



Some Thoughts on the Protection and Inheritance of Liangshan Yi Traditional Architectural Culture

—Taking New Village Construction as an Example

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Abstract

As the country's largest settlement of Yi, Liangshan has achieved certain achievements in the construction of new countryside (Xu Hang, 2018) [1]. This article first briefly analyzes the significance of the protection and inheritance of traditional architectural culture, and the Yi folk house culture with Fire pond as the core. Then it analyzes the changes in the functional layout of traditional Yi people's traditional houses in the construction of new rural areas, and the impact on the original lifestyle of Yi people under the tide of urbanization. Finally, it puts forward the problems facing Liangshan Yi architectural culture inheritance, and puts forward the protection and inheritance strategy of traditional Yi architectural culture in the construction of new villages.

Subject Areas

Architecture, Culture

Keywords

Liangshan Yi People, Traditional Architectural Culture, Inheritance and Development

1. The Significance of Protection and Inheritance of Traditional Architectural Culture

China is a multi-ethnic country with a long history and a vast territory (Li Haoyang, 2019) [2]. The traditional architectural cultures of various nationalities produced during the development process are the testimony of Chinese history,

civilization and multiculturalism. The architectural culture of various nationalities is the carrier of creating, consolidating and developing Chinese culture and spirit, and is also a historical material for studying people's life and culture in a specific era. Architecture is the carrier of culture. The traditional architectural culture of 56 ethnic groups constitutes a rich and distinctive Chinese traditional architectural culture. Nowadays, with the acceleration of urbanization and the rapid development of information technology, the traditional architectural culture of China has received considerable damage, some even facing disappearance, which is attributed to the impact of foreign culture and the integration of information. Therefore, the protection and inheritance of the traditional architectural culture of various ethnic groups is of great importance.

2. Residential Culture with Fire Pond as the Core

The traditional residences of the Yi are not only affected by the natural environment, but also by traditional culture and local customs, and are the product of a combination of many factors. Powerful patriarchal concepts, primitive and simple wedding customs, religious beliefs centered on ancestor worship, and diverse ethnic and cultural fusion characteristics have all affected and restricted the spatial organization, use and composition of Liangshan Yi buildings. By linking the traditional Yi architecture with the surrounding environment and the inhabitants, and studying the relationship between architecture, society and living customs, we can better understand the characteristics of traditional Yi architecture under specific circumstances.

Folk dwellings are one of the main types of Yi architecture (Cheng Xiaoqin & Tang Liying, 2019) [3]. In the long-term historical development and evolution process, affected by the natural environment and regional environment, the exterior form of the Folk dwelling has undergone great changes, and the interior of the house is organized around the Huotang (refer to **Figure 1**). Compared with other minorities of China, Fire pond symbolizes sacredness in the life of the Yi people. In addition to heating, cooking and other basic life functions, the Huotang also symbolizes the status of family members and plays an important role in



Figure 1. Fire pond (photo source: author self-photo).

the organization of the space. Fire ponds are important indoor furnishings in Yi houses. Due to the economic level and material restrictions of different regions, the types of fire ponds are also diverse (Wen Quan, 2015) [4].

In the original residence of the Yi, people dug a shallow earth pit from the indoor floor, and then placed three pieces of natural stone as a support for the stone pot. This is similar to the firepit site seen at Banpo site, and it is the original firepit form. In this type of house, the ancient lifestyle unique to the Yi people is maintained. In some Yi districts with better economic conditions, the fire pond is usually oval, with three stone pillars erected around it, forming a triangular three-stone tripod. There are exquisite carvings on the stone. In the evolution of the residences of the Yi people, the function of the fire pond has gradually changed with the different layouts. With the improvement of living standards, most of the Yi districts have used electric lighting. The original heating and cooking function of the fire pond has been replaced by the stove. Now just in a few Yi families, the fire pond has not been abolished, or it exists in the kitchen at the same time as the stove, or still exists in the hall. Fire pond has existed as a cultural symbol in the living room of the Yi people.

3. Problems in the Inheritance of Architectural Culture in the Construction of Yi New Village

3.1. The Overall Style of the Construction of the New Village Is the Same

In order to ensure the uniformity of the exterior wall decoration of the folk houses in the Yi area of our country, from the exterior wall decoration to the house layout, they are quite similar and lack design and innovation. In most villages, the exterior walls of the buildings are directly painted with white paint (refer to **Figure 2** & **Figure 3**) and some painted in red, yellow and black paint (refer to **Figure 4**). Qualitative thinking is that buildings with red, yellow and black are Yi buildings. Such buildings painted with white paint can easily cause wall pollution in villages with poor sanitary conditions or humid weather.



Figure 2. The buildings are directly painted with white paint (photo source: author self-photo).



Figure 3. The buildings are directly painted with white paint (photo source: author self-photo).



Figure 4. The buildings painted in red, yellow and black paint (photo source: author self-photo).

3.2. The Layout of the Building Has Changed, Weakening the Traditional National Culture

In the competition between modern architecture and the original Yi architecture, modern architecture prevailed in the construction of the new village. The designer divided the interior space of the house according to modern functions and layout, and independently designed toilets and livestock sheds. Although this measure has raised the living standards of the villagers to a new level, it has destroyed the planning and design of the original houses, and the traditional customs of the villagers have been destroyed. As the kitchen is designed independently, the role of the fire pond is marginalized, leading to the weakening or even disappearance of some rituals and activities centered on the fire pond. This survey found that most residential houses no longer have firepond and replaced them with new heating stoves (refer to **Figure 5**). This is the destruction of national culture. Due to the living area and geographical location of the Yi people,



Figure 5. New heating stoves (photo source: author self-photo).

each village has its own unique living space, such as small villages, dams and grain drying yards, which may seem inconspicuous, but in fact they are the main places for people to communicate, and they are also the carrier of Yi culture (Fan Jinling, 2012) [5]. In the construction of the new village, the new plan destroyed the original places of communication and changed people's traditional way of life (Liu Xiaodong, 2013) [6].

3.3. The Use of Modern Technology and Materials Has Changed the Yi People's Residential Buildings with Native Colors

Due to the new construction technology and new materials, the original construction methods of the Yi people were excluded from the construction of new villages. The use of new materials and the application of new construction techniques caused unemployment for some people who understood Yi people's architecture, leading to the loss of traditional construction skills. Handicrafts with local characteristics are gradually on the verge of extinction, and the development of modern technology and materials has caused considerable damage to the inheritance of national architectural culture.

4. Strategies for the Protection and Inheritance of the Construction Culture of Yi New Village

4.1. Reasonable Planning to Ensure a Comfortable and Beautiful Living Environment While Inheriting the Characteristics of Traditional Buildings

First of all, in the design of the village, measures should be adapted to local conditions. In the design, the national-specific architectural elements and functions

should be retained. For example, the courtyard dam exists in every family, and the role of the courtyard dam occupies an important position in daily life. Especially for some buildings with primitive rural characteristics, some green plants adapted to the local climate should be properly planted to enrich the landscape greening of the village. Secondly, the reconstruction is carried out on the original site of the village. During the design process, the opinions of the original residents must be listened to the residents' requirements for reconstruction and reconstruction should be reasonably adopted. In the process of reconstruction, the customs of the villagers must not be violated. If the reconstruction measures violate public opinion, these measures should be discarded. Finally, when improving the village, the original texture of the village should be preserved, and the construction should be carried out without violating the original village's architectural culture. Planners and designers can promote rural development through the construction of primitive rural tourism projects, publicize rural architectural features, and protect the architectural connotation of residential buildings. Inherit the building skills of Yi villages in the construction of the new village to ensure that the original ethnic characteristics are not changed. Without changing the internal structure of the house, modern measures for cold protection and ventilation can be increased, such as retaining the fire pond, because in the traditional residences of the Yi people, in addition to heating, the fire pond also has a sacrificial function, which can not only play a role in life, but also can inherit traditional national culture.

4.2. Color Balance

The color matching of the village should match the color of traditional houses as much as possible (Ma Jishizi, Liu Yanmei) [7]. It is best to use the same wood color as the traditional house, plus some carvings and paintings. The design and decoration of carvings mainly include the plant patterns, animal patterns, and natural scenery patterns. The combination of red, yellow and black should be coordinated, and the characteristic pattern of the three colors should be painted on the facade of the building. We should take positive measures to preserve the original local charm of the traditional house.

4.3. Try to Keep the Internal Structure of the House as Traditional Residential Features

In terms of the functional layout of houses, we should try our best to maintain traditional residential features and respect villagers' living habits. On the basis of maintaining the characteristics of the original residential houses, combined with modern design techniques, appropriate divisions are made to give each villager a comfortable living space without losing traditional cultural characteristics.

4.4. Drive the Village Economy with Traditional Buildings

The government should take a variety of measures to support the development

of the rural economy, featuring traditional architecture and the development of the rural economy, such as the development of rural-style tourism and home stays, and characteristic ethnic catering, to promote economic development, meet the basic living conditions of the village, and increase the basic income of the villagers. Villagers should also join the ranks of traditional house protection and actively cooperate with the government.

4.5. Develop Protective Measures

For some traditional houses of great protection significance, the establishment of relevant protection measures can only be reinforced and repaired. In this process, we must pay attention to the protection and inheritance of architectural features, and do not destroy the original architectural features.

5. Conclusion

Under the tide of urbanization, the construction of the new Yi Village has had a considerable impact on the original production and lifestyle of Yi. The appearance of the construction of the new village lacks individuality and is highly consistent; the internal layout of the building has changed, and the fire pond has been replaced by a new type of heater, weakening traditional culture; the use of modern technology and materials has changed the building methods of Yi people's houses with native colors. The protection and inheritance of national architectural culture is the common responsibility and obligation of everyone. Reasonable planning is to ensure a beautiful living environment while inheriting the characteristics of traditional buildings. At the same time, pay attention to the reasonable combination of colors, retain the function of the fire pond, and designate relevant protection measures. Traditional houses with ethnic characteristics are protected by policies. National architectural culture is the carrier of creating, consolidating and developing Chinese culture and spirit. It is also a historical material for studying people's lives and culture in a specific era. Each of us should actively participate in the protection and inheritance of national traditional architectural culture.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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