

Historic Building Appraisal
Shi Wang Study Hall
No. 124 San Wai, Ha Tusen, Yuen Long

Shi Wang Study Hall (士宏書室) in San Wai (新圍) of Ha Tsuen (廈村), *Historical Interest* Yuen Long, was built around 1910s by three brothers to commemorate their grandfather Tang Shi-wang (鄧士宏, 1717-1806) who was the 20th generation ancestor of the Tang clan in Ha Tsuen. It was built to provide education for the village children with lessons of Chinese classics, mathematics and others. Two other study halls were also built in the village, including Yau Sin Study Hall (友善書室) constructed earlier and Chok Yee Study Hall (作宜書室), the last one. The hall had a kindergarten operated in the building in the 1960s and now locked up for storage use.

The study hall is a small Qing (清) vernacular building having a *Architectural Merit* two-hall-one-courtyard plan of three bays. The courtyard is between the two halls. It is in symmetrical design with the Confucius portrait hung in the middle of the main hall in the old days. Side rooms are constructed on either side of the entrance hall and the courtyard. Mezzanines are at the entrance and main halls. The building is constructed of green bricks with its walls and arches supporting its flush gable roofs of timber rafter, beams, purlins and clay tiles. The entrance has granite door frame, wall bases and lintel. Above which is the name board of the study hall. Its ridges are with geometric mouldings. Timber beams are with carvings of fruits, birds and floral motifs. Its wall friezes are with paintings of similar design.

It is a study hall to reflect the past education of the Tangs in Ha Tsuen. It has some built heritage value. *Rarity & Built Heritage Value*

Its façade, internal walls and columns have been heavily plastered very much diminished its authenticity. *Authenticity*

The study halls in the village have related group value. *Group Value*

Three classes were operated at the study hall each accommodated some 10 to 20 students. In the 1930s, a more advanced school, the Yau Kung School (友恭學校), was established in San Sang Tsuen (新生村) in the southern part of Ha Tsuen which replaced the role of the traditional study halls in the area. With many buildings in the area the study hall served as a temporary shelter for many refugees taking a short stay before they moved on to go north to the mainland at *Social Value, & Local Interest*

the beginning of the Japanese Occupation (1941-45).