

# Cultural Connotation of Architectural Features of Wooden Houses in Western Sichuan

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## Abstract

The western Sichuan region has a long history and a rich humanistic culture, while the local wood-frame residential architecture has a simple and elegant style under the influence of its unique Shu culture. This study aims to explore the cultural causes behind the unique architectural features of the western Sichuan dwellings from three aspects: site selection, material selection, and construction feature.

## Keywords

Western Sichuan Dwelling; Architectural Features; Culture Connotation.

## 1. Introduction

“West Sichuan” refers to the West Sichuan Plain, also known as Chengdu Plain or Basin West Plain, which is located in the western part of the Sichuan Basin and is called the West Sichuan Dam by local residents. Due to the characteristics of the geographical environment and the climate of the region, the construction of local dwellings is often influenced by the terrain, taking materials from the local land and building based on the materials. And in the western Sichuan, the local people mostly use wood as the main material for the construction of dwellings, and then add locally available materials such as clay, stone, thatch, etc. The construction of such dwellings eventually becomes harmonious with the environment, providing both ventilation and solar shade, with a flexible and versatile building layout and a variety of architectural styles but also orderly. Under the combined influence of these factors, the “Western Sichuan Dwellings” eventually formed a unique style of simplicity and elegance, and its architectural features contain a rich humanistic connotation. The “Western Sichuan Dwelling” is a representative architectural product of traditional Chinese culture, and now the “Western Sichuan Dwelling” is also included in one of the eight major schools of traditional Chinese architecture. This study attempts to explore the cultural causes behind the architectural features of the western Sichuan dwellings from the humanistic perspective, and its cultural significance is mainly expressed in the three aspects of the site selection, material selection and architectural construction features of the dwellings.

## 2. Organization of the Text

### 2.1. Literature Review

In recent decades, the research on western Sichuan dwellings has been mainly from the perspective of architecture, and has only been mentioned in passing when introducing Sichuan dwellings. So the number of monographs on western Sichuan dwellings is relatively small. The earliest extant work that introduces Sichuan dwellings is *Overview of the Survey of Ancient Buildings in Southwest China* by Mr. Liu Dunzhen in the 1940s, which is included in *Selected Essays on the History of Architecture*; Mr. Liu Zhiping and Wang Qiming(2000), in his work *A Brief History of Chinese Residential Architecture* made an introduction of Sichuan residential architecture. However these scholars’ research on Sichuan dwellings is rather general and does not form a systematic result, which has been compensated by later scholars’ research, including

Li Xiankui's book *Sichuan Dwellings* and Mr. Ji Fuzheng's book *Towns and Dwellings in Sichuan* and *The Native Land: A Sequel to Towns and Dwellings in Sichuan*. In these works, the geography, material selection, design features, and spatial patterns of Sichuan houses are systematically described, and the customs and culture behind the houses are also briefly mentioned. The research on the western Sichuan dwellings is mainly focused on journal articles and dissertations. Xie Wenfeng (2010) introduces the emergence of new western Sichuan dwellings and analyzes their characteristics; Yue Yang and Chen Yi (2011) analyze the similarities and differences of the architectural features of western Sichuan dwellings in different architectural individuals, taking Lei Chang's former residence and Liu's manor as examples; Xu Kailiang, Fu Hong, and Miu Xiaoyu (2011) point out the current situation of destroyed western Sichuan dwellings and suggest the protection and development of western Sichuan dwellings; Zhou Jie, Chen Yi, Zhou Bo, and Li Xudong (2012) take Lei Chang's former residence as an example and introduce the "Tianjin" in western Sichuan houses in detail which is also called patio, and revealing the importance of the "patio" and explaining the idea of "harmony between heaven and man" in western Sichuan houses; Pu Yinzhu, Chen Yi, Zhou Bo and Li Xudong (2012) again take Lei Chang's former residence as an example to explore the cultural heritage and architectural art value of western Sichuan folk houses, and review the conservation strategies and development of western Sichuan folk houses. In addition to journal articles, the frequency of Sichuan western dwellings being used as the research topics of dissertations in the past ten years has also increased, and several scholars have made great contributions to the study of Sichuan western dwellings through their dissertations. Dong Wenying (2010) takes the composition form and formation environment of western Sichuan dwellings as the research object, and systematically explains the historical origin, geographical environment, material selection of western Sichuan dwellings, and analyzes in detail the economic factors, cultural environment and customary beliefs of the social form of western Sichuan dwellings; Li Changchun (2016), in his dissertation, investigates the wooden structure dwellings in western Sichuan from the perspective of architecture, and meticulously analyzes the architectural structure of western Sichuan dwellings; Zou Yuxiang (2017) studied the unique technique of tile and stone construction technology of western Sichuan dwellings in his dissertation; Ren Pingping (2017) meticulously discussed the relationship between architectural art and environment of western Sichuan dwellings in her dissertation, and finally concluded that there is an interdependent relationship between the two. In her dissertation, Wu Yulu (2017) analyzed in detail the technology of "tiaoyan" of western Sichuan houses from the perspective of building technology. In addition to the above-mentioned dissertations, many other scholars have introduced Sichuan dwellings or western Sichuan dwellings, but often from an architectural perspective and covering only a smaller range of western Sichuan dwellings. Foreign studies of western Sichuan dwellings and even Sichuan dwellings have not yet been found, and the only relevant research is taking the method of comparison between a domestic building type and its own architecture, including the comparison of building materials, technology, and other aspects. Moreover, in Western society, the architecture of the common people did not receive enough attention at first, and the Western architecture only considers the architecture of ruling class as orthodox architecture. What changed this phenomenon was the publication of Bernard Rudowsky's book *Architecture Without Architects: A Short Introduction to Non-Pedigreed Architecture*, in which Bernard first publicly evaluated the architecture of the plebeian and affirmed its architectural techniques and architectural styles (Wan, 2015). It was under the influence of this work that the architectural community began to include traditional architecture or plebeian architecture in the scope of study. There are fewer works on traditional architecture in Western architecture at present, and the study of traditional Chinese architecture has not been addressed in Western architecture. So far only some Japanese and Korean architects have made some introduction to some traditional

dwellings in their own countries. The Japanese architect Kenzo Tange has conducted field research on Japanese traditional residential architecture and compiled the research results to eventually publish several books; the Korean architect Sang-Lee has also studied Korean traditional residential architecture and introduced various aspects of architectural site selection, culture, layout, construction forms and spatial characteristics in his monograph, *Korean Traditional Settlements and Dwellings* (Ren, 2017). These research results provide research ideas and research methods for the study of this topic.

## 2.2. The Culture of Site Selection of Dwellings

Since ancient times, the Chinese have attached great importance to the location of their homes, and for the people of western Sichuan, the location of buildings not only requires specific regulations based on the characteristics of the terrain and topography, but also reflects the rich cultural connotations of the Chinese nation, including feng shui culture, Taoist culture, and so on. In terms of geographical location, there are three main types of sites, mountains, hills and plains, due to the diverse topography of the western Sichuan plain. Based on the different topography of western Sichuan, the residential architecture also differs in terms of combination. The “Chuanxi bazi” is a flat plain area in the Sichuan Basin. Compared with other terrains, the “flatness” of the plains makes the roads in this part of the Sichuan basin easily accessible and convenient for traffic, which is very favorable for the formation of tribes and the development of urbanization. At the same time, the plain area is rich in river resources and construction resources, which makes it the preferred place for people in western Sichuan to gather and live together. In the western part of Sichuan, the famous “Chuanxi linpan”- a rural living environment form formed by the organic integration of the farmhouse compound and the surrounding natural environment such as tall trees, bamboo forests, rivers and peripheral cultivated land. This form of life and architecture form is a unique part of western Sichuan folk culture, which reflects the Chinese way of life of living in groups since ancient times, and the farming land in the linpan is also a reflection of the farming culture in western Sichuan.

The plain is rich in river, so the local areas such as river and ponds among them are also one of the sites chosen by the Chuanxi people for their buildings, and this is an important manifestation of the river source culture in the Chuanxi region. River source culture is an important feature of ancient Chinese agricultural civilization and an important part of Chinese water conservancy culture (Dong, 2012). The residential buildings in western Sichuan were sited at the junction of several plains, including the Chengdu Plain, the largest plain in Sichuan. And the internal water system is composed of two main water system, the Tuo River system, which is consisted of the Mian Yuan River, the Shiting River and the Jianjiang River, and the Min River system, which is consisted of the Dujiangyan River system, the Xi River and the Nan River. The rich flow of rivers in the western Sichuan region, so the ancient Shu people is rich in water management which have ensured water resources for agricultural production in the western Sichuan region. And also the rivers, lakes and ponds provide water for people to live in their daily lives. In addition to drinking for people and animals, water also has an irreplaceable role in purifying the environment and regulating the climate. Besides, the rivers are bound to form important water and land docks, which can be used for daily washing of local people, passenger transportation and distribution. At the same time, the docks can also serve as landmarks to attract tourists and date gatherings. The ancient town of Yuantong in Chongzhou, one of the four major market towns which is established along the river, was historically an important wharf, with the confluence of the Wenjin River, the Wei River and the Po River running through the entire territory of Yuantong. Since ancient times it has been a lively place where merchants flowed incessantly and oars traveled constantly, and a large number of merchants have come here to build pavilions and set up businesses.

In addition to the plain, the west Sichuan dam also includes some surrounding mountains and hills. There are a large number of mountain ranges along the border of the plain area, including Longmen, Qionglai and Longquan ranges, while the surrounding hills are undulating. Compared with other terrains, the mountainous area is a terrain site with great advantages as far as the building itself is concerned, although the transportation is not as convenient as the plain. First of all, the slope of the sun-ward mountain area has long sunshine time, so the house is not easily exposed to moisture, which is a favorable site for building. At the same time, the high slope of the mountain is a natural drainage system, which can effectively avoid natural disasters such as flooding. Secondly, the high terrain of the mountain is well ventilated and has a higher vegetation cover, which can play a natural cooling role.

The custom of “feng shui” plays an important role in guiding the selection of building sites. As for the definition of “feng shui”, Wang Qiheng (1998:12) points out that “the meaning of ‘feng shui’ is to examine the geographical environment of the mountains and rivers, including geology and hydrology, ecology, microclimate and environmental landscape, and then to choose an auspicious site to build. It is a practical academic discipline in ancient times”. Dong Rui and Li Zechen (2008:50) point out that “feng shui, also known as the science of geomancy, is very closely related to the *The Book of Changes*. Geomancy is originally the way of heaven and earth. The use of feng shui in architecture means that the site selection, planning, design, and construction of buildings should take into account astronomical, geographical, and meteorological factors to create an environment in which heaven and earth, geography, and human harmony are integrated to achieve the supreme state of unity between heaven and man. In feng shui, the shape of the site is chosen by comparing the natural landscape of mountains and rivers, topography and terrain. Traditional Chinese architecture, from the capital to the village, from the palace to the residence, from the Yang house to the Yin house, from the Taoist temple to the temple, the site selection is the best place with the rule of back to the mountain, facing the water, facing the sun”. Thus it can be seen that Feng Shui is a philosophy of studying the environment and the laws of the universe, emphasizing that man and nature are convertible and inseparable, reflecting the Chinese people’s “unity of nature and man”. Moreover, it is also the precipitation and summary of the practical experience of Chinese people in choosing and building living environment for thousands of years. “*The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Residence*, has description on the choose of residential site, ‘taking the situation as the body, spring water as the blood, land as the skin, vegetation as the hair, house as the clothes, and portal as the crown and belt. If the house meets the criteria above, it is auspicious’. It is a insightful views which can be called the earliest and most authoritative expression on the choose of site in ancient times. And it clearly expresses the traditional planning thinking and environmental view of the ancients in surveying the geography and choosing the residence, which has a profound influence on the site selection and layout of traditional Chinese residential houses and shapes the pattern of traditional residential houses” (Dong, 2012:241). In feng shui culture, residential buildings focus on the sun, avoiding the wind and attracting gas, preferring to “follow the mountain and water”, with the mountain being the skeleton of the earth and water being the source of all things, which is considered to be an auspicious source of wealth. Therefore, whether it is a town or a forest settlement, or an ordinary residential farmhouse, the site selection pays much attention to “feng shui”, and most of them insist on the site selection method of “avoiding wind and facing water” and “relying on the mountain and water”. Some of them have a garden in the south and a clan house in the north, with the south side being Yang and the north side being Yin, which is in line with Taoist thought. Some of the buildings are oriented west and face to east, which implies the Taoist idea of “Purple Qi coming from the east”. Therefore, the site selection culture of western Sichuan dwellings is based on the geographical location and built according to the environment, but also influenced by Feng Shui culture and Taoist culture.

### 2.3. The Culture of Materials Selection of Dwellings

The selection of materials for the wooden houses in western Sichuan is influenced by the unique natural and humanistic environment, and the selection of building materials is based on the rule of according to local conditions and using local material, which is decided by the influence of natural geographical conditions and economic and technological development, reflecting the ideology of the people of western Sichuan “the unity of nature and man”. The complex and diverse topography, mild and humid climate, and rich and diverse native materials have given the people of western Sichuan a unique conception and creation of architecture. The large number of rivers and water resources brought the people of western Sichuan abundant sediment and water resources, which created favorable conditions for the growth of local vegetation and wood. Therefore, due to the geographical environment, the region has abundant materials for the construction of residential houses. The western part of Sichuan is mountainous and watery, with abundant forest resources, so there are plenty of available timber resources, including pine, fir, cypress, poplar, acacia, as well as valuable timber such as balsam fir and Nanmu wood are available for construction. Bamboo, a representative wood of Sichuan, is also a widely used building material for western Sichuan houses. Compared to materials such as stone, wood is easier to carry, and based on the abundant natural resources, buildings in the mountains of western Sichuan could then be made from local materials, as saving labor costs was very important to the people during production activities in ancient times. In addition, the Chengdu plain also produces rice, which is mixed in mud and can be used for the construction of walls or thatched roofs. Mud with rice in it increases the durability of the walls and also prevent moisture. Sichuan limestone is also abundant, and the quality of burnt quicklime is very high, which is widely used in construction. The ubiquitous red clay and weathered fine shale formations are commonly used for firing green bricks and small green tiles. The clay interspersed with weathered sand shale is used for building earthen walls. Besides, river sand, pebbles and other building materials are also abundantly produced.

In addition to the abundant material resources, the geographical environment also had a great impact on the local climatic conditions. The Chengdu plain belongs to the subtropical humid climate region, with an average annual precipitation of more than 1000 mm and a very suitable temperature. During the summer months, however, the rainfall surges which makes it prone to outbreaks of heavy rainfall and flooding. The Chengdu Plain is a basin, depressed in the middle and surrounded by high mountains. The depressed topography provides good thermal insulation, and at the same latitude, the Chengdu Plain and the Sichuan Basin are like a warm island, with a significantly higher temperature accumulation than the surrounding areas, which is beneficial for agricultural production. The Sichuan Basin is particularly rich in rivers and water resources, resulting in a large amount of water and air that cannot be dispersed, thus forming topographic rain, making the Chengdu Plain often cloudy and rainy, with little sunlight radiation and therefore high humidity. The geographical and climatic characteristics of the Chengdu Plain make the local architecture more liberal in its orientation requirements and the nature of the axes of layout can be varied. In addition to the general requirement for natural ventilation and dampness avoidance in houses, shading, heat insulation and ventilation are also emphasized. These are the important factors influencing the choice of site for the residential buildings in western Sichuan.

The Chinese people respect nature, emphasize science, and pursue the harmony between man and nature. Therefore, when building houses, the people of western Sichuan choose building materials in accordance with the characteristics of Chinese culture. Traditional Chinese culture advocates “the unity of nature and man”, pursues the aura of nature, and believes that trees are alive, so in the selection of building materials, they mostly use raw materials such as wood, thatch and clay, and strive to blend the image of architecture with nature.

## 2.4. The Culture of Construction Features of Dwellings

There are two main forms of construction of wood structure residential buildings in western Sichuan, one is single building and the other is combined building. Building monomer is each independent building in the building group, while building combination mainly refers to the "courtyard-style" building community composed of several independent buildings, which integrates the residential function and production function of buildings. Common building combination include farmhouses, forest plates, manors, towns, houses and so on. Influenced by farming culture, immigrant culture, Confucianism, folk culture, Buddhist culture, Taoist culture and some other cultures, dwellings have unique styles in western Sichuan from the aspects of shape, layout and decoration.

The influence of farming culture on residential buildings in western Sichuan is mainly reflected in the construction purpose and form of residential buildings. For thousands of years, the main form of economic development in China has been small-scale peasant economy, in which crops are planted and processed by families, which can be self-sufficient and exchanged for trade activities. In residential buildings, the architectural communities of farmhouses, forest plates and towns are distributed in or surrounded by fields, which is for the convenience of farming and planting. The formation of "Changzhen" is to provide a place for people to carry out free trade of crops, and at the same time, it is convenient for people to communicate with each other. The architectural purpose and decoration of western Sichuan dwellings also show the unique farming culture in this area. In order to facilitate the development of agriculture, the people of western Sichuan have designed and built field ground, warehouses, milling houses and other building units that are convenient for farming or agricultural products processing. The field ground can dry grain and pile up firewood piles, the warehouses can store grain, and the milling houses can process agricultural products; In order to facilitate the fishing, residential buildings also include harbors, threshing ground and so on; In order to carry out commercial transactions, people in western Sichuan live in shops, and integrate shops into the construction of residential houses, thus having the architectural form of shop in the first floor and residential house in the second floor, or shop in the front and residential house in the back. In addition, the unique "Yanlang", also called eaves gallery, is the embodiment of farming culture. Yanlang, also known as Bukou and Yandun, is a corridor formed by extending eaves outward in front of a house. It is connected with the building not only as a passage, but also enriches the space and level of the building (Yao, 2015). People in western Sichuan use eaves gallery as the stacking area of farm tools, which not only saves space, but also provides convenience for people to go out and do farm work. In terms of decoration, influenced by farming culture, a large number of decorative components with the theme of "fishing, firewood, farming and reading" are used. In addition, a large number of poultry and livestock images such as cattle, horses, chickens and ducks are used in the decoration of bricks, doors and windows (Dong, Zhou, 2012).

Immigrant culture is also an important type of culture that brings influence on the construction of residential buildings in western Sichuan. "The immigrant activities in Sichuan have a long history, starting as early as the pre-Qin period and lasting for a quite long time, which inject multi-regional cultural nutrients into the land of Sichuan. So it says that 'Qin customs exist in Shu, and Chu customs remain in Shu'" (Li, 2009:30). Sichuan has been a war-torn place since ancient times, especially since the Song Dynasty, since when the Shu area repeatedly underwent great changes, first Wu Xi betrayed the Song Dynasty and defected to the Jin Dynasty, then the Jin invaded the south area, and then the Mongolian invaded (Tang, 2017). The long years of war led to a low number of native inhabitants. Since the Qin dynasty, there have been six major migrations in Sichuan's history, the largest one was the "Huguang-filled Sichuan" which is the migrant activity from Hubei and Hunan. Most of the people in Sichuan today are immigrants, and because of the many migrations, Sichuan has developed an open and tolerant culture, and its history is characterized by diversity, which is also reflected in the architecture of the houses

in western Sichuan. The large number of immigrants brought with them building techniques and architectural styles from other regions, which had a profound influence on the architecture of western Sichuan houses. For example, the banking fire wall, which is typical of the Hubei and Hunan style, was initially prevalent in Fujian, Guangdong, and Jiangxi, but was introduced to Sichuan after immigration, and was eventually incorporated into the western Sichuan residential architecture system and widely used. Moreover, the architectural complexes such as mansions and estates in western Sichuan often include such single architecture as ancestral hall and guild hall, whose development was also influenced by the immigrant culture.

The influence of Confucianism on the residential architecture of western Sichuan is mainly manifested in the form of the combination of houses and architectural structures. In the feudal society of the Chinese nation for thousands of years, Confucianism's idea of ritual dominated social thought for a long time, in which all social activities and related utensils formed certain hierarchical differences according to social status, and formed a formal regime. Confucianism is centered on the concept of "etiquette" and the ethical and hierarchical concept of "superiority of the elders over the young, superiority of men over women, and superiority of the lineal descent over concubine". The spirit of "etiquette" is order and harmony, and its core is the patriarchal and hierarchical system, which constitutes a hierarchical human relationship between people and also groups (Dong, 2012). As part of the people's life and feudal rituals, architecture reflects Confucianism in its layout, scale, and construction. In many places, residential buildings in western Sichuan embody strict social hierarchy, such as respect and inferiority, age and youth, men and women, inside and outside. For example, the courtyard houses often have a main room and a side room, and the main room is usually the residence of the elders and the honored ones, while the side rooms located on the east and west sides are the residence of the juniors and the inferiors, which is the reflection of respect and inferiority in the architecture. The division of priorities in the courtyard layout of western Sichuan houses also comes from the influence of Confucianism in religious culture. Also, the square shape of some of the houses has a strict symmetry of the central axis, which is also influenced by Confucianism. In addition, the decorative colors in the houses also reflect the hierarchy. The colors of the houses in the western Sichuan region are generally plain and simple, with white brick walls and black tiles, but the houses of officials and wealthy merchants often use gorgeous and bright colors for the decoration of the buildings or walls, but in the ordinary houses the magnificence of the colors is reduced, which is also a reflection of the hierarchy in the buildings. The unique layout of the "patio" in western Sichuan dwellings also reflects Confucianism. "As a lubricant for family ties, the patio space plays an important role in connecting architectural spaces and thus human feelings. It brings the whole family together as a unity, while at the same time embodying the feudal family hierarchy of 'ethics, hierarchy, and order' in the building body, forming various 'order spaces'" (Zhou, 2012).

The influence of folk culture, Buddhist culture and Taoist culture on architecture is reflected in the decoration of residential buildings. The decorative motifs commonly used include the Buddhist Bodhisattva, lion, scrolling grass pattern, etc. The decorations reflecting Taoist culture also include many, such as the Eight Immortals, gourd, crane, duster, etc., which are all related to Taoism. For example, the pendant pillars of residential houses are often decorated with lotus flower pattern, which represents the meaning of dignity in Buddhism, and the scrolling grass pattern symbolizes perseverance in Buddhism. Buddhist culture has also influenced the construction of buildings in western Sichuan, such as the construction of Buddhist halls and the installation of Buddha statues. Bashu area is one of the birthplaces of Taoism, whose main ideology is to avoid the world and return to the truth, and Qingcheng Mountain in western Sichuan is one of the representative buildings of Taoism. The eight immortals, gourds, cranes and dusters that symbolize Taoist culture express the vision of the people of western Sichuan for a better life and the expectation of good fortune and longevity. The folk culture of the

western Sichuan region includes not only the aforementioned feng shui, but also tea culture, ancestor worship and other ideas. Some of the dwellings are designed and built with a pathway between the main courtyard and the large meeting hall connecting the entrance dam and the backyard, while a large shade wall is built on the opposite side to prevent the leakage of wealth, which is the influence of feng shui on the construction of the building. In western Sichuan and even the entire Chengdu area, tea culture has long become an important part of the daily life of the local people, teahouses can be found everywhere has also become an important part of the western Sichuan architecture, while retaining the western Sichuan architectural style into the tea culture and tea ideas. The decoration in the western Sichuan residential buildings is the best interpretation of the folk culture, such as the Taisui decoration on ridge of the roof, the hanging fish under the verge board and so on. The verge board, also called Bofengban, is nailed to the end of each purlin on the eaves of the left and right side of the roof wall, which serves to shield the purlins from wind and rain erosion. And the “hanging fish” is a fish-shaped decoration that hangs vertically in the middle joint of the Bo Feng board on the mountain side of the building (Chen, 2018). There are two main reasons for using fish as decoration: one is that most of the houses in western Sichuan use wood as the structural pillar and important raw material for house construction, so the house is afraid of fire, and fish is a thing in water, symbolizing water, which can restrain fire; second, the fish shape also has the meaning of having a good year and many children, reflecting people’s beautiful vision of praying for many children and many grandchildren. “The ridge of the roof is the focus of traditional Chinese architecture decoration, in the middle of the ridge will usually make a protruding tile decoration, shaped like a vase or gourd, commonly known as ‘Zhongdui’ or ‘Taisui’, in order to drive away evil spirits to stabilize the house, pray for good fortune, and ward off evil, etc., which send people’s good wishes. (Li, 2016). Similar architectural decorations include the head of Ao, which is a traditional animal like fish in Chinese myth, eagle tips, and so on.

## 2.5. Conclusion

All the site selection, materials selection, and construction feature of the western Sichuan residential buildings reflect the unique connotations of the Sichuan culture. In the site selection, in addition to the natural environment of Sichuan, it also contains the concept of feng shui in folk culture and Taoist thought. In the selection and use of building materials, the idea of “the unity of nature and man” is used as a guide, and materials are selected according to local conditions and priority of local materials, striving for a harmonious relationship between man and nature. The layout, structure and decoration of the houses are influenced by various cultures, including farming culture, migrant culture, Confucianism and folk culture. The layout and structure of the dwellings reflect the feudal hierarchy and ritual system, with the main and side rooms, symmetrical and balanced arrangement, colorful and gorgeous changes according to the hierarchy, and the construction of the “patio” reflecting Taoist thought. In the decoration, most of the decorations are based on agricultural activities or domestic animals, or use a lot of lions, lotus flowers, scrolling grass, cranes, gourds and other Taoist or Buddhist motifs to send a good vision. A large number of repeated migrations brought the rich culture of various places and incorporated it into the regional culture of the western Sichuan region, which was eventually reflected in the architecture, such as the construction forms of fire sealing walls and clan shrines. It is under the joint influence of many cultures that the architecture of western Sichuan dwellings presents a unique style distinct from other types of architecture and has become an important part of traditional Chinese architecture, still shining through the development and evolution of history.

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