Windows in the Context of Contemporary Culture

The term “text” originates from the Latin words *textus* (meaning “woven fabric”) and *texere* (meaning “to weave”), broadly referring to anything that is written. Roland Barthes, building on the textual theories of Derrida and Kristeva, introduced concepts such as the signifying practice, the signifying process, and intertextuality^[16]. Among these, the signifying process and intertextuality refer to the idea that a text does not offer a singular, definitive meaning, but rather is a secondary, associative process. At various levels, it expresses other texts, pretexts, and surrounding cultural texts in more or less identifiable forms^[17]. Barthes stated, “A text is only perceived in its effect, in its production; it is experienced through the process of signification”^[18].

The perception and experience of tourists regarding the homestays and their flower windows are shaped through the intertwining of different texts, resulting in rich and ambiguous emotional experiences. A field study on representative tourists’ emotional experiences with flower windows in rural homestays in Yangshuo (Table 3) illustrates this. The diversity of texts means that the meaning of flower windows is no longer confined to a single, fixed interpretation, but instead holds an open-ended nature. Different individuals, based on their cultural background, aesthetic preferences, and personal experiences, interpret the signs of the flower windows in various ways, thereby imbuing the flower windows with more complex and nuanced meanings.

Table 3 Emotional Experiences of Tourists Regarding Flower Windows in Yangshuo Homestays

Consumer Information	Flower Window	Initial Impression	Indoor Perspective	Public Area Perspective	Outdoor View Coordination	Emotional Association	Emotional Expression
35 years old, female, white-collar		Instantly captivated	A natural painting frame	Flower window complemented by greenery	Perfect fusion of green mountains and clear waters	Natural beauty	Willing to share
58 years old, male, retired		Reminiscent of childhood home	Filters out external noise	Recalling the past times	As if traveling back in time	Nostalgia	Willing to share

25 years old, male, French		An exquisite artwork	Intricat e carving s	Experien cing the cultural ambianc e of past eras	Creates a romantic atmospher e	Exotic beauty	Willing to share
44 years old, female, doctor		Primitiv e charm	Retro atmosph ere	Witness of history	Harmonio us with natural landscape s	Poetic dwelling	Willing to share
20 years old, female, student		Romanti c ambianc e	Adds poetic sense	Strong decorativ e function	Scenic spots at every step	Romance	Willing to share
25 years old, female, social media		Strong artistic appeal	Clever combin ation with furnitur e	Highligh t of decoratio n, enhancin g artistic atmosph ere	Perfect blend with lighting and surroundi ngs, photogeni c	Pastoral romance	Willing to share
8 years old, female, student		Interesti ng animal patterns	Mysteri ous and intrigui ng	Ingeniou s composit ion	A window to explore the world	Peculiarity	Willing to share
32 years old, male, travel enthusiast		Differen t from northern official architect ure	Stargaz ing through the flower window , romanti c	Rich in life atmosph ere with decoratio ns	Unique artistic picture	Artistic beauty	Willing to share

4.1 Pretext

4.1.1 Personal Background

Different cultural backgrounds endow individuals with diverse aesthetic concepts and value orientations. Those with an Eastern cultural background tend to emphasize the symbolic meaning, cultural connotation, and philosophical essence of flower windows, while those from a Western cultural background are more focused on the form, color, and craftsmanship of the windows. These cultural differences lead to distinct implicit connotations when interpreting flower windows, as people project familiar cultural symbols and meaning systems into their interpretations.

Moreover, personal growth experiences also influence the perception of flower windows. Individuals who grew up in traditional architectural environments tend to have a strong emotional connection and cultural identity with flower windows, easily sensing the historical accumulation and familial heritage they represent. Conversely, people raised in modern urban environments might find flower windows novel and unfamiliar, focusing more on their artistic and decorative value.

Educational background also plays a role in shaping understanding. Those with education in art, history, or culture possess more professional knowledge and analytical skills, allowing for deeper interpretations of the implicit connotations of flower windows. On the other hand, individuals with lower educational levels tend to focus on intuitive perceptions and direct sensory experiences.

4.1.2 Related Cultural Works

Literature, painting, film, and other cultural works that depict or represent flower window elements serve as pretexts that influence people's understanding. If visitors have previously encountered positive depictions or artistic representations of flower windows in other cultural works, they are likely to project those impressions when encountering flower windows in homestays. This results in a romantic and poetic reinterpretation of the window. For instance, certain poems that create an ambiance around flower windows may prompt visitors to recall related verses and imagery, enhancing the cultural charm and emotional resonance of the flower window.

4.1.3 Expectations and Imagination

Before choosing to stay at a rural homestay in Yangshuo, visitors usually hold certain expectations and imaginations. If their intention is to experience the tranquility of rural life and the charm of traditional culture, then flower windows are perceived as more than just architectural decorations; they become essential elements embodying their ideal of rural living. These expectations extend the symbolic meaning of flower windows, turning them into representations of escaping urban noise and finding inner peace. Moreover, visitors often attribute specific emotions and meanings to the windows, imagining them as portals through time that allow them to experience the lives of ancient people, thus infusing flower windows with romantic and whimsical connotations.

4.2 Typological Text

4.2.1 Regional Cultural Type

Yangshuo's unique regional culture significantly influences the interpretation of flower

windows. Placed within this distinct cultural context, flower windows carry local cultural memories and characteristics. The patterns on the windows often incorporate natural elements like mountains and rivers, as well as images of flora and fauna, echoing Yangshuo's natural landscape. This imbues flower windows with meanings of admiration for the beautiful scenery and expressions of local cultural identity. Moreover, local folklore, traditional beliefs, and social customs are often reflected in the designs, making flower windows bearers of cultural heritage that convey the local people's aspirations for a good life and their distinct values.

4.2.2 Architectural Style Type

The rural architecture of Yangshuo possesses a distinctive style, and as an integral part of architecture, flower windows reflect and complement the overall architectural aesthetics. In traditional Guangxi northern-style residences, the form, material, and craftsmanship of flower windows harmonize with the building's rustic and substantial rural atmosphere. The textuality of architectural style influences the interpretation of flower windows, extending their symbolic meaning to represent rural simplicity, tranquility, and a pursuit of traditional architectural aesthetics. In contrast to modern minimalist architectural styles, flower windows in rural homestays emphasize meticulous craftsmanship and historical depth.

Therefore, the symbolic form of flower windows generates meaning through the interweaving of these various texts and demonstrates strong extensibility as time and space evolve. This extensibility enriches the cultural and artistic values of flower windows and reflects the complexity of human thought and emotion.

5 Conclusion

The significance of flower windows as architectural components lies primarily in their functionality, which guarantees their everyday utility. However, the transition from traditional society to modern living has altered the functional role of flower windows. In traditional dwellings, flower windows had specific forms, functions, and placements, reflecting cultural symbolism such as fertility, family harmony, and virtues like "benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faith." Consequently, traditional flower windows possessed a strong "cultural sense."

In modern society, particularly within rural homestay environments, this "cultural sense" has faded, giving way to emotional experiences such as "pastoral romance," "nostalgic traces," and "childlike wonder." In contemporary rural homestays, the value of flower windows does not manifest through their own presentation but through their relationship with other "texts" within a new context. As a result, the function of flower windows has been extended. The original practical functions gradually disappear, replaced by diverse functions where flower windows freely combine with interior decoration, furniture, and other architectural components to form a rich symbolic assembly.

The post-structuralist semiotic analysis of the implicit connotation of flower windows reveals their variability, diversity, and intertextuality as cultural symbols. This analytical approach helps us gain deeper insights into the cultural and artistic value of flower windows, offering new perspectives and methods for protecting and preserving traditional culture. Moreover, in the context of contemporary leisure culture, the design of flower windows should

consider the emotional experiences required by different subjects, discern the appropriate forms in various contexts, and strike a balance between preserving traditional culture and meeting modern demands.

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