

# Research on the historic preservation of Zhaojiashan village

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**Abstract.** Through field investigation and field visiting, we studied and analyzed the ancient villages of Zhaojiashan in Jiancaoping District, Taiyuan City of Shanxi Province. We learned that Zhaojiashan Village is on the only way of the Shanxi Merchants The Tea Road starting from Taiyuan to Xinzhou. It occupies an indispensable and important position in camel road. There are many historical and cultural relics in the village. The analysis of the historical value and the environment of the village has provided the basis for the protection and exploitation of ancient villages.

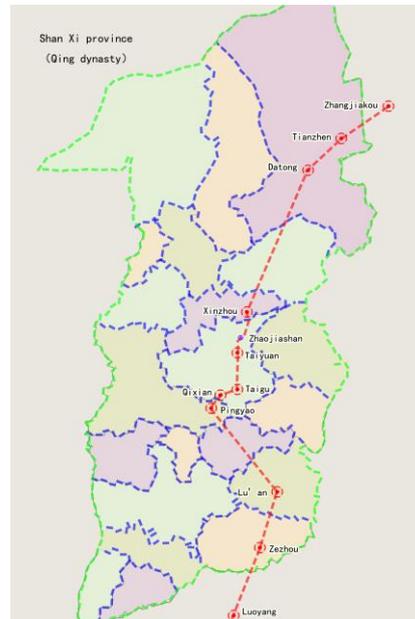
## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Geographic position

The village of Zhaojiashan is located in the Xiyan countryside of Jiancaoping area in Taiyuan, north latitude 38 ° 01 '53.46 ", east longitude 112 ° 33' 38.96 "and the average altitude 903 meters. The village of Zhaojiashan has a long history which beginning from the spring and autumn period, there is no person whose surname is Zhao in this village. How does the village of Zhaojiashan get its name? It can be answered in a stone tablet in the Dragon King Temple. Originally, the doctor of Jin – the Orphan – Wu Zhao looting, recruiting, the area of Zhaojiashan is very suitable for breeding horse, the herdsman settled down in here, after a long time, this area formed a village, this is why it names Zhaojiashan. Originally, this village was a horse farm for Zhao's orphans. It was distributed about 1.5 kilometres west of the current village, and was located in the mountains and rivers. The tombs of the Warring States Time were buried here, and the subsequent living ruins in Han Dynasty. After that, it gradually migrated eastward, which was basically finalized in Tang Dynasty (According to: 1, The temple was firstly built in Tang Dynasty. 2, Now, there are many ancient tombs of Tang in the south of village.) The centre of the village is located in the east of the village in Ming and Qing Dynasties. San Jiao temple is the centre of the village. Now, there existing many tax houses and living ruins. There was also a tomb built in Ming dynasty in the west of the village, but the whole range of the village was not changed. Now, the centre of the village is surrounded by dragon king temple and other adjacent village committee buildings, the Yang Po village is next to its north border, the Yan village is next to its south border, the Donggao village is next to its west border and the Qizi mountain village is next to its east border. However, people not only pay attention to its long history, but also pay more attention to its important position on The Tea Road, which is well known to the Silk Route. These two roads are known as the two of the most famous Golden channels for international trading in Chinese history. The tea road is 5150 kilometres long. <sup>[1]</sup> In the late of Qing Dynasty, the waterway to north was hindered, and in many routes for Jin Merchants collecting tea, there is a way that from Taiyuan to Xinzhou, which would pass through the village of Zhaojiashan. Camel is the most common tool for



transporting. According to the description, many Chinese cake shops were built for camels having a rest, then, generated a commercial street of Chinese cake shops in the period of great prosperity. These Chinese cakes can be kept fresh for several days. Although the iron pole of the camel sign has been destroyed in the period of steelmaking, some camels are still preserved; the thousand million tea road will remain forever.



**Figure 1.** Map of The Tea Road.

*1.1.1. Architecture.* In order to fit the function of taking the village as a rest area for business, many buildings emerged in this village, which not only formed a commercial street, also formed a tax houses for government tax service that existed in the eastern part of this village. This tax house is located in the eastern temple street in the village, which faces south, established in the Qing Dynasty and the existing buildings are ruins of Qing Dynasty. It was a place for collecting taxes within dozens of miles from Qing Dynasty to the early years of the Republic of China. According to the memories from an old men of this village, the last tax officer named Zanfu Meng, he died in twenty years of the Republic of China, there were the tax support team includes more than twenty people with guns, the captain of this team is Chunsheng Bai, he died on 80s at the beginning of the century. And the tax house was the concentration area of public grain. In addition, there were seven main rooms, three wing-rooms with wooden partitions. <sup>[2]</sup>

The original axis had the gate, the south shop, the pond, two doors, the screen wall, the wooden door, the main court, the second court, some accountants and some share rooms in the east and west of the yard. In addition, there are three underground warehouses, which are the three courtyards and the two crosses into the courtyard of the big dwelling.

Now it only leaves a courtyard, a court and a wing-room. The court has three bays, one into a deep, the gabled roof, the structure of the beam frame is the six-front porch type purlin, roofing with the grey pottery and tile, the grey pottery as ornaments. It can be seen that it is momentum in those years, takes a really important role, and has a large number of personal exchanges. In addition, there are buried tunnels in this courtyard, which can straight through the fortress in the mountain.

*1.1.2. Public buildings.* It forms some settlements when people living here. Thus, there will be faith in the formation of these settlements and the appearance of temples in China. It becomes more evident in the village of Zhaojiashan. There are 3 temples in this village, but there are 9 temples in the small village in the period of great prosperity. In the village, there is a famous phrase "Two lantern mountains, nine temples, one garret and two stockaded villages", which indicates that, the state of this

village at that time. One of the most unusual temple of them is Tan Lang temple. This temple is located in the northwest of the village. Now, there only leaves a small part of column base and pedestal. In addition, there is still a monument of this temple in village, and the tablet inscription is still clearly visible.

*1.1.3. Tunnel and Fortress.* It can be seen that the village of Zhaojiashan is really prosperous, for which is the only route of The Tea Road. The flow of many goods and money became the main goal of the mountain bandits. Although the tax house was built in the underground warehouse, people cannot save their life when some bandits robbed here. Thus, ‘the centurial underground artery’ appeared in this village.<sup>[3]</sup> Nowadays, there are still many tunnels in this village. These tunnels are around 2 meters high and 2 to 3 meters wide. They are thousands of miles long and through two stockade villages. For example, the entrance of the tunnel in the tax house can directly lead to the village in the mountain which is next to the house, called Putuo stockade village. There are three tunnels of Putuo fortress and four tunnel crossings; and the village still has more than ten tunnel crossings that can go through the whole stockade village. As the annual rainfall, the road connecting Putuo fortress with village has been collapsed. If you want to through this fortress from outside directly, you need to walk around a long way. But the door of this fortress is relatively intact and pedestrians can pass.

*1.1.4. Streets and Alleys.* The main streets and alleys are related to temples in this village, they are arranged base on the temple and they belong to an irregular layout, like a pound, which expresses the ancient thought ‘Establishing a temple before establishing a village’.

Every street is a T-junction, which directly straight in the street. There are temples, Lantern Mountains or screen wall in the top of the Main Street. The main street has East Street, west Street, South Street of temple, Kwan-yin Street, temple Lane, etc. The old village was surrounded by walls; there is a gate in the entrance of this village. In addition, there is one fortress includes blind pass on the east and west of the village. San Yi temple, it is the place that defences mutinous soldiers, it ultimately formed the closed safety village which are surrounded by walls, there is an old adage: ‘Two lantern mountains, nine temples, one garret and two stockaded villages’<sup>[4]</sup>

However, the T-junction is not created by the people in this village, in the windy city - Taiyuan, the T-junction can effectively prevent the direct irrigation of the wind, and it is used for preventing wind.<sup>[5]</sup> There is a temple at each end of the street, if there is no temples, there will be a tablet, ‘Taishan Shigandang’ is an important part of this tablet, which reflects the traditional Chinese theory of geomantic omen, if it towered the streets, it will generate the negative effect that need to be suppressed by temples.

## 2. Characteristics

The ancient village is a kind of historical and cultural heritage of our country, which bears the information and historical traces of different historical periods, its spatial forms are complex and diverse. It is not only the physical form that shows the layout of the architecture, but also integrates the geomantic and cultural concept. It is really rich and colourful and it has the unique characteristics. The village of Zhaojiashan is a typical example which is a combination of loess hilly environment with layout of the village. The overall arrangement of public buildings, houses, roads and drainage system in this village is the professional organic collaboration from the current viewpoint.

This small village still has a strong power of humanistic environment for constructing. The layouts of Heavenly Kings temple, Dragon King Temple, Guan Yu Temple and others were arranged in the centre of this village, which occupied the main position. And at the same time, this village also focuses on the protection and management of the ecological environment around this village. This village belongs to the sparsely populated village, the major land covers by dry land and sloping land.

As a post house on The Tea Road, the layout of this village, the architectural function of this village and the style of the buildings in this village all fully reflect its function of a transfer station. On

the floor, there are nine temples that supported by people, the merchants and the camels can have a rest on the business street; There are thousands of miles of winding tunnel for people avoiding the disaster and transporting goods.

### 3. Conclusion

Because of its unique geographical location, the village of Zhaojiashan has a distinct characteristic of the commercial transfer station, which makes the layout of the street and the structure of the courtyard also reflect the characteristics of all business services, which is similar to the function of the modern logistics centre, it mainly expresses the unique form of commercial towns and it is a typical example of a combination of loess hilly environment with layout of the village. The overall arrangement of public buildings, houses, roads and drainage system in this village is the professional organic collaboration from the current viewpoint. The whole creation is also specific embodiment of ancient thought that called 'Establishing a temple before establishing a village' The village of Zhaojiashan has a history of more than two thousand years; this village shows its ancient past and brighter future via its profound historical background.

### References

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