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ON THE WAY TO *ALL UNDER HEAVEN*  
COSMOLOGY:  
THE ZHAOZHOU *BAZI* SOCIETY IN  
WEST YUNNAN

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## **On the way to *All under Heaven* Cosmology:**

### **The Zhaozhou *Bazi* Society in West Yunnan<sup>1</sup>**

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#### **Abstract**

Based on local inscriptions and from the perspective of a micro study of local communities, this research explores the historical dynamics of the social extension of a Bazi (坝子) society, which colluded with the state to maintain transportation systems between Yunnan and Burma. Some social networks overlapped on the transportation routes between the basins, because these routes had since the early Ming guaranteed the successful delivery of tributaries from exterior chieftains to different capitals, which confirmed the state's *all under heaven* cosmology (天下). For instance, the significance of the transportation of copper from western Yunnan mines to the Yangtze River ports had guaranteed the safety of the state financial system in the Qing dynasty. Thus, in history, the Zhaozhou Bazi has been regarded as sustaining the support of a geopolitical network by states. On the other hand, local elites such as religious masters and scholars also gradually changed their roles from nobles at the political center of the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms to government officials or Confucian scholars from the Ming to the Qing. In this process, reforms of state policy on land tax, and its bound corvee for transport services, increased the burdens of local communities. As a response, pushed by the local elite, communities reorganized their common property to deal with changes in state policies, and extended their networks to search for alternative opportunities over the routes. In sum, social changes created opportunities for local agents to reform their religious beliefs, as well as extend their community-based mule caravan business. Dynamic local agency performed an active role in reconstructing a Bazi society, and projected a changed center-periphery relationship in the historical context of western Yunnan.

**Key words:** the *Bazi* society, tributary system, *All under Heaven* cosmology, common property, Southwest China, Yunnan

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## Introduction: What is a Bazi?

Southwest China and the highlands of southeast Asia is a terrain of high mountains, particularly in Western Yunnan, where there is a region of ragged mountains and deep river gorges of the Upper Yangtze, the Mekong, the Red, the Salween and their numerous branches. In Yunnan and Guizhou provinces in China, most of the area is more than 1000 meters above sea level. In northwest Yunnan, the highest mountain peak is 6740 meters above sea level, but the valley of the Red River on the border between Yunnan and Vietnam drops sharply down to 76.4 meters above sea level. In this realm of numerous ragged mountains in Yunnan, only about 6.52% of its territory is small flat basins and relatively flat land surrounded by mountains. Therefore, more than 93% of the geographic terrain of Yunnan is ragged mountains and river gorges. In such a province, the basin areas are treasured by local people. According to geographic investigations and measurements since the 1940s, the total amount of scattered flat basins larger than 1 square kilometer, is 1442 in Yunnan, and their combined sizes total 244,465.39 square kilometers, occupying about 6% of the area of the province.<sup>2</sup> The local people in Yunnan, southwest China, northern Burma and Thailand, call these basins the “Bazi (坝子)”. Among these Bazi basins, there are 42 that we can define as the “big Bazi”, their sizes varying between 50 and 100 square kilometers.<sup>3</sup> These “big Bazi” are the most important political and cultural centers, and also agricultural and industrial bases in Yunnan, known as the Bazi basins of Kunming, Dali, Qujin, Zhaotong-Ludian, Mengzi, Chuxiong, Lijiang, Zhongdian, Simao, Baoshan, Tengchong and so on. These Bazi basins are linked by transportation routes like highways and railways, and are concentrations of cities and towns with very high population densities in general. In this way, the Bazi basins should be seen as the geographic framework of junctions of the transportation system, the hubs of economic connections between cities and towns in the mountain areas of Yunnan or southwest China, as well as the highlands of southeast Asia.

There is a well-known saying in western Yunnan, “People in mountains look to the Bazi, people in the Bazi look to the villages, and people in villages look to the cities.”<sup>4</sup> Here when people “look to”, it shows that the layers of local communities admire others, from the mountains to the cities, but the Bazi set the basic boundary of these differences. For local residents, these differences are not only geographic and environmental, but also social and economic. Geographers define the Bazi basin based on physiognomy measurement, regarding some river valleys, small alluvial fans and terraces with gradients lower than  $8^0 \sim 12^0$  which all belong to general categories of Bazi basin in this region.<sup>5</sup> However, based on the sense of local people, their

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<sup>2</sup> Tong Shaoyu, Chen Yongsan, *The Study of Bazi in Yunnan*, Kunming: Yunnan University Press, 2007, p2. [童绍玉、陈永森著,《云南坝子研究》,昆明:云南大学出版社,2007,页2].

<sup>3</sup> Tong Shaoyu, Chen Yongsan, *The Study of Bazi in Yunnan*, Kunming: Yunnan University Press, 2007, p22. [童绍玉、陈永森著,《云南坝子研究》,昆明:云南大学出版社,2007,页22].

<sup>4</sup> “山头的望着坝头的、坝头的望着村头的、村头的望着城头的”。

<sup>5</sup> Tong Shaoyu, Chen Yongsan, *The Study of Bazi in Yunnan*, Kunming: Yunnan University Press, 2007, p2. [童绍玉、陈永森著,《云南坝子研究》,昆明:云南大学出版社,2007,页21].

definition of a Bazi basin has become more flexible. In the mountains environment, if a piece of land is relatively flat and not a mountain side, peak or mountain range, it could be a small or big Bazi. In this sense, Bazi is a way to define the land which “is not mountains” through the eyes of local residents. But beyond the geographic description, a locally recognized Bazi basin has been a long term development of social integration and separation leading to it becoming a unit of space in every life for communities. In this way, Bazi should be regarded as a social history unit for our understanding of communities in the mountains area in Southwest China, for example, people are very familiar with the term Shaping Ba (沙坪坝) in Chongqing, or “Chejiang Daba(车江大坝)”in Guizhou, as well as the Mali Ba (麻栗坝, Kokang) in Burma.<sup>6</sup>

If the local term Bazi is not to be regarded as a simple geographic term used by local communities because it is also a term used to manifest a certain historical process of local space integration and construction, which makes it into a hub of sociopolitical relation sets, we should check some terms for basins in history. According to Li Fuyi, the term BA (ba<sup>35</sup>) of Chinese origin means a dike dam (坝), so it was a Shan-Dai-Tai original term used to describe a basin in the mountains area, this term has not originated from Chinese vocabulary.<sup>7</sup> This explanation helps us to understand the description of landscapes in Shan-Dai areas in Thailand and Burma as well and it is very popular in Dai language, such as “Menglan Ba (勐朗)” or “Ganlan Ba (橄欖坝)” in Yunnan. For ordinary usage, in Yunnan, the caravan muleteers called their journey to the Mandalay plain as “go down to the Bazi” in history. However, if we trace back the term Bazi in historical documents, it became a new fashion in the late Ming dynasty. As late as the late Ming, it was not well accepted by scholars in their descriptions of local landscapes. One case was recorded by Xu Hongzu in his *The Travels of Xu Xiake* (《徐霞客游记》) in 1642. Xu describes the Weishan Bazi: “Menghua territory is narrow, it just has a Chuan (川, basin) in the middle, and rivers all run toward the Mekong River (Lancang Jiang), and the Dingxi Ling Mountain is the boundary in the east demarcated with another region.”<sup>8</sup> It is clear that, before Qing dynasty, some well-known Bazi basins were called the Chuan (川) or the Dian (甸), local administrative centers or famous market towns, and these names are still used today for cities, but not for the names of the basin these cities are set in, such as Jianchuan (剑川), Binchuan (宾川), Hechuan (鹤川). In this way, Chuan was not only a term to highlight the local geography of basins, but also a title of the local administrative units, like a county or prefecture centered in this basin. In this case, Bazi was a new term to replace Chuan in West Yunnan. In a local context, the change of the vocabulary of the title “the flat land in the mountains area” also means the change of the relationship between places and people in this mountains area.

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<sup>6</sup> Sui-woo Cheung, “The King of Miao, Sama, and Zhuge Liang: Ethnic Interaction and the Exploitation of Chejiang Daba on the Perspective of Religious Worship. [张兆和, “苗王, 萨玛、诸葛亮: 从信仰崇拜看中国贵重榕江县车江大坝的开发与族群互动”, 页 XXX。]

<sup>7</sup> Li fuyi, *The letters of Fulu*, 李拂一, 《復庐存稿》, 復仁书局, 2005 年, “复谭伟臣”, 页 125。

<sup>8</sup> Xu Hongzu, *The Travels of Xu Xiake*, Kunming: Yunnan People’s Publishing House, 1985, p1160.

[徐弘祖, 《徐霞客游记》(朱惠荣校注本), 昆明: 云南人民出版社, 1985, 页 1160。“蒙化疆宇较蹙, 其中止一川, 水俱西南下澜沧者, 以定西岭南脊之界其东也。”]

Therefore, as a historical habit to describe landscapes, “Chuan” and “Dian” also meant the contemporary Bazi basin before the concept of Bazi was established in local communities. For instance, Chiang Mai in Thailand was also known as the Jingmai Bazi (景迈坝子), and recorded as the Babai Da Dian (八百大甸) in historical archives since the Yuan dynasty. In this sense, the local term to define the geographic landscape of a basin used to be fluid depending on the historical context, but the concept of Bazi had been gradually stabilized since the late Ming to early Qing, in most areas in Yunnan, to describe the basins and it became a day to day concept in local communities.

Another more historical term to describe a Bazi basin was Dan (爇) or Jian (睑) in the Nanzhao (783-902) and Dali (937-1253) kingdoms. Dan is pronounced in today’s Bai language as “da<sup>22</sup>”, meaning large area of farmland. For example, the Zhaozhao Bazi discussed in this paper, it was known as a Shihe chieftaincy (石和诏) and Qulian Zhao (渠敛赵), here Zhao (赵) is the surname of the chieftain’s family, and 诏 means the king. Later, when Chuan (川) was given to describe this basin, the title changed to Zhao Chuan Dan (赵川爇) in late Nanzhao. From the Dali kingdom to the Yuan dynasty, this basin was called Zhao Dan (赵爇) and Zhaozhou Dian (赵州甸). In a document in Yuan dynasty, the basin is described as: “Traveling along the mountains road from Baiya basin (from Kunming toward West Yunnan) for forty *li* (20 kilometer), is Zhaozhao Dian, also known as the Zhao Jian. The basin is surrounded by mountains, while there is a strong feeling that there is something of powerful influence here. The basin (川) is flat, some old noble families (in Dali kingdom) are well established here. The Shenzhuan River is running along the basin with its irrigation systems that could benefit thousands of hectares of fields. Thus the ordinary people are rich here, without fear of a drought disaster.”<sup>9</sup> Another basin is to the north of Erhai Lake in Dali area, today’s Deng Chuan basin. In pre-Nanzhao time, it was known as the basin of Deng Dan Zhao (邓爇诏), then it was renamed Deng Chuan (邓川), and now this basin is called the Deng Chuan Bazi.<sup>10</sup> In different times, people used new titles to revise this basin.

In brief, even if the concept of Bazi is today described a basin by local communities, what this concept describes about “the flatland surrounded by mountains” as a geomorphic type in Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau, is also a historical process of local social political space construction as well. This historical construction has been deeply embedded in local communities with their changing political systems, irrigated rice farming, transportation and ecological environment, and the geomorphic type has also linked with a social historical type of local space on the state frontier of China in the last several centuries. Therefore, when we discuss the well-used concept of Bazi in Han Chinese language in Yunnan today, it is a term borrowed from the

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<sup>9</sup> Guo Songnian, *Traveling Records in Dali*, Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House, 1986, p14. (“山行四十里至赵州甸，即赵睑也。山形四周回抱，有藏风蔽气之势。川泽平旷，故家乔木犹有存者。神庄江贯于其中，溉田千顷，以故百姓富庶，少旱虐之灾。”郭松年，《大理行记》(王叔武校注本)，昆明：云南民族出版社，1986，页 14)。

<sup>10</sup> Fanchuo, *Manshu*, vol. 5. (樊绰，《蛮书》，卷五，参见方国瑜，《中国西南历史地理考释(上册)》，北京：中华书局，1987，页 443。)

Tai-Dai language to describe a social political system centered on a flatland surrounded by mountains, and all those Bazi systems were linked not only by transportation systems but also by flows of goods and markets, as well as by state power.

To put the Bazi basin centered communities into a bigger historical context and a political geography between political powers between China and Southeast Asia, we could develop some interesting questions for further discussion: In a mountains realm like southwest China and highland southeast Asia, if we start from a local perspective about everyday relations and cultural meaning construction among local communities to study Bazi basin centered societies, it will help us to have a better understanding of the historical process of Bazi construction and the geographic connections of local cultural space. The cultural meanings of local historical construction for local residents in their daily life therefore might be a way to understand the development of the social agency of local society responding to the extension of state power on political geography as the frontier of the state. Different local communities have been searching for ways to reconstruct values and cultural strategies to construct their social space for local agency due to the change of state power. Some scholars pointed out that the perspective of local communities was crucial in frontier study in the 1990s. When Yang Tingshuo (杨庭硕) and his colleagues published the Book Series of the Southwest (《西南书系》), their point is that, scholars should try to put ecology, economy, ethnic relations as well as historical process together in their study of Southwest China society, so that we can escape the bind of dogmatic paradigm of frontier history and ethnic history, based on the perspective of seeing the periphery from the core, based on the vision of the cultural plain of China.<sup>11</sup>

### Map of Bazi basins in Western Yunnan



<sup>11</sup> Yang Tingshuo, Luo Kanglong, *The Southwest and the Central Plain*, Kunming: Yunnan Education Publishing Houses, 1991. [杨庭硕、罗康隆,《西南与中原》,昆明:云南教育出版社,1991].

## **Transportation System as Tributary Routes: Networks in a cosmology of *All under Heaven* (天下) between Yunnan and highland Southeast Asia**

One way to put local perspective into a context of academic concern regarding Southwest China is to study the network of transportation routes based on the Bazi basins, as the Bazi basin societies are the supporting positions of this system in a ragged mountains realm in history. Between Bazi basins, both the state and local communities mutually cooperated in the reconstruction and maintenance of the transportation system as well as the reformation of communities themselves in a long term process. In this context, the transportation systems were not only a network for commercial goods circulation, but also a network for state power extension and transition toward Southwest Asia and Tibet through Yunnan's western basins, where the Zhaozhou Basin in this paper is discussed. For the Ming and the Qing Chinese empires, all important political and economic flows of people and goods were reliant on the transportation system supported by these Bazi basins in the Southwest, such as the tributary journeys from frontier chieftains and kingdoms in Burma and Laos, and the travels of officials from their working places to the capital, Kunming, and other provinces. In addition, the transportation of melted copper became more and more important in the Qing dynasty. If there were wars, the supply chains also relied on the support of the transportation services provided by the Bazi basins along the main routes from Yangtze River ports and cities in north Burma. During the wars between the Qing and the Burma,<sup>12</sup> all logistics of warfare supply were heavily reliant upon the local services and mule caravan support. Between Yunnan and the Shan highlands in Northern Burma, transportation meant traveling from one Bazi to another across mountains and rivers. However, we can find that, systems weaved by local markets in the Bazi basins, agricultural irrigation canals and local temple connections were effectively supported by local communities both in Bazi basins and nearby mountains to work as a social mechanism for local integration, and higher level, cross-region networks existed, such as the pilgrimage networks or trade fairs made possible by mule caravans.<sup>13</sup>

In a ragged mountains area in Southwest China, where the geographic condition of transportation meant inconvenience with no navigable rivers or level roads on the flatlands, the most significant political priority for the Chinese states was to guarantee the transportation system was functional and safe across mountains. Thus, the social mechanism of Bazi basin society in the mountains area was different from the system which could be regarded as the gradual development of a parallel system of towns and cities with local agriculture and markets, from lower level to high level economic and political centers as William Skinner points out. The geographic and ecological

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<sup>12</sup> Dai Yingcong. "A Disguised Defeat: The Myanmar Campaign of the Qing Dynasty." *Modern Asian Studies* 38 (1): 145–189, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Tak-sang Liu and Zhao Min edited, *The Bazi Society in Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau*, Kunming: Yunnan University Press, forthcoming.

conditions of Bazi based societies were bound with a local, cultural and economic type of communal cooperation with the state in a frontier situation, but we need to discuss some of the characteristics of this social and cultural space. According to Skinner, Southwest China should be regarded as a part of the Chinese domestic market, and local markets were also constructed on the basis of the local administrative system, like other regions in China.<sup>14</sup> However, through the study of historical cooperation between communities in mountains and Bazi basins, we found that the real situation is much more complex than Skinner suggested. On one hand, a regional market system must be shaped by the geographic significance of the transportation accessibility between Bazi basins. On the other hand, local marketable products such as minerals, medicinal herbs, animals, as well as the special need for regular long distance connections between Yunnan, Burma and Tibet and numerous chieftains tributaries, are all factors that have seriously limited the promotion of local markets based on local agriculture. In sum, the transportation system among Bazi basins in Southwest China was not a system simply based on local agriculture and the needs of local peasants, but a system based on state politics as well as regional transportation needs for long distance exchange in politics (like tributary journeys), and state strategic planning (like copper transportation in the Qing). Counter to this, the transportation system, between the Yangtze River ports, or Dongting Lake and the Irrawaddy River, run by animal caravans was seriously shaped by the level of local participation in regional markets and the roles performed by local communities, into a very large network in general. That means, as a geographic position on the frontier, a local Bazi basin society had to work with others in a whole system, so that they could share a common marketable value and political resources along with transportation routes between China and Southeast Asia. This connection could also be a crucial element of state power to maintain its political benefit and cultural meaning, which could be seen as the political cosmology of the Chinese state on the frontier.

In this way, the flows of goods need to cooperate with the flows of relations exchanged between Bazi basins and it must be an open space toward Southwest Asia and Tibet, but we could observe that these flows were based on social, political and commercial support serviced by Bazi basins as ties of transportation network. Additionally, this transportation network has also been the frame of local ethnic relations and cultural connections. Based on these ties and the framework, local communities were continually reconstructing their relationships as well, responding the change of state politics and the economic environment in a huge context of regional exchange. Therefore, Bazi basin society is a different social cultural system and a way of market organization based on scattered, discursive ties of the Bazi basin connected to the transportation system, to link the Chinese domestic market, Southeast Asia and Tibet together, but run by local agency based at the social support centers located around the Bazi communities. This is not an isolated end and a corner of the Chinese domestic market in a sub branch of the Yangtze River market system as suggested by Skinner, but multiple levels of social networks woven by local

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<sup>14</sup> G. William Skinner, "Marketing and Social Structure in Rural China: Part I", *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (Nov., 1964), pp. 3-43.



communities, state power, and commercial flows.

For the local community level in Bazi society, after the transformation from Dali kingdom to the establishment of Yunnan province in Yuan dynasty, and particularly since the early Ming dynasty, the court in Nanjing and then in Beijing invested in large amounts of resources to protect transportation routes from Dongting Lake area to the Irrawaddy River through the basin centers of Kunming, Dali and Tengyue (腾越). The political recognition of the Ming state required a safe and well-maintained passage for military forces, officials and tributary travelers from the 1380s which also provided an infrastructure of long distance trade and the flow of materials. This power also reshaped native political groups as their political and cultural centers shifted from cities in Yunnan to the imperial capitals, and since then, the indigenous communities had to redefine themselves as the circle peripheral to the Chinese empire, rather than the self-defining center anymore. This transformation deeply reshaped local residents not only in terms of agricultural and economic activities, but also religious and cosmological values.

In the case of Zhaozhou, as a transportation position on the main passage from Kunming to Burma or Tibet, we can find that, the holistic scope of a transportation system for the Chinese empire became a serious shaping power to reorganize local relations among communities and the cosmology as a cultural landscape. People's daily life could not be separated from the dualism power of communal reform and state politics through the continuing changes of prefecture, county and communal administration, the style of state tax and carve, the household registration categories as well as the activities of the state shaped local elite. In this way, local social structure, from households to counties, and the ways the transportation system crossed the communities have been a double-way for us to understand the change of local culture, from the capital districts of the previous Buddhist Dali Kingdom into a county seat of the Ming and the Qing's southwest frontier.

Scholars have tried to explain the social historical features of the Southwest frontier in different ways in the last several decades. As Patterson Giersch points out, the concept of "middle ground" could be used to explain the borderland of southwest Yunnan as an area of flows of social actors and flows of cultural, economic exchanges, as well as the flow of boundaries.<sup>15</sup> In the frontier between Yunnan and Southeast Asia, the long distance trade of commercial circulation also pushed the social change of local society, thus the fluidity and networks of circulations also established the basis for the transformation to modernity in this region.<sup>16</sup> Besides this discussion, I would like to argue that how the social agency of local communities was reconstructed is the basis used to support and maintain these flows in the long term historical process on these borderlands. Another scholar, Hill, points out that, in northern Thailand, the Yunnanese were regarded as strangers and called the *haw* by indigenous people to some degree. However, these Yunnanese merchants performed

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<sup>15</sup> C. Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier*. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2006. p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> C. Patterson Giersch, "Cotton, Copper and Caravans: Trade and the Transformation of Southwest China." In Eric Tagliacozzo and Wen-Chin Chang eds., *Chinese Circulations: Capital, Commodities, and Networks in Southeast Asia*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011. Pp. 37-61.

the role of middlemen, between indigenous groups and other businessmen in this borderland, so that the Thai government defined them as a group of natives.<sup>17</sup> This observation about the middleman role is significant for our explanation about the relationship between the Bazi basins and the mountains communities, and it could be a certain common phenomena throughout the region. But if we study the transportation networks supported by the Bazi basins, it is a crucial point that the Bazi basin societies are open for its discursive and extensive stretch toward different dimensions linked and bound by other Bazi basins and woven by their agents. This social feature could help us to better understand the strong local agency of continuing communal reconstruction, which is not only visible in the political dynamic of ethnic identities, but also in their self-managed communal agency responding state powers. In this way, study the Bazi basin society is a way to explain the dialectic process of discursive flows of goods and cultural meanings and the integration of local communal unities in a bigger picture of state extensions of the Ming and Qing empires and local transformation in the same process. However, as the base of the previous Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms, this region was not an area beyond the state politically, and could not be described as the region outside the “state civilizing project”, as in northwest Guizhou on the border between Yunnan, Guizhou and Sichuan, which used to be the traditional border between the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms and the Sichuan plain.<sup>18</sup> The local elite in western Yunnan were able to participate in state politics in different ways since the early Ming, as it had been a long term historical center and had the significant position of main transportation hub in the state cosmology in the Yuan, the Ming and the Qing dynasties. The political geographic framework of Yunnan was mainly established by the transportation system which linked the Bazi basins into a big system supported by the Yunnan prefecture (云南府, Kunming area), the Dali prefecture (大理府, the Erhai lake area), the Linan prefecture (临安府, southern Yunnan-Vietnam borderland area) and the Yongchang prefecture (金齿、永昌府, the Yunnan-Burma borderland area) since the early Ming. Based on these Bazi basins, the whole social political system of Yunnan province could extend their influence to the mountains area and different dimensions in Tibet, Burma and Vietnam supported by the transportation system from Dongting Lake to eastern Yunnan through Guizhou. Under this framework, local intellectuals gradually transformed from the Nanzhao-Dali style of Buddhist masters into Confucian scholars and participated actively in state politics but based on their local perspective of scholarship and social practice. Through the study of Bazi society we could realize that social transformation for previous local kingdoms, to the Southwest frontier of the Ming and the Qing, was not internal colonialism concerning the social reconstruction of local communities along with Bazis, and it was not a direct result of

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<sup>17</sup> Ann Maxwell Hill, *Merchants and Migrants: Yunnanese Chinese in Southeast Asia*, New Haven: Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1998. p. 9.

<sup>18</sup> John E. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist: China's Colonization of Guizhou, 1200-1700*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007 (see also 李林, “‘开化’与‘殖民’两套诠释话语的论争与困境—兼与 John E. Herma 教授商榷”, 《中央研究院近代史研究所集刊》, 第 80 期 (2013 年 6 月), 页 151-170).

the civilizing object of state power. The local elite performed crucial roles in negotiating with the state in the long term course to mobilize local communities and to search for opportunities to respond to the changes of state policies. They were quite skillful at reconstructing local agency based on the development of native Confucian schools and religious reform to build up a local space for communication networks through the reform of Bazi basin societies.<sup>19</sup>

In brief, we could not simply regard a diverse region of mountains and basins, their supported transportation routes and branches, the different administrative styles of chieftain territories and official counties, all of these political geographic diversity in a historical dynamic, as a homogenized Southwest China frontier. Some recent studies also simply regard local communities as a simple “passage” or “corridor” for passing travelers and these travelers represent the view of the central plain again, but ignore the local social agency of communities in the reform of this frontier. The perspective of Bazi basin study benefits us to think about two questions: first, Bazi society was a historical process around the construction of local communities to deal with the pressure of state power through responding to policies like corvee and tax, the pressure of providing a transportation service, wars, the flow of goods, and so on. This was also a process of the reconstruction of local integration and cooperation within and between groups in Bazi basins and mountains areas. This process pushed the local elite to work with communities as their political representatives and agency in their cultural reconstruction based on their ideals and local common interest. Second, the Bazi basin society was involved in continuing competition and conflicts in searching for different political and social possibilities in the whole process, and this dynamic also pushed the reconstruction of different interest groups and common identities. In this sense, the perspective of Bazi basin study is not about a comparison of the demarcation between highland and lowland societies, as this point of view never put local agency into a network of transportation in the state political cosmology and political geography.<sup>20</sup> Edmund Leach pointed out that ethnic identities and political systems in the mountains area in this region were very dynamic,<sup>21</sup> but we could go beyond these oscillating models to check where and how the state and the elite worked together in shaping local agency for change, social fluidity and continuity. In the case of Zhaozhou Bazi we can see that, pushed by intellectuals, gentries and officials, local residents gradually reformed their social landscape into a mythical and cosmological space based on the Fengshui geomancy theory for their re-imagination of social relations with the state. Also, the reconstructed temple system was a way of reorganized communal ties according to the irrigation system in the Bazi, and therefore the agricultural economy was integrated into a local cosmological model of social order and a Bazi community in

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<sup>19</sup> Jianxiong Ma, “The Zhaozhou *Bazi* Society in Yunnan: Historical Process in the *Bazi* Basin Environmental System during the Ming Period (1368-1643)”. In Ts’ui-jung Liu edited, *Environmental History in East Asia: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, London and New York: Routledge. 2013. Pp. 131-155.

<sup>20</sup> James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southwest Asia*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009.

<sup>21</sup> Edmund R Leach. 1986. *Political System in Highland Burma*. London: Athlone Press, 1986.

general. The author wants to point out that, the reconstruction of local community was a reform of historical legacy of the Nanzhao-Dali kingdoms to become a combination of state tributary routes in a Fengshui geomancy space with communal temples run by local elite to respond to the changes of state, and local people manage their social life based on their way of interpreting this transportation cosmology.

## **The Zhaozhou Basin: a Bazi society as a sustaining position on the transportation system**

### **1. General historical changes in Zhaozhou county**

The Fengyi township today was previously Zhaozhou county (赵州) before 1912 when the title changed to Fengyi (凤仪县). The territory of this county then included the main area of today's Dali city, known as Xiaguan (下关) now south of Erhai Lake, and the northern part of today's Midu county (弥渡). Because of economic development and the construction of the Burma Road, as well as the shift of the center of the administrative district after 1958, Fengyi lost its position as the county seat and became a township level administrative district under Dali county (1958-1983) or Dali city (since 1983). According to historical records, the total population of Fengyi county was 43,000 in 1919.<sup>22</sup> In the township of Dali city in 1982, its population was 43,000, and now the Economic Zone of Dali city has a population of 69,700 in 2014, and a total area is 307.9 square kilometers.<sup>23</sup> The Fengyi township is still a transportation crossroads in western Yunnan even today. The old Burma Road and the newly constructed highways to Lijiang and Ruili all cross the basin, as well as the Dali railway stations and the airport which are all located in this basin. For local residents, Fengyi is a basin, and people still call it the Zhaozhou Bazi today.

In this article, the author takes the Zhaozhou Bazi as a geographic unit for analysis mainly based on local inscriptions and gazetteers. The Zhaozhou Bazi is not organized by orders of ethnic groups, even though there are many ethnic groups like the Bai, the Han, the Hui and the Yi (the Lalo group). In a long history, the basic units of social activities are villages and streets in Zhaozhou town. We can find that, the politics of Ming and the Qing states, the transportation route and local religious activities were all shaping powers of social integration for the organization of Bazi society in Zhaozhou. However, competition, conflicts and social adjustment also performed important roles in the cooperation of these village communities around the management of temple-based common property and this cooperative mechanism helped to build up a local identity. Therefore, Bazi could be regarded as an integrated social unit and space to understand the dimension of historical change in the mountains area in western Yunnan.

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<sup>22</sup> Yang Jiajing, *The Fengyi Gazetteer*, Kunming: Yunnan University Press, 1996. (杨嘉靖主编,《凤仪志》,昆明:云南大学出版社,1996,页93。凤仪人口数据的大幅变化,主要是因地方行政区划的调整所致。)

<sup>23</sup> <http://www.ynszxc.gov.cn> (大理市凤仪镇乡镇概况,2015年5月8日浏览)。

Since the 1950s, the newly developed academic paradigm on ethnic minorities in Southwest China has paid ample attention to the history of ethnic nationalities or the origin of Non-Han minorities in the context of the establishment of minority autonomous regions in China. In this political atmosphere, Chinese scholars have tried to include the study of frontier society in history into the fashion of ethnic history for several decades. Meanwhile, some western scholars tried to adopt a perspective of internal colonialism to discuss social reforms in this region, regarding Southwest China as part of a colonial project launched by the courts of Ming and Qing empires.<sup>24</sup> The former ignored the history of the social and cultural changes of local communities and their relations with the state, the latter fails to review the diverse ecological environment and parties participating in state politics in the geographic landscape of the Southwest frontier of China. But the case of Zhaozhou provides a historical perspective on a local scale to check change and continuity based on integrated local communities, to study the process of transformation from a community controlled by famous noble families (名门巨族) based on their family Buddhist monasteries in Dali kingdom, to become a county based on official household registration of *Lijia* (里甲编户) and the administrative category separation of military garrisons (卫所军户) and the commoners (民家) in the Ming and early Qing. Gradually, social administrative categories have been integrated into village based communities in a Bazi society along with the transportation system across Bazi basins. In this process, the noble families and their lead villages took different strategies to respond to the changes of state policies and tried to find their space to serve their self-interest. But the interesting thing is that, these famous surnames like the Zhao family and the Dong family in Zhaozhou had been long term Buddhist masters or Confucian scholars, but, as late as in the 1870s, they started to build their own ancestral halls and recompile their family genealogies.<sup>25</sup> One reason of the development of village based community rather than lineage based community in the Bazi was the heavy corvee service requirement by the Ming and the Qing states, and due to these heavy official tasks, village temples had been used as an effective manager, run by village leaders, to accumulate common property and use these common resources to deal with government required services for transportation maintenance. As a social responding mechanism of village communities, the temples of local masters (本主、土主庙) therefore became a system of common property to divvy up official tasks for transportation corvee services (夫马). In this way, the shrinkage of the Buddhist monastery and the rise of village temples could be understood as a local institution responding to the state, but it also bound with the change of state policy of corvee and agricultural tax in difference periods. On the level of local affairs, these village temples also performed a significant role to deal

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<sup>24</sup> John E. Herman, *Amid the Clouds and Mist: China's Colonization of Guizhou, 1200-1700*, Cambridge (Massachusetts) and London: Harvard University Asia Center, Harvard University Press, 2007. P. 15; Laura Hostetler, *Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern China*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001, p. 30.

<sup>25</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p203, p304. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“教谕康公墓志”、“故父赵昌墓铭”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页203、页305].

with irrigation cooperation and everyday disputes, as well as being a platform for negotiation between village leaders or gentries and county officials. In this way, ethnic identities and social categories in the Bazi were not necessary bound to ethnic identities as these temples were run by different ethnic groups.

**Figure:** Today's Zhaozhou Bazi basin



Along with the change of state tax policy and the extension of state power from the early Ming to the late Qing in Yunnan, local agency and communal power were also created gradually, by the cooperation of the state and local elite. The establishment of local agency was therefore bound with the extension of the state and local intentions and their ability of stretch. For instance, local communities developed their opportunities and occupations in long distance trade, or became the middlemen for trade on the transportation routes. In this situation, the Bazi system was bound with, and equal to, the transportation system. The transportation system guaranteed the existence of the state in a mountains realm, but the Bazi basin society provided some basic material and human support of this transportation system, so that state power could be extended. Mountain resources could be concentrated in the markets in the basins through branches of the transportation routes for trade on a general level, but the state power also radiated and transited toward endless communities near the basin, and this system could be clearly understood as a network system and its tie to different communities and flows of materials and people were concentrated, as well as circulated. This system could be run as infrastructure, that means both the state and local communities could take benefits for their own purposes.

## 2. Continuing social integration from the Ming to the Qing in circles of the basin society

In order to control the main transportation route in western Yunnan, the Ming government in Yunnan established an armed forces official based at Erhai regional military garrison (洱海卫兵备道) in Yunnan county (云南县) after the Ming army occupied Dali. Under this official, the Ming government also set up the Jingdong military garrisons in Mudi and Dali, and Zhaozhou was under the control of the Dali military garrison (大理卫). According to the Kongxi Dali Prefecture Gazetteer (*《康熙大理府志》*), until the early Qing dynasty, there were large numbers of military households (军户) attached to Zhaozhou under the categories of Jingdong military garrison (景东卫) and Dali military garrison. However, these military households were under the control of the system of regional kings (藩王), and there were the military farms under the Mu family in Yunnan (沐氏勋庄).<sup>26</sup> It is clear that, since the early Ming, there were double official systems established for local administration, one was the official county like Zhaozhou, another was the military garrisons under the regional kings, therefore two different household registration categories followed: the commoners (民户、民家) under the county, and the military households (军户、军家) under the garrison, and, most importantly, in this double system commoners paid their tax and corvee to the county government, but the military households paid theirs to the military officials, until the system was demolished in early Qing. In this way, the Zhaozhou county government could only control its registered commoners administratively. After Zhaozhou county was established, all commoner households were registered and organized into fifth *Li* (里) as a collective unit for tax and corvee service, until in year 10 of Wangli reign (1582), the farming lands of these *Li* registration households were measured and their tax and corvee were divided up into land tax and paid by silver. This reform of tax policy was known as the Single Tax in Silver (一条鞭法) and since then, the commoners' tax ratio was stabilized based on their registered land.<sup>27</sup> In year 2 of Kangxi reign (1663), because of the transformation from the Ming to the Qing, all military garrisons were demolished, and then in year 26 of Kangxi reign (1687), the policy of integrating military garrisons into a county was carried out. Later in year 34 of Kangxi reign (1695), the Qing government established a new official military force as a branch of Dali military garrison in Zhaozhou, and set up its sub-official in Midu.<sup>28</sup> After these political changes, the double system of military garrison households and commoner households was finally demolished but it had been maintained for more than 300 years. The separated household categories of the commoners and the military

<sup>26</sup> Huang Yuanzhi, *The Kangxi Dali Prefecture Gazetteer*; Cheng Jinren, *The Qianlong Zhaozhou Gazetteer*. [黄元治修,《康熙大理府志》,卷七,“户口”,收入《大理丛书·方志编》,卷四,北京:民族出版社,2007,页82;程近仁修,《乾隆赵州志》,卷三,“兵防”,收入《故宫珍本丛刊》,第231册,海口:海南出版社,2001,页91].

<sup>27</sup> Zhuang Cheng, *The Wangli Zhaozhou Gazetteer*. P41. [庄诚修,《万历赵州志》,卷二,“税粮”,大理:大理白族自治州文化局翻印,1983,页41].

<sup>28</sup> Chen Zhaotang, Li Qixin, *The Daoguang Zhaozhou Gazetteer*, p173. [陈钊堂、李其馨修,《道光赵州志》,卷二,“兵防”,台北:学生书局,1968,页173].

households therefore set the basis of two local identities in history: the commoners or Minjia (民家) and the military household or Junhu (军户), and this developed into the two ethnic identities of the Minjia or the Bai and the Junhu or the Han in a local context after the transformation from the Ming to the Qing.<sup>29</sup>

However, the integration of military garrisons into a county did not stop the corvee for local communities, and it seems that the policy reform in the Ming was not so successful. Zhaozhou residents still needed to pay their agricultural harvest as tax to the government and “because the locality of this basin is on an important transportation route, people were troubled for endless corvee services.”<sup>30</sup> Again, in year 5 of Yongzheng reign (1727), the Qing government carried out the policy of divvying up poll tax into land (摊丁归粮), the poll tax was finally demolished and the land tax was stabilized. From year 1 of Qianlong reign (1736) to year 13 of Daoguang reign (1833), the continuing reorganization of Lijia or Baojia household registration enriched the integration of categories of households after the official integration of military garrisons. In this situation, the demarcation of the local identities of commoner and military households was never blurred because the two identities of the Minjia/Bai (民家/白子) native and the Han settlers gradually developed as local ethnic identities. The difference has never been the social boundary of different villages in this region, because both the commoners and the military households inhabited their own villages, or mixed together in a single village after the integration.

This historical review could help us to understand the legacy of Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms and the double administrative system carried out in the Bazi basin, and their influence in social reconstruction in the Qing dynasty, because the double system did not exist later, the categories of people therefore transformed into ethnic identities during the continuing integration of Bazi society in the early Qing.

In order to strictly control the capital region and main transportation routes of the previous Dali kingdom in western Yunnan, the Ming government set very strong military forces, based on the military garrison system, to suppress local resistance in early Ming. From the 1380s to the 1720s, the Qing government was able to extend its direct political control toward more remote areas on the borderland with Burma, and after more and more southern Yunnan areas were integrated into the county system through the demolition of native chieftains (改土归流), the functional position of Zhaozhou on the transportation system changed. From the early Ming to the middle Qing, Zhaozhou gradually changed from a frontier region to become a well-developed “interior county (内地)” in terms of direct control of administration and jurisdiction in local affairs. This continuing development also meant that, the Zhaozhou Bazi society had been well integrated into the most important transportation chain of state power and logistic transition of state military force due to its own well integrated social agency to provide the state’s transportation tasks and to protect local interests. In this

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<sup>29</sup> Jianxiong Ma, “The Zhaozhou *Bazi* Society in Yunnan: Historical Process in the *Bazi* Basin Environmental System during the Ming Period (1368-1643)”. In Ts’ui-jung Liu edited, *Resources Utilizations and their Impacts: Studies of East Asian Environmental History*, Londong: Routledge, 2013.

<sup>30</sup> Cheng Jinren, *The Qianlong Zhaozhou Gazetteer*, p35. [程近仁修,《乾隆赵州志》,卷一,“户口”,赵州“当西迤要冲,编氓苦徭役”,页 35].



way, the social integration meant that, on one hand, local communities could easily organize themselves as a cooperative to adopt and to respond to the coming of the Ming and the Qing states; on the other hand, this social integration also meant that a group of local elite developed who were leaders of local communities supported by the commoners to be their representatives to manage their public affairs and common properties for the common good. This leading elite also performed the roles of local representatives to work with officials and negotiate with representatives of state power for their local interests, or to work for the state to maintain their own communities. This layer of social elite were crucial actors and were the middlemen for social reform and cultural reconstruction in the whole process of integration to build up a Bazi basin society. Through their activities, we can see how local agency could develop in this society bound with the state transportation system.<sup>31</sup>

This case shows how local communities could cooperate with the county officials to build three important bridges on the main road. It helps us to understand the way of social cooperation and integration in this basin society in the middle and late Ming dynasty. In year 33 of Jiajing reign (1554), because more and more heavy traffic traveled on this road, which was the only road linking Dali in western Yunnan to the provincial capital Kunming, and the floods of the Boluo river (波罗江) across the centre of the basin heavily destroyed the old bridges, the county officials in the city of Zhaozhou had to take responsibility to rebuild the bridges and maintain the road, otherwise the Boluo river became a transportation barrier for travelers. Normally, after the travelers crossed the Dingxi Mountains (定西岭) and walked down to the Zhaozhou basin, they needed to cross the river using the Lion Mouth Bridge (狮子口桥) first, then the Whit Bridge (白桥), and finally the Mill Bridge (水碾桥) before arriving at Zhaozhou city. All the old bridges were wooden and often destroyed by floods. The magistrate of Zhaozhou county therefore initiated a project to reconstruct these three bridges making them permanent stone bridges. Studying the records on the inscriptions we can find the process of this construction project in great detail: the magistrate Pan Dawu (潘大武) himself donated his salary, totaling 20 *liang* silver (about 35 ounce) and some rice for food. Then the magistrate called a meeting with local gentries to organize a committee. A retired prefecture magistrate Zou Yaochen (邹尧臣) was appointed as the chair of this committee, some local scholars (生员) and representatives came from the military garrison villages and commoner villages worked together to manage the whole process. The committee then appointed two general managers, three accountants and two cashiers to manage the project under the supervision of this committee. Besides this, two managers were appointed to organize waterway transportation to move stone from Cangshan mountain through Erhai Lake and the Boluo River. Another two managers were appointed to organize land transportation for the construction materials. After that, three managers were appointed to take responsibility for cooking food for the workers. But, how could they

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<sup>31</sup> Jianxiong Ma, "The Zhaozhou *Bazi* Society in Yunnan: Historical Process in the *Bazi* Basin Environmental System during the Ming Period (1368-1643)". In Ts'ui-jung Liu edited, *Resources Utilizations and their Impacts: Studies of East Asian Environmental History*, Londong: Routledge, 2013.

raise money for construction costs? The committee called all the village leaders to donate funds from the villages in the basin. The magistrate noticed that, “the cost for each bridge will be 100 *liang* silver (about 176 ounce), but should be donated by villagers according to their willingness. The household apportion is prohibited, and if the total amount of donation could not match the finally cost, the remaining part will be paid by my salary. All kinds of donations are welcome, including money, rice, grain, silk, more or less is all matters. All logistic flows must be clearly recorded under the individual name of who has taken on responsibilities and there are state laws in charge of the living world, while the gods and ghosts are in charging of the world of death.”<sup>32</sup>

In the construction process, all engineering and materials expenses were paid for in silver. The cost of labor for each bridge was 47 *liang* silver (about 82 ounce) and 450 kilogram rice (六石米) and it took six months. But some small items, such as lime and timber, were paid for using shell money (贝巴), because in everyday business, shell was still used as currency, rather than copper coins in Yunnan then.<sup>33</sup>

#### Villages and their part in building the bridges in the Zhaozhou basin in 1554.

| The name of bridges | Parts of bridges         | Responsible villages                                       | Detailed explanation  |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| The Mill Bridge     | The southern bridge base | The Lehe village, the Xianshu village (罗和村、羨树村)            | Total cost was 100 <i>liang</i> silver, including 47 <i>liang</i> paid for labor costs. |
|                     | The first pier           | The Huazang Temple village, an anonymous village (华藏寺、???) |   |
|                     | The second pier          | The Benchang village, the Jingtian village (本场村、敬天村)       |   |
|                     | The third pier           | The Gantao Temple village, the Jixiang village (甘陶寺、吉祥村)   |   |
|                     | The fourth pier          | The Xuchang village, the Zhiyang village (许场村、只杨村)         |   |
|                     | The fifth pier           | The Upper and Lower Caodian village                        |   |

<sup>32</sup>, Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p195. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“赵州潘公桥记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页195。]

<sup>33</sup> Wang Shixing, *Guangzhi Yi*, p320. [嘉靖至万历年间,云南“交易用贝,俗谓贝以一为庄,四庄为手,四手为苗,五苗为索,盖八十贝也。”见王士姓,《广志绎》,北京:中华书局,2006。页320]。

|  |   |  |   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  |   | (上草甸、下草甸)  |   |
|  | The sixth pier  | The Hanyi village, the Madi village<br>(汉邑村、麻地村)             |   |
|  | The northern bridge base                                | The Shedang village, the Chixia village<br>(赦荡村、赦下村)         |   |
| The White Bridge                                 | The southern bridge base                                | The Jiangxi village<br>(江西村)                                 |   |
|  | The first pier  | ? ? ? (inscription became blurred)                           |   |
|  | The second pier   | The Qubo village, the Zhaozhuang village<br>(曲拨村、赵庄村)        | Total cost was 100 <i>liang</i> silver<br>约用银一百两。   |
|  | The third pier  | The Upper Jinchang village (上锦场)                             |   |
|  | The fourth pier   | The Lower Jinchang village (下锦场)                             |   |
|  | The fifth pier  | The Yangjia village, the Beishan Qu village<br>(杨角村、北山曲)     |   |
|  | The sixth pier  | the Zhima village, the Small Jiangxi village<br>(芝麻村、小江西村)   |   |
|  | The northern bridge base                                | The Muniu village, the Luohe Chong village<br>(牧牛村、罗和冲)      |   |
| The Lion Mouth Bridge                            | The bridge bases  | The Puhe, Yunlang Hushao and Dongbi villages.(普和、云浪、湖稍、洞鼻四村) | Total cost was about 100 <i>liang</i> silver.   |
| The big boat transportation on the Erhai Lake    | From the pier of Dali city to the mouth of Boluo River. | Big boat provided by the Maji Yi village<br>(马加邑大船)          | Premium paid.   |
| The small boat transportation on the Boluo river | From river mouth to the construction sites.             | The Beishan Qu village and the Shiping village<br>(北山曲、石坪村)  | The villages were responsible to provide boats; 9 kilogram (六升) rice paid for each big flagstone moved, and 4.5 kilogram (三升) rice paid for each small flagstone. |

|   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| River dike construction and trees planation | The all military households nearby the county city. | To construct the bridge deck of the White Bridge, the length was 33 meters (十丈). |  |
|---|---|--|--|

Practical managers: two general managers; three accountants; two cashiers; two land transportation managers; two waterway transportation managers; three meals managers.

In this project, the construction methods carried out by the county magistrate were done in two ways, on one hand he claimed that the project was a charity for the public and the funds were raised by donation: the magistrate declared that, “there are state laws in charge of the living world, while the gods and ghosts are in charge of the world of death (朝有王法、幽有鬼神).” and the magistrate noted that the donation should be based on individual willingness, they could not compel individual families directly. On the other hand, the exact process of fund raising and construction was based on three layers of cooperation: the magistrate, the powerful local gentry group, and the village leaders. The so-called fund donation was actually apportioned, or in other words, the whole construction project was apportioned to all villages and military households and it was run by a cooperative and self-management system between villages in the basin. The project committee allocated the parts of the bridges to apportioned villages, such as villages for bases, villages for piers, villages for dikes, and so on. According to the inscription, the village heads classified villagers into rich families, middle families and poor families for different ratios in the funding apportionment and their labor corvee. For instance, the Lehe village and the Xianshu village were responsible for the southern base of Mill Bridge, including the meals and some construction laborers, then other villages would take other parts such as bases, piers and so on. However, there was a very rich military garrison family which donated money to construct the bridge deck and all the piers of the Lion Mouth Bridge. For those military garrison villages, they were responsible for repairing dikes and planting trees to protect the river. For the part of the funding donation, the whole income besides the part of village apportionment was 180 *liang* silver and much rice, which was used for the cost of the stone, construction materials and meals. The stone blocks were bought from Dali, and they were exploited from Canshan Mountain (苍山) and transported by a big boat from Dali pier to Zhaozhou pier. Then the stone material should be transferred into small boats or ox carriages to move it to the construction sites. For all of the ox carriages requisitioned, the meals would be provided, but they would not be paid for their animals’ labor.<sup>34</sup> Studying the inscriptions we can find that, the ecology in the Zhaozhou basin was significant. It is hard to imagine that, the boats could navigate the river, because the Boluo River is very small now. In addition, through the study of these bridge constructions we could understand that, the administrative system in local communities in the Ming dynasty,

<sup>34</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p195. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“赵州潘公桥记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页195].

was seriously based on the cooperation of government apportionment and communal charity, because, based on local Buddhist tradition, constructions of bridges and roads were like building a temple, it was a kind of merit accumulation of personal karma. That is also the reason why the magistrate Pan said, “the gods and ghosts are in charge of the world of death”. These constructions were also a kind of religious practice. Thus, the case of bridges construction clearly shows the way of social integration pushed by government officials, local gentries, as well as village leaders and peasants in the 1550s in the Ming dynasty.

Besides this, from this construction project of three bridges we can also compare historical changes of social integration in the basin communities between the Ming and the Qing, and the influence on contemporary social relations. The cooperative of the officials and communal leaders was based on the categories of commoners and military garrison households in the Ming, but the commoners and local gentries, rather than the military, performed significant roles in local affairs in the middle and late Ming. In the early Qing, after the political reform of “integrating military garrisons into counties (裁卫归州)”, the separation of taxes and corvees became blurred, but the corvees of transportation services were still heavy for communities along the road. The social integration of household registration based identities gradually transformed into ethnic identities in local contexts, but the social and cultural separation between basin communities and mountains residents was still very significant in the Qing dynasty, even if the integration of basin communities was still going on in parallel.

Since the early Qing, the space of the Bazi basin has been well integrated into a system of circles of transportation routes, towns, villages and temples centered around Zhaozhou city, the seat of county government. Based on Zhaozhou city, the four city gates were defined as the four directions of villages in this Bazi basin and the surrounding mountains. All villages in the basin have been identified as having four classifications based on the four city gates orientated communities, thus, all the villages were organized around Zhaozhou city, the center of local cultural practice. For instance, all festival parades should be organized in line with the categories of city gate base and village streets, and funeral parades also needed to follow this order. *Lijia* based tax and corvee registrations were also recorded and followed this order in the government booklets.

The county seat city was gradually established as the center of the basin, as all the most important government buildings and temples were distributed there, and regular market days and fairs were mainly in the city; then, all villages in the basin were recorded under the name of the appropriate four city gates. Thus, the city became the center of local space and the networks of temples, scheduled dates of festivals, and business. The influence of the city could extend toward all villages in the basin and to the communities in the mountains through the transportation route or sub-routes. The system of circles, based on “the county city-villages in basin-communities in surrounding mountains”, therefore became a hierarchical space and formed the political order of the social life of different local residents in the area.

Different residential communities became villages as this system gradually

became established. There were villages of transportation stations set up by the Yi (驿), Pu (铺), Shao (哨), Guanxun (关巡) in the Ming dynasty: for example the Desheng Guan Yi (德胜关驿, today's Xiaguan city), the Tangzi Pu (塘子铺) the Shifo Shao (赤佛哨) and the Xunjian Si in Dingxi Mountain (定西岭巡检司). There were some military stations like Tang (塘) and Xun (汛) set up in the Qing and these developed into new villages. All these types of villages were communities functioning as basic service stations to protect and maintain the main transportation system in western Yunnan. However, most villages were agricultural communities locally organized by the irrigation system, like the streams, irrigation channels and small reservoirs, but all this agricultural infrastructure became based around the village-run temples after the early Qing when the military garrisons were demolished. In sum, we could see that, market towns and transportation villages, as well as agricultural based villages and their common temples, were all linked to the county seat city based on their geographic location to the direction of the city gates. Or, put another way, the county city became the center of the small cosmology of a Bazi basin society, while this small cosmology also functioned as a support position in the bigger cosmology of the Chinese empire, when the transportation system bound together the frontier chieftains and foreign satellite kingdoms, such as Burma.

However, besides the transportation system organized by the county seat, and the basin and road villages, there was another type of community around the basin, the mountains residential community, called “the mountain area (山区)” by the Bazi basin people. Comparing two editions of local gazetteers in Qing dynasty, the Qianglong Zhaozhou Gazetteer (《乾隆赵州志》) and the Daoguang Zhaozhou Gazetteer (《道光赵州志》), we can clearly observe the gradual social change from the early to the middle Qing. After the reform of “integrating military garrisons into counties” and before the Panthay Rebellion in 1856, the whole territory of Zhaozhou county was divided into fifteen *li* of agricultural harvest (粮里). However, around Zhaozhou city, all fifteen *li* were broken down into different villages. In this case, the traditional villages were more important social units than the officially classified *li* household registration and tax organizations in Zhaozhou. In this way, local officials and ordinary people also identified their groups based on their residential villages, and the membership of a village became extremely important. In the Zhaozhou Bazi basin, all villages were classified into four categories: Seven villages belonged to the system of the east gate of the city (东门之村: 庄墩、赦荡、许长、云浪、长发、华营、朋邑); four villages belonged to the south gate system of the city (南门之村: 锦耿、乐和、本敬、木慈); nine villages belonged to the west gate system (西门之村: 芝华、江西、汤颠、丰乐、牧牛、梅地、赤佛、新铺、南山曲), and another nine villages belonged to the north gate system (北门之村: 高昌、班庄、草甸、红山、千羊、下庄、马加邑、石瓜、石鼻). There were some exterior villages in the marginal areas of the Zhaozhou basin: six villages were in the lower basin (下川村六: 山西、东窑、西窑、马凉、地石曲、茨巷); four villages belonged to the forth *li* (四十里村四: 者摩、乌栖、桥头、红崖); and eight villages were in Baiya (白崖八村: 蔡家营、班局村、袁家庄、赤水江、东村、前所营、北夷营、大营). Beyond all of these villages in the basin, there were some exterior communities in the mountains which could link with

the transportation route across the mountain, or were linked by the branches of the transportation route, but these mountain communities were not necessarily organized by residential villages. For example, there were thirteen Cong communities in the mountains area in the south of the basin in Midu area, known as “the thirteen *Cong* in Midu (弥渡十三丛).” In sum, we found that, from the city to the remote mountains area, there were three circles of residential types based on a political-geographic hierarchical order, we could call it the basin based local cosmology: the first circle held the main villages in the basin bound with the four city gates, the core of this local cosmology; the second circle held the marginal villages on the margins of the basin or along the transportation route; and in the third circle were the communities in the mountains area, linked with the branches of the main transportation route.

Here, another important issue is posed about the residential and organizing style of mountains communities. According to the local gazetteers, “the thirteen *Cong* in Midu” included thirteen localities, which were distributed in the mountains areas (河东、河西、景东、平定、上达、苴力、纪罗、密只、苗纳、花鱼洞、密底、苴力敢). “Sometimes, there were several villages that combined into a *Cong* (丛).”<sup>35</sup> Here, *Cong* was a traditional organizing method to organize communities in the mountains areas in Yunnan, normally known as “the Cattle Cooperation (niu cong, 牛丛).”

In the Qing dynasty, the *lijia* system was not well practiced in most mountains areas, but the system of Cattle Cooperation performed an important role in the social organization of the mountains communities. The Cattle Cooperation could be an economic cooperative organization, but also could be very militarized. However, its fundamental function was to graze the animals. Residents in mountains communities lived scattered on the mountain sides. In order to organize their labor effectively, people organized into cooperative teams for herding their cattle. For instance, some neighboring families, kinship relatives or friends could put their cattle together for herding, and they became a cooperative group of the *Cong* cooperation. Normally in this cooperation, a group would make a board out of an ox horn. The names of all participant families were listed on the board along with the number of their cattle; then the head of this group could assign one laborer to herd all the cattle for the participant families, or hire a laborer to do the same. All participant families should pay certain money based on their cattle numbers, or they could also herd the cattle by turns. For example, to put one ox into the cooperation, the ox owner should take one day’s responsibility to herd all the cattle for the group, then, others would take their turn. Every morning, the one who needed to herd the cattle for the group should blow the ox horn on the village road, to inform all the families they needed to drive their animals together. In the evening when the herder returned, he should blow the horn again to ask the cattle owners to pick up their animals. There was another style of organizing the herding: in the fall and winter, all families put their farm cattle together as a group, and the selected head of this group should arrange a herder to graze the cattle in a mountain valley until the following spring when the families needed their cattle for ploughing. The herder then drove the cattle back. In this way, the organized

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<sup>35</sup> Chen Zhaotang, Li Qixin, *The Daoguang Zhaozhou Gazetteer*, pXXX, [陈钊堂、李其馨修, 《道光赵州志》, 台北: 学生书局, 1968, XXX].

group was a Cattle Cooperation. This group was organized through herding, but it could also cooperate economically. All families put a certain amount of cash together every month, then each of them could use the money in turns, month by month. This style of cooperation was normally written as Cong (賒) too. Therefore, the Cong Cooperative could be labor based or cash based, but it could also become a militia system when the mountain communities became militarized sometimes.<sup>36</sup> For instance, in the late Qing after the 1830s, more and more mountains communities organized their Cattle Cooperation into militia groups and the heads of these groups could establish their own custom law to deal with disputes and conflicts, and they never reported these cases to the county officials.<sup>37</sup>

In general, if we take the Cattle Cooperation systems as the exterior circle of Bazi society, we can find that communities in the mountains and basin were managed in different ways, and their connections with the county officials varied. From the *Cong* groups in the mountains to the villages in the basin and county city, social space was organized based on the political hierarchy under state influence along with the transportation system, therefore, boundaries of communities and identities were also established along with these routes.

### 3. The transformation of noble families: the change of Acarya Buddhist masters

Based on the understanding of social integration and communal relations after the middle Ming in the above sections, we could return to the period of early Ming to study the earlier transformation of local communities from the remains of a Nanzhao and Dali kingdom system to a newly established Ming system.

During the Yuan dynasty in Yunnan (1253-1382), the noble families and Acarya masters remained and their social status was not destroyed in western Yunnan as the descendants of the previous kings of Dali kingdom still controlled western Yunnan.<sup>38</sup> Once the Ming army occupied the Dali area, they immediately destroyed the institutions of the economic based religious masters and thus their political power. In Zhaozhou, the Zhao family (赵姓) and the Dong family (董姓) were two religious masters and noble families who controlled the basin. The Xianguo monastery (相国寺) and its farming lands was controlled by the Zhao family in the north of the basin, while the Dong family controlled the Huazang monastery (华藏寺) in the middle of

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<sup>36</sup> Lu Jiarui, edited. *The Gazetteer of Ethnic Minorities and Religions in Jianchuan County*, p303, 2003. [陆家瑞主编,《剑川县民族宗教志》,昆明:云南民族出版社。页 303, 2003].

<sup>37</sup> *The Factual Records of Qing Dynasty*, Daoguan, Year 26, July. [《清实录》,“道光朝实录”道光二十六年七月癸卯。“谕内阁、贺长龄奏、汉回构隙”。另据长沙图书馆“长沙名人”：“戴泽三,字畏斋,清长沙人。乾隆五十四年(1789)中举人,历任云南思安、富民、永平、河西、宜良诸县令,为政宽简,不事烦苛,约束吏胥不得扰民;遇有灾荒,尽心救济。宜良有积习,每村设一棚厂,名曰牛丛,获盗贼,不报官审理,自行聚众于牛丛中烧死,地方官不能问。泽三劝谕士民撤毁牛丛,陋习为之一变。嘉庆二十三年(1818)任乡试主考官,有同考官以某要人囑荐一卷,泽三不许,同考官以利害相胁,终不为动。”<http://cache.baiducontent.com/>, 2013年6月25日浏览。]

<sup>38</sup> Yang Shen, Hu Wei, *The Unofficial History of Nanzhao*, Taipei, Chengwen Publishing House, p125. (杨慎编辑、胡蔚订正,《南诏野史》,台北,成文出版社,1968,页 125.)



the basin. Both the Zhao and Dong families were the great Acarya masters who served the kings of Dali kingdom and they were actual rulers of Zhaozhou area. Therefore, the Ming army destroyed the two monasteries and confiscated all temple land making it into farming land for the established military garrison households. After that, the Ming army destroyed the old Zhaozhou city and moved the government officials to the western side of the basin under the Three Ears Mountain. They rebuilt Zhaozhou county city here, in order to avoid the area where the Zhao family was powerful. In 1489, the city wall was constructed.<sup>39</sup> The Huazang monastery was burn by the Ming army and the Dong family was forced to move the Tangdian village (汤颠, or 北汤天) on the southern margins of the basin. The economic and political foundations of the noble families were totally destroyed by the Ming government when they establish their official system in western Yunnan. However, the Zhao and Dong families did not lose the opportunity to join the Ming government. Considering their local political and religious influence, the Ming government encouraged the previous Dali nobles to become officials to serve the Ming government, then more and more educated elite from the Zhao and Dong families joined the Ming government.

However, the Ming officials supported a Buddhist master, Monk Yinxuan (印玄), who was not a traditional Acarya master but a Zen master. He came to Zhaozhou to maintain the Bianzhi monastery (遍知寺) and became the government agent of the Ming government in Zhaozhou. This monastery used to be controlled by the Gao family (高姓) in the Dali kingdom, so then the position of Acarya Buddhist of the Zhao and the Dong was marginalized by the Zen masters based on Bianzhi monastery. However, after the Dong family moved to Tangdian village, they found another channel to develop a religious connection with the Ming court. The master Dongxian was called to go to Nanjing to conduct a national Buddhist ritual for the Ming emperor. The Dong family thus could maintain their position of the Acarya Buddhist master as a hereditary title for many generations until the late Ming.

In order to maintain their political influence, the noble families quickly found ways to adopt Ming state politics. The nobles and powerful official families developed an intermarriage network among themselves in Zhaozhou. For example, when we study family records on stone inscriptions we can find that, the Kang family was not a native noble family but an official family resettled from Shangxi province. They were appointed magistrates of Babai Dadian (八百大甸, today's Chinag Mai in Thailand), and the family controlled the previous Huazang monastery area with some Huihui soldiers.<sup>40</sup> The family records show that, as a hereditary official position, the founder ancestor of the Kang family, Kang Wen (康旻), went to take up the duty of magistrate in Babai only in winter, but returned in summer in order to avoid the terrible malaria there. This record is very interesting, looking at the political

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<sup>39</sup> Jianxiong Ma, "The Zhaozhou *Bazi* Society in Yunnan: Historical Process in the *Bazi* Basin Environmental System during the Ming Period (1368-1643)". In *Resources Utilizations and their Impacts: Studies of East Asian Environmental History*, edited by Ts'ui-jung Liu, London: Routledge, pp. 131-155, 2014.

<sup>40</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p203, [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“教谕康公墓志”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页203].

relationship between the Yuan dynasty and the chieftaincy set in Chiang Mai region.<sup>41</sup> Kang Wen's first son was a Confucian scholar and took an official position in Qingdian (庆甸, today's Fengqing 凤庆). Another son was the county magistrate of Tengchong (腾冲), and his third son was a military general. Meanwhile, Kang Wen's daughters all married into influential families in Zhaozhou. It is clear that the Kang family represented the Mongolian influence in Zhaozhou area and they had been seriously localized through their intermarriage strategy with local, previously noble families. After the Ming's occupation, one of grandsons of Kangwen married a daughter of Zhao Yanliang (赵彦良), and Zhao Yanliang was an official of Dali prefecture. In year 27 of Hongwu (1394), Zhao Yanliang was recommended to participate in the civil examination in Nanjing and got an official title before he returned Zhaozhou to be the official in charge of education affairs. The offspring of the Kang family, Zhao family and Dong family maintained their intermarriages for long time, and their sons and grandsons were officials in Sichuan or other provinces after they participated in the civil examinations.

Another case was the change of the Zhao family in early Ming. In the early period of Nanzhao kingdom, the Nanzhao kings subinfeudated the Shihe Zhao (石和诏) basin to the Zhao family and renamed this district as the Zhao Dan (赵贲), because the nobleman, Zhao Kang (赵康), married his daughter to the Nanzhao king. In year 2 of Zhengtong reign (1437), the Ming government resettled the seat of the county city from the area of Dongbi village, which used to be a center of Zhao family. In the inscription on Zhao Chang's tomb (《故父赵昌墓铭》), it says Zhao Chang was the magistrate of Tianshui prefecture (天水郡) in the Dali kingdom, when the name of Zhaozhou was Tianshui. In other words, during the period of the Dali kingdom, the Zhao family was the magistrate, but the Dong family was a powerful noble family in Zhaozhou representing the power of the kings directly. The kings came from the Duan family, but the Dong family supported them from the very beginning of the establishment of the Dali Kingdom and they performed the role of the kings' ritual masters to promote the kings to become the Buddha through abhiseca (灌顶大法师) in state politics in Dali kingdom. However, the Zhao family members were continuing as magistrates and the Acarya masters at a local level. Zhao Jialong (赵迦隆) established their base in the northern part of the basin. The Zhao family was subinfeudated as the local noblesse in Nanzhao, and since the third generation of Zhao Jialong's grandson, Zhao Yi (赵义) became a Acarya Buddhist master and married a daughter of the Dong family, and he also got the monk title of Zhiming (智明). His son was Yaoshi Zhi (药师智), then it changed to Zhao Chang (赵昌). During the life time of Zhao Chang the Mongolian army attacked Dali, Zhao Chang therefore became a military general to resist the Mongolian army. To save his commoners, he surrendered finally and became a local magistrate to over a thousand households. For more than ten generations the Zhao family heads were Acarya monks and Buddhist masters, "their way of being monks, was practicing worship and rituals in the morning

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<sup>41</sup> Song Lian, *The Yuan History*, vol. 25. (参见宋濂,《元史》,卷25,文宗纪,“至顺二年(1331)五月己丑,置八百等处宣慰司都元帅府,以土官昭练为都元帅。孟定路、孟绢路并为军民总管府,秩从三品。”) )

and evening, they were precise in their Buddhist services, they cited Buddhist scriptures and curse; the pearl prayer beads were always in their hands, while the Buddhist curse were citing in their mouths. Their ability to adopt moral power was profound, beyond ordinary people's understanding, but this ability could protect the state and people. On the macro scale, this ability could promote people to be saint and prophets; while on the micro scale, this power was easily used to spread the seeds of fortune and even to capture dragons and tigers, or to drive out gods and ghosts. All these skills were just small case practices of their religious sect.”<sup>42</sup> For the social influence of the Zhao family in Zhaozhou basin, they were a long term-double agency of local affairs as they were political magistrates as well as religious authorities, but they had controlled a large amount of farming lands in the basin until the Ming government took the economic bases away. But, the Zhao family transformed their political influence smoothly in early Ming due to their intermarriage network which bound them with other powerful families in the region. They also quickly reformed to become Confucian scholars and participated in the civil examinations, while they gave up their positions as Acarya Buddhist masters. Another important political representative of the Zhao family was the scholar and official Zhao Chun. He became a Ming military general and official in Southern Sichuan province to fight with the native minority's resistance in Gao county (高县). He also compiled a famous local gazetteer of Dongchuan prefecture when he was promoted to be the magistrate there. For the Dong family, after the Wangli reign, their religious influence quickly weakened.

In sum, the period of Zhengde reign (1487-1521) was a significant time when local society changed quite dramatically. The changes in social relations and cultural life were because the Ming government strictly suppressed the religious masters of Acarya Buddhism and the reform of local customs. For instance, the Ming government set up two particular official departments to manage the affairs of Acarya Buddhism (阿吒力僧纲司) and native Duoxibo shamanism and rituals specialists (朵兮薄道纪司)<sup>43</sup> in Dali prefecture and some western Yunnan counties. In year 2 of Zhengde reign (1507), Yunnan provincial government demolished these two departments. According to the governor Chen Tianxiang (陈天祥), “There are two religions of Acarya Buddhism and Duoxibo shamanism in Yunnan, several hundred local followers are normally gathered, these people not only don't shave their heads, but also like to drink alcohol. Their behavior looks like monks and Taoists but they are not; they can get married, have their children, but they pretend to hold collective Buddhist rituals to call for women from ordinary families for their prurience gatherings. In addition, these people also bribed the eunuchs to get promotional official titles and stamps from the court during the Xuande reign period (1426-1435)

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<sup>42</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p305. [马存兆编, 《大理凤仪古碑文集》, “故父赵昌墓铭”, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 305].

<sup>43</sup> Chen Wen, *The Qingtai Gazetteer of Yunnan*, Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House, 2002, p246. [陈文修, 《景泰云南图经志》, 李春龙、刘景毛校注, 昆明: 云南民族出版社, 2002, 页 246].

and their influence is still very strong now. Therefore I would like to report to the higher officials that I want to demolish their official positions and ask them to be responsible for military and ordinary taxes and corvee, so that the custom would be changed.”<sup>44</sup> However, on the tomb inscription of an Acarya master Dong Bangzhao (董邦诏) and his wife, who was born in year 8 of Wangli reign (1580), and died in year 1 of Hongguang reign (1646),<sup>45</sup> the Dong family members still claimed that they were hereditary Acarya officials (世袭阿吒力都纲司) and the hereditary official of the Secret Method ritual in Zhaozhou (世袭赵州秘密法官) in the early Qing.<sup>46</sup>

We can understand that these titles were just a kind of self-award in their daily life among Zhaozhou villages around the Tangdian (北汤天), where the famous written scriptures of a Dali Kingdom Buddhist were found in 1952, but the Wanli Zhaozhou Gazetteer (《万历赵州志》) also records that, the master Dongxian (董贤) in the early Ming “..studies the Indian Secret Religion, as he could drive out gods and ghosts, could call for wind and rain. During the Yongle reign (1403-1424), Dongxian went to the capital to hold the Buddhist ritual to drive away the evil spirits for the emperor, therefore he was awarded as the official of Acarya Buddhism under the Dali prefecture, and this is a hereditary tile.”<sup>47</sup> But, according to the provincial governor Chen Tianxiang, these Acarya officials had very special connections with the eunuchs in the Forbidden City and it was true. Based on the family inscription of the Dong family, they also recorded their travels to Beijing in great detail: the son of Dongxian, his name was Dong Jingang Shou (董金刚寿) and his brothers inherited their father’s title as Acarya Buddhist masters, and two of them went to Beijing again, to hold the Buddhist ritual for the emperor. “In year 7 of Xuande (1432), they were called by the eunuch head Chenhai (陈海), passed the gates of Forbidden City, came to see the emperor and the emperor asked them to sit down in front of his Majesty.”<sup>48</sup> After this meeting, the emperor Xuande gave the brothers a whole set of Tripitaka (《大藏经》) and asked the Dong family to maintain their official titles. Against this political background, the local officials could not demolish their family title until the Qing dynasty. This case of Dong family shows that, the religious masters of the previous Dali kingdom still kept their close relationship with the Ming government and could not be easily excluded from the political sphere by local Ming officials due to their particular religious authority.

#### 4. The development of village temples and local agency based on temple property

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<sup>44</sup> *The Factual Records of Ming Dynasty*, Zhengde, vol. 23. [《明实录》, “武宗正德实录卷二十三”, 见《明实录有关云南史料摘抄》, 中册, 昆明: 云南人民出版社, 1959, 页 940。]

<sup>45</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p69 [马存兆编, 《大理凤仪古碑文集》, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 69].

<sup>46</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p103. [马存兆编, 《大理凤仪古碑文集》, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 102].

<sup>47</sup> 庄诚修, 《万历赵州志》, 大理: 大理州图书馆重印, 1984, 页 83。

<sup>48</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, pp97-98. [马存兆编, 《大理凤仪古碑文集》, “董氏本音图略叙”, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 97-98].

The transformation of local elite from these previous powerful noble families continued to perform a very active role in the reconstruction of local communities in the basins and mountains, so that we could observe the phenomena of social integration in the former sections. However, the reconstruction of communal organization, social customs such as festivals and rituals, and cultural values based on Acarya Buddhist tradition or Confucian ideal, were mainly pushed by a changing group of local elite. A group of village and county city based political and cultural elite tried to push their communities to gradually reorganize certain common property, based on their communal temples, when the religious tradition gradually shifted from Acarya Buddha monasteries to village temples. By whatever means possible, the local elite searched for the common interests of the communities they belonged to. The style of social control through the local elite was continually dynamic, and these changes also reshaped the style of religious activities and reconstructed cultural values. All these changes therefore reshaped communal participation in the social integration of a Bazi basin society.

The transportation route was the clue to link these elements together, such as the state power, local elite's influence, communal participation and social integration, on the layer of state politics as well as the layer of local cooperation. In the northern part of the Zhaozhou basin along the main transportation route, there was another regular market on the same schedule as the county city, which means that the Zhaozhou county city was not the only market in the local economic space of this basin. Before the commercial center of Dali city developed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the northern gate of the Zhaozhou basin was another economic center on the northern gate of transportation route. The market was on the square in front of the Feilai Monastery (飞来寺) along the main road, and this market place was close to the pier on Erhai Lake near Majiayi village (马加邑, today's 满江) and some other villages. It is clear that this location around the Feilai Monastery could control the transportation gate between the Erhai Lake waterway and the main western Yunnan route, and it was true that, since early Ming, the Ming government set up many military garrison villages near the Feilai Monastery to control this important gate. After the reform of "integrating military garrisons into an official county (裁卫归州)", the military garrison households became commoners and their villages also shifted to cooperate with their neighboring villages. In the northern area of the basin, the Feilai Monastery therefore became a center for village leaders to participate and negotiate their control of the market in front of the monastery.

During the Qianglong reign (1736-1795), the corvee for transportation services (夫马) became more and more heavy for the residents in Zhaozhou basin, as the traffic on the transportation route became very heavy and the official requirement for transportation services was endless. In order to deal with these heavy tasks, during this period, more and more common property based on village temples became established. Since the middle and the late Ming, the spatial circles around the county city and political hierarchy gradually built up, and this platform of connections between villages and county officials was also established to enable village gentries to

share their village based interests with other villages and county government, like the position of Feilai Monastery in the northern basin. The monastery became a platform for village gentries to meet and plan their cooperation of local management, and to help to deal with the state tasks in terms of transportation corvee. Through the study of village temple inscriptions we found that, villages were managed as a unit under their village leaders or gentries, those official-title-holder scholars and retired officials, to work as representatives of their villages, to negotiate with the county government and neighboring villages for irrigation channels and water sharing, social legal cases, and conflict. However, their activities were normally performed under the name of their village temples. In this way, we should understand the rising role of village temples in the early Qing and their role in communal cooperation with the state power in a basin space.

Many village based temples existed along with the two most significant Buddhist monasteries controlled by the Zhao and the Dong families. For example, the Jianfeng temple (建峰庙) in the southeastern part of the basin was a temple to worship the ancestor of Zhao family, Zhaokang (赵康), who was the father-in-law of the founder king of Nanzhao. In the northern margins of the Zhaozhou basin at Majiayi village, there was another temple to worship a Taoist master and an official in the Tang dynasty, Du Guangting (杜光庭). It was said in local myth that he used came to Nanzhao kingdom to educated some students. Another village temple in the northern basin worshiped a staff officer of the general Limi (李宓) of Tang dynasty, who led the Tang army to fight with the Nanzhao in 754AD, but the Tang army was completely annihilated and this staff officer died in Zhaozhou. In early Qing, these village temples became more significant than before in village affairs and religious practices, because more and more farming land was donated to become common property under the name of village temples, and these land properties were managed by powerful gentries as representatives of their villages.

Before the early Ming, only noble families like the Zhao family, the Dong family, the Kang family, were the super powers in local affairs, and their political activities were embedded into state power in Southeast Asia, like the Kang family, who were the officials of today's Chiang Mai in Thailand. The Dong family controlled large areas of farming land through their family based monastery. Similarly, the Zhao family was based at Xianguo monastery, and the Gao family controlled Bianzhi monastery.<sup>49</sup> Gradually, the Ming government destroyed the economic basis of these powerful families, and the monastery's land property was shifted to the military population. During the long term transformation in the early and middle Ming, the noble families also shrank from their state political sphere, to actors in local affairs, to become 'localized' in the basin communities. In this situation, Dong Xian and some ancestors were reshaped by their Dong family offspring into mythical figures in late Ming and early Qing. Meanwhile, their sphere of family power also shrank to become

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<sup>49</sup> Hu Wei, *The Unofficial History of Nanzhao*, Kunming: Yunnan Nationalities Publishing House, 2002; Chen Wen, *The Jingtai Gazetteer of Yunnan*, P276. [胡蔚,《南诏野史》,参见木芹,《南诏野史会证》,昆明:云南人民出版社,1990。另见陈文修,《景泰云南图经志》,李春龙,刘景毛校注,昆明:云南民族出版社,2002,页276。]

a local competitor to struggle for irrigation water and farming land with neighboring villages. They lost their power to control narratives of Acarya religious belief as they had before, all because the center of state politics had moved away.

In general, there were three styles of temples in the Zhaozhou basin since the late Ming and early Qing. First, the official temples controlled by county officials; second, the village temples controlled by village gentry; third, the public temples managed by a cooperative group of officials and gentries.

The officials temples were supported by farmlands controlled by the government, and these temples could be very dynamic if the state power changed. For example, the temple of Military God of Guanyu (关帝庙), the temple of Easter God of Holy Mountain (东岳庙), and the Bianzhi monastery were controlled by Ming officials in the late Ming as the officials of religious affairs.<sup>50</sup> However, after the Ming-Qing transformation, the temple owned farming land of Bianzhi monastery quickly shifted to some rising village temples controlled by village gentries, and during the early Qing, more and more village gentry controlled Taoist temples under the title of Wenchang (文昌宫), and Wanshou (万寿宫) temples were established and the common property shifted to these temples.<sup>51</sup> We found that, the Nanzhao and Dali historical legacy had finally disappeared in early Qing, and more and more Han settlers moved from interior provinces like Jiangxi, Hunan or Sichuan provinces to join local communities due to population reconstruction. The Feilai Monastery was an exception. This temple represented a semi-official style because it was located on the main gate of the transportation route and the lake piers at the northern gate of the basin, and it was a place to control the regular, historic market place. The county official therefore deputed the village gentries of nearby villages to collect trade tax from the market, as the agents of the county government. In this way, the Feilai Monastery became official, run by gentries for the county government, and its temple property was also shared by nearby villages for long term stability, until the 1930s when this temple became a public school supported by its common property. Village temples were a common property of a village community, but the title of village temples could be very diverse, most of them were the Dragon God temple (龙王庙), the Local Master temple (本主庙) or Land Master temple (土主庙) and some Buddhist temples. These temples could be very old, or newly built in early Qing, but most of them were located at an important place in the village grounds or at water channel gates, and they were places where local gentries set up their water sharing regulations for villagers. There were many historical changes to these temples, one case shows that, the Clear Water God temple (清流普济祠) in the northeastern part of the basin used be a goddess temple before the Ming, but gradually, villagers thought to set up a dragon god deity in the temple, then the goddess was worshipped as a

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<sup>50</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p244. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“重修遍知寺碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页244].

<sup>51</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p305. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“万寿宫谷租碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页305].

dragon goddess, until late Ming, when this dragon goddess became a dragon god.

The reconstruction movement of village temples coincided with the construction of the local space identified by the collective festival schedule of the whole basin, and it is another way for us to observe the social integration of Bazi basin society since the early Qing. All villages were organized by their village temples as the temples cooperated with each other as the connective sites of the irrigation system in rice farming in the basin, and this system was actually managed by village gentries under the hierarchy of a city-village-basin spatial arrangement. However, this spatial hierarchy was also performed through temple festivals in the basin based on an annual agricultural calendar. As a local custom, the streets in the county city organized their deity parade on the fifth day of lunar New Year, then a new yearly cycle started, followed by the parades of the village temple's gods' birthday celebration and big temple fairs all through the year. All these temple fairs and gods' birthday parades organized all communities together into a religious space as well as an agricultural circle to show their responsibilities and obligations to other, within the village members and between village communities. Therefore, the system of temple festivals performed a crucial role of social relationship of the basin space. In a local gazetteer in late Qing, these festivals were well recorded: "in the northern basin, three villages (Mizong, Cihang, Dongshan and Fule 米总、慈航、东山、富乐) will greet the Dragon God's third son on New Year' days; villages organize their parades based on their water share of irrigation. Then, seven villages in the east and middle basin (the Madi, Xuchang., Yunlang, Dongbi, Qingle, Nanying and Changfa 麻地村、许长、云浪、洞壁、清乐、南营、长发村) will greet the Su surname Dragon God, and also the order of parades must follow their order of irrigation schedule as they are sharing the same water channel; the eight villages in the northeastern of the Bazi basin share the same festival to greet the Nine Head Dragon God and the Mengzi God following the same order of the former."<sup>52</sup> On the twenty-third day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar, the county city and southern suburb would greet and worship the Red Son of Dragon God, and on the twenty-third day of the seventh month of the lunar calendar, all villages on the southern Erhai Lake would have a boat festival to worship the Madam of Mercy and Goodness (慈善夫人), who was a mythical figure as the wife of the Dengda chieftain (登賧诏) before the Nanzhao was established. The most important festival was the Spring Jiao festival managed by gentries of the county city based on the order of the four city gates; meanwhile, in the southern basin, they also organized their festivals to greet Local Masters or Land Masters during the New Year festival period.

Official temples were supported by the official resources, which were mainly based on the farming lands (常住田) and a big part of them were confiscated from the military garrison households. Because these farming lands were scattered in different places and were unstable, it could easily lose due to political reforms, chaos or change of county officials.

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<sup>52</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p364. [王康国, 《光绪赵州志稿》, 马存兆编, 《大理凤仪古碑文集》, “千户营甲夫马碑记”, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 364].



In summary, before the Ming dynasty, some noble families in Zhaozhou, such as the Zhao, the Dong and the Kang family were exact local rulers, but their power was practiced through their control of farming lands as monastery property, as well as religious authority and their intermarriage network. However, since the early Ming, the state power gradually destroyed the economic basis of these religious masters and their religious authority also shrank, as a new group of local gentry took the place of the previous religious masters. The newly developed gentry group participated in the Ming and the Qing state through their Confucian scholarship and their successes in civil examinations. The Confucian scholars gradually controlled village temples and they also pushed to build some new Taoism temples in the middle and late Ming, and these new temples therefore took the place of Buddhist monasteries. In early Qing, some new style villages, based on Taoism temples, began to perform more important roles in local affairs, while more and more farming land shifted to become common property under the title of these temples. Beside the changed fashion of local religious custom, there was another important function these temples began to take on; because the gentry managed the temples they began to help villagers to respond to state corvee service requirements. For instance, because all villages in the basin had to pay corvee service on transportation, to send official passengers from one station to another in the Zhaozhou territory, and because it was the only official route across the basin, this task had become heavier since the early Qing. One case about local strategy to deal with this official task was what the Qinghu Ying village (千户营) did: under the leadership of village gentries, all the village members established their common property under the name of the village temple, and used the income to buy a mill. This mill was only used for making money to pay for the laborers to service the government corvee for all the assigned families.<sup>53</sup> This style of common property management was popular in the basin villages as their response to the state.

Because the transportation position on the main route linked with Burma and many prefectures in western Yunnan, after serious social chaos during the political transformation from the Ming to the Qing, and a flourishing economy during the Qinglong period (1735-1795), the transportation pressure had approached a new peak in western Yunnan. Many local laborers had to service the transportation of copper and silver industrial bound logistics, as well as the long distance trade between Yunnan, Burma and Tibet. The heaviest pressure on transportation came during the wars between the Qing and Burma (1762-1770).<sup>54</sup> All these logistics were reliant on laborers and mule caravans, but most of the government tasks were shifted to local communities to maintain the flows of materials and people on the road. During this

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<sup>53</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p302. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“千户营甲夫马碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页302。]

<sup>54</sup> *The Factual Records of Qing Dynasty*, Year 33 of Qianglong, Feb. [有关乾隆征缅战争期间,赵州作为运输通道的背景可参见《清实录·乾隆朝实录》,乾隆三十三年二月己巳等,“四川总督阿尔泰奏、准云南抚臣鄂宁、咨调川省上年拣备满营马一千六百匹,并令动项办壮骡一千四百头,一并解滇。事关军需,臣即派委弁兵,将拣备马,分起押解。一面采买骡头,随有随解,因同途并运,未免拥挤。若挨次鱼贯而进,又恐耽延。酌将满营马,由川东之永宁,取道贵州毕节,及滇境宣威一路赴永昌;其骡头由川南之建昌,取道滇境之元谋、赵州,一路赴永昌。”]

period, most villages established their common property to help deal with the government tasks by taking their stable income from temple properties to pay off the state corvee, otherwise, an individual family could not afford such heavy pressures. This is the most crucial reason for the rising proportion of temple property and the numbers of village temples. In this way, village temples gradually developed to become a kind of social institution for local communities to help them to take responsibility for the state. Based on the working platform of common property around the village temples, local elite as gentries represented their communities to manage common income as a system of the proportion of corvee for individual families, thus the village became an important social unit responding to the state but also the unit where the local elite could initiate their power for communal management, cooperation between communities, and be their platform to negotiate with the state. In this way, the decline of big Buddhist monasteries and the rise of village based temples show a social change tendency from the middle Ming to early Qing when the state changed its policy of tax and corvee, but it also shows that, the extension of Qing state since the early 18<sup>th</sup> century pushed the changes in local social cooperation, integration and the reconstruction of local culture. By whatever means, those social and cultural changes were not necessarily bound with the categories of ethnic identities as a common space based on the developing Bazi basin society. At least in the Zhaozhou basin, ethnic identities of the Bai, the Han or the Hui could be linked with a historical context of social categories, religion or household registration, but not bound with the style of local communities along with the transportation route under a framework of city, village, and basin in western Yunnan.

## **5. Reconstructing the *Bazi* geomancy: the *Fengshui* interpretation on local space**

Since the early Ming, the officials had started to push the reconstruction of local geomancy order based on the theory and technique of *Fengshui* ideals, in order to reshape the local social landscape under the influence of Acarya Buddhism, which was controlled by noble and religious masters' families. From a series of stone inscription preserved in Feilai Monastery we can find that, the ideal of making the Zhaozhou basin into a complete *Fengshui* space started in early Ming. A piece of stone inscription says that, "The Red Mountain is the water gate of the whole county, because it faces the Erhai Lake and the Cangshan Mountain, all historical literature is generated from this spirit of the lake and the mountain, thus this locality is the key and like the throat of a body."<sup>55</sup> And, because the Red Mountain was facing the Feilai Monastery, the main road and the market place was placed between them, the lake piers were not far away, thus the monastery was the exact gate of "the Mountains of Phoenix".<sup>56</sup> The ideal and image of "the phoenix" was a fundamental geomancy

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<sup>55</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p283. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“重修飞来寺募序”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页283].

<sup>56</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p285. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“文昌宫常住碑”,香港:香港科技大学华南研

imagination of the Ming officials to reorganize the local landscape. The Ming government moved and rebuilt the county city to the western side of the basin, and this county had been named Zhaozhou for a long time. This title means it was a territory subinfeuded to the Zhao family by the Nanzhao king, so the Zhao family was the master of this county. However, the Ming officials tried to reinterpret the meaning of this space. The name of the mountain close to the newly built county city was the Three Ears Mountains, as it looked like three parallel ears, which represented the ear of the sky, and this place used be the place to worship the god of the sky during the Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms. After the county city was moved to this place, a new name was given to the mountain, the Phoenix Mountain, the image of the three parallel ears was then regarded as the body of a phoenix in the middle, while two wings were equally on each side. In order to match this *Fengshui* structure of a phoenix body, the county city was therefore gradually interpreted as the head of the phoenix, and the school in the city was the mouth of this phoenix. Finally, the school was entitled as the school of the sound of the phoenix (凤鸣书院). Until the middle Ming, the *Fengshui* based geomancy was early completed. The county city was in the middle of the basin, the main transportation route crossed the basin from the southeast to the northwest, as with the provincial capital Kunming and the Forbidden City in Nanjing or Beijing toward the direction of frontier chieftains and Burma in the far west. Some mountains communities were distributed in the mountains that surrounded the basin, and the basin linked Erhai Lake and western routes through the northern gate at the narrow corridor between the Red Mountain and the Feilai monastery.

Since the middle Ming, all of the mountains around the Zhaozhou have been renamed based on the Fengshui theory around the central mountain and the Back Mountain (正山, 靠山) and the central city. The mountains facing the Phoenix Mountain in the eastern side of the basin was regarded as the Table Mountain (案山). In year 24 of Wanli reign (1596), the stone inscription of the Tiansheng Monastery in the Red Mountain made its description very clear: “the northern gate of the basin is surrounded by the Phoenix Mountains and the Dragon Mountain in the west, the Kylin Mountain is to the south. The power of water and wind therefore has been driven by these mountains toward the northern water gate. So that, the fortune of the local scholars has been largely dominated (by this *Fengshui* framework), which enriches their civil examination successes. In this *Fengshui* and transportation framework, people could approach the Fan and the Rong (Tibet) in the north, and approach the Yi and the Man barbarians in the west; to the south, the provincial capital could be approached, while to the east, the capital city (京都) could be approached. For the exterior travelers, this is the road for their tributary, while for the interior travelers, this is the road for official business and military generals (北抵番戎, 西越夷蛮, 南通省会, 东达京都, 外则朝贡出入, 内则文武往来). At the northern gate of Shenghui and the transportation route, this water gate was also surrounded by two animal-like mountains, the mountain of the tortoise and the mountain of the snake, thus the locality was also a platform of Xuanwu (玄武) male-female dye dualism, in

addition to the circle of the Poluo River between these mountains and monasteries. The whole county, therefore, becomes a hot site to promote the fortune of scholars, and the forests on these mountains must be well protected.”<sup>57</sup>

The thinking of *Fengshui* gradually took the place of Acarya Buddhism largely in people’s mind. There is an interesting case we can find in the inscriptions in middle Qing, about the way two villages wanted to protect their Fengshui structure. During the Gaoguang reign (1821-1850), gentries of the two villages of Upper and Lower Caodian (上、下草甸) called on county official support to release their prohibition on cutting down trees and cutting out stone from the mountains. In this public prohibition, endorsed by county government, villagers could cut firewood and stone from their mountains if it was for family use only, but could not sell it to people from other villages. Another pieces of inscription in Yunlang village shows that, also during the Daoguang reign, the surnames in the village, including the Dong, the Zhao and the Duan families cooperated to rebuild their village temples, because they found that their old temple had not occupied a good Fengshui locality for a long time. Therefore, the whole village decided to rebuild this temple to match the dragon line along down from the mountain peak. After this reconstruction, “people found their fame and made the money they wanted, and all families are flourishing now”. In order to celebrate this change, they also added two deities into their village temple, one was the god of farming (神农), another was the god of money (财神). Until the period of Guangxi reign (1875-1908), the villagers thought that their deities and the temple had been completed and it was perfect already, because people were really happy.<sup>58</sup> Through the process of the continuing reconstruction of Zhaozhou Bazi basin over several centuries, in the eyes of local residents and local officials, Zhaozhou had been a completed space and unique society because it has a perfect Fengshui structure, well managed irrigation systems, a county city and government, an important transportation route here bound with unknown barbarians, and the state capital in two ends. That made it a very crucial cosmology of local residents in Zhaozhou Bazi basin. The names of mountains and rivers, temples and festivals, also helped to reconfirm this cosmology of *Fengshui* space in Zhaozhou Bazi basin and its surrounded mountains. In this sense, today’s Fengyi district in history, had been a process of making a complete local cosmology through long term social integration from the Ming to the Qing, and finally, in 1912, this county changed its name from Zhaozhou to Fengyi county (凤仪县). When the title of the county changed, the social ideal of Fengshui based on the Phoenix Mountain at its back, had been completed and the history of Nanzhao and Dali kingdom about the nobleman Zhao family, was finally demolished both from its environmental and social landscape.

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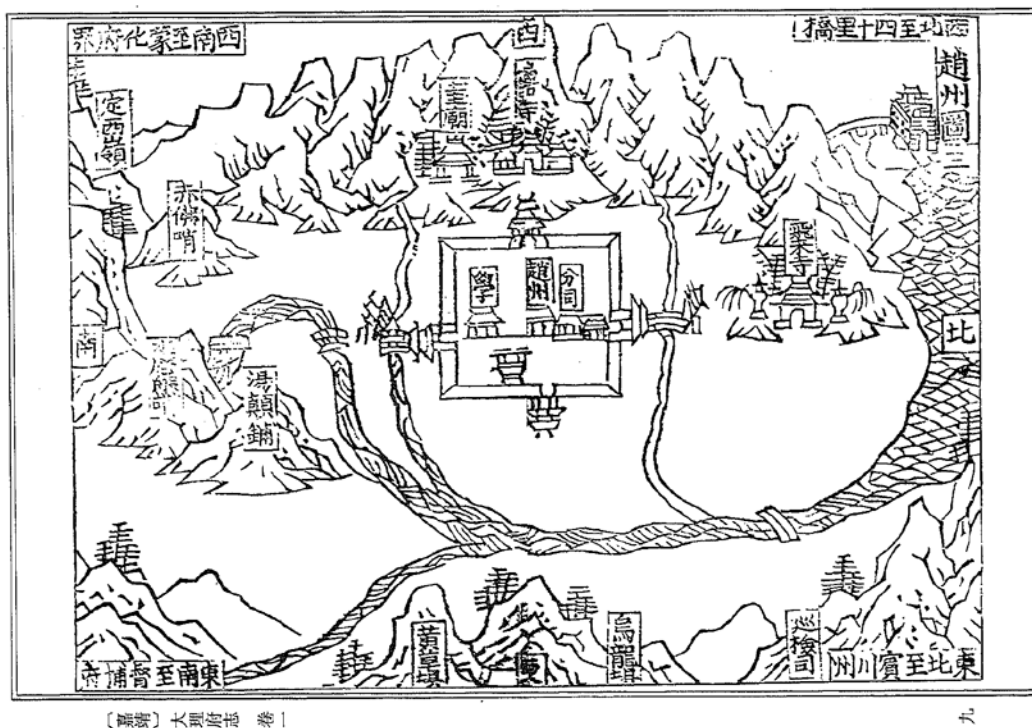
<sup>57</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p325. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“红山地方碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页325].

<sup>58</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p69. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“遵照护山碑”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页69].

## 6. The road of *All under Heaven* and the state power in the Bazi

For the Zhaozhou Bazi basin space, the local fengshui cosmology has been a local portion of the state version of *All under Heaven cosmology* to link the tributary chieftains and officials together with the state capital, through the communication and transportation on this road. Thus, the transportation route has been a fundamental issue of state power, just as the stone inscription described the northern water gate at Red Mountain, the Zhaozhou Bazi basin “is located at the key position of the transportation route between the West and East Yunnan, from here people could approach the Fan and the Rong (Tibet) in the north, and approach the Yi and the Man barbarians in the west; to the south, the provincial capital could be approached, while to the east, the national capital (京都) could be approached. For the exterior travelers, this is the road for their tributary, while for the interior travelers this is the road for official business and military generals.”

### The map of Zhaozhou in Dali prefecture gazetteer in the late Ming



The most significant social change in the northern basin area in Zhaozhou after the Ming-Qing transformation was the reform of integrating military garrison households into an official county system (裁卫归州). The military villages were registered as *lijia* households, but their tax and corvee for the government were quite heavy. Following the fashion of building village temples to take government tasks for villagers, a new religious movement among these previous military villages quickly spread, which was known as the Assembly of Worshipping the Big Depper (斗会) in

early Qinglong period in the 1730s. Some village heads were selected to be in charge of constructing village temples and called for the donation of farming land as the common property under the name of these temples. In the village of Red Mountain, more than forty *mu* of common land were quickly accumulated under the village temple, and the village heads proclaimed that, “the corvee is bound with the land. All affairs of rentals, of government corvee, are based on these lands and the responsibility of government tasks must be taken by the tenants of these lands. In this way, all villagers could pay attention to their own farming labor, and the whole village will be free from government callings.”<sup>59</sup> In the Daoguang Zhaozhou Gazetteer, some cases also mentioned that, before the village temple based property built up, the heads of official *xiangyue* (乡约) were victims and bankrupted, because they could not be able to help the official to call for enough corvee for the service, as the transportation corvee was extremely heavy in Zhaozhou. However, “a gentry Li Tangxie (李唐燮) called to promote the method of building up common property to deal with the state corvee, thereafter more and more villages built their common property pool and this idea helped communities a great deal.”<sup>60</sup> The transportation system was run by laborers and their driven mules, horses, and vehicles. When this road became a core issue in state policies, there was no way to stop, but only to maintain by certain new methods. Under the promotion of local gentries, more and more people were willing to donate their property to support this project under the name of temple property, due to their religious belief. In this way, the title of “merit mental (义租)” became a kind of religious merit for personal good even if it was used to deal with state tasks. In this way, the political responsibility thus transformed to be a personal religious practice. Based on this logic, the village temples and monastery common property systems were developed and managed by local gentries.

Since the early Qing, especially during the Qinglong reign, a new style of common property management developed to become a social institution in the negotiation between village leaders and county officials. The village temple, as a double mechanism of a religious platform and a basic unit to practice the state assigned task, had effectively reinforced the development of local agency running by gentries, but one important pushing force was the geographic feature of the basin on the state transportation route, and these Bazi basins were in fundamental positions to support the existence of the state power toward the southwest borderlands. Therefore, the continuing state control and the local response were seriously based on the growth and change of local agency if we study the process of how the core region of the previous Nanzhao and Dali kingdoms gradually became a part of the Chinese southwest frontier based on the change of local cosmology, or local agency adjusting itself to cope with the change of the state power step by step, but it never stopped, and

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<sup>59</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, P325. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“红山地方碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页325].

<sup>60</sup> Chen Zhaotang, Li Qixin, *The Daoguang Zhaozhou Gazetteer*, vol. 3. Taipei, The Student Publishing House, 1968, P366. [陈钊堂、李其馨修,《道光赵州志》,卷三,“忠孝”,台北:学生书局,1968,页366].

this process was never interrupted.

It was true that Zhaozhou basin was the key transportation crossroad in western Yunnan, because the road extended to Burma in the west and to Tibet through northwestern Yunnan, and the road crossing the Jinsha River toward Sichuan province must meet at Zhaozhou. All travelers in western Yunnan should pass here from different directions and the travelers were endless on the road. In early Qing dynasty, these travelers were very diverse, they might be some tributary chieftains' teams and their animals, officials and soldiers, businessmen, mule caravans carrying goods or government escorts of goods like copper, and many migrant labors came from different provinces and worked in mines or worked as porters and hawkers. There was a story recorded in the Qianglong Zhaozhou Gazetteer: there was an inn on the road side run by Zhang Zhenqi (张振奇). Once some miners returning from a mine stayed overnight, they went home to Hunan province after having worked a long time in the mines. One of them suffered an acute disease, and he had to stay at this inn with the host Zhang for many days, and could not catch up with his partners. Unfortunately, this guest passed away several days later. Another one Yang Heming (杨鸣鹤) was philanthropic, he paid for the coffin and buried this dead traveler. After the funeral, the inn host and the philanthropist found that, there was a 4,000 *liang* silver (about 7000 ounce) remittance draft and some letters in the dead miner's belongings, so they immediately reported it to the county magistrate. The magistrate wrote an official notice to Hunan side officials, the family members of this dead man came to pick up their silver remittance draft, and the two good men was rewarded by the government.<sup>61</sup> Stories and cases like this were rare in official archives or local inscriptions, and the information is a valuable clue for us to understand the flows of migrants, the transportation system and the bank system for silver money remittance in the Qianglong period.

Returning to the early Ming, when the Ming army occupied western Yunnan, the Ming government could not be able to control this transportation route, and it took a very long time to guarantee the openness and safety of this transportation line from Burma to the capital Nanjing, and the Ming emperors regarded this guarantee as the key issue of the "face of the emperor" as the kings and chieftains had to be safe to pay their tributary to the emperor and it meant the frontier kings recognized the power of the Ming emperor. Thus the cosmology of *All under Heaven* was accepted, because the Ming emperors were regarded as the son of the Heaven and had the ultimate authority of this world. Since then, the transportation route has been deeply embedded in the state power and bound with the reality of practical state cosmology. In brief, the openness and safety of the transportation line was the highest politics of the Ming and the Qing state.

"In year 2 of Xuande reign (1427), the Prince of Qian (黔国公), the general military official Mu Sheng (沐晟), and three main provincial departments of Yunnan reported to the emperor that, about six to seven hundred Lisuo bandits (力些贼) in the

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<sup>61</sup> Chen Zhaotang, Li Qixin, *The Daoguang Zhaozhou Gazetteer*, vol. 3. Taipei, The Student Publishing House, 1968, P365. [陈钊堂、李其馨修,《道光赵州志》,卷三,“忠孝”,台北:学生书局,1968,页365].

area of Lancang military garrison (澜沧卫, today's Yongsheng county) had rebelled, killed many people, and stolen cattle and horses, but the officials could not arrest them. The chieftain of Burma sent a tributary team to Beijing and this team was led by a head named Bahan (巴罕). Unfortunately, the bandits robbed them of their gold and silver, and Bahan's son was killed. In addition, fifteen villages of the Pu and the Luo rebelled in Shunning prefecture; these bandits hid in the mountains and frequently robbed travelers."<sup>62</sup> As the new conquerors, the Ming government knew that the most significant task of this new dynasty which had replaced the Mongolian Yuan, was to build up its legitimacy and be recognized by remote chieftains and kingdoms in Yunnan, Burma, and Tibet. Therefore, the tributary from these places and the transportation to them, was the real road to show the symbols of worshiping the Ming emperors. This message was made very clear by the founder emperor Zhu Yuanzhang. He declared in 1382 when the Ming army conquered Yunnan, "my declaration to the barbarians in Yunnan: since the Yuan lost its control, heroes have seldom been successful; I ordered the General of Expeditionary Barbarian to conquer the Yuan capital. Then the whole Huaxia was finally purged and people returned to peaceful times. In recent years, there has been no need for soldiers to bend their bows any more, horses fill the plains and peasants are working in the fields peacefully, because humanity is enjoying life. However, you southwestern barbarians reject the teaching and rely on your difficult road, taking in escaped criminals and insulting central China. All of our ministers are angry, this is the reason we sent the army to condemn you. Now Yunnan has been under pressure and the barbarians have surrendered. I would like to forgive you barbarians and let you know this is the will of the Heaven, and if you infract it, that will be your tragedy. This is the law and should be well known to barbarians in every location."<sup>63</sup> Despite this, indigenous groups in western Yunnan seriously resisted the Ming army for a long time. The emperor Zhu Yuanzhang asked the general Fu Youde (傅友德) to try to call for local chieftains to pay tributary in the capital, and try to let them know more about the Chinese ritual and manner (礼教), but Zhu Yuanzhang understood that it needed a long time to do so, because the indigenous chieftains were suspicious about the Ming conqueror and wanted to resist aided by the natural barriers in the mountains. So that, the most significant policy was to comfort these rebels, then try to guide them to contribute.<sup>64</sup>

During the Ming and the Qing, the most important policy toward frontier chieftains and local kingdoms was to encourage them to pay irregular tributary, through which the authority of Chinese emperors could be recognized and the remote frontier people could be included into a framework of *All under Heaven* cosmological

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<sup>62</sup> *The Factual Records of Ming Dynasty*, Xuende, vol. 25. P438. [《明实录》, “宣总宣德实录卷二十五”, 见《明实录有关云南史料摘抄》, 上册, 昆明: 云南人民出版社, 1959, 页 438。]

<sup>63</sup> *The Factual Records of Ming Dynasty*, Hongwu. P30. [《明实录》, “太祖洪武实录”: “诏云南诸夷曰: 自有元失驭, 群雄弗成, 乃命征虏大将军平定元都, 肃清华夏, 奠安黎庶。迩年以来, 士不弯弧, 马牧平野, 农安田亩, 人皆乐生。惟尔西南诸夷, 密迹声教, 恃险弗庭, 纳捕逃, 匿有罪, 肆侮中华。凡我朝臣, 孰不愤恨? 是以特兴问罪之师。今云南既平, 诸夷服从, 故诏谕以更生之恩, 于戏! 知天命者福臻, 昧天理者祸至。信如四时, 速如影响, 播告四夷, 想宜知悉。”同上, 页 30]。

<sup>64</sup> *The Factual Records of Ming Dynasty*, Xuande, p31. [同上, 页 31]。



value. In this way, Chinese emperors were identified as the only ruler to represent the power of ultimate Heaven, under their Authority of Heaven (天威), the native people had to accept that the Chinese empire was the only power in the world, it was undefeatable. Therefore, the tributaries of kingdoms in Burma, Siam, Laos and Vietnam were most important state politics for officials in the Southwest provinces. However, if these kingdoms seriously maintained their contributory relationship with the courts of the Ming and the Qing dynasties, the borderland chieftains' territory would be peaceful. But sometimes wars between Chinese empires and these kingdoms happened, large amounts of military force were sent and war supply logistics followed, if the central government could afford the cost of the wars. But in general, the main idea of this *All under Heaven* policy was to try to avoid war, but using the symbolic rituals to maintain the relationship between Chinese emperors and kings in Southeast Asia. Under this system, hundreds of local small or big chieftains had to pay their tributary all the time, and only this political task had made the transportation system flourish. For local officials and the communities along the transportation line, to protect these tributary travelers and keep them safe on the way, had been a most serious political duty and the highest state politics for local society, as it bound the state cosmology and political interest with identifying the power of the state and the recognition of the emperor as the son of Heaven by those travelling.

In this context, local communities in Zhaozhou, which was a key geographic position of this transportation frontier, showed a dynamic way of local agency development responding to the state cosmology, as we have discussed in the previous sections. In Yunnan, the main transportation line bound main Bazi basins together, to support the whole system of connection between the political centers and frontier chieftains and kingdoms. But for local societies, the local cosmology also gradually developed, as we find in Zhaozhou, a Bazi basin society could be reconstructed as a relatively complete local space in many ways, such as a locally identified Fengshui geomancy space, a hierarchy relation between cities, towns and villages in the basins, and their extended branches in mountain communities. This was the dialectic relations between the exterior and the interior influence in the reconstruction of local agency.<sup>65</sup> So, we can understand why these village temples could become a place of common property management run by gentry since the early Qing, and how local culture and daily life custom could be so integrated with the feature of a transportation position.

In summary, the Zhaozhou basin had taken double-responsibilities in the process of becoming a Bazi society: on one hand the whole Bazi society had been well integrated in different layers as a local cosmological space, a cooperative agricultural system bound with the transportation system, and a local market shared with long distance trade; on the other hand, it had been a well-developed state institution since the early Ming as a social base to maintain the state transportation system, providing security and traveling services for guests of the state and travelers for different purposes. In this way, the construction of Zhaozhou Bazi society represents a type of

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<sup>65</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST. P325. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“红山地方碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页325].

state existence in a mountains area on the borderland, because the communities and officials in Zhaozhou had to take their responsibility to manage the road across the mountains to approach another Bazi basin, besides the provision of labor and services. On this level, the whole of Bazi society also bound with some villages that serviced official tasks along with the road, they were the different official stations of Shao (哨), Pu (铺), Tang (塘), Xun (汛) and the native chieftain as the Xunjian official on the Dingxi Mountain (定西岭土巡检). In *Guangzu Zhaozhou Gazetteer* (《光绪赵州志稿》), this task as historical communal service was clearly recorded: the transportation corvee services of villages in Zhaozhou Bazi was organized by an official institution in the county city: “the bureau of transportation service for the six li communities (六里夫马局)” and the requirement of this service: for official transportation supply service, the laborers and muleteers had to send the travelers to the Hong Yan station (红岩) in the south, the Dali station (大理) in the north, the He Jiang station (合江) in the west, and the Bin Chuan (宾川) in the east.<sup>66</sup>

The city wall in Zhaozhou city was built in 1489 by the Ming, when the Lisuo rebels gathered at the Tiesuo Qing valley and threatened the transportation route between the middle and the western Yunnan counties.<sup>67</sup> But after this rebel group was suppressed, this problem was resolved, then the transportation service as local corvee was stabilized, and it has been an internalized fact of local life. The Bazi basins were organized by the state through the transportation route, and each basin was just one unit of this big network, while the state power and influence has extended through this big network to Burma, Tibet or India at one end, and to Hunan, Sichuan provinces at the other. Through this network, the Bazi society became a part of the Chinese state through its transportation route. Meanwhile, local cultural creation was also a part of transportation cosmology in general, and a kind of religious belief in transportation also created on the road, as a detailed part to interpret the cosmology of *All under Heaven* by local agents.

The case of Taiguo Si monastery (泰国寺) provides us with an understanding of “the cosmology of road”: the road not only functions as the means of material flows, the road is also a means to define the value of life. Hu Yuejiang (胡月江) was a businessman who came from Sichuan. His lived in a chaotic time of social transformation from the Ming to the Qing when the wars continued for many years. In Year Tianqi 7 (1627), he came to Yunnan from Anyue county (安岳) in central Sichuan for trade. He was married in Sichuan, but he married a daughter from a Zhao family in Zhaozhou. After several decades of hard work a successful businessman, he accumulated a large amount of wealth. However, Hu thought that his wealth should

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<sup>66</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p325. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 353, 王康国,《光绪赵州志稿》]

<sup>67</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, p230. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》, “建赵州城碑记”, 香港: 香港科技大学华南研究中心, 2013, 页 230]. Jianxiang Ma, *The Zhaozhou Bazi Society in Yunnan: Historical Process in the Bazi Basin Environmental System during the Ming Period (1368-1643)*. In *Resources Utilizations and their Impacts: Studies of East Asian Environmental History*, edited by Ts'ui-jung Liu, London & New York: Routledge, 2013

not handed down to his sons, but to translate it into religious merit, which could benefit people to escape from their secular life.<sup>68</sup> Then Hu became a Buddhist secular devotee, and he used his money to build a Buddhist monastery, Taiguo Si, beside the main road. His wife, the daughter of the Zhao family, also followed him to become a nun. During the time they built this monastery, they had a son and a daughter. In year 9 of Chongzhen reign (1636), Hu called his sons and daughter in Sichuan to move to Yunnan. One of his sons, who was born in Sichuan, married the daughter of a Sichuan businessman, and all of them tried to make this monastery more majestic. People called this monastery the Hu Family Temple, because the family members and relatives donated more and more farming lands to this monastery, and all Hu's sons and daughter married into rich local families, and they used the rental income to support this temple. Later, a monk, Xinglian (性莲), came to join them and became the abbot of this monastery. Monk Xinglian became a monk at his hometown in Zunyi (遵义) in Guizhou, but he had travelled to the most famous Buddhist Holy Mountains in China before he came to Zhaozhou. Monk Xinglian and Hu found that they could share a lot about their understanding of life and Buddhism, then they worked together to maintain this temple on the road side, and entitled it "The Zen Monastery of Wishing the State and Transmission (泰国接引禅寺)". They wrote down their ideals on a temple inscription about, "the western Buddha works to receive people and send them on to their target, and people are moving on their way doing labor, and are busying the road. The road is just like the blood vessel on the human body, and travelers move on the road to anywhere in the world, and just like running water they could not stop. If movement is the law, why not devote our life to the road to benefit people's ultimate transmission?"<sup>69</sup> Both Hu Yuejiang and Monk Xinglian were travelers on this road, but they found their religious values on the road and converted these religious values on the road, while they practiced their religious ideal on the road. Many passengers stayed in the monastery as it was on the road side, and they left their poems on the wall, and agreed with them that "life is a journey". However, the Hu family temple which also held a large amount of farming lands, worked as a village temple later, and it is still working there today. All these cases are showing one thing: the road, road side society and the travelers on the road were often connected by the temples on the road on these borderlands.

## Conclusion

The Taiguo Si monastery is not the only evidence to show how travelers became the masters of the road, and how the road could be promoted by passengers to be the

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<sup>68</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, pp9-10. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“鼎建泰国接引禅寺碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页9-10].

<sup>69</sup> Ma Cunzhao, *The Ancient Inscriptions in Fengyi*, Hong Kong: The South China Research Center, HKUST, pp9-10. [马存兆编,《大理凤仪古碑文集》,“鼎建泰国接引禅寺碑记”,香港:香港科技大学华南研究中心,2013,页9-10].

means of their eternal life. Another story is about a filial son in Zhaozhou. When the son was a boy, his father went to the Dai area on the border for trade, but never returned. After the son grew up, he swore that he would find his father's body and bring it back for burial if he had died already. The son finally came to the Burmese border and, helped by his father's friends, found the place where his father passed away. He dug his father's skeleton up, and moved it back, and built a good tomb for his father. It is clear that, not only passing travelers, but also local communities on the road, like people in the Zhaozhou basin, could also promote themselves as "humans are the passengers on the road" as the "road perspective" of local culture, because local residents were also deeply involved in the business on the road, and moral about traveling. The inscriptions at Taiguo Si monastery explained that, people moved on the road for different purposes, they may be high officials or miners, poets or monks, businessmen or beggars, but on the road of their life, "there is no noble man and no ragtag man, no saint and idiot, no far and near places, or past or present. The Western Paradise is here and now, just on the road." In this Zen style Buddhist understanding about the road, the road itself was not only a network to circulate flows of materials, but also a chance and a relationship for people to create their values of life and to renew their life again and again. The logic here is similar to the Ming and Qing courts when the state and the local communities collaborated in the affairs of frontier politics or local community management. When the political space was created and reshaped by the state, it also provided a chance for local agents, as the leaders of local communities, to reshape their relationships with the state, and to reconstruct their cultural meaning and life values. In this way, the idea of a road to a road side community was similar to their understanding about the state. This idea was not abstract, it was like the Taiguo Si Monastery: for monks and Buddhists, this is a place for self-cultivation and promotion, and some believers also regarded it as the receiver and a transmission platform for all travelers on the way through life, and this religion could help travelers to escape from suffering. However, this monastery actually held large amounts of farming lands, and many people struggled for the power to control this wealth for many generations, according to the temple inscriptions. And, all other temples in different villages or in the cities were quite similar. Different people built temples and maintained them in different ways, but these temples had become the public space to develop their accumulated wealth, and the power of local agency to cooperate and share their power with the officials.

Moreover, on the level of state politics, emperors and officials tried to build up and maintain the legitimacy of political power and its symbols through their official discourse about the relations between the Flourishing China (中华) and the frontier barbarians (四夷), to enhance the ultimate value of *All under Heaven* in everyday politics, through the symbolic journey of paying tributary, like a pilgrimage, from very far and remote places to the capital for a long time and undergoing difficult travel. This tributary journey was a powerful cultural symbol representing the serious sincerity and respect of remote chieftains to the power of the imperial states. In order to maintain this structure of state power, for the officials in Zhaozhou, their most important job was to support these travelers, receive them and send them to another

transportation receiver in another basin. Therefore, the idea and the symbol of *All under Heaven* was not an abstract caption, but a daily life practice for providing laborers, food, and vehicles. In a ragged mountain terrain in southwest China, especially in western Yunnan, transportation was a superior but also everyday task of politics, for the purpose of trade, official business, and chieftains' tributary. Even so, it is not an easy job at all, as endless rebellions and social chaos continually threatened all kinds of movement on the road. However, local communities had their own ways to respond. On one hand, an effective way of local agency could rapidly adjust its attitudes toward the state power, and adjust its cultural practice pushed by intellectual elites like the gentries and religious masters; on the other hand, under the leadership of local gentries, different communities were still able to struggle for their collective space to reinterpret or recreate their cultural values. Different participants in Bazi society might have different purposes for these struggles but, what they learned was to make a collective village as a unique platform, to accumulate common willingness from the public in their competition with each other, and negotiation with the state. In this way, even if social relations might vary, the connections became close as the village and the village leaders performed an important role of social agency for Bazi society in the local, public sphere.

Furthermore, a village became a basic unit to be organized to pay for the state a collective corvee service in Zhaozhou Bazi basin. This is an important way for us to understand how village temples and temple bound common property could be the social institution for the local elite to construct a style of local agency participating the state policy. However, this social institute should work in a system of Bazi society, which was ordered with a ranking of county city, villages and mountains communities on different layers of local integration. In this system, officials and gentries could work with village representatives as a whole network to manage the common property of the villages, and they also worked together to practice public service as well as the state transportation maintenance. To a certain degree, this network of public service and property management was run as a religious service, as we can see from the cases of bridge construction, village temple organization, the cosmology of Fengshui framework and the road bound Zen Buddhism. In everyday practice, the village temples were managed based on the working methods apportioned for corvee service and public construction. Meanwhile, the public cooperation within a village unit was mainly managed by villager households taking turns under the leadership of village gentries and some religious assemblies, like the aging groups for male or female actors. This tradition has been a most important method for public affairs in western Yunnan.

In summary, the leading elite of local society worked continually for construction and reconstruction in their fashion to respond to different requirements of the state. Social integration happened after the integration of the local elite, and their deep cooperation was mainly embedded with their intermarriage network after the Dali kingdom, and this process could be traced back to the time before early Ming. These intermarriages were between the new comers and local noble families, between military garrison households and the commoner villagers, or between traveling

businessmen and local residents. Pushed by an integrated elite group, local gentries and officials pushed the changes in religious fashions and the style of temple property and its management. Many noble families controlled big monasteries that were destroyed by the Ming government, but some new monasteries were built. However, pushed by the new Confucian scholars, some Taoism temple developed and since the early Qing, village temples became a new style of public management which cooperated with official temples in a local cosmology. The cooperation between officials and gentries extended their influence from city to village and to the mountain communities, but most of these activities were organized on the platform of temples through religious practices. In this way, rituals, or temple based social institutes became a connection between the state and local residents; but the exact pushing power of this connection was a style of local agency lead by local intellectuals, who were interested to combine practices of Confucian, Buddhism, and Taoism together in everyday life.

In southwest China, Bazi had been a growing social space with the extension of state power and state cosmology, and Bazi basin society was integrated into a macro scale of *All under Heaven* cosmology, but this integration initiated from a micro model of local Fengshui cosmology and a network of temples. The Bazi basins, therefore, were ordered and organized into this big cosmology through a chain of many Bazi basins, to become a state transportation system for traveler's tributary, official business, and trade. In this way, a local market was not based on a local scale market system from villages to cities as a parallel system of different layers of local peasants' markets to cope with the state power, like William Skinner described in Chengdu plain. The Bazi basin system seriously cooperated with the tributary policies of the state as the most significant shaping power, as well as some details linked with state politics, such as the frontier strategy, distribution of military forces, long distance trade, pilgrimages, migration and many other needs of transportation superiority. However, local society also has its own way to response to these needs, and the development of local agency was the most significant part of political participation of local communities. Thus, the politics in Bazi society were bound with the need for transportation management, and local market and trade service also surrounded the condition of the transportation route. In this way, long distant mule caravan services and other services on the road could open for different purposes regarding connections between the Yangtze River system and Irrawaddy River system, into a big global network. But local kinship networks, villages and temples, were also an important portion of this system over a very long history. For this feature of local participation into the state, we define it is a Bazi society.