

The Home of Mosuo Granny Flat Spirit

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Keywords: Granny flat; Mosuo nationality; Folk architecture; Spiritual culture

Abstract: Chinese minority residential building forms can be described as dazzling, Lugu Lake Mosuo residential building granny flat, and other residential building forms are completely different. Architecture is the carrier of culture, and the special structural form of granny flat residential buildings is a direct reflection of Mosuo spiritual culture.

1. Introduction to Granny Flat

The forms of Chinese residential buildings are diversified. Because of the differences in geographical environment, living habits, culture and religious beliefs, the forms of Chinese residential buildings are also different among different nationalities and regions. In southwest China, Lugu Lake in Sichuan has a special form of residential architecture---granny flat!Granny Flat is a form of architectural expression with “home” as its main body and core. “From the point of view of location, Lugu Lake is the boundary lake between Yunnan Province and Sichuan Province--Located at the junction of Ninglang County, Lijiang City, northwest Yunnan Province, and Yanyuan County, Xichang District, Sichuan Province, the lakeside area of Yongningba District and Lugu Lake is the main habitat of Mosuo people. “[1]. The Mosuo people in Lugu Lake originated from the ancient Qiang people in the eastern part of Qinghai Province and eventually evolved into Mosuo people after entering Yongning area. In the whole development process of Mosuo, due to a series of national policies, religious culture and other influences and integration. This has made Mosuo people in Lugu Lake a unique traditional concept. “[2]. Granny Flat, as its name implies, is Grandma's house. From the housing structure of Granny flat, we can see the special architectural culture of Mosuo minority in Lugu Lake.

2. Reasons for the Formation of Granny Flat

2.1 Geographical environment

Because of the luxuriant forests in the mountainous areas, local materials are used for building houses. The main material of granny flat is wood, also known as “cabin”. The whole house is made of logs spliced together, looking from the outside, similar to pieces of wood!

2.2 Grandmother is the core of the family.

Lugu Lake is also called “the country of daughters”. The main reason is that not all people are women and there are no men. It is because grandmother is the largest and the core of the family. Lugu Lake is a social structure dominated by women's rights. After the marriage of men and women, there is no new family. Children are brought up by their wives. They live with their mothers' surnames and grandmothers are the biggest. This special form of marriage and marriage is completely different from that of other nationalities. Grandmother is in the middle of granny flat, so granny flat is also the core of a family unit!

2.3 Special historical factors

The Mosuo people in Lugu Lake do not belong to one of Chinese 56 ethnic groups. Lugu Lake was divided into two parts and became the jurisdiction of two provinces, Sichuan and Yunnan respectively. In Lugu Lake area under Sichuan jurisdiction, Mosuo people are called “Mongolian” in household registration files and “Naxi” in Yunnan jurisdiction. And the Mosuo ethnic group, to

“Na” clan, or to “Mosuo” clan! It is said that the Mosuo people were once one of the Mongolians. They had always wanted to “go home” because of the war, as can be seen from the word “Hui” in the architectural structure and the special funeral ceremony.

3. Granny Flat Architectural Structural Form

3.1 “Hui” glyph plane layout

The granny flat structure is a “Hui” type of structure. The whole house structure consists of five doors. The central word “kou” is the core of the house and is also the place where grandmother lives, entertains relatives and friends, and holds various ceremonies. It can be said that it is a structural form integrating bedroom, living room, ceremony activity place, etc.

3.2 Material--Wood

Due to the luxuriant trees in the mountain area, the main form of residential buildings is mainly made of wood materials. The wood materials of granny flat of Mosuo nationality are different from other residential buildings. Its wood is all logs cut directly from the mountain without any processing. It is directly spliced and built! Therefore, from the appearance, it is a collection of logs with the theme of trees. Therefore, some people call it a “cabin”.

3.3 Furnishings

Granny flat's furnishings are mainly focused on the required functions:

(1)Fire pit:The worship of “fire” is concerned by every nation. Since ancient times, human life and way of life have changed greatly because of fire. Nowadays, with the development of high technology, fire culture still exists. For example, the fireplace in western Europe and America is actually the survival of a fire culture. Most of Chinese ethnic minorities have Fire pit, such as Qiang, Tibetan and Mosuo ethnic groups. In the Han nationality area of the Central Plains, fire culture still exists. For example, when a new house is moved, a fire is lit in the kitchen of the new house, which indicates the implementation of the moving ceremony! The stronger the fire, the more firewood there is, the more prosperous the population is and the money is rolling in! It is a kind of appeal for people's good wishes! “In the villages of northern China, the heated kang has similar important significance: not only as a heat source and a sleep space, but also important family activities such as eating and entertaining take place on it.”[3]. Senpel ranked the stove first among the four elements: “The earliest signs of existing human habitat are the establishment of the fireplace and the fire-making activities aimed at survival, heating and heating food. Around the stove, people formed the earliest group; around the stove, people formed the earliest alliance; around the stove, the early primitive religious concept evolved a whole set of worship customs. In all stages of development in human society, stoves are the core of sacredness, and everything around them is in the order and form formed by this core. The spiritual elements of architecture are the earliest and most important.”[4].

(2)Among the Mosuo people, due to their strong religious beliefs, fire culture is integrated into life! Every year there is a special festival, the torch festival. men, women, and children all sing and dance around the raging fire. Pray for good weather and good health in the coming year. One of the most important items in Granny Flat is Fire pit. Grandmother's Fire pit is different from other minority nationalities' Fire pit. It has two Fire pits, the Upper Fire pit and the Lower Fire pit. The Fire pit is more to meet the needs of daily life, usually three meals a day, cooking, family and friends meet, all in the Fire pit, everyone around the Fire pit group sit together, eat together, chat together!

(3)Divine position: The gods worshipped next to the upper Fire pit are Tibetan Buddhist gods, while those next to the lower Fire pit are various gods of primitive religion, including the gods of fire, the seven immortals, and their ancestors' souls. The souls of ancestors are under the gods of primitive religion. After the death of the people, lamas used spells to introduce the spirits of ancestors into granny flat, believing that the ancestors returned to their homes and found their way

home. Above the lower Fire pit, below the primitive religious deity is the ancestor's position. The first meal of the lower Fire pit's life requires the ancestors to taste. Therefore, in the position of the lower Fire pit's ancestors, there will be meals left every day!

(4)Grandmother's bedroom: Granny's bedding, or bed, is next to the Lower Fire pit, where granny flat rests. Granny flat has a variety of fairy shelters, so the placement of grandmother's bedding here not only expresses the importance of grandmother, living in a room with gods, but also expresses the respect and love for grandmother. Because my grandmother is getting older, this is a place where spirits can't be immersed. Young babies and parturients will spend their important moments in granny flat's dormitory. Because this is an auspicious and healthy place.

(5)Wardrobe: It seems to be an important sacred place for ceremonies. Because of the residence of grandmothers, the required functions need to be improved, so wardrobes are indispensable.

Men and women pillars: In the center of Granny flat, there are two pillars, male and female. Pillars play an important role in residential buildings. From the point of view of material structure, pillars bear beams, like human skeleton, and are important nodes to support houses. At the same time, from the perspective of cultural implication, the pillars also imply “important” and “pillars” and other good wishes. Many ethnic minorities have a pillar. Qiang and Tibetan have a “central pillar”. As the name implies, the central pillar is the center of space. All kinds of activities and ceremonies are held around the central pillar. There are two pillars in the Mosuo nationality. The two pillars are located in the center of the house, but they are divided left and right. They are opposite and side by side. They symbolize men and women. Therefore, they are also called men's pillars and women's pillars. The wood needed by the male and female pillars are two trees facing the sun. At the same time, the male pillar needs to be upright and straight when selecting, which symbolizes that the men in this family are brave men of indomitable spirit. The female pillar needs luxuriant branches and leaves, which symbolizes that this family has strong fertility and can “open branches and disperse leaves”.

4. The Cultural Significance of Granny Flat

4.1 The Meaning of “Home”

(1)The plane layout of granny flat is a word of “Hui”, which expresses the meaning of returning home.

(2)The funeral at the time of death, through the Lama to attract the soul, to find the way back home, and finally to granny flat itself, it can be seen that granny flat symbolizes the destination of “returning home gloriously”. Among Mosuo people, after the death of a person, the Lama will infer a auspicious time according to the time of birth and death, and then cremate the ashes. After cremation, the ashes will be guided by the Lama through a ceremony, from the incantation of the cremation site to the “granny flat”. The completion of the ceremony at last represents finding a home.

(3)Granny flat seems to be grandmother's house, but its connotation not only expresses the family structure with grandmother as the core, grandmother is the center of a family. At the same time, it also expresses the concept of “home” in the form of architectural expression, especially in the name of grandmother's house, which shows the Mosuo people's attention to “home”.

4.2 Important place

In granny flat, all the important rituals of human life are completed here. All kinds of complicated ceremonies, such as birth, adult ceremony, marriage and death, need to be held here. Architecture is the carrier of culture, and the important node of one's life will be held in the place of granny flag, which shows the importance and particularity of granny flag!

4.3 Shared space

(1)From a material point of view, living, eating, receiving visitors and various activities are held here, which can be a multi-functional and integrated shared space.

(2)From the spiritual level, people, gods and souls coexist in one room.

Man: Grandmother lives here. It's her bedroom. At the same time, the stove is a place where all family members gather together, eat together, hold talks here, and entertain relatives and friends.

Gods: Immortals of Primitive Religion and Tibetan Buddhism. Mosuo people not only believe in primitive religion, but also Tibetan Buddhism. In granny flat's space, the two religions coexist and do not interfere with each other! The deities of both religions are furnished!

Soul: "Daba religion is the native belief of Mosuo people, and ancestor worship is an important part of it. Traditionally, in October of the lunar calendar, Mosuo people carry out ancestral worship activities (mostly during the Spring Festival) to bring their ancestors home from Spuanawa along the migration route, which is called "taking over ancestors"; In the funeral ceremony, the soul of the deceased is sent back to Spuanawa along the same route, which is called "open road". According to legend, the ancestors of Mosuo people arrived in Yongning along different routes during their migration to the south. Mosuo people believe that the process from birth to death of an individual is only a short life form. After death, a funeral ceremony is held for him through his "home". Follow the special route of sending souls back to the ancestral residence of their respective "family houses", find the ancestors of this "family house" and become a member of the ancestral group owned by this "family house". Only in this way can the identity of the deceased be confirmed, and at the same time, the deceased obtains eternal identity and status in the "home". "[5]. In the Central Plains, the Han people regard the soul as a "ghost", while in the Mosuo people, because of their special religious beliefs, they introduce the soul of their ancestors through the incantation of the Lama, but regard it as their own family. Those who have not been baptized by the Lama's mantra are ghosts. Those who have passed away from their families and passed through the Lama's scriptures are called souls. Souls are "good" people in the Mosuo ethnic group, while ghosts are "bad" people in the Mosuo ethnic group. Therefore, the ancestors after death, enshrined in granny flat, are a kind of respect for ancestors. At the same time, it also means that he is still a family member, just in another form! Therefore, granny flat is a special place where ancestors and families live.

5. Conclusion

As the Mosuo nationality is a nation without written language, it is impossible to find direct written language about understanding the world and expressing emotions directly from their national literature. They are more attached to the material and cultural carriers to embody national thoughts, repose national spirit and promote national culture. "Spiritual space is an important building carrier carrying traditional regional culture. The protection of core spiritual space is beneficial to the protection and inheritance of regional traditional culture. Especially with the development of economy and the change of life style, it is almost impossible to realize the static protection of settlements and residential buildings as a whole. The protection of key buildings with spiritual center significance becomes the realistic choice in the protection of settlements and residential buildings. "[6]. Granny Flat is the spiritual core of Mosuo culture and the direct expression of its spirit.

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