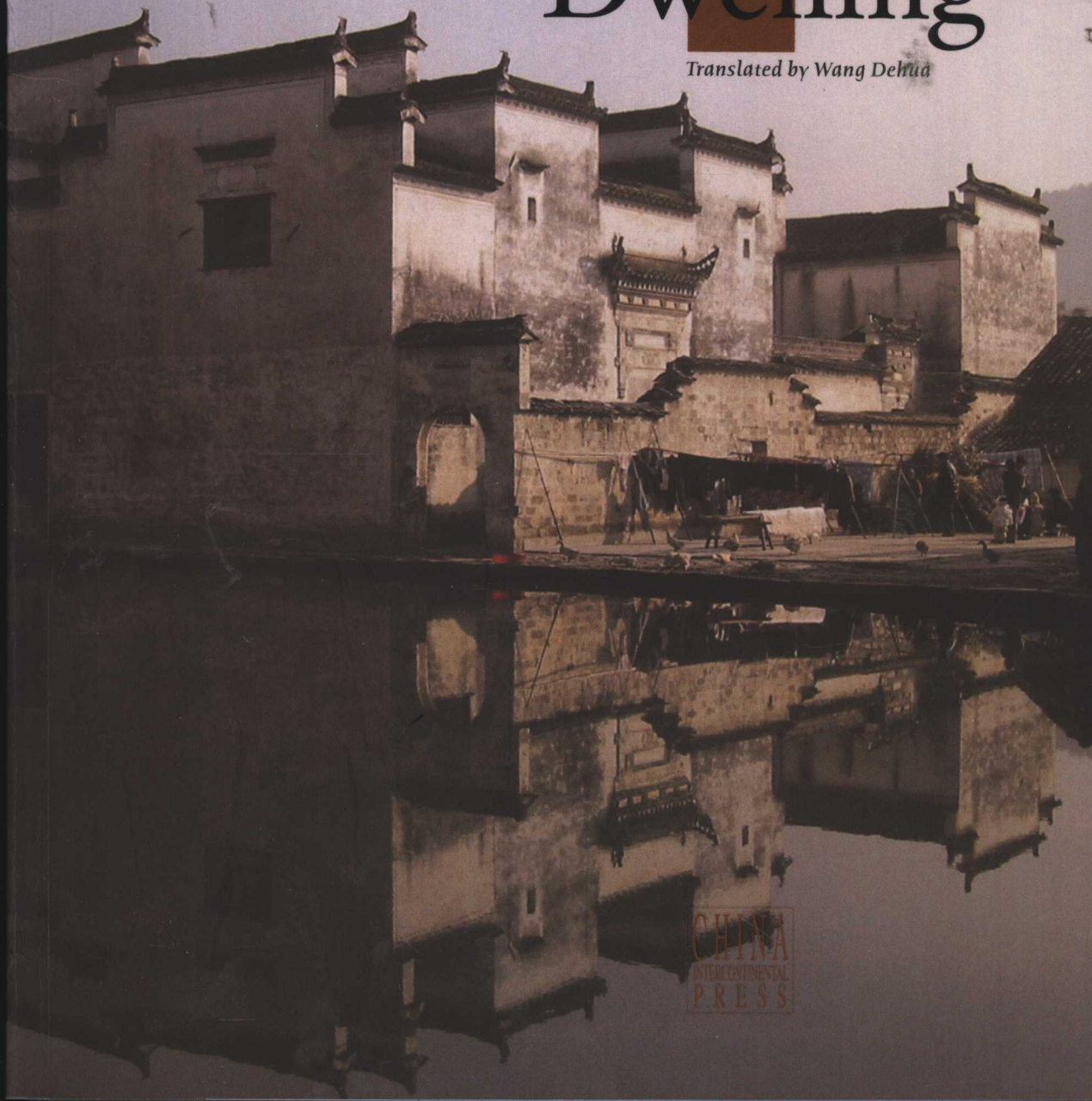


Shan Deqi

● Cultural China Series

Chinese Vernacular Dwelling

Translated by Wang Dehua



CHINA
INTERCONTINENTAL
PRESS

● Cultural China Series

Chinese Vernacular Dwelling

Shan Deqi

Translated by Wang Dehua

江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章

CHINA
INTERCONTINENTAL
PRESS

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

中国民居 / 单德启等著, 王德华译. —北京: 五洲传播出版社, 2004.3

ISBN 7-5085-0370-8

I. 中... II. ①单... ②王... III. 民居—建筑艺术—中国—英文 IV. TU241.5

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2003) 第 101635 号

中国民居

著 者 单德启等

译 者 王德华

责任编辑 孙海雯

责任校对 张行军

整体设计 海 洋

出版发行 五洲传播出版社 (北京北三环中路 31 号 邮编: 100088)

版式设计 张 红

承 印 者 北京华联印刷有限公司

开 本 720 × 965 毫米 1/16

字 数 60 千字

印 张 9.5

版 次 2004 年 3 月第 1 版

印 次 2004 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN 7-5085-0370-8/TU · 05

定 价 85.00 元

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

中国民居 / 单德启等著, 王德华译. —北京: 五洲传播出版社, 2004.3

ISBN 7-5085-0370-8

I. 中... II. ①单... ②王... III. 民居—建筑艺术—中国—英文 IV. TU241.5

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2003) 第 101635 号

中国民居

著 者 单德启等

译 者 王德华

责任编辑 孙海雯

责任校对 张行军

整体设计 海 洋

出版发行 五洲传播出版社 (北京北三环中路 31 号 邮编: 100088)

版式设计 张 红

承 印 者 北京华联印刷有限公司

开 本 720 × 965 毫米 1/16

字 数 60 千字

印 张 9.5

版 次 2004 年 3 月第 1 版

印 次 2004 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

书 号 ISBN 7-5085-0370-8/TU · 05

定 价 85.00 元

Contents

Introduction: Chinese Vernacular Dwelling / 1



1 Huizhou Dwelling in Green Hills and Blue Waters

– A Talk on Huizhou Dwelling in the South of Anhui Province / 15

2 Ganlan Wood House and Storm-Tossed Bridge

– A Visit to Northern Guangxi Mountain Villages / 29



3 The City along Jade Water and Full of Historical Charm

– A Tour of Ancient Lijiang Streets / 43

4 Harmonious Combination of Chinese and Western Elements

– Catching the Architectural Novelty in the Homeland of the Overseas Chinese / 55

5 Small Bridges, Flowing Streams and Cottages

– An Introduction to Shaoxing, an Area of Rivers and Lakes / 69



RBE25/03



6 Imposing Dwellings and Spacious Courtyard

– A Visit of the Residential Quadrangle / 87

7 Natural Rhythm and Intelligent Conversion

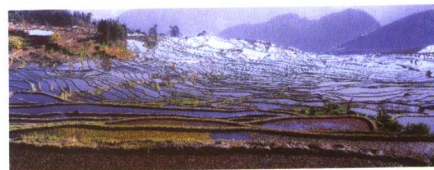
– Inspections on Zhang Dwelling in Central Yunnan / 95

8 Comfortable and Harmonious Dwelling Prizing the Culture and Martial Art

– A View of Minxi Dwelling / 109

9 Magnificent and Beautiful Dwellings

– A Description of Tibetan Watchtower / 125



Introduction: Chinese Vernacular Dwelling



A land of peach blossoms: Xidi.

In the year 2000, Xidi and Hongcun, the ancient villages in Anhui Province of China were formally approved on the 24th session of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee to be inscribed into UNESCO's World Heritage List. In early spring of that year, the Japanese Expert Dr. Naomi Okawa, assigned by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee, highly valued the villages after his field investigation by saying that "it's really an unrivalled village scene such as Hongcun". "The village Xidi still remains its beautiful ancient streets and alleys, which is seldom in the world". In 1997, old town of Li Jiang in Yunnan Province and ancient city of Pingyao in Shanxi Province were inscribed into the World Heritage List; nowadays, the famous river town Zhouzhuang in Jiangsu Province is on application for the list. At the turn of the century, the Chinese traditional vernacular dwelling is unveiling itself to the world, becoming a big stage for China's access to the world and for the world to have a better understanding of China.

China is a country with vast territory, varied topography and diversified climate, together with its different kinds of nationalities and cultures, which creates a rich variety of settlements and buildings of



Chinese Vernacular Dwelling

2



traditional vernacular dwelling. The residential houses can generally be divided into three patterns: courtyard, storied and caved (*or clay dwelling built with clay materials*) dwellings.

The screenwall of a quadrangle.

I

Courtyard dwelling is the most popular vernacular dwelling among all the patterns and it is also the one



The *Tu Zhang* Dwelling in Ailao Mountain region, Yunnan Province.

with most advanced material and structure technology, the richest component, most complicated arrangements of traditional ethic code and diversified decorations. In a sense, it is the most advanced dwelling style in the farming society and also the ideal mode to materialize the natural environment in the feudal society. The quadrangles in Beijing are the typical one of this pattern. The fundamental character of the courtyard dwelling is: being enclosed, symmetrical in middle axis and clear distinction between primary and secondary, outside and inside. Such kind of dwelling is mainly seen in North China, Central Plains, Shandong



A quadrangle in Beijing.

Peninsula, plains and coastal areas in South China. It also can be found in some basins and plains of the southwest of China and in the areas of Chengdu in Sichuan Province, Kunming and Dali in Yunnan Province and plain areas of Taiwan Island, etc. The courtyard dwelling is popularly adopted in many areas including the areas where the Hans settle in, ethnic minority areas in close exchange with Han culture (such as the Bai and Naxi nationalities) and some developed areas (such as Zhuang and Yi nationalities), or the ethnic minorities living with the Han nationality (such as



Chinese Vernacular Dwelling

4



The color picture and carved decoration of a quadrangle.

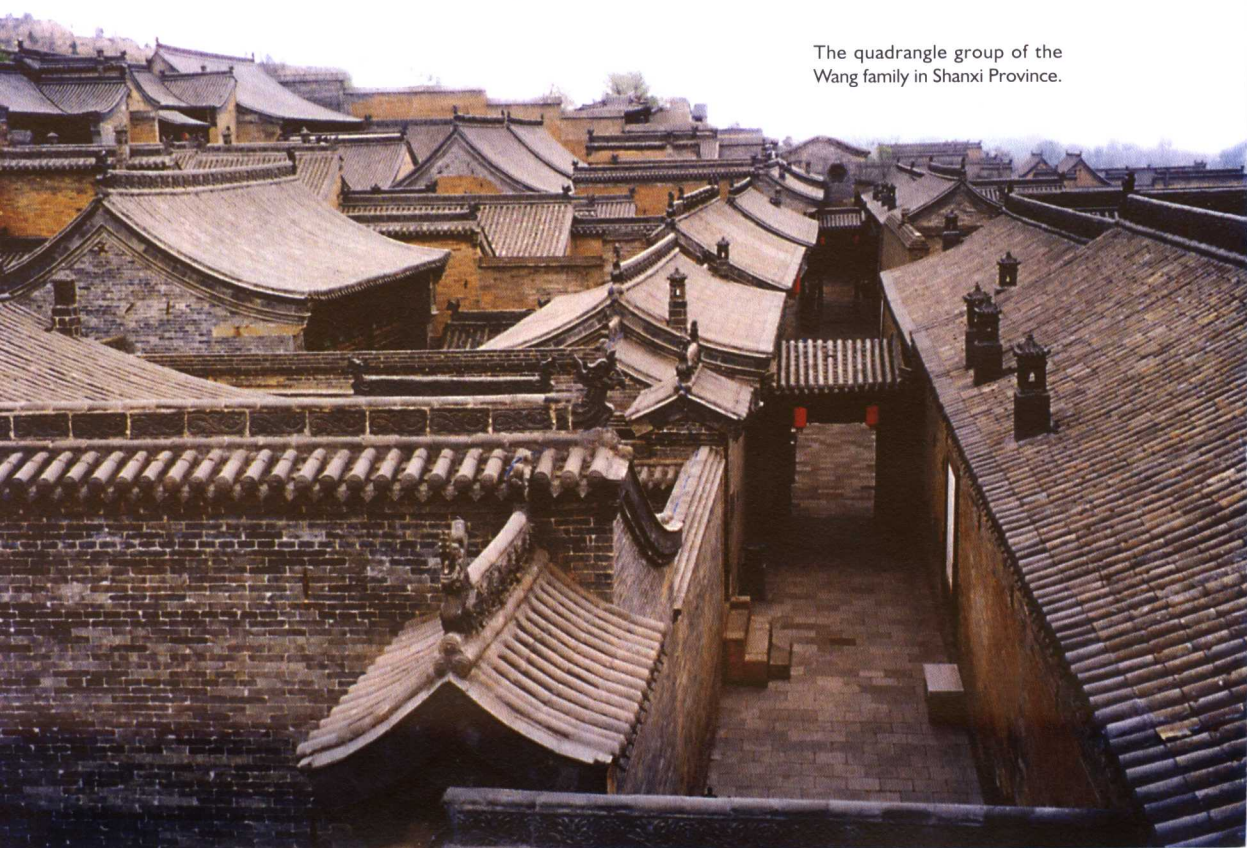


The main gate of a quadrangle.

Manchu and Hui nationalities).

In marching into one of the international metropolises, laws have also been formulated in Beijing to protect its 25 lanes and quadrangles in the ancient areas, ranging from Prince Gong's Residential to common houses, which still have kept the most completed and almost whole forms of quadrangles of the courtyard dwelling. For example, as to the gate, there are *Naizi Fang* Gate, *Jinzhū* Gate, *Brilliant* Gate, *Ruyi* Gate, *Manzi* Gate and so on, which make up the real museum of the quadrangle. Businessmen in Shanxi Province were in the leading position in building private residential in the period of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The Quadrangle Group of the Wang family

The quadrangle group of the Wang family in Shanxi Province.





The patio in Huizhou dwelling.

in Lingshi County, known as the First House of Shanxi Province, is composed of over one hundred courtyards. Despite of variation in scale, composition, decoration and other aspects, all the quadrangles, which are most popular in the northern plain areas, have the common fundamental characteristics, such as the famous Confucian Residence in Qufu (Shandong Province), Zheng Banqiao's Former Residence in Weifang (Shandong Province) and the numerous old-style banking houses in the ancient city of Pingyao in Shanxi Province, etc. The dwellings in the vast countryside are not as complete as the typical quadrangle; some dwellings only have three or two houses around a courtyard, such as the Manchu's sun-facing rural dwelling in Liaoning and Jilin Provinces, *Tu Wei Zi* in Shaanxi and Shanxi Provinces, all of which are of



The Clay Building of Western Fujian Province.



simplified courtyard-dwelling categories remaining the basic structure of gate, wall, courtyard and central room and wing-room. There are many variation forms of such a courtyard dwelling as follows: the residential dwelling called *Yi Ke Yin* in Kunming, Yunnan Province, which generated from the cave uncalcined clay dwelling; Huizhou's courtyard residential dwelling (In Chinese traditional architecture, the courtyard enclosed by the houses and walls was called *tianjing* in Chinese) in Anhui Province, which came from the *ganlan* (In ancient times, this kind of architectural mode with wood as main building materials was popular in southern China) wood dwelling combined with courtyard; and the Yongding's Hakka residential dwelling in Fujian Province, which was mainly built for self-defense under the specific historic and geographical circumstances; *Da Cuo* – a courtyard dwelling composed of red-brick wall, sloping roof and arc fireproof wall, made by immigrants from Guangdong and Fujian to Taipei area of Taiwan, and so on.

The earliest form of the courtyard dwelling emerged firstly in the period of Qin and Han dynasties, and the figure bricks in the Eastern Han Dynasty give us a complete form of the then courtyard dwelling. The widespread of such a dwelling culture was due to the technological supports of Qin's bricks and Han's tiles, the improvement of feudal farming family pattern and the popularization of etiquette norms. And in the long period of time of farming society, this vernacular dwelling pattern showed its extremely strong vitality.

II

Cave-style dwelling has explicitly regional characteristics in the natural ecology, remaining the most primitive architectural features among all vernacular dwelling patterns. The drought area in the Loess plateau in the northwest China is the area where the kind of dwellings most centralized.

The most typical cave-style dwelling is the Cave Dwelling which can be largely found in the middle and west regions including Henan, Shanxi, Shaanxi and Gansu, including the “underground Cave Dwelling” in the west of Henan and plains of



The Cave Dwelling.

southern Shaanxi – a kind of Cave Dwelling wholly built under the ground. Caves are dug with earth steps as entrance. This kind of dwelling is inhabited by several or a dozen of households and is still completely kept in Liquan County of Xi'an (Shaanxi Province); the “cliff-along” Cave Dwelling – another kind of Cave Dwelling widely adopted in mountainous regions and usually converged transversely and multiply along the contour line with connecting caves dug on natural hillsides and a courtyard can be built with adobe outside the cave; “plugging Cave Dwelling” – a mixed form

mostly appear in the middle of Shanxi with one or two storied arched adobe or brick house outside the cave and form a courtyard with walls, which seems more flexible in settlement combination and richer in inner space. And, there is a kind of semi-underground-cave dwelling remained in the settlements of Taiya and Yamei nationalities in Taiwan Province. Its shape is quite natural: generally with a rectangular flat covered with cobblestones and caved in about 1.5m, wood-framework upper structure using bamboo as purlin and being covered by day lily as roof. The whole settlement scattered loosely, which is believed to form in the long time of encountering typhoon, earthquake and other frequent disasters and remains till now. Despite of its



The Tibetan watchtower.



Chinese Vernacular Dwelling

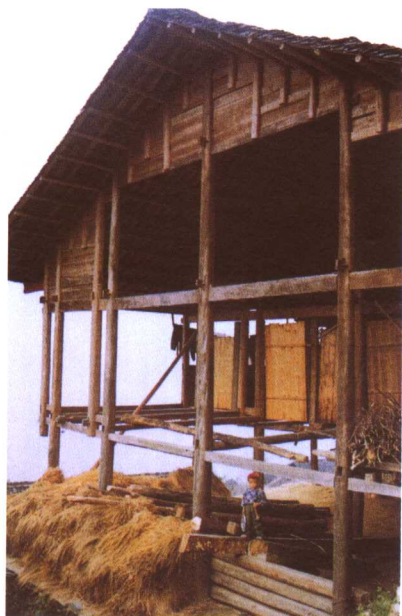
limited space, there still has reserved the place for sacrifices in this kind of dwelling.

The Cave Dwelling, clay dwelling, or even the vernacular dwelling made of uncalcined clay, rammed earth, scattered in the drought or desert areas, such as *Zhuangguo* in the east of Qinghai Province, watchtower of Tibetan nationality in the areas of Sichuan, Qinghai and Tibet and even *Gaotai* vernacular dwelling in Kashi of the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, all belong to the category of uncalcined clay dwelling.

III

The *Ganlan* wood building is the typical storied dwelling, which distributes mostly in the mountains of minority nationalities in the southwest semi-tropical areas. Such a style has pushed the space form and space combination of storied dwelling, the support, suspension and stagger floor along the hills, and, the techniques of mortise and tenon to a very high level. It also demonstrates rich material and spiritual civilizations in combination with the unique national and folk cultures of the minority nationalities.

The traditional typical wood *Ganlan* buildings are all set up by wood including wood framework, wood purlin, plank wall, bark tile, with tenon and mortise at the link point, without any iron nail or iron hook. The plane of the house is rectangle, while the roof looks like double-slope shape, and the first two to three levels have no walls. The households live closely along the hillside. In the Dai nationality autonomous counties in Xishuangbanna in the southwest of Yunnan and De Hong in the west of Yunnan, there are bamboo *Ganlan* buildings with a kind of bamboo-wood-combined structure using large amount of *mao* bamboos. Compared with the wood one, the building material of



The *Ganlan* wood building.

bamboo dwelling are linked mostly by coir rope and rattan; its roof is called *Kongming's Hat* with swallow-tailed *Qianmu* – some kind like the *Xieshan*-style (*Roof of the Xieshan-style is composed of two big slopes at front and back and two small slopes at both sides, with two flats in the shape of isosceles triangle also being at both sides of the roof.*) four-slope roof. The Jingpo nationality, Jinuo nationality, Hani nationality and other minority nationalities in this area mostly adopt the bamboo dwelling. Their dwellings are alike in terms of the height of overhead level, whether they being paired up with the architecture materials (such as adobe, day lily, the tile top, etc.) and the worshiped totem



The drum tower at Ma'an Village, Sanjiang County, Guangxi.

9



The storm-tossed bridge of the Dong nationality.



except for slight differences. There are some other unique features of Yunnan's bamboo stockaded village, such as the Dais stockaded village, each of which has a well with painstaking decorations around or even with well pavilion or guardian stone-carving beast. Another example is the stockaded village gate of Hani nationality, which is always made of tree trunk and set in the entrance with fur on the cross wood and later bird carving instead. After numerous textual researches, Kenzaburo Torikoshi, the Japanese expert figured out that the traditional torii is derived from Yunnan. In addition, according to the building origin, fundamental framework and space idea, the *Diaojiao* building seen in the Mount Emei area in the southwest of Sichuan, Chongqing area and Fenghuang mountainous and lake areas in the west of Hunan Province are all the specific models of storied dwelling.

Dwelling in trees and dwelling in caves are both the most original modalities of Chinese traditional vernacular dwelling, which was once concluded by the ancient as "dwelling in trees in the south and caves in the north". The historical records and archaeological studies have fully proved that the *ganlan* wood building was once widely adopted in the areas south of Yangtze River, most of which are areas of mountains and hills with the humid, hot and rainy climate, the ecological resource of dense woods, the production mode of paddy cultivations. In ancient times, these regions were known as *Yues* as a whole. The dwelling culture of *Ganlan* is the common feature of *Yues*, and, the totem, courtyard, entrance and the subdivision of structure and materials together with the unique customs of all minorities, were passed on and formed such rich residential dwelling settlements in today's southern areas especially the southwest.

It is worth mentioning that with the growing population, declining wood resources, the popularization of architectural materials like brick and tile and some other factors, the Han nationality in the south and the minorities in the plains have increasingly farewell the *Ganlan* wood buildings, and progressed to many variations and new modalities, such as the water street dwelling in Zhejiang Province, the courtyard-style dwelling in Anhui Province, the adobe building in the south of Fujian Province, *Yi Ke Yin* in Kunming and so on.

The Chinese traditional vernacular dwelling always maximizes to comply with nature, or remake nature with compensation. As the polymer of vernacular dwelling, the emergence and development of traditional settlements have fully taken advantage



of natural ecological resources while have carefully paid attention to saving the resources, the water scene treatment, fully utilizing the local architectural materials, and making use of the difference in the natural temperature to prevent cold and heat, which has reflected the ecological view attaching importance on partial ecological balance. The dwelling modalities are rich but not miscellaneous, skillful but not factitious because the numerous villagers who created them are accustomed to cultivation and conform to the rule of natural changes. The villagers always attach great importance on the harmony in contrast, the rhyme in gradual change, leading to a strong aesthetic sentiment of rural life with the characteristics as follows:

– Beauty in nature. The Chinese vernacular dwelling is always located at the places near mountains or waters; in the full sunshine or dark shadows; under bright sky

The vernacular dwellings of water street in Zhejiang Province.



The vernacular dwelling of Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province.