

# An Analysis of the Traditional Villages in Fangdong Town, Luxian County, Sichuan Province from the Perspective of Community Building

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**Abstract:** Aunder the background of economic construction as the center of the times, the rapid development of cities and rural areas obviously lag, showing a dual structure of urban and rural areas, serious loss of rural population, some traditional villages and even showing the trend of extinction. It is imperative to protect traditional villages. Therefore, China has been included in the list of 6 batches of national traditional villages. Fangdong Town, Luxian County, Sichuan Province, has a long history and culture. It is known as the "hometown of fish and rice in southern Sichuan". Including several towns adjacent to it, it has retained a large number of local watchtower-style manor buildings from the Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China. Shipaifang Village and Songtian Village under the jurisdiction of Fangdong Town are fortunate to be selected as state-level traditional villages. From the perspective of community building, this paper combines the background of Shipai Village and Songtian Village, and explores the development direction of the two villages with 'people', 'culture', 'land', 'industry' and 'scenery' as entry points, aiming to open a new window of thinking for the protection of traditional villages and rural revitalization.

**Keywords:** Fangdong Town, Community Building, Traditional Villages, Shipaifang Village, Songtian Village

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## 1. Introduction

After the reform and opening up, China has opened a new situation of transformation from an agricultural producer to an industrial producer, all walks of life are booming, the city has been unprecedented construction. Since then, China's urban economy has developed rapidly in the past 40 years [1]. The rapid development has made the city have strong vitality and adsorption, while the rural areas lack the support of modern industries, and the population loss is very serious, which makes the villages abandoned or even disappeared, forming the current situation of urban-rural dual structure [2]. How to reshape rural vitality and protect traditional villages is a major issue in the current society.

Fangdong Town, Luxian County, Sichuan Province, retains a large number of watchtower manor-style historical buildings. These watchtower manor buildings occupy a unique and very important position in Sichuan folk houses and even Chinese

traditional folk houses. Despite incomplete statistics, only covers an area of more than 2000m<sup>2</sup> manor building in the entire Fangdong town has 48. These manor buildings are scattered in rural fields, integrating good historical culture and cultural landscape, which are valuable cultural resources for rural revitalization. Through field visits and investigations, taking the traditional Chinese villages of Shipaifang Village and Songtian Village in Fangdong Town, Luxian County, Sichuan Province as examples, from the perspective of community building, we try to explore new development ideas for these traditional villages.

## 2. Related Concepts

### 2.1. Traditional Villages

Chinese traditional villages, formerly known as ancient villages, according to the requirements of the <Traditional

Village Evaluation and Identification Index System >: traditional villages were built before 1980, which better retained the historical evolution. There was no major change in the architectural environment, architectural style and village location in the village. It has unique folk customs. Although it has gone through a long time, it has been a village that serves people [3]. Traditional village is the carrier of China's farming culture, including rich rural culture, history and culture, folk culture, social culture, with high cultural, historical and social value [4].

## 2.2. Community Building

The term 'Community Building' is derived from Japan, meaning all social activities done to improve the quality and vitality of life by improving the surrounding community environment on the basis of diversity cooperation, with the theme of community residents and with the help of the existing resources of the regional community [5]. Community Building in this article can be understood as: Shipaifang Village, Songtian Village villagers in the use of existing regional background resources, multi-party cooperation to the villagers of the village as the main body of action to protect the village's historical buildings and beautiful new village construction, shaping the new sustainable industries, to bring new vitality to the village. Relying on the link of village development and construction, villagers establish close social ties between each other, between villagers and villages, between villagers and partners, and realize rural revitalization while continuing excellent traditional culture [6].

## 3. Advantages of Community Building

### 3.1. Social Equity in Villages

Rural aborigines are the masters of the village, and the right to use resources and preferential benefits of rural communities should be owned by them. The core of Community Building concept is to realize rural self-organization and self-management through empowerment. Rural construction through Community Building can ensure that the original residents enjoy limited economic benefits of rural development, and prevent foreign enterprises and other external entities from monopolizing rural resources. In addition, it emphasizes the multi-dimensional rural construction system, jumps out of the single investment mode of economic interests first, pays more attention to rural development and villagers' welfare, and takes the villagers of the village as the main body, which not only allows the villagers to embark on the road of getting rich, but also allows the villagers to jointly build a better rural living environment, which is conducive to the overall balance and social equity of the village.

### 3.2. Realization of Rural Economic Development

The great cause of the decline of traditional agriculture is the outflow of population. If we do not focus on rural economic development and build a new sustainable industrial

development chain, it is difficult to stop the phenomenon of villagers going out to work, and it is impossible to attract qualified villagers who have gone out to return to the village to start a business. The intervention of external resources to control the operation mode of management rights will make it difficult to protect the interests of rural residents. At present, the decentralized development of rural industries also makes the villagers' management ability weakness, and agricultural production presents small-scale primary management, which is not competitive and serious homogenization. The important content of rural economic industry development under the concept of community construction is to realize the organic integration of high-level agricultural production and rural tourism by optimizing and integrating traditional agriculture and cultural industries, and innovating and activating them, so as to build a sustainable new rural economy and form an industrial system in which enterprises and villagers share their interests.

### 3.3. Realization of Rural Cultural Heritage

Mr. Liang Shuming believes that: 'All cultures, mostly from the countryside, but also for the countryside, the legal system, customs, industry and commerce is no better' [7]. However, with the rapid development of urbanization in China, rural 'local characteristics' are facing an unprecedented crisis. First, by the impact of modern urban life, making the villagers lack of attention to the development of the village culture, local customs and culture is the rapid demise; second, in the past village tourism development, foreign enterprises led the development of excessive 'commercialization', and most of the original residents lifestyles retreated to commercial development, so that the tourism development of many villages appeared homogeneous competition. With the acceleration of competition, commercial operation prevailed over the village background in the later period. The community construction is committed to the villagers themselves, emphasizing the villagers of the village as the main body of action, based on the background of the village, rather than a single material space construction, because the villagers of the village are the object of the traditional culture of the village. Only when the subject object is valued can the local culture of the village be activated and inherited.

### 3.4. Sustainable Rural Development

The rural construction mode dominated by external capital or supported by the government alone has been unable to adapt to the current social changes and rural development needs. Community building is a continuous process of cultivating self-management and self-organization in rural areas. Through the cultivation of 'villagers and villages' to replace the short-term material space construction, with the improvement and output of the industry based on the village background, the endogenous construction initiative can be further sublimated, so that the village gradually reduces the dependence on external resources to help, self-reliance is the fundamental method of rural sustainable development and inheritance.

## 4. Two Traditional Villages Overview

### 4.1. Shipaifang Village

The village is located in the southeastern part of Sichuan Province. It belongs to Fangdong Town, Luxian County, Luzhou City. The whole village has an area of about 4 square kilometers and a relatively flat terrain. It has 11 village groups, more than 1300 households and more than 4700 people [8]. Shipaifang Village has a long history and profound cultural heritage. It is a typical traditional agricultural production village. The village has a large number of manor-style historical buildings with defensive towers built by generations from the Qing Dynasty to the Republic of China [9]. This kind of manor-style building is large in scale, covering an area of less than thousands of square meters, and more than tens of thousands of square meters. It is composed of several courtyards, and the functional space combination is diverse and rich. Most manors are also built with theatrical buildings, gardens and other landscape cultural and entertainment places. These manors are the culmination of the development of residential buildings in Sichuan and have regional characteristics [10].

Shipaifang Village first retained a relatively complete manor stone arch, Han Tianpu, Hengfang, Tingfang, Qu Yuanzi more than 10 [11], the total area of more than 10 hectares. In 2013, Shipaifang Village was listed as the second batch of national overall protection of traditional villages [12], and received corresponding central financial funds. In recent years, the villagers have greatly improved their awareness of the protection of historical buildings in the village, and most of them will spontaneously participate in the conscious maintenance and protection of historical buildings.

Shipaifang Village has flat terrain, convenient transportation, fertile land and abundant water resources. Most of the left-behind farmers spontaneously develop related agricultural and sideline industries, such as fishery, poultry industry, fruit and vegetable industry, tea industry, planting industry and other agricultural and sideline industries. These agricultural and sideline industries are mostly carried out in a self-sufficient way and lack overall planning, but these good natural and cultural resources are important basic conditions for rural revitalization.



Figure 1. Qu's Manor, in Shipaifang Village.



Figure 2. Dam Manor in Songtian Village.

### 4.2. Songtian Village

Songtian Village belongs to Fangdong Town and is located in the northwest of Fangdong Town. It borders Longchang City of Sichuan Province and Rongchang County of Chongqing Municipality. It is less than 5 kilometers away from Shipai Village of Fangdong Town and is located to the west of Shipaifang Village. The geographical environment, population, agricultural resources and rural industry of Songtian Village are very similar to those of Shipaifang Village. There are also a large number of manor-style residential buildings scattered in Songtian Village. The architectural forms are rich and diverse, and there are many Chinese and Western-style buildings, which can be described as rich historical building resources. At the same time, the village's painted dragon cultural performance was included in the "Chinese Folk Dancing Integration" by the state in 1985. On May 20, 2006, it was honored as the first batch of "national intangible cultural heritage list" and won the reputation of "Oriental living dragon." In 2016, Songtian Village was selected as the fourth batch of traditional villages under overall national protection [13].

## 5. Exploration of Village Development from the Perspective of Community Building

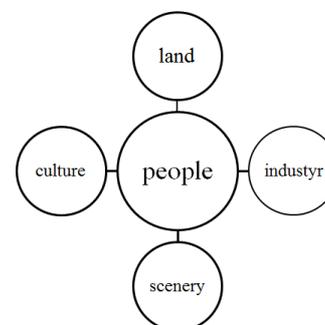


Figure 3. Five Elements of Community Building.

In order to integrate and coordinate the five regional resources of 'people, culture, land, scenery and production', the community construction is based on the background of the village, with the villagers as the main body of action, and after

integrating various resources, to find a new development breakthrough direction for Shipaifang Village and Songtian Village, and to build a new type of rural sustainable economic system. Under the premise of retaining the cultural background, the revitalization of the countryside is gradually realized through villagers' autonomy in the later period, and the inheritance of excellent traditional culture is realized at the same time [14].

### 5.1. People

'People' is the main body of community building. The construction subjects of the two villages mainly include villagers, non-profit organizations, governments and investment groups. Villagers are the initiators and actors of the construction, and the government is more of a multi-regulation management institution. Non-profit organizations are mainly universities and expert research teams, whose main work is to excavate the historical context of the two villages. Investment institutions can be composed of many parties, for example, villagers can participate in various forms such as shares, rather than simply composed of capital groups pursuing economic benefits. Villagers, governments, scientific research teams and investment institutions jointly formulate village development plans, and investment institutions must carry out construction activities under the formulated plans. Villages should not completely hand over the power of development and construction to investment institutions because of the lack of sources of investment funds, so as to avoid the village development and construction guided by the full pursuit of economic value maximization. The ideal state of the whole community construction should be guided by the university team, the villagers' self-construction, government regulation and supervision, and the multi-party participation of investment institutions.

### 5.2. Culture

'Culture' is mainly reflected in the excavation and application of the material cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage of the two villages. In terms of material and cultural heritage, the urgent need to do is the two villages of historical building surveying and mapping work. Based on the scientific research team of colleges and universities, first of all, the historical buildings of the two villages, especially the tower manor-style historical buildings with important tourism resources, are comprehensively counted and mapped. After the completion of archiving and mapping, the hierarchical protection is implemented and the protection boundary is delineated. A number of evaluation measures are formulated according to the integrity of building protection, the level of development value and the difficulty of development. According to the evaluation results, the excellent levels of protection and utilization of relevant historical buildings are listed. Secondly, formulate the village style control guidelines, the village new rural homestead style control.

The excavation of intangible cultural heritage can find a

breakthrough from farming culture. The two villages have bred rich traditional agricultural operations due to their superior regional resource conditions. The excavation, extraction, optimization and reshaping of these traditional agricultural cultural heritages, and the experiential application in the following rural cultural tourism will be a new combination of cultural heritage protection and rural tourism.

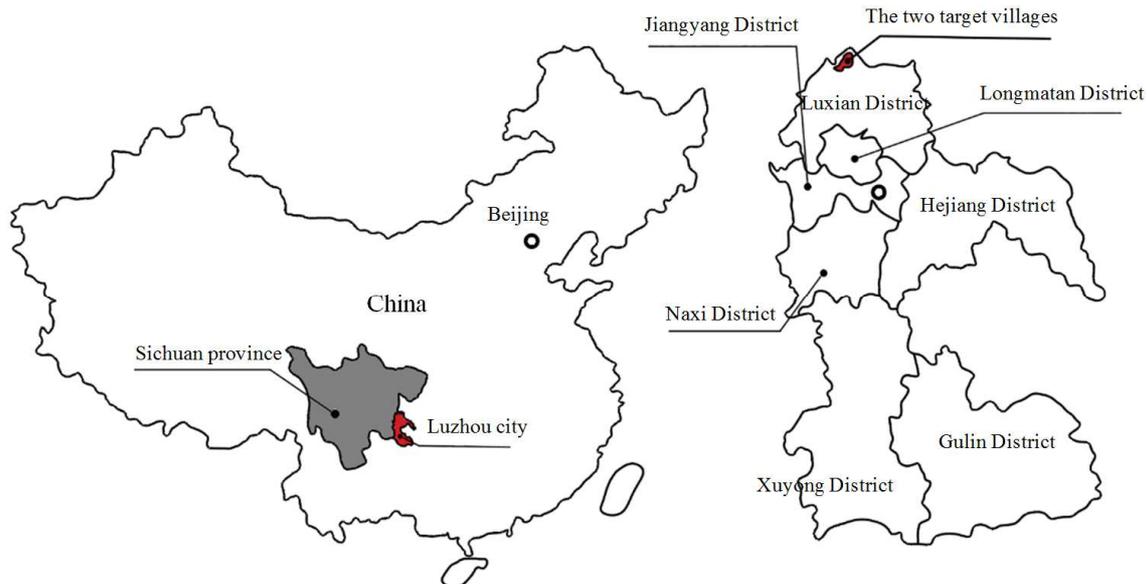
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### 5.3. Land

Located in the northeastern part of Luxian County, Luoshi archway and Songtian Village are important towns in the northeastern part of Luzhou City. They are 15 kilometers away from the county seat. They are flat and belong to small basins in hilly areas. With the advancement of the Chengdu-Chongqing economic circle, the implementation of road infrastructure has been completed, and the village's external and internal transportation has been very convenient.

Luxian County is also the earliest pilot county for the entry of village collective construction land into the market. The new rural land policy has opened a green window for the development and utilization of village land resources, and the favorable land policy has built a bridge for the introduction of social capital. However, the development and utilization of land can not be completely guided by the pursuit of economic value orientation. The important principle of the utilization of village land resources is not to destroy the historical context and style of the original traditional villages, but to upgrade and optimize the utilization and upgrading of land on the basis of retaining the original traditional style and elements.



**Figure 4.** Regional location of the two villages in China.

#### 5.4. Production

Industrial support is the foundation of village continuation and the driving force of village sustainable development. Completely abandon the existing traditional agriculture, the direct introduction of modern agriculture will not be the best policy, which deviates from the original intention of the protection of traditional villages. It is a major issue for the two villages to realize agricultural organic renewal on the basis of keeping the historical context.

How to explore the existing agricultural industry information to achieve the villagers' autonomy of agricultural production is the purpose. Two villages a variety of agricultural production operations, such as lake fish industry, pepper, fruits and vegetables, rice loach, orange, turtle, crayfish and so on. But these agricultural productions are basically carried out in the way of villagers' self-sufficiency, neither forming the industrial scale, nor packaging the landscape culture of agricultural production. Upgrading the existing agricultural production in the two villages with the new concept of Community Building is to establish the villagers as the main body of construction, integrate social capital, and under the premise of overall planning and design as a guide, these scattered agricultural and sideline productions are concentrated and organically updated, and modern agricultural production is used as technical support to further improve the production efficiency of agricultural products.

The rural community formed under the concept of Community Building can gather highly dispersed individual units of small farmers and play a role in protecting the vital interests of rural residents in the system of market economy.

#### 5.5. Scenes

'Landscape' is the detailed transformation of historical

buildings in traditional villages and the creation of cultural landscape. Cultural landscape can start from the agricultural production, such as the upgrading of agriculture on the basis of traditional agriculture, integration of scattered agricultural farming, focus on creating a large area of agricultural ecological landscape.

For example, the village retains a large number of drinking water projects built in the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China. These canals have played an irrigation role so far. However, with the expansion of agricultural production scale, some canals can no longer meet the demand for agricultural water consumption. In the future, agricultural production can be based on the original irrigation canals. On the basis of agricultural irrigation, the expansion and construction of canal landscape can be carried out to realize the integration of agricultural irrigation and cultural landscape.

## 6. Conclusion

From the perspective of community construction, the purpose of Shipaifang Village and Songtian Village is to inherit the culture and protect the village as a whole, and to regenerate the vitality of the village. Emphasize the villagers is the main body of the implementation, because the villagers are the fundamental village alive, rather than the direct introduction of social capital to the overall management of the village to investors. The purpose of capital integration is not purely to pursue the maximization of economic recovery, but more to provide strong help for the inheritance of traditional culture, not a one-time acquisition of resources.

What we really want to obtain is that the improvement of villagers' self-governance ability can make the later operation of the village get a virtuous circle. The purpose of our Community Building is to focus and improve the background of traditional villages through the integration of multiple resources,

so that it can build a new type of rural sustainable industrial economy through its own industrial concentration, optimization and upgrading, and finally make the traditional villages [15]. Under the autonomy of the villagers in the village, they can have regenerative power, and do not let the traditional villages be swallowed up by modern economic construction because they do not have self-hematopoietic function, so as to eventually lead to the loss of traditional culture.

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