

# Traditional Architecture of Shu

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**Abstract:** *The traditional architecture of Shu occupies an important position in the field of architecture in China, this paper takes the historical development of traditional architecture in Shu as the entry point, analyzes the spatial form of the buildings in the region, the regional characteristics, stylistic features and craftsmanship of the traditional architecture, and explores the unique charm and value of the traditional architectural art in Shu. It is hoped that this study can provide certain help for the development and protection of traditional architecture in Shu.*

**Keywords:** *Traditional architecture in Shu; residential space patterns; regional characteristics;*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Status:

Architecture is an important part of Chinese traditional culture, with great regional characteristics and historical heritage. In recent years, with the strengthening of people's awareness and concern for the protection of traditional architecture, the research on the field of traditional architecture in Shu is gradually increasing. Taking the ancient town as a case study, we analyze the artistic charm and cultural connotation of the traditional architecture of ancient towns in Shu Di (Xiang Yao, 2020). From the perspective of rural revitalization, the regional characteristics of traditional housing architecture in Sichuan Basin and the inheritance strategy in modern times are analyzed (Luo Yueqi, 2023). Characterizing the residential houses in Sichuan and exploring their causes provide valuable perspectives on the evolutionary history of traditional residential houses in Sichuan (Zheng Ke, 2023). A spatial morphological characterization of waterfront traditional villages in the Yangtze River Basin in the Sichuan Basin was conducted (Hu Mingrui, 2021). To summarize, research on traditional architectural art in Shu has made remarkable progress in several aspects in recent years, but there are still problems such as relatively narrow research scope, insufficient depth, single research method, and insufficient strategies for protection and inheritance.

### 1.2 Research Purpose:

The word "Shu" originates from the Shu ethnic group, who developed and established the ancient state of Shu, which gave birth to the splendid Shu culture, and now Shu refers to the Sichuan Basin area in general. Along with the development of modern society, the historical relics of Shu architecture are faced with the dilemma of dismantling or remodeling, which is extremely unfavorable to the protection and development of traditional architecture. By systematically sorting out and studying the traditional architecture in the region, and digging out the cultural connotation and artistic value of the traditional architecture, it can help us better recognize and protect this valuable cultural heritage, so as to promote the sustainable development of the traditional architecture in Shu.

## II. HISTORY OF TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE IN SHU

The traditional architecture of Shu has a long history. As early as in ancient times, according to the seasonal characteristics of the region, the ancestors of Shu used wooden sticks and bamboo pieces to make fences, and painted grass and mud on the inside and outside to build their dwellings. <sup>[1]</sup>With the development of time, Shu architecture was influenced by the culture of the Central Plains and gradually incorporated new materials such as masonry and tiles, and the change of materials made the buildings more stable in structure and the types of buildings were gradually enriched. Immigration activities in the Ming and Qing dynasties further deepened cultural exchanges, and Shu culture was influenced by more foreign cultures, and architectural techniques and styles were further developed, such as paying more attention to architectural details, expanding the scope of wood carving, brick carving, stone carving, and other artistic techniques, and emphasizing the

combination of practicality and aesthetics in application.

### **III. Spatial Forms of Traditional Architecture in Shu**

#### **3.1 Principles and characteristics of space layout**

The spatial layout of traditional Shu architecture contains the philosophical essence of “harmony between humanity and nature”, Through the design, an atmosphere of harmonious coexistence with the natural environment is created. In the overall layout of the building, the building is made to match the undulation of the natural space, try to keep the original geomorphology without making special changes, and consider the structural characteristics, and reasonably arrange the layout of each function so that it meets the needs of people's lives.

#### **3.2 Functional zoning and flow design**

The Shu building takes into account both practicality and aesthetics in its functional zoning, and clearly divides the public space from the living space. The living space occupies the core area of the building, which is highly private and can effectively isolate the outside world; while the public space is located at the entrance of the building or in the courtyard. The internal structure of the building is clearly delineated, and the functional zoning is clear, which can meet the various needs of daily life and external communication. At the same time, due to the climate in Shu, the building also pays attention to moisture-proof and insect-proof, and through the design of eaves and patio, it increases the air permeability of the building, and also effectively improves the comfort and safety of living.

#### **3.3 Spatial characteristics**

The traditional architecture in Shu is unique and customized according to the local conditions. In the mountain architecture, local people skillfully use the terrain difference, reasonable layout of the housing structure, through the natural terrain to achieve a good ventilation and lighting effect, so that the building to get better lighting and ventilation effect; and in the waterfront building, the use of water advantages, to create a unique landscape style, such as Leshan Arrow Plate Ancient Town of the riverfront buildings, which are in close contact with the river, the field of view of the open landscape is pleasant, but also for the convenience of people's life and production, perfectly presenting a symbiotic relationship of natural harmony and unity. They are in close contact with the river, with a wide view and pleasant scenery, and can also provide convenience for people's life and production, perfectly presenting the symbiotic relationship of natural harmony and unity.

### **IV. Characteristics of traditional architectural art in Shu**

#### **4.1 Geographical**

The traditional architecture of Shu is influenced by Shu culture, forming a unique Shu architectural style, which not only has the solemn atmosphere of the Central Plains architecture, but also has the delicate elegance of the southern architecture, and is the product of the fusion and collision of national cultures. In the choice of materials, more bamboo, wood, stone and other natural materials produced in the local area, not only convenient transportation, easy to process, but also able to save costs, so that the building and the natural environment coexist harmoniously. Reflecting the concept of sustainable development, highlighting the regional and uniqueness of the architectural art of Shu.

#### **4.2 Decorative style characteristics**

Traditional architectural decorations in Shu are mostly made of wood, stone and brick carvings, demonstrating the skill and aesthetics of the craftsmen. Workers use the relief, leakage, translucent carving and other techniques to carve stories, myths and legends, birds and animals, landscape, flowers and birds and other auspicious motifs in the building components, the works of smooth lines, vivid modeling, lifelike, far-reaching significance.

The same ingenuity in the use of color. Such as painted murals will be people's life scenes and natural scenery painted on the building, the overall vivid image, vivid, lifelike, amazing.

#### **4.3 Structure and process**

The traditional architecture of Shu mainly consists of column and tie construction. The traditional wooden structure is a flexible and changeable structure, which uses less material, is light and easy to construct, and is the most commonly used form of structure for traditional houses in the basin and mountainous areas<sup>[2]</sup>. This building structure is more common in the southern region, it combines bamboo weaving, mud and other materials, so that the building in the construction process of cost and difficulty are reduced, but also to ensure that the wall of the thermal insulation performance, superior safety performance, so that the comfort of the

living space increased substantially.

### **V. Traditional Architectural Decoration Subjects in Shu**

The use of natural elements is more common in the traditional architectural decorative themes in Shu, craftsmen draw inspiration from the living environment, applying elements such as landscapes, flowers and birds to architectural decorations, and the vibrant visual effects give life and vitality to the buildings, and show the local people's reverence and love for nature.

In addition to natural elements, the use of auspicious motifs is also common in decorative themes, such as “have both fame and wealth”, which is an auspicious motif composed of gourds or Chinese characters and double happiness characters<sup>[3]</sup>. The gourd takes the harmonic sound of fortune and luck, symbolizing wealth, good fortune, longevity and other symbols, and the double character represents joy and happiness, expressing people's hope for a happy life. There is also the application of “Loong and Phoenix bring auspiciousness”, “Five bats bring long life” and other patterns, these patterns are brightly colored, lively shape, but also contains a deep cultural culture, loved by the local people.

### **VI. Summary**

The traditional architecture of Shu is the crystallization of the wisdom of ancient craftsmen, but also the embodiment of the cultural connotation of Shu, they have witnessed the changes and development in the long history, in the future, we should actively protect these precious historical and cultural heritage, and promote its continuous innovation and development.

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