Antiquity Or Innovation? Architecture, Sculptures And Murals In Southern Shanxi Under The Yuan Dynasty

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Antiquity Or Innovation? Architecture, Sculptures And Murals In Southern Shanxi Under The Yuan Dynasty

Abstract
The dissertation analyzes the different forms of art - architecture, murals and sculptures - produced in Southern Shanxi from the beginning of the fourteenth century to the early of Ming. The dissertation starts with a case study on the history of Guangshengsi, one of the most prestigious Buddhist monasteries in the region, and one of the best-preserved Yuan architectural complexes of all China. It then examines the extant Yuan architecture of Southern Shanxi, most of which were constructed in two types of structures, diantang and tingtang. It was the tingtang structure that gained increasingly popularity in the first half of the fourteenth century. Surviving Yuan buildings in Southern Shanxi belonged to religious institutions of various kinds, Buddhist and Daoist monasteries, temples and shrines of local beliefs. In many cases, these buildings were decorated with murals and contained religious images in various forms. Unfortunately, because of their high artistic achievements and with few exceptions, murals and sculptures were either lost or found their way to the collections of private collectors and museums. The goal of the conclusion is to put architecture, sculpture and murals into one schematic paradigm. The dissertation begins with a reconstruction of history, to the reconstruction of a monastery layout, and finally in the conclusion, to the reconstruction of the imagery program within a building. The imagery program of the main hall of the Guangsheng Lower Monastery is reconstructed, which answers a final question, to what extent were the art and architecture of Southern Shanxi influenced by Tibetan Lamaism, one that defines the high art during the period of Yuan.

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lian qu

a dissertation

in

east asian languages and civilizations

presented to the faculties of the university of pennsylvania

in

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2019

supervisor of dissertation

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Dedicated to the memory of my beloved mother.

亦母亦師養育之恩重於山，至純至善為人平和靜似水。
ABSTRACT

ANTIQUITY OR INNOVATION? ARCHITECTURE, SCULPTURES AND MURALS IN SOUTHERN SHANXI UNDER THE YUAN DYNASTY

Lian Qu
Nancy S. Steinhardt

The dissertation analyzes the different forms of art - architecture, murals and sculptures - produced in Southern Shanxi from the beginning of the fourteenth century to the early of Ming. The dissertation starts with a case study on the history of Guangsheng Monastery, one of the most prestigious Buddhist monasteries in the region, and one of the best-preserved Yuan architectural complexes of all China. It then examines the extant Yuan architecture of Southern Shanxi, most of which were constructed in two types of structures, diantang and tingtang. It was the tingtang structure that gained increasingly popularity in the first half of the fourteenth century. Surviving Yuan buildings in Southern Shanxi belonged to religious institutions of various kinds, Buddhist and Daoist monasteries, temples and shrines of local beliefs. In many cases, these buildings were decorated with murals and contained religious images in various forms. Unfortunately, because of their high artistic achievements and with few exceptions, murals and sculptures were either lost or found their way to the collections of private collectors and museums. The goal of the conclusion is to put architecture, sculpture and murals into one schematic paradigm. The dissertation begins with a reconstruction of history, to the reconstruction of a monastery layout, and finally in the conclusion, to the reconstruction of the imagery program within a building. The imagery program of the main hall of the Guangsheng Lower Monastery is reconstructed, which answers a final question, to what extent were the art and architecture of Southern Shanxi influenced by Tibetan Lamaism, one that defines the high art during the period of Yuan.
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INTRODUCTION

The Yuan Dynasty ended a long period of disunion, from the end of the Tang (618-907) to the fall of the Southern Song (1127-1279). Established by Mongols, the Yuan Dynasty was an empire composed of a variety of ethnic groups, including Chinese, Jurchen, Khitan, Tangut, Tibetan and Uighur. Even the government institution that was responsible for producing art at the court, Zhuse Renjiang Zongguanfu 諸色人匠總管府 (the Supervisorate-in-Chief of Artisans of All Kinds) was named in response to this.1 With deep roots of multiculturalism, the art of the Yuan by nature was expected to be diverse and complicated. Composed of artistic traditions synthesized by the Mongol conquest, the art of Yuan had to develop an identity of its own.

In the introduction to The World of Khubilai Khan: Chinese Art in the Yuan Dynasty, James C. Y. Watt suggests that “the formation of Yuan art did not begin immediately, or even soon after, the conquest of the Southern Song. It certainly did not happen in Khubilai’s reign (r. 1260-94), or in those of his immediate successors. It may well be that the most marked changes occurred during the time of Shundi 順帝, the last emperor of the dynasty (Toghan-Temür; r. 1333-68) ....”2

In the art history of China, the formation of a dynastic art usually took a long time. Considering the cultural, ethnic and religious complexity, it seems logical that it might have taken longer for Yuan art to develop its own styles and characteristic than the other dynasties.

I. At the Court: Tibetan Buddhism and the High Art of Yuan

The Yuan Dynasty was formally proclaimed by Shizu 世祖 (Khubilai; r. 1260-94) in 1271. It officially came to an end with the conquest of the Ming in 1368. Ruled by ethnic minorities and existing for fewer than one hundred years, the dynasty was deemed by traditional Chinese historians as short-lived and even less important than other dynasties. However, the Mongol

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1 It is the government agency responsible for manufacturing textiles, religious images, and decorative ornaments and for building royal Buddhist temples and lamaseries. See Fong, Wen C., 1995: 50.
empire had controlled part of North China beginning 1215 when Jin Zhongdu (the Central Capital of the Jin, part of modern Beijing) was captured by Mongol troops. After the fall of the Jin in 1234, the Mongols controlled the whole of North China. If those pre-dynastic years were counted, the Mongol-Yuan empire ruled North China for a total of 153 years. It seems that a dynasty that existed for this long should have enough time to develop art traditions, for the Northern Song endured 167 years and the Southern Song 152 years. According to Sherman E. Lee, the Yuan Dynasty should be included in “the usual Chinese sequences of innovation, development, and gradual absorption so characteristic of the great classic periods”.  

The discussion begins in the fourteenth century, and continue to the 1380s, or through the early decades of the Ming Dynasty. At the turn of the fourteenth century, the Yuan Dynasty was ruled by the second emperor Chengzong 成宗 (Temür; r. 1294-1307), who reigned for thirteen years, the third longest reign of all Yuan emperors except Khubilai and the last emperor Toghan-Temür. Chengzong was a competent emperor who continued most of the policies of his grandfather (Khubilai) and successfully maintained political stability. Yuan shi (Standard History of the Yuan), juan 21, concludes his biography with the following commentary:  

“(The emperor) had ruled a united country in peace, following the precedents and carrying on.”

Unfortunately, since the death of Temür, power struggles among his successors had become intense. There were eight emperors in a short period of twenty-six years from Wuzong 武宗 (Khaishan; r. 1307-11) to Ningzong 宁宗 (Rinchibal; r. 1332). Compared to those short-lived emperors, Temür had more resources and ruling time to patronize art.

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3 Lee, Sherman E., 1968, 1.
4 Chengzong ji si 成宗紀四, juan 21, Standard History of the Yuan.
In Dade 大德 7 (1303), the tenth year of Temür’s reign, two incidents were noteworthy; one was taking place at the court and the other in the province of Shanxi 山西. In the seventh lunar month of that year when Temür stayed in Shangdu 上都 (the Upper Capital, Xanadu of Samuel Coleridge’s poem, near modern Chifeng 赤峰 of Inner Mongolia) for the summer, a high lama named Danba 胆巴 (Tibetan: Danupa; 1230-1303) died in Mituoyuan 彌陀院 (the Amitābha Temple). Upset by Danba’s sudden death, the emperor ordered the lama’s body to be cremated with precious wood. According to the memorial stele, when the body was cremated, five-colored firelight appeared; numerous relics were collected in the aftermath. Brought back to Dadu (the Great Capital of the Yuan, modern Beijing) in a grand ceremony, the remains were buried inside Qing’an Pagoda 慶安塔 housed in Da huguo renwangsi 大護國仁王寺.

Danba had arrived at Dadu as one of the companions of Phagspa (1235-1280), the leader of the Sakya order of Tibetan Buddhism in 1270. He served the Yuan court ever since. A prominent Sakya priest himself, Danba specialized in the rituals of Mahākāla, a deity in Tibetan Buddhism worshiped by Mongol warriors as a terrifying protector. When Mongol troops won battles in the conquest of the Southern Song, Danba was given credit for his power of praying to Mahākāla for victories. In 1289, he was exiled to Chaozhou 潮州, a coastal city in remote Guangdong 廣東, as a victim of the power struggle, but he managed to return to Dadu two years later.

Teműr gave Danba his greatest trust. Shortly after Teműr’s enthronement in 1294, Danba was appointed national preceptor (Chinese: guoshi 国师) and abbot of Da Huguo Renwangsi, the most prestigious royal monastery in Dadu. In terms of religious affairs, the imperial preceptor

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5 Mahākāla was a center-piece of Yuan imperial Buddhism, and the most potent symbol of Tibetan esoteric power in the Yuan pantheon. On the introduction of Mahākāla rituals and imagery to Kubilai, see Debreczeny, Karl, 2003: 51.
6 Da huguo renwangsi is the official residences of all imperial preceptors starting from Phagspa. See Jun,
(Chinese: *Dishi* 帝師) had the highest rank at the court. Although Danba did not attain that position when he was alive, he was in fact, the most powerful and influential Buddhist lama during Temür’s reign.\(^7\)

Danba was so influential that he was memorized by the royal family many years after he was dead. In 1311, the newly enthroned Renzong 仁宗 (Ayurbarwada, r. 1311-20) posthumously honored Danba with the title of imperial preceptor, and commissioned Zhao Mengfu 趙孟頫 (1254-1322), a Chinese official and an accomplished painter and calligrapher, to draft a proclamation which was carved on a commemorative stele housed in one of the royal monasteries. Unfortunately, this historical document is not known to have survived the Yuan period. Four years later, upon the request of Chinese monks from Longxing Monastery of Zhending circuit 真定路龍興寺, Ayurbarwada ordered Zhao to draft another text for a new memorial stele. Though that stele also was lost, Zhao’s inscription survives in his own hand on a scroll in the Palace Museum in Beijing (figure 0.1). The stele text was entitled *Dayuan chici longxingsi dajue puci guangzhao wushang dishi bei* 大元敕賜龍興寺大覺普慈廣照無上帝師碑, hereafter referred to as *Danba stele*.\(^8\)

There are many accounts of Danba in a variety of Chinese texts such as *Yuanshi* and *Lidai luo tongzai* 歴代佛祖通載. However, few details have come from the sources in Tibetan.\(^9\) It is true that Danba was widely recorded and admired by his Chinese contemporaries, the reasons for which deserve careful examination. First, unlike other national and imperial preceptors who almost never left the two capitals, Shangdu and Dadu, Danba travelled extensively across the country. Besides the capital cities where he stayed the longest, he had lived in many places including Mount Wutai 五臺山 (a Buddhist sacred peak in Shanxi Province), Zhuozhou 涿州 (a

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\(^7\) Chen Gaohua, 2014a. 158.

\(^8\) The title was translated as *the enlightened, universally compassionate, widely illuminating, and supreme imperial preceptor from Longxing Monastery of the Great Yuan*.

\(^9\) Chen Qingying and Zhou Shengwen. 1990: 58.
city to the south of Beijing in today’s Hebei Province), Hangzhou (formal capital city of the Southern Song) and Chaozhou.

Secondly, Danba was admired for his support of Han Chinese Buddhist monasteries, especially the monasteries of the Huayan Sect. It was recorded in several texts that, for over three decades, Danba had used his power and influence to fund the repairs of Baima Monastery in Luoyang, believed to be the first Buddhist monastery ever established in China. The repairs of Baima Monastery started in the early Yuan period. The project was sponsored by the court, a notable gesture of the Yuan rulers to revitalize Han Chinese Buddhism in the north. In 1270, Danba persuaded Khubilai to fund the repairs using part of the farm rental collected by Da huguo renwangsi. In 1300 when the repairs were finally completed, Danba ordered the ownership of those farms be transferred to Baima Monastery to support its future operations.

Acting as a protector, Danba had taken many concurrent posts as the abbot of Han Chinese monasteries. Among them was the one at the above-mentioned Longxing Monastery, which was founded originally in the Sui Dynasty (581-619). Like Baima Monastery, Longxing Monastery also received state-sponsored repairs in the early Yuan. Danba was the abbot when the repairs were completed. Not only could a high lama like Danba become the abbot of a Han Chinese monastery, Chinese monks were also appointed by the Yuan court to become the abbots of royal monasteries, believed by many scholars to be Tibetan lamaseries. For example, Zhi Jian 知揀 (?-1312), a Han Chinese monk from Baoji Monastery in Dadu, was appointed the first abbot of Da shengshou wan’ansi, one of the most eminent royal monasteries of the capital city.¹¹ Chen Gaohua 陳高華 suggested that Danba was the key person to make these appointments.

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¹⁰ Zhi Jian is one of the Han Chinese monks who won the trust of Khubilai. For his brief biography, see Huang Chunhe. 2001: 33-40.
¹¹ During the Yuan period, Baoji Monastery in Dadu was the most eminent monastery of Huayan Buddhism, which had a good connection with Lamaseries of the Sakya Order of Tibetan Buddhism.
happened. According to various historical accounts, Danba had been admired as the protector and spokesperson of Han Chinese Buddhism at the Yuan court.

Thirdly, Danba had been highly respected by his Chinese contemporaries, mostly Han Chinese officials serving at the court, as two pieces of art created by Zhao Mengfu suggest. The first is Zhao's own handwriting, the above-mentioned Danba stele. In the stele text Danba was highly praised by Zhao.

“Since the unification of the Royal Yuan, among so many Buddhist priests coming to China from the Western Region, no one has more integrity, wisdom, and magic power than the master (Danba).”

The second is a painting of 1304 known as Monk in a Red Robe now in the collection of the Liaoning Provincial Museum (Figure 0.2). The appearance of the monk suggests the figure portrayed had Central Asian origins. Zhao Mengfu did not give the painting a title, which was unusual in Zhao’s practices. Sixteen years later when Zhao added another colophon, he still had no intention of explaining whom the figure represented. This conspicuous absence suggests that Zhao may have wanted the painting to carry a personal message, a possibility studied by Hong Zaixing 洪再興. He proposed that the painting commemorates Danba who died the previous year.

Though Danba is not the subject of this research, the life of this Tibetan lama is in some ways a reflection of the complexity of the history and art of the Yuan Dynasty. Of all the Chinese dynasties, the Yuan was one of the most tolerant of religions. During the Mongol-Yuan period, Buddhism, Daoism, Christianity, Islam, and other beliefs were practiced freely and openly across the country. Religious institutions of each of them were established in the capital and in major

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12 Chen Gaohua, 2014. 163-166.  
13 Hong Zaixing, 1995: 29-34.
cities such as Hangzhou and Quanzhou. However, the Mongol rulers did not grant every religion equal status, because they were enthusiastic followers of esoteric Buddhism, especially the Sakya order of Tibetan Buddhism. Starting from Phagspa, fourteen Sakya priests had been appointed by the Yuan emperors as imperial preceptors. The relationships between the imperial preceptors and the Yuan emperors were often described as that between not only a monk and his patrons, but also a spiritual guide and his students. In terms of religious affairs, the imperial preceptors were the most prestigious figures under the emperors who reached out to the imperial preceptors for Buddhist services and for important political, military, and personal decisions. The imperial preceptors had thus enjoyed widespread religious and secular powers throughout the whole period.\(^1\)

The art of Tibet was exported to China when Khubilai adopted Tibetan Buddhism as the state religion in 1268. Consequently, the Tibetan art traditions, architecture and imagery were predominant in creating official and public art, or the high art of the Yuan Dynasty. The Yuan emperors and empresses were the generous patrons of Buddhism and art. Starting from Khubilai, all Yuan emperors received initiation (Sanskrit: abhiṣeka; Chinese: guanding) from imperial preceptors before the enthronement ceremony started. Once enthroned, all emperors, except those who died prematurely, started to construct monasteries of their own for the sake of the boundless merit they would acquire. Khubilai and his consort Chabi (1227–1281) had built three royal monasteries in Dadu, the so called “Three Great Monasteries”: Da huguo renwangsi, Da shengshou wan’ansi 大聖壽萬安寺 and Da xingjiaosi 大興教寺. Starting from Temür, the royal monasteries were built not only in Dadu and Shangdu, but also on Mount Wutai. (Refer to Table 1 for the major royal monasteries built throughout the Yuan period.) Gold, silver, land and households were rewarded to the royal monasteries. Not only did the constructions of these

\(^1\) Institutionally the imperial preceptor was in charge of Xuanzheng Yuan that was the governmental commission for Buddhist and Tibetan affairs.
monasteries consume numerous resources and manpower, maintenance became huge burdens for the whole empire, one of the factors that led to the fall of the Yuan Dynasty.  

According to historical documents, the royal monasteries were extremely majestic, with their architecture, sculptures and murals reflecting the highest artistic achievement of the time. Unfortunately, targeted by Yuan rebels as symbols of foreign rule, all royal monasteries were demolished when the dynasty fell. Nothing but two huge pagodas survive today, the White Pagoda of Miaoying Monastery in Beijing (Figure 0.3) and the White Pagoda of Tayuan Monastery on Mount Wutai (Figure 0.4). Although Miaoying Monastery is a reconstruction in the Ming Dynasty, the famous White Pagoda is the original Yuan structure, built from 1272 to 1288 for Khubilai’s Da shengshou wan’ansi. With a height of fifty-one meters, the White Pagoda has a huge brick core covered with white plaster. Five fundamental parts are visible on the exterior from bottom to top: base, shaft, wheel, harmika and crowning jewel. Too big to be demolished, the monumental size probably explains why the pagoda survived the destructions of the early Ming. Since the late thirteenth century, it has dominated the skyline of Dadu and Beijing of the succeeding periods. Similarly, the White Pagoda on Mount Wutai is the most prominent landmark of Taihuai township, the heart of the holy mountain where more than one hundred Buddhist monasteries are located. It is noteworthy that the construction in a bell-shaped form imported from Tibet and Nepal of both pagodas was supervised by the Nepali artisan named Anige (1245-1306).

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15 By the year 1291, there were more than forty-two thousand Buddhist establishments in China and more than two hundred thousand monks and nuns. As the state religion, Tibet Buddhism received the strongest government support. Patronage of Tibetan Buddhism was one of the largest expenditures of the Yuan government. A censor named Zhang Yanghao reported to Khaishan in 1310 with an estimate of two thirds of the state revenue allocated to Buddhism. See Jing, Anning, 2004. 216-17.

16 Another Yuan structure in the Dadu area that reveals the multi-national nature of Yuan rule is Yuntai (Cloud Terrace Pass), an archway at Juyongguan. Constructed in 1345, the archway was decorated with Lamaist deities and inscriptions translated into six languages of the empire: Sanskrit, Tibetan, Mongolian, Uyghur, Chinese and Tangut.

17 The pagoda was constructed in 1301. There is no doubt that this pagoda was constructed for a royal monastery, the name of which still need to be determined. Chen Gaohua. 2015, 37.

18 Anige was an accomplished Nepali artisan known for casting metal sculptures and for painting and
Some have believed that the Yuan royal monasteries were, by nature, Tibetan lamaseries.\textsuperscript{19} This is perhaps true because those monasteries were designed for Tibetan Buddhist practices, and the images housed in the monasteries were predominantly Tibetan Buddhist deities. However, there is also reason to believe that, during the Yuan period, the distinctions between a Han Chinese monastery and a Tibetan lamasery were not as clear as those of the Ming and Qing periods. In terms of religious practices and art, the Yuan royal monasteries were mixtures of Han Chinese and Tibetan Buddhism based on the following reasons.

First, the royal monasteries functioned as ancestral shrines for emperor. For example, Shenyu dian 神御殿 (the Hall of Imperial Portraiture) was installed to enshrine the portraits of the deceased emperors. The portraits of Khubilai and his consort Chabi were enshrined in the Shenyu Hall of Da shengshou wan’an si. Enshrining the imperial portrait in the royal monasteries had been the traditions of the Chinese court since the eighth century.\textsuperscript{20} Secondly, the clergy comprised many Han Chinese monks; the high monks had been appointed to top posts as abbots. Thirdly, research on architecture indicates multiple styles: the traditional Chinese style, the newly imported Tibetan style and the style reflecting a melding of the two.\textsuperscript{21} In his attempts to reconstruct six royal monasteries located in Dadu, Jiang Dongcheng 姜東成 points out that, the overall layouts of those royal monasteries were in accordance with the Han Chinese tradition because courtyards and buildings were arranged symmetrically along an axial line. However, the Tibetan tradition might be followed regarding the layouts of independent courtyards and the plans of individual buildings. Within the courtyard, the arrangement of architectural elements was in accordance with a Tibetan Lamasery. To create a mandala, a central Buddha hall was associated with four other Buddha halls that were aligned on the four directions. The examples

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  \item weaving. He was recommended by Phagspa to the Yuan court in 1268 and was quickly promoted to the director of Zhuse Renjiang Zongguantu to supervise the artwork productions at the court. For the brief biography of Anige, see Jing, Anning, 1994b: 40-86.
  \item As early as 703, the portrait of Wu Zetian 武則天 (624-705) was sent to and enshrined at Chongfu Monastery in Taiyuan. See Fu Xinian. 2001: 474. See also Shang Gang. 2004, 31-33. Fong, Wen C. 1995: 50-4.
\end{itemize}
include Khubilai’s Da Shengshou Wan’ansi, Khaishan’s Da chong’en fuyuansi 大崇恩福元寺 and Ayurbarwada’s Da chenghua puqingsi 大承華普慶寺. Jiang further suggests that features coming from the Tibetan traditions also include bronze banner poles erected in front of the entrance gate and the corner towers constructed on the four corners of the whole monastery compounds.\textsuperscript{22}

The Yuan royal monasteries must be studied through historical documents and archaeological excavations, because none of them exists today. However, monasteries datable to the Yuan period did survive in a few provinces, especially the province of Shanxi. Shanxi is, of all North China, the richest province in monuments of traditional architecture. Across China, among hundreds of timber buildings that survive from the Yuan period, over seventy percent of them are in Shanxi.

II. In the Province: The 1303 Earthquake and the Post-quake Rebuilding in Southern Shanxi

“On leaving Taiyuanfu the traveler rides west for seven days through glorious countryside, coming across plenty of towns and villages where trade and handicrafts are thriving, and many merchants take to the road in every direction to turn a profit. And at the end of this seven-day ride he comes to a city called Pingyangfu, which is exceptionally large and extremely wealthy and is home to many merchants. The people live by trade and crafts. Silk is produced here in great quantities.”\textsuperscript{23}

This was Marco Polo’s brief account of Pingyangfu 平陽府 (now Linfen 临汾, Shanxi Province), one of the three Shanxi cities Polo mentioned on his way to Yunnan 雲南.\textsuperscript{24} In the early Yuan period when this trip was made, Shanxi was governed directly by the court under Zhongshusheng (中書省, the Central Secretariat). The province consisted of three circuits,

\textsuperscript{22} Jiang Dongcheng. 2007b: 162.
\textsuperscript{23} Polo, Marco. 2015: 143.
\textsuperscript{24} With its history traced to statehood of Western Zhou (1050-771BCE), Pingyang developed into a big city during the period of Sixteen Kingdoms (304-439CE). See Steinhardt, Nancy S., 2014: 20.
Datong 大同, Taiyuan 太原 and Pingyang 平陽. Pingyangfu is the governing city of Pingyanglu (平陽路, the circuit of Pingyang), which consisted of two prefectures (fu 府) and nine sub-prefectures (zhou 州), which constitutes the whole Southern Shanxi.²⁵

Shanxi is in a region of mountain ranges, although two-thirds of the province is composed of a plateau. The Fen River rises in the mountains in the northwest and flows southeast into the basin of Taiyuan and then southwest through several minor basins near Pingyang to join the Yellow River. The Fen River Valley in Southern Shanxi has been extensively and heavily cultivated, which historically as well as today includes the most prosperous region of the province. The Fen River Valley was one of the early centers of Chinese civilization.²⁶ From Han to Tang, there had been an important route, linking Chang’an 長安 (now Xi’an 西安), the capital of eight dynasties, with the strategically vital Southern Shanxi, known historically as Hedong 河東 (Regions to the East of the Yellow River), and with the major land routes to the North China Plain.

Besides silk, which was mentioned by Marco Polo, salt and iron were produced in large quantities in Southern Shanxi.²⁷ The prosperity of the area, based on agriculture, industry and trade, had made Pingyang a wealthy metropolis, a center of culture and art. In 1237, Yelü Chucai 耶律楚才 (1190-1244), one of the most powerful officials in the service of Ögedei Khan (r. 1227-41), founded a college at Pingyang, where Mongol youth were taught history, geography, arithmetic and astronomy. Starting from the Jin Dynasty and remaining under the Yuan, Pingyang was the center of woodblock printing, in both texts and pictorial illustrations, of North Shanxi.

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²⁵ The two prefectures are Pingyangfu and Hezhongfu 河中府. The nine sub-prefectures are Haizhou 解州, Jiangzhou 晉州, Zezhou 澤州, Luzhou 潞州, Jizhou 吉州, Xizhou 西州, Huozhou 霍州, Qinzhou 沁州 and Liaozhou 遼州.
²⁶ Taosi 陶寺, one of the most famous archaeological sites in the area, is located in the county of Xiangfen 襄汾, which is dated to 2300 BCE, and considered to be part of the late phase of the Longshan 龍山 culture. See Shelach, Gideon, and Jaffe, Yitzhak. 2014: 339-42.
²⁷ Salt came from Yanchi 鹽池 (the great salt lake near Yuncheng 運城), one of China’s most famous inland salt lakes. In 1308, Hedong tieye dutijusi 河東鐵冶都提舉司 (the Department of Iron Production in the Area of Hedong) was set up to supervise the operations of eight iron plants.
China. A woodblock print dated Jin period now in the collection of the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg, has a cartouche indicating the print was made by the Ji 家 family workshop of Pingyangfu (Figure 0.5). The city had also boasted many Buddhist and Daoist monasteries that organized major printing projects. One of the most notable projects was *Xuandu baozang* 玄都寶藏, a collection of Daoist canons of 7800 volumes, compiled in 1244 by the Quanzhen 全真 Daoist Sect headquartered in Xuanuguan 玄都觀 at Pingyang. In 1260 the printing blocks were transported from Pingyang to be stored in Yongle Palace (Yonglegong 永樂宮 in the county of Yongji 永濟, a newly built headquarter of Quanzhen Daoism. Other famous projects included *Zhaocheng Jingzang* 趙城金藏 (*Jin edition of the Buddhist Tripitaka*), a subject of discussion in chapter one.

In the evening of the seventh day, the eighth lunar month of Dade 7 (1303), a severe earthquake devastated Southern Shanxi. The violence of the earthquake and its powerful aftershocks were truly frightening. Even major buildings in the nearby provinces of Shaanxi, Henan and Shandong were reportedly damaged. An earthquake of this scale was certainly recorded in *Yuan Shi* and other official historical documents such as *Xu wenxian tongkao* 續文獻通考.

“In the evening of the day of *xinmao*, the eighth lunar month of the seventh year, there was a series of earthquakes, which were especially powerful in Taiyuan and Pingyang.

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28 Upon conquest of Song, the Jin took cultural relics, ancient books, and a great number of talented craftsmen and artisans from the Song capital Dongjing to the North. Some craftsmen in printing professions were relocated to Pingyang.
29 Quanzhen sect Daoism is known for its syncretism of the three major faiths, Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism. It became popular in northern China during the Jin Dynasty and continued to flourish under the rule of the Mongols.
30 The printing blocks stored in the Yongle gong were destroyed in 1281 by the order of Khubilai after the Quanzhen Daoist lost the third debate between Daoists and the Buddhists at the court. See Xu Pingfang, 1960. 44.
31 The entire monastery was moved approximately twenty-five kilometers south to Ruisi in the late 1950s.
The collapsed buildings, both official and residential, numbered a hundred thousand. Fan Xuan Yi Xun Township of Zhaocheng county of Pingyang was dislocated ten li away. In the following counties, Xugou and Qi of Taiyuan, and Pingyao, Jiexiu, Xihe and Xiaoyi of Fenzhou, there were landslides and black, muddy water spewed out, flooding the land." ("Records of the Five Elements", juan 50, Yuan shi,

七年八月辛卯夕，地震。太原、平陽尤甚。壞官民廬舍十萬計。平陽趙城縣范宣義郇堡徙十里。太原徐溝、祁縣及汾州平遙、介休、西河、孝義等縣地震成渠，泉湧黑沙。(《元史·五行志》卷五十)

And another account of the same earthquake,

"Last year there was a series of earthquakes in Taiyuan and Pingyang. About one thousand four hundred Daoist monasteries were destroyed, and more than one thousand Daoist priests died or were injured. (The emperor) ordered special disaster relief for those Daoist priests." ("Biography of Chengzong", in Yuan shì

以去歲平陽、太原地震，宮觀摧圮者千四百余區，道士死傷者千餘人，命賑恤之。（《元史·成宗本紀》）32

Modern seismologists estimate a magnitude of 8.0 with a maximum Mercalli intensity of XI (near the epicenter). It is believed to be the first magnitude 8.0 earthquake ever recorded, and one of the deadliest recorded earthquakes in the history of China. The epicenter was placed

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32 Although the emperors are said to have followed Lamaist Buddhism, they are famous for their interests in other forms of Buddhism and religions. Even though there were occasional persecutions of Daoism under the rule of Yuan, the religion continued to flourish till the end of the dynasty. This is one piece of evidence that Chengzong continued to patronize the Daoist monasteries.
somewhere between the county townships of Hongtong and Zhaocheng, forty and fifty kilometers to the northeast of Pingyang.\(^{33}\)

According to traditional Chinese belief, natural disasters of many kinds could be understood as signals to the human world from deities in the Heavens. The earthquake of this scale was certainly a sign of Heaven's displeasures. The Mongol rulers, the followers of this tradition, had been very much concerned about “moral meteorology” which could signal imbalances in nature and impugn rulers.\(^{34}\) Shortly after the quake, Temûr sent his favorite courtier to Huo shan (Mount Huo), a sacred peak in Southern Shanxi that had been worshipped since the Spring and Autumn Period (771-476 BCE), to perform a special sacrifice to the mountain deity and to pray for the blessings on the emperor’s behalf.\(^{35}\) Apparently Temûr’s prayer was not answered, because the area was hit by aftershocks. In Dade 9 (1305), the helpless emperor made another effort to appease the Heavens by changing the names of the two circuits, from Taiyuan to Jining (冀寧, hope for tranquility), and Pingyang to Jinning (晉寧, promote for tranquility). Finally, the earth stopped quaking in Zhida 至大 1 (1308), one year after Temûr’s death.

The details of the disaster’s aftermath were recorded on a variety of local documents, especially commemorative steles of local temples, shines and monasteries. In the 1970s, a survey of hundreds of inscribed steles located in Southern Shanxi was conducted. The result suggests a strip of land, centered in Zhaocheng and Hongtong, 180 kilometers long and 32 kilometers wide, had suffered the worst earthquake damages (Map 1). Nine counties were distributed along the strip. From north to south, they are Pingyao 平遥, Xiaoyi 孝義, Jiexiu 介休,

\(^{33}\) For details of the modern assessment of the 1303 earthquake, see Qi Shuqin, 2005: 224-234.

\(^{34}\) The concept was proposed by Shane McCausland who analyses the connections between Heaven’s omens and the Yuan rulers by exploring reactions to natural disasters in Khubilai’s region. See McCausland. 2015: 87-114.

\(^{35}\) The sacrificed ritual took place on the third day of the tenth lunar month, according to a commemorative stele which is now preserved on the ruins of Zhong Zhen Miao (the Temple of Central Dominant Mountain) in the county of Hongtong.
Lingshi, Huozhou, Linfen, Xianling, Fencheng, and Quwo. According to the survey, most buildings located within the strip were collapsed.36

However, it should be noted that the inscribed steles surveyed were not made for documenting the earthquake damages. Instead, they were made to commemorate the restorations and repairs. Although the disastrous earthquake caused a huge loss of manpower and a mass destruction of architecture, over the years Southern Shanxi recovered from the debris and received a large scale of reconstruction. Architecture was repaired, murals re-painted and sculptures recreated for thousands of destroyed monasteries, temples and shrines. The mass reconstruction had made high demands, a critical factor for the blossoming of art in a short period. Patronage led to not only the increased production of art, but innovations of artisans. New styles that emerged, and masterpieces that appeared as a result are discussed below.

III. Chapters of the Dissertation

The primary aim of the individual chapters that follow is to analyze the different forms of art - architecture, murals and sculptures - produced in Southern Shanxi from the beginning of the fourteenth century to the early of Ming. The discussion focuses on Southern Shanxi for two reasons. Firstly, because it was a thriving economic and cultural center of North China during the Mongol-Yuan period, one assumes masterworks might have been created. Secondly, Southern Shanxi boasts the largest number of extant Yuan architecture of all China. Approximately more than two hundred timber-framed structures datable to the Yuan period are preserved in the region. Many of them can be securely dated because they were rebuilt shortly after the great earthquake of 1303.

Surviving Yuan buildings in Southern Shanxi belonged to religious institutions of various kinds, Buddhist and Daoist monasteries, temples and shrines of local beliefs. In many cases, these buildings were decorated with murals and contained religious images in various forms.

Unfortunately, with few exceptions, murals and sculptures were either lost or found their way to the collections of private collectors and museums. I will try to reconnect some selected objects with their original localities, with an aim to reconstruct the original imagery program of the entire building. The research relies not only on visual materials, but also textual evidence, especially inscriptions preserved in situ that give historical facts and dates.37

Chapter One studies the history of Guangsheng Monastery (Guangshengsi 廣勝寺), one of the most prestigious Buddhist monasteries in the region of Southern Shanxi, and one of the best-preserved Yuan architectural complexes of all China. Today Guangsheng Monastery is composed of three parts: The Upper Monastery, Lower Monastery, and Water God Temple. While the Upper Monastery was reconstructed during the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the Lower Monastery and Water God Temple still maintain their original Yuan layouts. Murals and sculptures housed in the buildings were created around the same time as the buildings themselves. Through the study of a variety of documentary and inscriptive evidence, a forgotten history of the Upper Monastery from the late Yuan to the middle Ming will be reconstructed.

Chapter Two examines the Yuan architecture of Southern Shanxi. A devasting earthquake struck the region of Southern Shanxi in 1303, destroying almost all buildings in the area. For the extant Yuan timber buildings, most were constructed in two types of structures, diantang 殿堂 and tingtang 廟堂; both are stipulated in Yingzao fashi. Exemplified by the official style buildings of Yongle Palace, buildings of diantang structure are traditional, in an official style derived from a combination of Northern Song and Jin. Exemplified by the main hall of the Lower Monastery, buildings of tingtang structure seems to be more innovative. Lengthwise framework combined with the employment of massive architrave and slanting beams are rarely seen anywhere in an earlier period. In Southern Shanxi, it was the tingtang structure that gained increasingly

37 There has been an increasingly use of temple inscriptions in the study of Chinese local religions and religious art. See Falkenhausen, Lothar Von. 1998: 411-25.
popularity in the first half of the fourteenth century. It is probably due to a quick response to large-scale reconstruction in the aftermath of the 1303 earthquake. In architecture, the challenges of material and manpower shortage were met by technological innovations instead of the compromise of quality.

Chapter Three examines the extant Yuan-period murals from Southern Shanxi. It is widely acknowledged that the region has produced one of the most emblematic collections of Yuan monastery murals in terms of both iconographies and styles. Because they are artistically remarkable, this group of murals were studied extensively since the 1930s. With only a few works still preserved in situ, most of the many extant works have found their way to the collections of the museums overseas. The murals attributed to the Zhu Haogu School are monumental in size. In comparison with the murals from the Song and Jin periods, their murals are designed especially for an enlarged interior space. With extremely high artistic achievement, to some extent, the murals had replaced the sculptures to become the direct object of worship. New chronology will be established through the studies of the historiography, original localities and variations in styles and iconographies.

Chapter Four examines the sculptures, especially the wooden statues now in the collections of museums across the world. During the Jin and Yuan periods, a school of wooden sculptors from the Fen River Valley in Southern Shanxi attained remarkable achievements in Buddhist sculptural art. Their influence has been compared to the School of wall painting from around the same region. As it is with murals, most wooden sculptures from this region have been lost during the early 20th century; many were taken abroad. Through a close examination of stylistic features as well as other inscriptive evidences, I have determined the precise origins of two wooden sculptures housed in two prominent museums in the United States. The conclusion informs the current speculation that the Fen River Valley in Southern Shanxi is the origin of a vast number of Chinese wooden sculptures featured in collections abroad.
The goal of the conclusion is to put architecture, sculpture and murals into one schematic paradigm. The dissertation begins with a reconstruction of history, to the reconstruction of a monastery layout, and finally in the conclusion, to the reconstruction of the imagery program within a building. The imagery program of the main hall of the Lower Monastery will be reconstructed, which answers a final question, to what extent were the art and architecture of Southern Shanxi influenced by Tibetan Lamaism, one that defines the high art during the period of Yuan.
CHAPTER 1

GUANGSHENG MONASTERY: AN EMINENT BUDDHIST MONASTERY UNDER THE RULE OF THE YUAN

Guangsheng Monastery (the Monastery of Vast Triumph) is located seventeen kilometers northeast of the county township of Hongtong, Shanxi Province, on the southern fringes of Mount Huo. This location is historically governed under the jurisdiction of the county of Zhaocheng. For this reason, the monastery is also described as in Zhaocheng. Identified as a national cultural heritage site since 1961, Guangsheng Monastery today consists of three distinct architectural complexes: Xiashi (the Lower Monastery), Shangsi (the Upper Monastery), and Shuishenmiao (the Water God Temple). The Upper Monastery is located on the top of a hill. The large thirteen-storied pagoda of the Upper Monastery is an outstanding landmark. At the foot of the hill is the Huo Spring, a famous and bountiful spring of water, which for centuries has been harnessed for irrigation purposes. The Lower Monastery lies at the foot of the hill and close to the spring. The Water God Temple is adjacent to the Lower Monastery to the southwest. In the past, a 1.5-kilometer mountainous path separated the two monastery compounds. Today, the paved road provides an easier access to the top of the mountain.

In the past 80 years, scholars of history, religion, and art have been highly interested in studying this monastery complex. The appeals of Guangsheng Monastery originate from its long history, its unique geographical setting, the many precious artworks and artifacts that remain there, as well as the extensive literary accounts. With a long history that can be traced to the Northern Dynasties period (386-581), Guangsheng Monastery has endured the many subsequent dynasties and survived to the era of the Republic (1912-1949). It remained a site of religious activity after the establishment of the People’s Republic in 1949 and housed Buddhist monks

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38 The consolidation of Zhaocheng and Hongtong in 1954 led to the creation of a new county named Hongzhao. In 1958, this new county changed its name back to Hongtong.
within the 1960s. This continuity is extremely rare among the surviving examples of China’s ancient temples.

The importance of the monastery’s geographic location is unequivocal. It stands within the range of Mount Huo, a sacred peak in Southern Shanxi. It is also adjacent to Huo quan (the Huo Spring), one of the major sources of freshwater for the region. Across the extremely dry North China Plain, these natural assets ensure the region’s agricultural productivity and economic prosperity. Ever since the Tang Dynasty, local farmers tapped into the water resources of the Huo Spring for irrigation. Two canals, Bei huoqu (the Northern Huo Canal) and Nan huoqu (the Southern Huo Canal), link the Huo Spring with a number of villages within two neighboring counties, Zhaocheng and Hongtong, sustaining thousands of acres of farmland nearby. While prosperity enshrines the religious culture, the monastery also provided local a place, the Water God Temple, to worship the water deities so integral to their economic prosperity.

There is no doubt that Guangsheng Monastery is a treasure trove of art and architecture. While most parts of the Upper Monastery were rebuilt before the middle of the Ming Dynasty, the Lower Monastery and the Water God Temple still maintain their original Yuan layouts. Within the buildings, murals and sculptures were created around the same time as the buildings themselves. All together, these remains epitomize the artistic accomplishments of Southern Shanxi in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

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39 Monks were forced to leave the monastery shortly after the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) was launched.
40 As early as the 5th century BCE, Mount Huo was worshipped as a sacred mountain by the state of Jin (1042–369 BCE), one of the five hegemon states during the Spring and Autumn period. During the reign of Wudi of Western Han (141-87 BCE), a new system of imperial sacrifices was established for the worship of natural spirits. Altars and shrines were built for Taiyi (the grand unity), Houtu 后土 (sovereign earth), Yue 峽 (sacred peaks), Zhen 鎮 (dominant mountains), Du瀆 (great rivers) and Hai 海 (great oceans). Like the group of the five sacred peaks, the five dominant mountains were arranged according to the five cardinal directions of Chinese geomancy, which include the center as a direction. They are the eastern dominant mountain (Mount Yi 沂山), the southern dominant mountain (Mount Kuaiji 會稽山), the western dominant mountain (Mount Wu 吳山), the northern dominant mountain (Mount Yiwulü 醫巫闾山) and the central dominant mountain (Mount Huo).
Lastly, extensive and reliable literature on Guangsheng Monastery makes the present study possible. This literature does not come from official historical records, or local gazetteers that only make brief and unreliable mention of the site. Fortunately, there are extensive written historical documents within the monastery itself. Inscriptions are on the temple walls and beams, as well as carved on ritual vessels, metal instruments, and stone steles. In all, a text of more than 100,000 characters about Guangsheng Monastery can be assembled from different parts of the monastery. These primary sources detail the monastery’s finances, religious organizations, construction history, lawsuits, and community involvement over the centuries. The historical facts and dates given by these texts are of inestimable value in chronological analysis and classification.

I. The Early Scholars and Early Studies

Guangsheng Monastery was brought to the attention of Chinese scholars through the discovery there of a valuable Jin edition of the Buddhist Tripitaka. The first modern scholar to discover the monastery was master Fan Chen, a monk famous for his work with Zhongguo yingyin zangjin hui (the China Association of the Buddhist Tripitaka Imprint). While searching for rare ancient Buddhist canons in the vicinity of Xi’an in the spring of 1933, he was told about the existence of these canons in a monastery near Shanxi’s Zhaocheng. Upon his arrival, he did some preliminary research on the canon and believed it was a hitherto unknown edition of Tripitaka from the Song Dynasty. The news of this discovery quickly spread across the country, which brought many more scholars to the monastery. Those who visited include Lin Huiyin (1904-1955) and Liang Sicheng (1901-1972), two of China’s first generation of architects and architectural historians.\(^{41}\)

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\(^{41}\) Liang and Lin are among the first generation of Chinese architectural historians who attended the University of Pennsylvania in the 1920s and 1930s for architectural education. For Liang and Lin’s trainings at Penn and their architectural practices in China, see Atkin, Tony. 2011: 63-66.
In the early 1930s, Liang Sicheng devoted himself to the study of traditional Chinese architecture. He joined Yingzao xueshe (the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture) and was appointed the director of research of Yingzao fashi (Treaties on Architectural Methods). One of Liang’s primary missions was to discover extant examples of Chinese ancient architecture. The discovery of the Song Buddhist canons at Guangsheng Monastery offered a clue. If the canons stored in the monastery dated to the Song, then it was reasonable to expect that the buildings of the monastery were just as old, if not older. After their investigation, Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin declared: “More than a year ago, the discovery of Song canons in Zhaocheng triggered a sensation in academia and beyond. The value of the canons of Guangsheng Monastery had become well-known. But little did people realize the value of the buildings that were housing these canons. They too, are rare and extraordinary treasures.”

Liang and Lin’s investigation took place in August 1934. They planned the visit to the site when taking a summer vacation at Fenyang in Shanxi Province, travelling with Wilma C. Fairbank (1910-2002) and John K. Fairbank (1907-91), an American couple who were at the time studying Chinese history and art in Peking. The report from this visit was published the following year in Zhongguo yingzao xueshe huikan (the Bulletin of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture). By analyzing the characteristics of the monastery architecture, they concluded that most buildings of Guangsheng Monastery complex had been built in the immediate aftermath of the great earthquake of Dade 7 (1303). Liang and Lin knew

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42 Compiled by Li Jie (?-1110), Yingzao fashi is a technical treatise on architecture and craftsmanship during the Northern Song Dynasty. For general introductions of the book, see Guo Daiheng. 2002: 187-92.
43 Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin 1935, 41.
44 The American couple had become the life-long friends of Lin and Liang. For detailed account of this trip, see Fairbank, Wilma. 1994: 73-83
they were rare and extremely valuable for the study of traditional Chinese architecture, but they didn’t realize how truly important the buildings were.\(^{45}\)

Lin and Liang’s early report was the first study of the architecture of Guangsheng Monastery, but this study left much to be desired. Trained as architects, the couple glossed over the valuable sculptures and murals housed inside the temple. Further, their brief stay at the site did not allow for careful measurements and detailed drawings. The report was entirely based on their subjective perceptions of the buildings. In 1936, Liang revisited the monastery along with assistants Mo Zongjiang 莫宗江 (1916-99) and Mai Yanzeng 麥嚴曾.\(^{46}\) Unfortunately, their drawings and measurements were lost during the War of Resistance against Japanese.

Not long after Lin and Liang’s first visit, in October 1934, Jiang Weixin 蔣唯心, a scholar of Buddhism from Nanjing zhina nei xuehui 南京支那內學會 (Academy of Chinese Buddhism at Nanjing) visited the site. Jiang came seeking the Song canons and he stayed there for 40 days. Published later that year, the report from his study was titled *Jinzang diaoyin shimo kao* 經藏雕印始末考 (Examination of the Printing of a Jin Tripitaka)\(^{47}\). In this text of great academic significance, Jiang assembled a wealth of information on the origins of this Tripitaka and the history of the monastery. He determined the precise dates of the edition: the first group of printing blocks were made between the reigns of Huangtong 皇統 (1141-49) and Dading 大定 (1161-89) of the Jin Dynasty; additional blocks were made during the rule of Ögedei Khan (1229-41) of the Mongol empire. Furthermore, Jiang verified that the Buddhist canons stored in the

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\(^{45}\) Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin 1935, 41-54.

\(^{46}\) This was Liang’s third field trip to Shanxi. According to an announcement made in the *Bulletin of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture* (vol. 6, issue 4, 1936, 148), the investigation took place in October 1936. The counties visited were Yangqu 陽曲, Taiyuan, Zhaocheng, Hongtong, Linfen, Fencheng, and Xinjiang 新絳.

\(^{47}\) The report was published originally in *Guofeng* 國風 Magazine (vol. 5, issue 12, 1934), and later in 1935 a monograph by Nanjing zhina nei xuehui.
monastery were reprints of the early years of Khubilai’s Zhongtong reign (1260 – 1264). Based on all the evidence, Jiang corrected the widespread mistake of attributing the Buddhist canons to the Song Dynasty. Instead, he re-named the collection as The Jin Tripitaka of Zhaocheng, clarifying both the canon’s site of discovery and its correctly attributed historical period. This name has been widely accepted by scholars since.

In addition to clarifying the dates of the Tripitaka, Jiang dug even deeper into the histories of Guangsheng Monastery. From the Tang Dynasty texts of Sanbao gantong lu (Records of the Miracles of the Three Treasures) and Fayuan zhulin (Dharma Garden, Pearl Forest), Jiang found records of a Buddhist monastery and a stupa atop Mount Huo. In fact, the monastery mentioned in the texts is indeed the predecessor of Guangsheng Monastery, which survived from the late Northern Dynasties period. As a scholar of Buddhism, Jiang naturally paid special attention to the religious practices at the monastery. He left behind detailed records of the architectural layout, sculptures, murals, and their placement within the monastery complex. This study by Jiang made up for the shortcomings in Lin and Liang’s investigations two months prior.

In the autumn of 1934, right after Lin and Liang’s visit but before Jiang’s, an American scholar named Laurence Sickman (1906-88) also visited Guangsheng Monastery. A Harvard graduate, Sickman came to China in 1930 on a fellowship to study Chinese language and art. During this time, he was also hired by the Nelson Gallery in Kansas City, Missouri, to assist Landon Warner in acquiring ancient China art.51 The Nelson Gallery opened to the public in

48 Upon the request of Khubilai, a number of copies of Tripitaka were printed at Dadu, which were bestowed to the monasteries of high rankings in the nationwide. In 1959, Su Bai found another 555 volumes of the same Jin and Yuan edition of Tripitaka at Sakya Monastery in Tibet. See Su Bai. 1964:260-64.
49 Compiled by master Dao Xuan 道宣 in Linde 1 (664), the text records the temples, stupas, images, and miraculous experiences of monks and nuns from the Latter Han to the beginning of the Tang.
50 It is a Buddhist encyclopedia compiled by master Dao Shi 道世 in Zongzhang 1 (668) of the Tang Dynasty.
51 Laurence Sickman was later to become the Oriental Art Curator and Director of the Nelson-Atkins Museum. He is one of the very few Western pioneers in the study of Chinese art who had travelled considerably through North China including Shanxi. For his own accounts of those field trips, see Sickman, Laurence. 1988, 23-28.
December 1933. As a new museum, the gallery demonstrated from the outset a strong interest in assembling a robust collection of Chinese art.

One of the earliest contributions to the museum’s efforts in this direction came from C. T. Loo (Chinese name: 卢芹斋, 1880-1957). In 1932, the well-known art dealer brought to the museum’s then budding collections a gigantic Buddhist mural from China. Even Loo knew very little about the mural. Information regarding its date and provenance are missing, and there was only a hint that it might have originated from a Buddhist monastery in Southern Shanxi. Having lived in Beijing for several years at this point, and well-acquainted with China’s antique market, Sickman was led to none other than Zhaocheng’s Guangsheng Monastery in his quest to discover the origins of the Nelson Gallery’s Buddhist mural.52

Besides a concern about the Nelson mural, Sickman had other research project in mind. He wished to conduct a general survey of Buddhist art in murals and sculptures that were still preserved in situ, in order to obtain authentic data for approximate, and in some cases, accurate dating.53. Since the early 1920s, an increasing number of Chinese sculptures and murals had come into the permanent collections of major museums in Europe and North America. On the whole, they have been collected without any data as to localities, or any clue of definite dating.54 By visiting Guangsheng Monastery and other sites in Southern Shanxi, Sickman made a fruitful investigation, which the subsequent chapters will discuss in detail.55

II. A Brief Review of the Early History: from Establishment to the Jin Dynasty

Past studies of Guangsheng Monastery have grappled with two puzzling issues. One is the composition of the monastery. How did the monastery evolve into what we observe today, three

52 Mackenzie, Colin. 2011: 80
54 Sickman, Laurence. 1939. 12-17
55 In the summer of 1938, two Chinese students from a Christian school of Hongtong county were sent by William C. White to investigate Guangsheng Monastery. The purpose of this trip was to obtain information concerning the present condition of the monasteries from which the ROM murals were known to have come, said to be similar to that of Laurence Sickman. The abstract of their investigation report of Guangsheng Monastery was published by White in 1940. See White, William C. 1940: 49-58.
building complexes: the Upper Monastery, Lower Monastery and Water God Temple? What are the relationships between these individual constituents? Did the individual temples independently evolve, or were they governed and planned by the authorities of the monastery as a whole? This chapter seeks to answer these questions. The second issue relates to the monastery’s extant architecture. The buildings of the Upper Monastery are dated to the middle of the Ming Dynasty, whereas the Lower monastery and the Water God Temple preserve their Yuan buildings and layout. Refer to Table 2 for the construction dates of the main buildings from all three constituent sections. The dates come from writings on wooden architectural members and stone inscriptions at the monastery.

As mentioned before, Hongtong and Zhaocheng are both located near the epicenter of the great 1303 earthquake, which destroyed almost all buildings nearby. Within twenty years after the earthquake, the rebuilding efforts of Guangsheng Monastery made substantial progress. Restoration of the Lower Monastery and Water God Temple had neared completion. Evidence reveals that the Upper Monastery was rebuilt shortly after the earthquake, a topic of discussion in the next section. Today, however, the Upper Monastery is entirely devoid of all remnants from this phase of rebuilding. The situation is very different in the Lower Monastery and Water God Temple.

There is also a remarkable discrepancy in textual accounts, highlighting once again the scarcity of details regarding the Upper Monastery from this period. While there are substantial amounts of textual accounts of the Upper Monastery both before 1272 and after 1452, there is nothing from the 180 years in between. In the tumultuous years of the Yuan-Ming transition, the history of the Upper Monastery, along with its architecture, disappeared.

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I believe there is a relationship between the two questions. The answers lie in the socio-political changes in China during the last years of the Yuan Dynasty and the early years of the Ming Dynasty. I seek to reconstruct, at least partially, this forgotten period of the history of Guangsheng Monastery. Before turning to the questions, we briefly revisit the history, from the establishment of the monastery to the great earthquake, paying special attention to the details that are pertinent to the monastery’s art and architecture.

1) A Brief Review of the Early History: from Establishment to the Jin Dynasty

Local historical records hold that the monastery was founded in 147 CE, the first year of Jianhe 建和 of the Eastern Han Dynasty. This claim first appeared during the Song Dynasty, and there has been no reliable historical evidence to back it. What we do know, however, is that the monastery existed during the late Northern Dynasties period. It was recorded in three Buddhist texts compiled in the early Tang period. *Juan* 15 of *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 has this record regarding a Buddhist monastery atop Mount Huo,

“To the north of Jinzhou, an ancient mound is situated on the south of Mount Huo. The locals call it the pagoda of Ashoka Monastery.”

*Sanbao gantong lu* and *Fayuan zhulin* also contain a similar account. These three excerpts of historical texts consistently present two important pieces of information. Firstly, Ashoka Monastery, located on the southern slopes of Mount Huo, was likely the precursor of Guangsheng Monastery. Secondly, Ashoka Monastery was famous for its pagoda. Interestingly, the pagoda was described as lying in ruin during the Northern Dynasties period, specifically in the

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57 It is *Pingyangfu zhi* 平陽府志, compiled in 1047, that made this claim for the first time. See Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 4.
Northern Zhou (535-581). From the texts, we infer that the wooden components of the pagoda had fallen but the earthen core remained.\(^{58}\)

Despite the fuzzy evidence for the monastery’s earlier periods, we know for certain that the name Guangsheng Monastery was adopted in 769. Guo Ziyi 郭子儀, the Prince of Fenyang, was said to have rebuilt a Buddhist monastery on the site of Gu yuwang tayuan 古育王塔院 (the pagoda precinct of the ancient Ashoka Monastery) on the slopes of Mount Huo. He asked emperor Daizong (r. 763-80) to grant this monastery a new name, Guangsheng, meaning vast triumph. The texts of his application as well as the court’s approval are both inscribed on stone plaques housed in the monastery today.\(^{59}\)

The size and scale of Guangsheng Monastery during its early years through the Tang, Five Dynasties, and Song periods are no longer verifiable. There are traces, however, that recount its history during the Jin Dynasty. During the Jin invasion of Song, from 1125 to 1127, the area of Southern Shanxi was ravaged by war. However, Guangsheng Monastery was little effected.\(^{60}\) Religious activities continued as usual, according to the accounts of Zong Ying 宗瑩, who became a monk during the late Song and served as the abbot of Guangsheng Monastery during the early Jin periods. The abbot Zong Ying died in 1159. Although the funeral pagoda is no longer to be found, a memorial tablet bearing Zong Ying’s biography is preserved in the Upper Monastery today.

According to this biography, *In Memory of Abbot Ying of Zhaocheng’s Guangsheng Monastery of Mount Huo in Pingyang Prefecture*, abbot Ying was a local of Zhaocheng. He first

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\(^{58}\) The earthen-core pagoda was typical in the sixth century. Scholars of architectural history have proposed the idea that, since techniques for timber construction during the Northern Dynasties period were not advanced enough, the use of an earthen core was a common practice in constructing multi-storied towers. The famous Yongningsi pagoda 永寧寺塔, constructed in 523 in Luoyang, is the prime example for the use of this technique. See Fu Xinian. 2002a: 84.

\(^{59}\) Due to the serious damage to the original stone plaque, the abbot of Guangsheng Monastery re-carved the stone in 1064. The re-carved stone plaque is now preserved on the front wall of the Vairocana Hall in the Upper Monastery.

\(^{60}\) For details regarding the Jin invasion of Southern Shanxi, refer to Institute of the Study of Shanxi History, 2001: 152-165.
became a Buddhist monk at the age of 21 in 1107. Considered to be talented and virtuous, he was well-supported by the monks in the monastery and was elected as the vice abbot in 1132. In 1136, there was a great famine in Southern Shanxi. The biography recounts the dire situation in those years. “The grains were unripe, and the people were destitute. There wasn’t enough to eat.” During this time of depravation, Ying was elected as the head of the monastery. Because of his management skills in allocating resources, he successfully led the people through the years of hardships. This experience earned him a good name and widespread praise both near and far. As a result, Guangsheng Monastery also prospered under his leadership in the aftermath of the great famine. The monastery not only expanded to incorporate more buildings and land, but also discovered two new channels of income.

“One day, Zong Ying again lamented the emptiness of the monastery’s courtyard. The buildings were dilapidated. Then he had the idea of removing a nearby hillslope to make room for a new dharma hall. He made up his mind that day, and soon enough the hall was finished as planned. … Zong Ying expanded the guest house that contained forty rooms. He commissioned the casting of a massive bell that weighed five thousand kilograms. He also built a water mill to supplement the monastery's income. Less than one year since he was retired from the post of abbot, Zong Ying helped to build a new entrance gate with five bays and three levels of drip-tiles. … He was fighting to obtain the Dalang Temple. All in all, Zong Ying served as the abbot three terms for a total of more than fifteen years.”

一日複顧寺宇疏而又闕, ……欲以鑿鑿山石創修後法堂一所, ……遂結志興工, 具如碑載。……展修官客位一所, 四十餘間。鑄鐘一顆, 可約萬斤。創修下水磨一盤。退罷山主, 周星未曆, 又展修三門一座, 五間三滴水。……爭大郎廟一所。前後住持, 連綿三次, 可十五餘年。……

2) The Incorporation of the Water God Temple into Guangsheng Monastery
In accordance with the above quoted text, Zong Ying managed to add to the monastery two new revenue sources: a water mill and Dalang Temple, both of which were closely associated with nearby water. The operation of water mills was very lucrative. 61 Nevertheless, Dalang Temple deserves more attentions. We can infer from the text, that the acquisition of the temple was a great privilege, as Zong Ying had to “fight” to obtain this privilege.

Dalang 大郎, meaning the eldest son, is the nickname local people used to refer to the deity of the Huo Spring. The local temple dedicated to him was thus named Dalang Temple. Meanwhile, the temple also had an official name, Mingyingwang miao 明應王廟 (Temple Dedicated to the King of Righteous Response), the title of which was granted by the Song court. 62 A commemorative stele installed in 1283 entitled Stele of Restoring the Temple of Mingyingwang reads: 63

“The spring water flows from the foothills on the southwestern side of Mount Huo. … The shrine, dedicated to the god of the water, has always stood on the bank of the flowing spring. … To the left of the shrine near the mountain’s summit, there was a Buddhist monastery, with a plethora of buildings. Accordance to Huanyu ji, people, since Tang and Song, have called the god of Huo Spring water as Dalang. However, the name Mingyingwang has also been used for a long time.”

其泉出於霍太山西南之麓, ……其神祠峙乎於泉上, 有自來矣。……山峰佛刹, 参差乎其左。……按《寰宇記》, 自唐宋以來, 目其神曰大郎, 然明應王號, 俳之亦久矣。

61 Milling, an important source of power with commercial values, had been keenly promoted by the Northern Song emperors to the extent that water mills became a popular subject of court painting. Examples include the Song scroll paintings of A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains by Wang Ximeng and the Jin Murals of Yanshansi on Mount Wutai. See Fu Xinian, 1979: 303; see also Liu Heping. 2002: 566-96.
62 According to an entry in Song huiyao jigao (The Collected Important Documents from the Song), entitled “the Shrine of the Deity of Mount Huo”, the water god of Huo Spring, living in Zhaocheng, is the eldest son of Yang Hou 阳侯 who is the deity of Mount Huo. The title of Mingying was granted by emperor Huizong in 1106.
63 The stele is now preserved in the east side of the south veranda of Mingyingwang Hall in the Water God Temple.
Literary sources date the founding of the shrine of the water god to the reign of Zhenyuan (785 – 805) in the late Tang period. However, as the biography of Zong Ying reveals, in the early Jin Dynasty it was incorporated into Guangsheng Monastery. The water god of the Huo Spring is obviously not a Buddhist deity. Therefore, the temple dedicated to him is, by nature, a vernacular place of worship.

Throughout history, vernacular temples and shrines of various sizes were widespread across cities and countryside, much more numerous than Buddhist or Daoist monasteries. The provincial nature of these religious practices limited their followings to residents living nearby. The Water God Temple exemplifies all these characteristics typical of such vernacular temples. Most temples and shrines dedicated to local beliefs were communally owned. Some were managed by religious adherents from one or a few adjacent villages. Others were managed by Buddhist monks or Daoist priests. Ever since the Jin Dynasty, the stewardship (if not the ownership) of the Water God Temple has been sought by the monks from Guangsheng Monastery. The acquisition had nothing to do with religious beliefs, but rather economic interests.

The Water God Temple was the religious manifestation of the economically crucial Huo Spring. The spring water was used to irrigate a vast agriculture-dominated landscape around Hongtong and Zhaocheng. The livelihoods of tens of thousands of farmers and townsfolks were dependent on the water resources. It is not surprising that the water god would assume heightened importance in the local culture. Thus, the temple dedicated to him served many functions including guarding the Huo Spring, making offerings to the deity, organizing annual spring prayer and autumn repayment, and hosting local assemblies. To keep the temple running, money was raised by collecting a water fee from the users plus a large and ample sum of donations.

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64 For detailed discussions, see Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 67.
65 Valerie Hansen gave the beliefs of the local deities a term, “population religions”, which contrasted with the “textual religions” such as Buddhism and Daoism. See Hansen, Valerie. 1990: 13.
66 Anning Jing discussed the roles the Water God Temple in the daily lives of local peasants. See Jing, Anning. 2001: 4.
At the time, water distribution and allocation could be a tricky task. In dry areas like Southern Shanxi, competition for water resources has frequently caused social disturbances and violence. In the case of the Huo Spring, things got more complicated because, although the spring is in the county of Zhaocheng, the water had to be shared with the adjacent Hongtong. The spring water flows out through two canals. The northern canal serves Zhaocheng and the southern canal serves Hongtong. Each canal was managed by administrators who oversaw affairs, such as water allocations, canal repairs, fee collections, labor distributions, etc. As to the significances of the Water God Temple, on the one hand, it was an asset that generated income; on the other hand, it was a place where administrators came for equitable and satisfactory resolutions to water use conflicts. Although the precise details of the temple’s incorporation into the monastery are nowhere to be found, we could perhaps infer from these historical circumstances that such a union was born from the reputation of Zong Ying in managing his own monastery, as well as from the neutral stands of the monks.

From the Jin Dynasty through the Mongol and Yuan periods, the Water God Temple had been managed by the monks from Guangsheng Monastery, which is documented in a variety of literary sources. According to the above-mentioned stele of 1283, the Water God Temple was rebuilt in 1234 under the supervision of a high-ranking monk from Guangsheng Monastery named Dao Kai 道開 who declared that:

“This temple is the source of benefit, which is recognized by the central government. Though it is the government’s responsibility to rebuild the temple, I am taking this duty because it is also the merit field of my monastery.”

是廟濟人之源，祀典所載，雖責在有司，亦我寺之福田也。

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67 Zhao Shiyu, 2005: 189-203.
In 1367, only one year before the fall of the Yuan, when Xiong Zai 熊載, Pingyanglu Zongguan 平陽路總管 (the chief executive of the Pingyang circuit) came to perform sacrificial rites, a commemorative stele was carved, on which the temple was referred to as “the Mingyingwang Hall of Guangsheng Monastery”. 68

This situation changed after the beginning of the Ming Dynasty. During the mid-Ming, Guangsheng Monastery was split into two independent monasteries, the Lower Monastery and Upper Monastery. The Water God Temple was associated with the Lower Monastery only.

III. Guangsheng Monastery in Late Yuan: Reconstruction of a Forgotten History

Jiang Weixin pointed out that, “the split into the Upper Monastery and Lower Monastery was taking place in a late period. Prior to that, when the name of Guangsheng Monastery was considered, it referred to what people of today call the Upper Monastery”. 69 Jiang’s judgment is based on the literary sources he had read during his visit in 1934; it is precise. Though Jiang was not able to be certain when this “late period” is. As discussed in the previous section, the precursor of Guangsheng Monastery was the pagoda precinct of the ancient Ashoka Monastery located on the summit of Mount Huo. It can be verified by historical inscriptions that the monastery had never moved from this original location all the way to the end of Yuan. I use as evidence two literary sources, dated to the early and late Yuan period respectively. The first one is the inscription from the stele of 1283 that has been quoted twice above.

“The temple, dedicated to the water god, stands on the bank of the flowing spring water…. To the left of the temple near to mountain’s summit, there is a Buddhist monastery with a plethora of buildings.”

68 Stele text, Ji Huoshan Guangshengsi Mingyingwang dian qiyu wen bei 祭霍山廣勝寺明應王殿祈雨文碑, 1367 (preserved on the front wall of the main hall of the Lower Monastery)
The second is a poem composed in 1367 by the above-mentioned official Xiong Zai 熊載 who came to the Water God Temple to perform sacrificial rites. The poem bears a title of You Guangshengsi guan boliping shelizi (To Visit Guangsheng Monastery and Have a Sight of the Buddha Relics Preserved in a Glass Bottle).

“Guangsheng Monastery stands atop Mount Huo; spring waters flow rapidly, making a wonderful scene and beautiful sound.”

霍山山頭廣勝寺，一流飛泉碎玉琴。

The two sources prove what Jiang Weixin pointed out: in the early years when Guangsheng Monastery was mentioned, the name referred to the monastery atop the mountain. Therefore, when describing the situation in the Yuan period, I refrain from using the names of Upper Monastery and Lower Monastery, because the names did not appear in any literary sources until the late Ming. Thus, the question would be the status of the monastery at the foot of the mountain, which has an independent architectural complex dated to the late Yuan. What is the name of this monastery? And what are the relationships it had with the adjacent temple, the Water God Temple, and the monastery atop the mountain?

In Guangshengsi zhi 廣勝寺志, Li Kong 力空, the abbot of the Upper Monastery in 1930s, claimed that, because Guangsheng Monastery had limited space at the summit for expansion, axia yuan 下院 (a subsidiary temple) was built at the foot of the mountain in the Tang Dynasty. Ever since, the main monastery atop the mountain had been called the Upper Monastery, and the subsidiary temple at the foot of the mountain the Lower Monastery. Although the claim is reasonable, I haven’t found any evidences to support it. Literary sources provide a different story.

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70 The poem was carved on the stele of 1367 that was already discussed.  
71 Quoted by Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 47.
As discussed above, the Water God Temple was incorporated into Guangsheng Monastery in the early Jin Dynasty. It was for the conveniences of monks that a small subsidiary temple was founded adjacent to the temple shortly after that. Evidence shows that Guangsheng Monastery, the Water God Temple and this small brunch temple were all destroyed in 1213 during the famous Zhenyou bingluan (the turmoil of war during the reign of Zhenyou). Li Ting 李庭 (1199-1282), a famous poet who had moved to Pingyang after the fall of the Jin, wrote a poem to express his regret on the destruction of Guangsheng Monastery. The poem, entitled You Guangshengsi dongyan 遊廣勝寺東岩 (To Visit the Eastern Cliff Near Guangsheng Monastery) was composed in the 1220s. It reads:

“The famous monastery of centuries old was burned by flames; pitiful the splendid architecture turned into ruins buried by bushes.

What is the meaning of talking about historical rise and fall? Let us discuss the fate of three calamities.

Life is short, following the rules of nature.; changes are rapid, like dusts in the wind.

The past is a dream; the aim of the poem is to memorize this visit.

Walking down the mountain I cannot help lamenting the ruins; there is nothing left but a white pagoda standing under an indistinct sky.”

72 From 1213 until early 1214, the Mongols invaded the Jin Dynasty and pillaged the entire north China. Southern Shanxi had suffered the most war damages. For details, see the Institute of the study of Shanxi history, 2001: 223-35.

73 Quan yuan shi 全元詩 (Complete Yuan Poems), edited by Yang Lian. 2013: vol. 2, 403.
下山一笑便陳跡，但見白塔蒼煙堆。

In accordance with Li Ting’s poem, all buildings of Guangsheng Monastery, except a white pagoda, were burned to ruins in the wars of Mongol conquest.

The above-mentioned stele of 1283 has a detailed account regarding not only the destruction of the Water God Temple in the late Jin, but also the rebuilding during the early years of Mongol rule.

“The temple was burned into flames by war in the end of the Jin Dynasty. … Master Dao Kai had all the needed materials and labors prepared and rebuilt the temple on a new site. The old site was abandoned as a result. … He also commissioned the construction of several buildings adjacent to the temple to accommodate monks who were assigned for daily clean-up.

The time is in the year of *jiawu* of the Great Yuan.”

金季兵戈相尋, 是廟煨燼。……乃鸠材命工，築以新基，棄其舊址。……又為僧徒構屋其旁，供懸掃。

時大元甲午歲也。

The year of *jiawu* 甲午 mentioned in the text is 1234, the official ending year of the Jin Dynasty. By then, Southern Shanxi already had been under the control of Mongols for over ten years. The two accounts mentioned in the inscription are extremely noteworthy. One account regards “the new site” on which the temple was rebuilt. One keeps in mind that the temple stayed on the

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74 During the Yuan period from 1271 to 1368, the year of *jiawu* appeared twice: 1294 and 1354; both of which are ruled out, because the stele was made in 1283 to commemorate the event in the past. Therefore, the year must refer to 1234 when the area was already under the rule of the Mongols.
75 A memorial stele made in 1272 is now preserved on the front wall of Vairocana Hall in the Upper Monastery, the inscriptions of which contain a biography of master Yun Xi 禪溪. Yun Xi became a monk in the late Jin period at Guangsheng Monastery. He fled to Shandong to escape the turmoil of Mongol-Jin war and managed to return to Guangsheng Monastery two decades after. This is one piece of evidence supporting the fact that the monastery was restored in the early years of Mongol period.
same site when it was rebuilt again after the 1303 earthquake and has remained so until today. The other account regards the buildings that were adjacent to the temple and constructed to accommodate monks. Considering their size, location and functions as mentioned, these buildings had to be part of the subsidiary temple, which is indeed the precursor of the Lower Monastery. Destroyed again in the 1303 earthquake, the temple was rebuilt shortly after the quake and has survived until today.

For the convenience of discussion, from now on, I will use the names of the Upper Monastery (or the Upper Guangsheng Monastery) and the Lower Monastery (or the Guangsheng Lower Monastery) to refer to the main monastery atop the mountain, and the subsidiary temple at the foot of the mountain, respectively. Prior to the Ming Dynasty, one recalls, when the name of Guangsheng Monastery was considered, it always referred to the main monastery atop the mountain.

The epicenter of the 1303 earthquake was somewhere between the county townships of Hongtong and Zhaocheng. Located so close to the epicenter, doubtlessly Guangsheng Monastery incurred tremendous losses. A commemorative stele set up in 1319 reads:

“...It was unfortunate that, on the sixth day of the eighth lunar month, the eighth year of Dade, earthquakes struck the area of Hedong in the evening. This county incurred tremendous loss, and everything was destroyed.”

不幸至大德七年八月初六日夜,地震河東,本縣尤重,靡有孑遺。

Another text entitled Nan huoqu caihui xibi ji 南霍渠彩繪西壁記 (Note on the Murals on the West Wall by the Southern Huo Canal) inscribed in 1324 on the west wall of Mingyingwang hall says,

“Suddenly, the earth lost her peace. The halls collapsed consequently.”

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76 The stele is now preserved in the east side of the south veranda of Mingyingwang Hall in the Water God Temple. The text is entitled Chongxiu Mingyingwang dian zhi bei 重修明應王殿之碑 (the Stele Commemorating the Restoration of Mingyingwang Hall).

37
坤道忽而失寧，殿宇空然悉圮。

The earthquake was so disastrous that the repairs and restorations took years. For example, the main hall of the Lower Monastery was restored in 1309, six years after the earthquake. It took fourteen years for the locals to rebuild the Mingyingwang Hall of the Water God Temple, from 1305 to 1319. The two halls and the building compounds that enclose them have all survived until today. However, issues concerning the restorations of the Upper Monastery are puzzling. Unlike the above-mentioned two subsidiary temples, all extant buildings of the Upper Monastery are dated to the mid-Ming (Refer to Table 2 for details). Had the Upper Monastery ever been rebuilt from the debris of the earthquake? The answer is positive based on the in-depth analysis of the above-mentioned stele of 1319. The stele text reads:

“To the north of the spring is a great and ancient temple, a splendid edifice. It bears the name of Guangsheng, and this name is not mere empty praise. One may see how beautiful it is - how truly elegant. Who but a great and glorious spirit could dwell here? The halls, galleries and rooms have approximately one hundred pillars in number with an appropriate number of priests. A portrait of the emperor Shizhu Xuechan, relics of Buddha, and sutra bestowed by the emperor are all placed in order to prepare a fitting place to invoke long years for the emperor and the nation”.\(^77\)

泉之北，古建大剎精蘭，揭名曰廣勝，不虛譽耳。視其佳麗絕秀，非大雄能棲此乎！殿宇齋舍，謹可百楹，僧行稱是。世祖薛禪皇帝禦容、佛之舍利、恩賜藏經在焉，乃為皇家祝壽之所。

The text has been frequently quoted by scholars because it reveals how eminent the monastery was during the Yuan period. There is no doubt that the monastery is eminent because it has many Buddhist treasures and a shrine for Khubilai Khan. Many scholars have believed that

\(^{77}\) The translation is after Laurence Sickman with minor revisions. See Sickman, Laurence. 1937: 57.
it was the Lower Monastery which the text described.\textsuperscript{78} This supposition deserves to be reconsidered based on the following reasons. Firstly, the Lower Monastery has a very simple layout, the plan of which follows a north-south orientation for the principal structures, an entrance gate followed by a front hall in the middle, and a main hall at the north end. According to an archeological survey conducted by Chai Zejun himself in 1990s, no architectural remains were detected near the existing buildings\textsuperscript{79}, indicating that the Lower Monastery we see today has maintained its original layout since it was restored in the beginning of the fourteenth century. Secondly, the architecture of the Lower Monastery is simple and humble in terms of the ranking system of traditional Chinese architecture. For example, a type of low-ranking overhanging gable roof is used for all halls in the Lower Monastery, including the main hall. A monastery of this size and simplicity cannot fit into the descriptions of the text. It must refer to the main monastery which has a more elaborate group of buildings on the top of the hill. In other words, if we believe the facts, existing physical evidence and discovery, the Upper Monastery was indeed restored to the full extent by 1319.

Another piece of evidence that supports the existence of the Upper Monastery during the late Yuan period is the above-mentioned poem composed by Xiong Zai' in 1367, which reads:

“Guangsheng Monastery stands atop Mount Huo; spring waters flow rapidly, making wonderful scenes and beautiful sounds.

The forest is shaking because of the roar of mountain tiger; the sky is foggy because of the rain of deep pond dragon.

The Buddha’s relics are stored in a precious bottle, like a store house of brilliance; the golden scriptures of pattra-leaf represent the free heart.

\textsuperscript{78} Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 10; Jing, Anning. 1991: 159.
\textsuperscript{79} Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 7-8.
I’m staying in the room of the old abbot for the night; the birds are laughing at me outside in the dark and forbidding forest."

霍山山頭廣勝寺，一流飛泉碎玉琴。
齿虎撼林風凜凜，潭龍行雨霧沉沉。
寶瓶舍利光明藏，貝葉金經自在心。
今夜老僧方丈宿，亂禽嘲哲樹陰森。

Two of the three treasures recounted in the stele of 1319, the relics of Buddha and Tripitaka, are mentioned in this poem. What had happened to those treasures and the Upper Monastery that housed them when the Yuan Dynasty fell? Why was the Upper Monastery completely rebuilt in the middle of the Ming, when the Lower Monastery and the Water God Temple were able to keep their Yuan architectural complexes?

IV. Two Guangsheng Monasteries in the Ming and Qing Dynasties

The uprisings aimed at overthrowing the ruling Yuan started in 1351 and lasted for seventeen years, causing great damages to the vast areas, especially the regions of Yellow River, Huai River and Yangtze River. When the war ended in 1368, the population in these areas had been sharply reduced. Luckily enough, Southern Shanxi was spared from the turmoil of the late Yuan period. Upon the founding of the Ming, immigration was organized by the court to relocate people from the densely populated areas to the areas that suffered tremendous loss of life. Not surprisingly Southern Shanxi became a major area of population outflow.\textsuperscript{80}

It was in this historical context that the history of Guangsheng Monastery during the early Ming will be discussed. Prior to the Ming Dynasty, when the name of Guangsheng Monastery was considered, it always referred to the Upper Monastery. However, this was no longer the case at the beginning of the Ming Dynasty. Instead, based on the study of the stele inscriptions,

\textsuperscript{80} For details of the immigrations of the early Ming period, refer to An Jiesheng. 1999: 288-311.
for over one hundred years since the beginning of the Ming, the Lower Monastery had replaced the Upper Monastery to become the carrier of the legacy name, Guangsheng.

Another important fact revealed by the stele inscriptions is that the Lower Monastery started a new genealogy of monks at the beginning of the Ming. It means, although this monastery carried the old name, Guangsheng, and stayed in the same old monastery compound, it should still be considered “new” because the monks who resided there were not the same ones who practiced during the Yuan period. According to the traditions of Chinese Buddhism, if famai (Dharma lineage) terminates, the monastery itself no longer exists anymore. From the names of monks recorded by the steles of the pre-Ming period, it can be determined that the same lineage had been followed through Song to Yuan. However, this lineage terminated, and a new lineage started in the early Ming. The new lineage is recorded in a form of generation poem entitled Guangshengsi zushi zhi zongpai tu (the Chart of Genealogy for the Masters of Guangsheng Monastery). It reads:

“Attaining the state of bliss and wisdom; it is the path to great awakening.

There are various themes about attaining liberation; the good old master’s preaching has branched into various schools of teaching.

Inner peace at heart is like a deep ocean; the tranquility of nature is as pure as the best virgin snow.

Good virtues never die; the spiritual body lasts forever.

The inner light shines from deep within and illuminates afar; it is the ultimate blessing when self-nature is enlightened.

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81 According to the information collected from the steles, the generation names from Song to Yuan can be listed in the following order: Zong, Qing, Shao, Yuan, Dao, Fa, Wei, De (宗, 清, 紹, 道, 法, 唯, 德).
82 The poem was carved on a commemorative stele dated to 1476, which is now preserved on the east side of the front hall of the Lower Monastery.
Admiration for Chan with the heart and right mind, advocate Buddhism for the sake of salvation.

Master Fajiang is the founding Chan master, guiding you to the Path of Buddhahood.”

福慧智子覺，了本圓可悟。
周洪普廣宗，道慶同玄祖。
清淨真如海，湛寂淳貞素。
德行永延拉，妙體常堅固。
心郎照幽深，性明鑒崇祚。
衷正善禧禪，謹愨原濟度。
法江為祖師，引上菩提路。

For ancient Chinese, the sequence of generations was typically prescribed and kept in records by a generation poem specific to each lineage. Each successive character becomes the generation name for successive generations. It is the duty of the founder to compose such a poem from which future generations derive their names.\(^{84}\) A study of the stele inscriptions preserved at the Lower Monastery confirms that, from the early Ming to the era of Republic, monks had their names derived from this chart of genealogy with no exceptions.\(^{85}\)

Because of this new Dharma lineage, we may infer that when the Ming Dynasty began, a new monastery was founded in an old building complex located at the foot of Mount Huo. An

\(^{83}\) This poem is similar to the generation poem composed by Xueting Fuyu 雪庭福裕 (1203-1275) for the famous Shaolin Monastery 少林寺. The fist sixty characters are exactly the same, indicating the same lineage which belonged to Caodong 曹洞 Sect of Chan Buddhism. For details of this Caodong lineage, see Ji Huachuan. 2008: 312-9.

\(^{84}\) In China, a monk receives Dharma name that consists of three Chinese characters. The first character is the surname, always taking Shi 釋 (Chinese character for Shakya); the second character is the generation name derived from the prescribed lineage and the last character is the given name.

\(^{85}\) The most senior monk who is recorded by the stele inscriptions is named Zhi Shun 智瞬, a third generation, which appears on a stele dated to 1392. The latest one is Zhen Da 貞達, the abbot of the 1920s, a twenty-ninth generation.
official document released by the county magistrate of Zhaocheng in 1620 explains the reason for its foundation,\(^8\) which says:

“In the beginning, the primary purpose of establishing this monastery was to guard the Huo Spring and give accommodations to people coming for sacrificial rites.”

下寺之設，原為看守霍泉，應承廟祀往來人等。

In other words, this new monastery was founded to serve the needs of managing the Water God Temple, a tradition starting from the Jin Dynasty. The new monastery even carried the legacy name, Guangsheng, which is also a part of the same tradition.

Then, what had happened to the “real” Guangsheng Monastery, a monastery that had stood on top of Mount Huo from the mid-Tang until, at least, the end of the Yuan? One possibility is that the monastery was destroyed in the fall of the Yuan Dynasty. Firstly, it disappeared from all available records for over one hundred years since the beginning of the Ming. Secondly, the Dharma transmissions of the Yuan Dynasty Guangsheng Monastery discontinued. Thirdly, the precious Jin Tripitaka was moved from the top of the mountain and stored in the Lower Monastery, which, as Jiang Weixin has noticed, was taking place in the early Ming.\(^8\) Lastly, as was discussed above, the name of Guangsheng had been carried solely by the Lower Monastery starting the early Ming, which would not have happened if the Upper Monastery was still in existence at the same time.

The Upper Monastery reappeared in the reign of Jingtai 景泰 (1450-7). As shown in Table 2, the Upper Monastery was reconstructed from 1452 to 1532 in phases. According to an inscription cast on an iron bell in 1628\(^8\), the full official name of the Upper Monastery was “Da

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\(^8\) The official document was carved on a stele which is now preserved on the east gable wall of Mingyingwang hall of the Water God Temple.

\(^8\) Local gentries moved the Tripitaka back to the upper monastery in 1928 for better protections. See Jiang, Weixin. 1935: 5.

\(^8\) The bell is now preserved in the pagoda precinct of the Upper Monastery.
Ming Guo Shanxi Pingyangfu Zhaochengxian Senghuisi Guangsheng Haihui Shifang Chanyuan”
大明国山西平阳府赵城县僧会司广胜海会十方禅院 (Guangsheng Public Chan Monastery under the Buddhist Registry of Zhaocheng County at Pingyang Prefecture of Shanxi in the Great Ming). 

Because of the “rebirth” of the Upper Monastery, two monasteries, only 1.5 kilometers apart, were sharing the same name, Guangsheng Monastery. Therefore, starting perhaps from the late Ming, the names of Xiasi (the Lower Monastery) and Shangsi (the Upper Monastery) were adopted to distinguish between the two. It was in the above-quoted 1620 official document that the name of the Lower Monastery appeared for the first time.

Rising from the South, Ming conquered North China and put an end to the Yuan Dynasty in 1368. Shortly after Dadu was captured, the Yuan palaces, royal monasteries and even major structures of the city, were torn down by the Ming troops. The Yuan royal monasteries on Mount Wutai (Refer to Table 1 for details), the second largest group of the kind, also “disappeared” without any documentary records. Due to the lack of historical records, we don’t know exactly when and how that had happened. Then, for the period of Yuan-Ming transition, the demise and rebirth of Guangsheng Monastery makes a typical case of the fate of many great monasteries located in the provinces. Because of the connections with the Yuan court, many of them were either attacked or destroyed by the new rising powers.

Because a shrine of Khubilai was installed, a rare case for a local monastery during the Yuan period, the eminence of Guangsheng Monastery is beyond doubt. The monastery became an easy target which was persecuted with full force. Monks were forced to leave the monastery,

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89 In the Chan tradition, haihui refers to a gathering of monks or nuns.
90 Sharing the same name, the two monasteries had been operated as two independent monasteries. Lawsuits were filed several times between them during the Qing period. Moreover, the two monasteries were organized in a different way. While the Upper Monastery was a public monastery, the Lower Monastery was a hereditary temple. For the distinctions between a public monastery and a hereditary temple, refer to Welch, Holmes. 1967.
91 Royal monasteries located in Shangdu were burned by the Red Turban rebels in 1359.
92 Other cases include Chongfu Monastery 崇福寺 at Shuozhou 朔州. According to the stele inscriptions, the monastery was abolished in the early Ming, and the monastery compound became a grain depot. The monastery was restored in 1383 by local authority. The history was recovered in 1950s when an inscription with a date of 1383 was found in the body of a Buddha statue. See Chai Zejun and Li Zhengyun. 1993: 3, 17.
the compound of which was either destroyed or abandoned. Because of the overhaul, the reconstruction during the mid-Ming, it may be inferred that much of the Upper Monastery fell into ruins before the restorations started. The persecution could be for economic reasons, aiming at the valuables accumulating for centuries, but more likely a political one, to punish and purge the Yuan loyalists. Even the Yuan Dynasty literary records were destroyed on purpose, which explains why, among so many inscribed steles and plaques preserved at the Upper Monastery, none of them dates to the periods of Yuan and early Ming. To explain the timing of reconstruction, by the middle of the fifteenth century, not only the Ming had already consolidated its power in Shanxi, but also the memories of Yuan had long gone.

The Water God Temple was largely intact. Its Yuan architecture, sculptures and murals have survived without damages. Apparently, the temple was impenetrable to destination because of the local beliefs in the water god. It was probably due to the protections of the Water God Temple that the Lower Monastery compound survived with only minor losses.

**Concluding Notes:**

Scholars of history, religion, and art have been interested in studying Guangsheng Monastery since the early 1930s. The appeals originate from the monastery’s long history, unique geographical setting, architecture, murals and statues that remain there, as well as the extensive literary accounts. In 1933, the discovery of a Jin edition of *Tripitaka* at Guangsheng Monastery triggered a sensation in academia and beyond. As a result, many scholars visited the monastery in the next year. Among them are architectural historians Lin Huiyin and Liang Sicheng who surveyed the architecture, Buddhist scholar Jiang Weixin who studied the history of the monastery, and American art historian Laurence Sickman who investigated murals and statues *in situ*. Although preliminary, these early studies have laid a solid foundation for the research of future scholars.

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93 The front hall of the Lower Monastery is likely to have been destroyed in the turmoil, a subject of discussion in chapter three.
Guangsheng Monastery has a long continuous history which can be traced back to the second half of the sixth century. Since the date of its founding, the monastery has never moved from its original location which is located on the top of a hill. Today, Guangsheng Monastery comprises three constituents, the Upper Monastery on the top of the hill, the Lower Monastery at the foot of the hill, and the Water God Temple that is adjacent to the Lower Monastery. The relations among these three constituents are very complex because the names of the Upper Monastery and Lower Monastery did not appear until the late Ming Dynasty. In the period of pre-Ming, when Guangsheng Monastery was mentioned, it always referred to the monastery atop the hill.

Dedicated to the spirit of the Huo Spring, a dragon king known as Mingyingwang, the Water God Temple was founded in the middle of the Tang Dynasty. In the Jin Dynasty, the stewardship (if not the ownership) of the temple was sought by the monks from Guangsheng Monastery. Shortly after, a subsidiary monastery was constructed at the foot of the hill to accommodate the attending monks, which is the precursor of the Lower Monastery today. There is less doubt that the Great Earthquake of 1303 destroyed all three constituents. However, supported by a variety of historical evidence, all three parts were restored to a full extent in the aftermath of the earthquake. Inscriptional evidence also reveals that, during the Yuan Dynasty, Guangsheng Monastery was an eminent monastery patronized by the Mongol rulers. Unfortunately, it was persecuted by the rising power of Ming, and the monastery compound standing atop of the hill was destroyed as a result. Due to the protection of the Water God Temple, the subsidiary monastery at the foot of the hill was largely intact.

When the Ming Dynasty began, in the old monastery compound of the subsidiary temple, a new monastery was founded with a duty to guard the Huo Spring and the Water God Temple. This new monastery carried the legacy name Guangsheng. Staring from the second half of the fifteenth century, another monastery had been gradually restored at the old ground on the top of the hill. It also used the same legacy name, Guangsheng. Therefore, in the early seventeenth
century, the name Upper Guangsheng Monastery was created to refer to the monastery atop the hill, and the name Guangsheng Lower Monastery was created to refer to the monastery at the foot of the hill. The distinction remained until the Republican Era in the 1930s.
CHAPTER 2

TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS OF ARCHITECTURE IN SOUTHERN SHANXI

In the early 1940s, when Liang Sicheng was writing his first book on the history of Chinese traditional architecture, he made the following comments on the buildings of Guangsheng Monastery. “The Upper Temple and the Lower Temple of Kuang-sheng Ssu, Chao-cheng, Shansi Province, are two interesting groups of which the buildings are constructed in a most unorthodox manner.”\(^{94}\) In my understanding, Liang uses the phrase “unorthodox” because the buildings of Guangsheng Monastery are constructed in a manner with which he was not familiar. Buildings of Guangsheng Monastery, especially the Yuan-period building in the Lower Monastery belong to a local style, a style that is contrary to the official styles of that period. According to Fu Xinian, an official style of Chinese architecture is the “one that can be traced from the Tang to the Ming Dynasty, that it was transmitted through the centuries, and that the history of vernacular architecture and local traditions is intimately related to.”\(^{95}\)

Of all China, Shanxi is a province most rich in monuments of traditional Chinese architecture. Most of China’s oldest and best-preserved timber-frame buildings survive in this province. Shanxi also boasts the largest amount of extant Yuan architecture. According to an estimate made by Chai Zejun, more than 350 Yuan-period timber-framed buildings survive in the province, accounting for about seventy percent of extant Yuan architecture of all China.\(^{96}\)

The Yuan Dynasty lasted less than a century if we take 1271, the year of official proclamation of the state, as the beginning. In the past, architecture of the Yuan Dynasty has been under-studied by scholars in both China and overseas. Many believe that Yuan architecture is not important in comparison with the architecture of either earlier period Song or later period

\(^{94}\) The manuscript was completed in China in 1945. The book was first published in the United States in 1984. See Liang Sicheng. 1984: 100.

\(^{95}\) Fu Xinian, 2017b: 226.

\(^{96}\) Chai Zejun. 2006: 27. Because the estimate is based on a survey conducted in the late 1990s, the number is an underestimate. Many Yuan-period buildings have been discovered in the recent two decades.
Ming. Moreover, the Yuan Dynasty is believed to be transitional, as is the architecture of this period. Unsurprisingly Yuan architecture has rarely been considered as a distinctive group. Liang Sicheng considered the Yuan as the last phrase in the Period of Elegance, a period featured by architecture of the Song. The Yuan period has alternatively been considered the beginning of a new period. In history books published within the recent two or three decades on Chinese architecture, Yuan architecture has not only been discussed together with that of the late periods, Ming and Qing, it also took only a small part of the entire discussion.

There are several reasons to explain why this period has been overlooked by architectural historians in China. Firstly, it can be argued that the architectural innovations of the Yuan were few, and the period was largely a transition between the Song and Jin dynasties and the Ming Dynasty. Secondly, Yuan architecture had been criticized for its high degree of flexibility in beam frameworks, as well as coarseness, because curved and unprocessed timbers were employed in many extant Yuan-period buildings, especially those in North China.

After the fall of the Jin in 1234, the Mongols controlled the whole of North China. Decades before the conquest of the Southern Song in 1279, official construction of large-scale buildings had already begun under the rule of the Mongols. For instance, with helps from Han Chinese and other ethnic groups such as Jurchen and Khitan, the great capital cities of Mongols, Shangdu and Dadu, were constructed. In the capital cities, the palaces, government offices, royal monasteries and temples were using Chinese official style, which derived from a combination of the Song and Jin. Unfortunately, most of them were lost because Ming troops demolished almost everything shortly after the capitals were captured. However, a few outstanding examples of Yuan official style survive in the provinces. One is Dening Hall, dated 1270, at the Temple to the Northern Peak in Quyang, Hebei. The other is a group of Yuan buildings at Yongle Palace, a Daoist

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98 Examples include Liu Dunzhen ed. 1984; Pan Guxi, eds. 2001; Pan Guxi. 2002;
100 Qi Yingtao. 1965: 10
101 For an in-depth study of the history and architecture of the Temple to the Northern Peak, see Steinhardt,
temple dedicated to Lu Dongbin 吕洞賓, a Daoist immortal believed to be alive in the eighth century, and the eastern headquarters of the Quanzhen Daoist sect. The architecture of Yongle Palace we see today was built from the 1250s. Though the focus of this study is Yuan construction in the fourteenth century, Yongle Palace will be discussed briefly because it is also located in Southern Shanxi. It will make a good comparison with the late constructions in the same region, thus enhancing our understandings of the traditions and innovations of architecture in Southern Shanxi.

I. The Official Style of Yongle Palace during the pre-Yuan Mongol Period

The construction of Yongle Palace was first proposed in 1240 by high priests of the Quanzhen Daoist Sect who had good connections with many of the Mongol elites. In 1245, the proposal was officially authorized by an imperial edict. The early history of Yongle Palace was recorded by a commemorative stele set up in the monastery compound in 1262, *Dachao chongjian da Chunyang wanshougong zhi bei* 大朝重建大純陽萬壽宮之碑 (*Stele on the Reconstruction of the Great Monastery of Pure Yang and Long Life of the Great Dynasty*).

According to the stele inscription, by the year 1251, three major halls and the living quarters for the priests were already constructed.

Shortly after, the Quanzhen Sect encountered its first major setback since the establishment of Mongols rule in North China, because Khubilai, younger brother of Möngke (r. 1251-9) was interested more in Buddhism. In 1255 under the supervision of Khubilai, a Daoist-Buddhist debate was organized at the Mongol court on the authenticities of the Daoist canons. The Quanzhen priests lost the debate and received persecution from the court. As a result, the construction of Yongle Palace slowed down. Though the construction resumed at the end of the

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102 The western headquarters of the Quanzhen Sect is Chongyanggong 重陽宮 on Zhongnan Mountain 終南山 near Xi'an. Chongyanggong, dedicated to Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (founder of the Quanzhen Sect who was active in the second half of twelvth century), was constructed a little bit earlier than that of Yongle Palace.

103 For the details of the debates and their consequences, see Li Mingfei. 2013. Chapter 4.
Khubilai’s reign, it went on at a very slow pace. Wuji men (Gate of Infinity), the entrance gate of the whole monastery complex, was not completed until 1294.\textsuperscript{104}

Behind Wuji Gate, three major halls stand along the central axial line: Sanqing Hall, Chunyang Hall and Chongyang Hall. Dedicated to “three purities”, the highest powers of the Daoist pantheon, Sanqing Hall is the first hall along the main building line and the main hall of the whole monastery complex (Figure 2.1). The architecture of Sanqing Hall will be discussed because it is one of the most splendid buildings that stands today from the Mongol-Yuan period.

Sanqing Hall is elevated on a high platform with side projections in front of it. The hall is seven bays wide and eight rafters deep, topped by a simple hipped roof. The bracket sets atop pillars across the front façade have six puzuo. Except for the two end bays which have one intercolumnar bracket set installed, other bays including the central bay all have two intercolumnar bracket sets. The corner sets have three cantilevers. The platform, roof type and bracketing, all indicate the high structural eminence of Sanqing Hall.

The roof of Sanqing Hall is steep, which is due to the shrinking size of the bracket sets. All seven bays across the façade are in the same width. Compared with the Song buildings of the same rank, Sanqing Hall has a taller appearance because the lengths of the exterior columns exceed the widths of the bays. Survey of the timber framework shows that the construction of Sanqing hall followed the modular design of \textit{caifen} (graded timber and a section of the graded timber) stipulated in \textit{Yingzao fashi}. In practice, the standardized timbers are reduced by two grades and the \textit{fen} value decreases accordingly.

According to the standard of the Song construction, the beam framework of Sanqing Hall is also simplified. For the central bay and the two side-bays, the transverse framework uses an eight-rafter construction, a four-rafter beam in the font abutting a four-rafter beam in the back with

\textsuperscript{104} For the early history and the construction phases of Yongle Palace, see Su Bai. 1962: 80-7; Su Bai. 1963: 53-67; Jing, Anning. 1994a: 83-7.
four columns, similar to one of the fenxincao 分心槽 (compartmentalized-cao) layouts of diantang type of construction described in Yingzao fashi. Yingzao fashi distinguishes four types of construction, each denoting a different building type: diantang (a palatial-style hall), tingtang (a hall, often residential in style, but of lower eminence than diantang), yuwu 餘屋 (an ordinary building, or ordinary residence, usually without bracket sets) and doujian tingxie 斗尖亭榭 (pointed roofed pavilion). The most common types of Song-style construction are diantang and tingtang.105

Diantang construction of Sanqing Hall is confirmed by other features, such as mingfu liangjia 明栿梁架 (framework of exposed beams) and pingqi 平棋 (a flat-coffered ceiling) installed above the top of the interior columns. The exposed beams are elaborately finished, while caofu 草栿 (beams hidden from view) are roughly processed, another feature which follows the Song and Jin traditions. Three zaojing 藻井 (caisson ceilings) are installed on the ceiling, another feature indicating architectural rank.

Historical literatures as well as inscriptions support that Yongle Palace was an official building project of the Yuan court. The officer in charge of construction was sent from the capital to supervise the project. However, no matter how eminent Sanqing Hall was, if compared it with the extant Northern Song buildings of the same eminence, a divergence from the regulations in Yingzao fashi, as well as downscaling and simplification are observed. According to Fu Xinian, Sanqing Hall demonstrates “the aesthetic and technical achievements of Yuan official-style architecture that build on the traditions of the Northern Song and Jin”.106

Located on the southern slopes of Zhongtiao Mountain 中條山 in the southern tip of Southern Shanxi, Yongle Palace is far away from the epicenter of the 1303 earthquake. All major halls and

105 Fu Xinian. 2002b: 253-4. For the differences between diantang and tingtang structure, see also Chen Mingda. 1980: 54-6; Pan Guxi and He Jianzhong. 2005.
106 Fu Xinian. 1999: 244.
Wuji Gate withstood the quake. However, the walls of the major halls might have received some earthquake damage, which explains why murals were repainted in Sanqing Hall in the 1320s.

II. Architecture Represented on the Murals of Mingyingwang Hall

The Great Earthquake struck the region of Southern Shanxi in the evening on the sixth day of eighth lunar month in 1303. According to a variety of textual accounts, “everything was destroyed” in the counties of Zhaocheng and Hongtong which are near the epicenter. Two canals (the Northern Huo Canal and Southern Huo Canal), major irrigation facilities crucial to the livelihood of the local people, were severely damaged as a result. Because the entire region depended upon the flow of the Huo Spring for its prosperity, the repair of the canals was unquestionably a priority. The repair of the two canals started shortly after the earthquake and was completed in the eleventh lunar month of 1303.

The repair of the Water God Temple was not put on the agenda until two years after. In the autumn of 1305, Shi Gui 史珪, qu tou 渠頭 (chief administrator of the canals)\(^\text{107}\), proposed the restoration of Mingyingwang Hall. Probably due to a shortage of money and manpower, the going was slow; it took fourteen years to be completed. *The Stele Commemorating the Restoration of Mingyingwang Hall* reads:

“All villages benefited from the irrigation that contributed to the rebuilding. The rich donated assets, and the poor provided labor. The timber frame of the main hall was constructed from the ground, which was the beginning of the whole project. Once monk Ju Tidian\(^\text{108}\) was in charge; followed by Liu Sizhi who commissioned the sculptures and roof tiles; then, Guo Jingxin assembled the front door.

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\(^{107}\) One of the top administrative positions to manage the two canals.  
\(^{108}\) Here *tidian* refers to an administrative position at the monastery that is in charge of disciplines and rules. Monk Ju and other people mentioned in the text were contributors and coordinators, not architects or artisans.
In the sixth year of Yanyou, **qu zhang** Gao Zhongxin hired laborers to complete the mud walls inside the hall.

“各量使水定分，計置修造。富有者施財，貧薄者出力，創起正殿木裝，始經營之也。時有寺僧聚提點亦當施工，繼而劉思直塑像、結瓦，郭景信造門成趣。

至延祐六年，渠長高仲信募工，殿內砌造砂壁完備。”

Upon the completion in 1319, murals were planned to decorate the interior walls. The execution of the murals took another five years as per the inscriptions written on the east side and the west side of the south wall. To celebrate the completion, an inauguration ceremony was held in the seventh lunar month of 1324. Today, murals survive in good condition on the four walls of Mingyingwang Hall, which is squarish and two hundred square meters.

Since the 1930s, murals of Mingyingwang Hall have been admired and studied for several reasons. Firstly, the completion date of the murals is definite, as are the name of all craftsmen. The murals are rare examples of surviving Yuan murals of high quality. Laurence Sickman was amazed by “the beauty and importance” of the murals when he visited the Water God Temple in 1934. Secondly, the subject of the murals is “secular” and “non-Buddhist”, which was rarely seen on other existing examples from the same period. Thirdly, the murals were not conceived as background for sculpture but were intended to be viewed independently as narrative paintings. Last but not the least, the theatrical scene on the east side of the south wall has drawn special attentions for its realistic representations of the drama performances, an extremely rare example of this type during the Yuan period.

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109 See Note on the Murals on the West Wall by the Southern Huo Canal preserved on the west side of south wall of Mingyingwang Hall and Note on the Murals on the East Wall by Northern Huo Canal preserved on the east side of south wall.
110 Liang and Lin, 1935: 54. See also Liang, 1984: 96.
The first scholarly report was published by Laurence Sickman in 1937. A more systematic study was published by Chai Zejun and Zhu Xiyuan in 1981, who identified two major themes and fourteen sub-scenes the murals contain. The major theme of the western half of the hall is *qingyu* 請雨 (petition for rain). The major theme of the eastern half of the hall is *xingyu* 行雨 (making rain). In researches of the 1990s, the murals were studied in the context of the local cult and were treated as a coherent system following some basic logic.

My purpose in this study is to reconstruct the complex of Guangsheng Monastery in the late Yuan period, which is based on an individual scene depicted on the murals. Before further discussions, issues regarding the execution of the murals must be addressed. It has to be pointed out that two teams of craftsmen were involved, with one team executing the eastern half of the hall, and the other team executing the western half. This is called *duihua* 對畫 (meaning “to paint in opposition”). *Duihua* is popular in the Tang Dynasty, and is recorded in *Lidai minghua ji* 历代名画记 as a special way of organizing mural paintings. According to Huang Miaozi 黄苗子, special rules were enforced when *duihua* was applied. For instance, the painting jobs were divided into two halves along the central axial line of the hall. Murals of the eastern half would be assigned to a team while the murals of the western half would be assigned to a different team. In practices, curtains were hung in the middle to separate the two teams, assuring independent works. When the paintings were completed, curtains would be removed to show the final works to the public. Apparently, the goals of *duihua* were to encourage competition and to obtain works of the best quality the craftsmen might create. For mural paintings of Mingyingwang Hall, the

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114 Anning Jing argues that the basic structure of the mural program corresponds to the ritual process of a rainmaking ceremony. He proposes the following sequence: the supplicants’ approach to the temple (southeast wall); petitioning for rain, begging for rain and praying for rain (west wall); the offering of food and entertainment (north wall); the acquisition of rain and relinquishment of rain (east wall); and lastly the drama (southeast wall). Jing, Anning. 2001: 193-4.
116 *Duihua* continued to be popular in Shanxi from the Song to the Qing periods. Examples include the Song murals of Kaihua Monastery 开化寺 at Gaoping 高平, the Yuan murals of Yongle Palace at Ruicheng, the Yuan mural of Qinglong Monastery 青龙寺 at Jishan 稷山, the Ming mural of Duofu Monastery 多福寺 at
competition became more intense because the outcome concerned recognition of two different parties: Southern Huo Canal and Northern Huo Canal, co-sponsors of the entire restoration project of the hall.

Names of the craftsmen were recorded by the inscriptions *in situ*. According to the inscriptions of *xibi* (the western half of the wall), composed by the Southern Huo Canal, the murals of the western half were executed by a team of three *huihua daizhao* (painters-in-attendance): Zhao Guoxiang from Dong’an village, Shang Junxi from Zhou village, and Jing Yanzheng from Nanyang village. According to their designated hometowns, it is noteworthy that this team of craftsmen all came from the local villages within the irrigated area of the southern Huo Canal in the county of Hongtong.

A larger team of nine craftsmen were recruited by the Northern Huo Canal to execute the murals of the eastern half. Their names appeared in the inscriptions of *dongbi* (the eastern half of the wall), composed by the Northern Huo Canal, which reads below,

“The beautiful names of these *daizhao* are listed below:

Wang Yanda and son *daizhao* Wang Jr.; Hu Tianxiang; Gao Wenyuan and apprentice *daizhao* Guan; Yuan Yancai and *daizhao* Yuan Jr.; *daizhao* Xi and apprentice Hao Shan”.

Taiyuan and the Qing mural of Yong’an Monastery 永安寺 at Hunyuan 浑源.

117 Literary *xibi* means the west wall. But in the context of mural paintings, it refers to the western half of the hall. For the same reason, *dongbi* refers to the eastern half of the hall.

118 *Daizhao* was a title for court painters during the Song and Jing periods. But during the Yuan it was used to designate any professional artisans, including painters, sculptors, kiln workers, and others.
For the team of *dongbi*, the home villages of those craftsmen are not designated, meaning they do not come from the local villages. Compared to the team of *xibi*, the team of *dongbi* consists of more craftsmen, fathers-and-sons, masters-and-apprentices, typical relations within professional workshops from that period. Obviously, the Northern Huo Canal invested more by hiring professional craftsmen from afar than its Southern Huo Canal counterpart.

I agree with the previous studies that suggest the murals of Mingyingwang Hall should be treated as a coherent system, and the scenes of murals should follow a unified conception and logic. However, *duihua* should also be considered because two different teams of craftsmen were working independently on design and composition for the assigned halves. Aiming at winning the competition, the craftsmen, working as a team, had to use their artistic imaginations to enrich the works. Subjects such as legendary characters, historical stories, local festivals and surrounding landscapes are chosen to inspire the viewers. Through a comparison between the works of two halves, I believe, craftsmen of *dongbi* are better trained in figure and landscape paintings, including the depictions of architecture. Compared with the works of *xibi*, the murals of *dongbi* have more realistic representations and more details. No wonder the theatrical scene, cherished by so many scholars as a precious visual record of history, was painted on the wall of the eastern half (Figure 2.2).

Among many scenes in the eastern half, a landscape painting is seen on the upper right corner of the east wall. In a style of blues and greens, it contains a monastery compound standing on the top of a mountain peak. To the left of this landscape painting, a large composition covers about two-thirds of the east wall, representing an assembly of Mingyingwang. In the composition, the dragon king is seated in the center on a large throne with two feet resting

119 The Chinese term for this type of professional workshop is *banzi*, a subject of discussion of chapter three.
upon a stool and his right hand holding a scepter. Before him are four figures dressed in robes of civil officials. On either side of the throne stand entourages and court ladies holding fans and banners (Figure 2.3).

The assembly scene of this kind is iconic and symbolic. Therefore, a sub-scene must be added to reveal the major theme of the eastern half, “making rain”. A sub-scene is shown over the throne of the dragon king, in which dark clouds are depicted floating in the sky. Amidst the clouds, a procession of figures is moving forward from the left to the right. In the front of the procession, deities of wind are squeezing two wind bags, releasing gusts of strong wind that are driving down into the ground. They are followed by two deities of thunder, with one beating drums and the other striking cymbals. All deities are accompanied by a dragon who opens his mouth, ready to discharge rain.

Following the direction of “the wind column”, the viewer’s attention is directed to the landscape scene on the right (Figure 2.4). The lower part of the scene depicts the foot of a mountain where trees flutter in the wind. The upper part contains the top of a mountain where a monastery compound of eight building shines under multicolored clouds. No doubt the compound represents a Buddhist monastery because there is a thirteen-storied pagoda. Chai Zejun named the scene as Gu Guangsheng shangsi tu (A Painting of Ancient Upper Guangsheng Monastery), arguing that the painting is a depiction of Guangsheng Monastery in the Jin Dynasty. “The existing murals of Mingyingwang Hall at the Water God Temple were painted in the first year of Taiding. They contain a rain-making scene on the middle section of the east wall. On the upper part of this composition, a Buddhist monastery is painted among the trees on the top of a hill…. The architecture depicted probably represents the Upper Guangsheng Monastery during the Song and Jin periods. Compared with the Upper Monastery at present, the architecture depicted is much more excessive and majestic in terms of the monastery’s general layout and outward appearances… Although Guangsheng Monastery of pre-Jin period was destroyed without remains, it can be inferred preliminarily from historical literature, poems and stele
A major theme of dongbi, “rain making” is supposed to be performed by the dragon king of the Huo Spring at Mount Huo. Therefore, Chai’s argument of pointing this specific scene to Guangsheng Monastery and the landmark nearby is quite correct. However, I cannot agree with him on the conclusion that the architecture in the murals represents the ancient Guangsheng Monastery of Song and Jin periods. Instead, I will argue that it is a depiction of the Yuan-period Guangsheng Monastery standing atop of the mountain when the mural was painted.

It was pointed out that Guangsheng Monastery of the Song and Jin periods was completely burned down in the 1210s due to the wars during the Mongol invasion. Restored in the 1230s, the monastery was destroyed again in 1303 because of the earthquake. It was also discussed in the previous section of this chapter that, at the time when the murals were painted at the Mingyingwang Hall, Guangsheng Monastery was already restored from the debris of the earthquake. Therefore, it is hard to imagine that the painters at the time would choose to paint the ancient monastery that disappeared more than one hundred years ago, rather than the real monastery standing before them.

The craftsmen of the dongbi team are very talented in placing the scene on the upper right corner of the east wall, which is oriented to the same direction to which Mount Huo and Guangsheng Monastery are aligned. Like a landscape viewed through a window, the real scene from the outside was successfully brought to the inside through depictions of the craftsmen. The architecture of Guangsheng Monastery is highlighted. A profile of seven buildings along the axial line of the monastery compound is depicted. Beginning in the south with a gate, a thirteen-storied pagoda and then a three-storied pavilion follow. Three halls with the same roof type are standing in a row on the north end. Although the architectures represented cannot reach the accuracy and

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120 Chai and Ren, 2006: 9-10, 118.
details of *jiehua* (ruled-line painting), they are structurally accurate, supporting the close observations of real buildings.

**III. Architectural Reconstruction of Guangsheng Monastery in the Late Yuan**

Figure 2.5 provides an air view of today’s Upper Monastery, which was rebuilt during the middle of the Ming Dynasty. Figure 2.7 compares the plans of Guangsheng Monastery that was destroyed in the Yuan-Ming transitional period and the Upper Monastery that is standing atop the hill today. In comparison to the former, the latter exhibits feature of lesser architectural rank, simplified forms and reduced size. Fortunately, this eminent Monastery of late Yuan, which had been once served as the shrine of Khubilai, can be reconstructed according to the architecture represented on the mural. The architectural reconstruction includes the major buildings along the central axial line of the monastery compound (Figure 2.6). A digital model was constructed accordingly (Digital Model 1).

The front gate is placed at the front of the monastery. Joined by a corridor that encloses the whole monastery, the front gate is a two-story pavilion with a timber structure (*pingzuo*) installed between each of the two floors. The lower story has waist-eaves; the top story is crowned by a double eaved hip-gable roof. In the Tang Dynasty, the front gate of a Buddhist monastery was called *sanmen* (gate of three)\(^\text{122}\). During the tenth century, due to the rise of Chan Buddhism, *shanmen* (mountain gate) became the new name of the front gate, which is in use up to today. The front gate taking the form of multi-storied pavilion is rarely seen in the monasteries of post-Yuan periods. However, as was pointed out by Zhang Shiqing 張十慶, the tradition started from the Northern and Southern dynasties and was extremely popular among the

\(^{121}\text{Paintings with detailed renderings or architecture constitute a category of Chinese painting known as *jiehua*, translated as ruled-line painting. It involves a technique that used measuring devices and straight edges to portray architecture and other kinds of technical structures, such as ships. See Fu Xinian. 1979: 296-7.}

\(^{122}\text{The full name of *sanmen* is *sanjietuomen*, meaning the gate of three liberations in the Dharma.}
Chan monasteries of the Song and Yuan dynasties.\textsuperscript{123} Zhang's observation is mainly based on studies of Chan monasteries in South China. The example of Guangsheng Monastery indicates that the gate pavilion remained popular in the late Yuan period in the North.\textsuperscript{124}

Behind the front gate there is a small courtyard, where big trees are planted. Pines are seen in the front, and cypresses in the back. Between the pines and cypresses stands a flagpole that is much taller than the height of the nearby trees. A red banner is hung on top of the flag pole, flying in the wind.

Facing the courtyard stands another gate pavilion. Compared to the one in the front, this pavilion is larger in size and much more excessive in outward appearance. A slightly lower one-bay structure with hip-gable roof is attached to each side of the pavilion. Because it connects two courtyards in the front and in the back, the structure is believed to be \textit{ermen} 儀門, the second entry gate of the whole monastery.\textsuperscript{125} Because it also provides a passage to the pagoda in behind, the structure may also be called \textit{tayuanmen} 塔院門 (gate of the pagoda court) (Figure 2.8). Since the Tang Dynasty monasteries and temples of higher official rankings used multiple gates along the central axial line, which was modelled after palatial and elite residential architecture. Like gate pavilions, multiple gates were rarely seen in monasteries founded during the post-Yuan period.\textsuperscript{126}

In the center of the second courtyard stands an octagonal brick pagoda, the tallest structure of the whole monastery compound. The pagoda has thirteen stories in a shape of a slender

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{123} Zhang Shiqing, 2001: 80-1.
\textsuperscript{124} Several gate-pavilions with similar structures survive in Shanxi. Examples are the Song-period Youxian Monastery 遊仙寺, Kaihua Monastery and Dinglin Monastery 定林寺 in Gaoping, Chong’an Monastery 崇安寺 in Lingchuan, Qinglian Monastery 青蓮寺 in Jincheng and Baitai Monastery 白胎寺 in Xinjiang.
\textsuperscript{125} Ermen is an abbreviation of \textit{buermen} 不二門. A term of Buddhism, \textit{buer} 不二 means ostensive dualities are not two, but really one. Therefore, \textit{buermen} is the last point to check one’s mind before one meets the Buddha. The act of passing through the gate reminds one of the Buddhist tenets that all things form a unified whole. (\textit{Digital Dictionary of Buddhism})
\textsuperscript{126} Among the extant examples of two gates in the front of whole building complex, there are the Song-period Temple of Ji River in Jiuyuan 濟源濟源 and the Yuan-period Temple to the Northern Peak in Quyang 南陽北嶽.
\end{footnotesize}
pyramid with a double-eaved timber gallery added to the ground story. It appears to be remarkably similar to the Feihong Pagoda (the Flying Rainbow Pagoda) standing atop of Mount Huo today. The latter was constructed by 1527, more than two hundred years after the murals were painted.

Behind the pagoda, a three-story large pavilion stands on an elevated brick platform which is enclosed by a balustrade. For the ground and middle story, each story has one layer of eaves on which a pingzu is constructed to support the story atop. The top story has two layers of eaves crowned with a roof of cross-ridges (Figure 2.9). In terms of the plan, this large pavilion has a square three-bay central part, flanked by four wings of which each has one bay. It is larger than the above discussed gate pavilions and is the most magnificent structure of the whole monastery. Although multi-storied structures of this type are often seen in ancient paintings, there are only a limited number of specimens still in existence. Among them from the Yuan and Ming periods, Feiyun Tower (Tower of Flying Clouds) in the county of Wanrong has the most similar structure and outward appearance as this one (Figure 2.10).

If ermen, brick pagoda and large pavilion constitute an independent courtyard, another courtyard in the further north is formed by three Buddha halls aligned in a row along the central axial line. The front hall and the middle hall are of similar size; both adopt the same roof type, the double-eaved hip-gable roof. Although only elevation of the buildings is depicted with details, we can still learn from the mural that the front hall is five-bays-wide-and-deep, and the middle hall is three-bays-wide-and-deep (Figure 2.11). Fujie is installed and no intercolumnar bracket sets are seen beneath the lower eave of the front hall. For the upper eaves, however, one cluster

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127 Multi-storied pavilions are also popular in Yuan palatial architecture. They were used as audience halls in both Dadu and Shangdu, which was rarely seen in both pre-Yuan and post-Yuan period. Da’ange 是 one of the most famous pavilions that was originally built in the Song period, and was relocated to the palace of Khubilai in Shangdu. See Wang Guixiang, 2009: 37-63.

128 Wanrong is a county in Southern Shanxi. Feiyun Pavilion belongs to a local Daoist Temple dedicated to the deity of the Eastern Peak. All major buildings in the compound were constructed during the late Yuan except the pavilion which was rebuilt in the middle of the Ming.

129 Fujie is an auxiliary structure attached to the core building. See the glossary of Fu Xinian. 2017: 355.
of intercolumnar bracket sets is placed across the elevation. A three-bay corridor connects the front hall and the middle hall, following a gong-plan for the building complex. Beginning in the Tang Dynasty, the gong-shaped plan was frequently used in large-scale architecture, symbolizing a higher architectural status.

The back hall is the last structure standing at the north end of the whole compound. With few architectural details depicted in the mural, it probably has a three-bay-wide-and-deep square plan, topped by one layer of eaves and a hip-gable roof. Xiewu 挟屋 is seen attached to each side of the back hall.

Of all the major structures in the Guangsheng Monastery, four are particularly important because each of them had some symbolic features added. Multi-colored flamed light is emitting from the pagoda and the front hall. Multi-colored clouds surround the great pavilion and the middle hall. In my opinion, the emitting light symbolizes the presence of “Buddha”. It is likely that the front hall is the main Buddha hall where major rituals are practiced; the pagoda is where the Buddha relics, one of the three treasures recorded, are stored. Similarly, the auspicious multi-colored clouds may symbolize the presences of the other two treasures mentioned in the text: the portrait of Khubilai and Tripitaka bestowed by the emperor himself. While the great pavilion might be referred as sutra repository, the middle hall is where the portrait of Khubilai is enshrined. This further verifies that the buildings depicted in the mural are consistent with architectural features of the times.

Due to the limited space on the top of the hill, Guangsheng Monastery never moved from this original location since the sixth century. Rather, the monastery was destroyed and reconstructed several times for over seven hundred years before the Yuan period. When it was reconstructed once again from the debris of the great earthquake of 1303, the layout of the

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130 The plan takes the form of the Chinese character gong 工.
131 According to Chai Zejun, the large pavilion houses the massive bell that was casted in the Jin Dynasty. See Chai and Ren, 2006: 10.
monastery still carried some of the legacies of the earlier periods. It is pointed out above that a thirteen-storied pagoda was in the center of the monastery and a three-storied Great Pavilion was north of the pagoda along the central axial line. Undoubtedly, the pagoda is the architectural focus, a feature traced back to Northern Dynasties period when the monastery was originally founded. However, equal importance is given to the Great Pavilion. The popularity of the pavilion is evident in this early fourteenth century reconstruction. Besides the Great Pavilion, two pavilions – the gate pavilion and the second gate pavilion - are seen on the central axial line plus one as a side building along with the enclosing gallery.\(^\text{132}\) However, when the Upper Monastery was reconstructed in the middle of the Ming Dynasty, pavilions disappeared, as did the enclosing langwu (corridors and side buildings).

While two buildings of Yongle Palace, Wuji Gate and Sanqing Hall, are topped with simple hipped roofs, no such roof type was employed at Guangsheng Monastery. This signifies the architectural rank of Yongle Palace is higher than that of Guangsheng Monastery. While at least six pavilions are seen at Guangsheng Monastery, none was built at Yongle Palace, which might be explained by two possible reasons. One explains the differences between Daoist and Buddhist architecture. The other one explains the period trend, a new focus on the pavilion in the early fourteenth century.

Basically, the layout of Guangsheng Monastery as well as its individual buildings were planned and constructed in accordance with the traditions developed from the Song and Jin periods. In other words, it might be argued that Yuan architecture in this region is more closely allied with that of the Pre-Yuan period (the Song and Jin) than the post-Yuan period (the Ming and Qing).

\(^\text{132}\) Since the late Tang period, multi-storied pavilions had gradually replaced pagodas to become the most eminent structures of Chinese Buddhist monasteries. This was partly due to the practices of Mahayana Buddhism, because by the Tang Dynasty, it gradually became popular to focus prayer on bodhisattvas. In contrast to Buddhas, bodhisattvas are more often standing figures and require that architecture be built accordingly. See Fu Xinian. 2001: 482. See also Fu Xinian. 2006: 93-5; Wang Guixiang. 2013: 54-5. For the popularity of pavilions in the Buddhist monasteries during the Tang and Song period, see He Congrong. 2013: 127.
IV. Structural Innovations of the Main Hall at the Lower Monastery

While the monastery layout of Guangsheng Monastery basically followed the old traditions of the Song and Jin, innovations were introduced to the beam frameworks of timber buildings, as exemplified by the main hall at the Lower Monastery. There is evidence that officials and craftsmen from the capital were involved in the construction of Yongle Palace. At Guangsheng Monastery, however, a state-registered monastery with local eminence, at least the surviving architecture of the subsidiary temple (the Lower Monastery of today) is believed to be constructed by local craftsmen. It is revealed by the features of the main hall that a style peculiar to the region of Southern Shanxi was developed among the Yuan-period buildings reconstructed after the Great Earthquake of 1303.133

According to an inscription written on one of the ridge purlins of the central bay, the construction of the main hall, completed in the autumn of 1309, less than six years after the disastrous earthquake:

“The time is the eighth day of the second half of autumn in Zhida 2 (1309) of the Great Yuan…reconstructed.

Zijiang134… Zhuang Cheng, Fu Qi from the county of Hongtong respectively recorded.”

Three small stairs lead to the front of the main hall, in contrast to the high and elaborate platform in front of Sanqing Hall at Yongle Palace (Figure 2.12). The hall is rectangular in plan, seven bays wide and eight rafters deep, covered by an overhanging gable roof with one tier of

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133 Chai Zejun believes the main hall is most representative because of the regional characteristic and innovative techniques it carries. See Chai Zejun. 2006: 30.
134 Craftsmen in carpentry, with expertise in the constructions of timber buildings.
135 Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 85.
eaves. A total of eight exterior columns stand across the front and back of the hall, defining seven bays. In the front, doors were placed for the three bays in the middle and lattice windows for the two side-bays on either side of the hall. In the front, there is an absence of windows and back doors. The bracketing at the hall is only five-\textit{puzuo}. No intercolumnar bracket sets are placed across the building façades. The roof, bracketing and platform of the main hall indicate humbleness, a sharp contrast to the architecture of Yongle Palace.\textsuperscript{136} The humbleness is consistent with the status of the Lower Monastery – a subsidiary temple of Guangsheng Monastery - in the late Yuan Dynasty. It might be due to the need for quick restoration in the aftermath of the Great Earthquake. It might also be explained by regionalism. As per the inscriptions from the purlin, the craftsmen came from Hongtong, the county nearby. There is no doubt that local craftsmen were responsible for constructing the buildings of the Lower Monastery.

Basically, the construction of the main hall also followed the modular design of \textit{caifen}. The single standard unit of the graded timber corresponds to the standard dimension of the fourth grade stipulated in \textit{Yingzao fashi}. According to the Song practices, the fourth grade should be used for three-bay \textit{diantang} or five-bay \textit{tingtang} structures. It is obviously too small for a seven-bay hall like the main hall. Similar to that of Yongle Palace, the standardized timbers are also reduced by two grades.

The beam framework is exposed to view as no ceiling was installed, known as \textit{cheshangluming 徹上露明}. As a matter of fact, most of the large structural members were roughly processed, a period characteristic of the time. The beam framework was initially designed as one of the \textit{tingtang} structures: an eight-rafter construction with a two-rafter beam in both the front and the back, with four columns. In the middle, the timber frame had beams that spanned four rafter lengths, above which a king post and inverted V-shaped truss supported the roof purlins. In the \textit{tingtang} structure of this type, normally it should have two interior colonnades with six columns each. However, both \textit{jianzhu} 减柱 (column elimination) and \textit{yizhu} 移柱 (column

\textsuperscript{136} Pan Guxi, 2002: 235.
displacement) were employed. Four columns of the interior front row for the two side-bays on each side were eliminated. The central five bays of the interior back row use three lengthwise frameworks, a one-bay-wide one in the center and a one-and-a-half-bay-wide one on each side, thus omitting two interior columns that would have been positioned at the outside of the side bays. Among the remaining four columns, the innermost columns on the left and right side remain unchanged. However, the other two remaining columns, the side bay columns, are shifted sideways onto the midpoint of the flanking side bays. They are neither positioned at the bay axes nor aligned with the front and rear eaves columns (Figure 2.13).

Because of the downgraded standardized timbers, most structural members of the main hall have downscaled sizes. However, Liang Sicheng was surprised by the “enormous ang” employed in the framework.137 This “enormous ang” referred to by Liang is not the cantilever used for bracketing. It is an ascending beam (also known as slanting beam) employed to enhance the stability of the beam framework. Slanting beam and massive architrave form a combination, which is rarely seen on the buildings in other regions of the Yuan period.

At the main hall of Guangsheng Monastery, slanting beams were employed in all bays across the facade. In the central bay, for instance, slanting beam is installed atop two two-rafter beams to sustain a four-rafter beam above them (Figure 2.14). In all other bays, slanting beams replace the two-rafter beams, with one end atop of the tail of bracket set and the other end atop the interior architrave (Figure 2.15). With an aim to support the transverse roof construction above, a massive architrave, 11.5 meters long, is employed in all bays but the central bay on the front and back rows of interior columns. Moreover, a second layer of architrave known as you’e 由額 is used beneath the massive architrave for additional support.

The earliest extant lengthwise framework is Jin tingtang construction represented by Manjusri Hall at Foguang Monastery 佛光寺 on Wutai Mountain. The hall was constructed in

137 Liang Sicheng. 1984: 100.
1137. Since lengthwise construction was already a mature technology when Manjusri Hall was built, Fu Xinian believes, the framework may belong to a local building tradition from the Northern Song that continued in the Jin Dynasty.\(^\text{138}\) The south hall at Yanshan Monastery in Fanshi County and Amitabha Hall at Chongfu Monastery in Shuozhou, both dated to the first half of the fifteenth century, use the same construction method. Unsurprisingly, Yuan architecture continues to use lengthwise construction with column omission and displacement. Because the structure is so widely used in the early fourteenth century in the region of Southern Shanxi, one can talk about a regional style.\(^\text{139}\) The main hall of the Lower Monastery is the earliest and most representative example.

Other examples include the main hall at Pujing Monastery 普淨寺 in Xiangfen, the main hall at Shousheng Monastery 壽聖寺 and the back hall at Baitai Monastery in Xinjiang, the main hall at Huayan Monastery in Hongtong, and many others. Figure 2.16 provides the plans of some of the buildings investigated during my research. Among buildings of this style, the main hall at Qingliang Monastery 清涼寺 in Ruicheng County offers one of the best comparable examples.

The monastery was founded sometime before 1242, shortly after the establishment of the Mongol rule in Southern Shanxi. In the monastery compound, the main hall is the only surviving building from the Yuan period.

The main hall is elevated on a platform, about two meters high, with a yuetai 月臺 (moon-platform) in front of it. It is rectangular in plan, five bays wide and eight rafters deep, with one tier of eaves topped by an overhanging gable roof. Inside of the hall, no ceiling was installed; most of the structural members were roughly processed. Both massive architraves and slanting beams were employed, aiming at enhanced structural stability and enlarged interior space.

\(^{138}\) For detailed analysis of the lengthwise framework employed at Manjusri Hall, see Fu Xinian. 2002b: 267-72.

The early history of Qingliang Monastery was recorded by seven Yuan steles that are still preserved in the monastery compound. Two of them are most interesting because the inscriptions were written in a special language known as Yuan *baihua* (Mongolian Chinese).

One stele reads:

“With blessings from emperor Güyük, his highness Chahan is giving the following command. Monk Liaowu from Qingliang Monastery of the county Ruicheng, sub-prefecture of Hai, has personally accused the military personnel and official envoys of seizing land and valuables from the monastery and harassing monks for food and drink, which caused a lot of disturbances. Because of this, this command is given in accordance with the imperial edict which forbids officials from appropriating land and estates of monasteries, snatching horses, demolishing monasteries and occupying them to accommodate the envoys. Why didn’t you people obey the edict of emperor? Buddhist monks are responsible for blessing emperor Güyük, and his consorts, crown princes, kings and concubines for longer lives. Why did you people disobey the will of emperors and render the monks unable to live peacefully? Therefore, I am commanding you to return all estates and properties seized from this monastery. In the future, those who harass the monks will be reported to this authority. For us all, disobeying the edict of the emperor is a big crime and will be heavily punished. This command must be enforced and shall not be violated.

From Huaiyin County of Western Capital, on the fifteenth day of the ninth lunar month, in the year of wushen (1248).”

Another stele records an edict sent from Dadu in 1310 by Ayurbarwada, who would be enthroned as emperor in the next year. This edict is similar to the one that was sent in 1248, both of which aim at protecting the properties of Qingliang Monastery from infringement. The inscriptions of the steles at Qingliang Monastery reveal the following historical information. Firstly, besides Tibetan Lamaseries, Han Chinese Buddhist monasteries located in the provinces were also protected by

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140 The third great Khan of Mongol empire, Güyük reigned from 1246-8.
the Mongol rulers. Secondly, the edict of Ayurbarwada indicates that many of the monasteries of local eminence in Southern Shanxi had good connections with the Mongol elites living in Dadu. Guangsheng Monastery could be another well-connected monastery at that time. Unfortunately, most Yuan-period steles of Guangsheng Monastery were lost. The question why the monastery had been served as a shrine for Khubilai remains to be answered.

Concluding notes:

The construction of Yongle Palace started in the 1250s, decades before the proclamation of the Yuan Dynasty. As indicated by the architectural features of Yongle Palace, the old traditions of Song and Jin were followed because the new dynastic art had not yet started to form. From the date of its foundation in the middle of the eighth century to the end of the Yuan, Guangsheng Monastery had always been a guansi (official established monastery, or state monastery)\textsuperscript{141}. Under the rules of the Mongols, the monastery was even more eminent because it was at the same time served as a shrine for Khubilai. Shortly after the earthquake destruction in 1303, Guangsheng Monastery was fully restored for both monastery complexes atop the hill and at the foot of the hill. Although the monastery complex atop the hill was destroyed again when the Yuan Dynasty fell, the architecture and layout of the monastery can be reconstructed based on the architecture represented on the murals of Mingyingwang Hall.

Completed in 1324, the murals of Mingyingwang Hall were executed by craftsmen using duihua. On the upper right corner of the east wall is a landscape scene which, I believe, contains realistic depictions of Guangsheng Monastery standing on the top of the hill when the murals were executed. As indicated by the architectural reconstruction, a thirteen-storied pagoda dominates the monastery compound which is enclosed by corridors and side buildings. Besides the pagoda, three pavilions and three Buddha halls are placed along the main building line of the monastery. A gong-shaped plan is employed for the first and second hall near the north end of

\textsuperscript{141} Starting from the Tang Dynasty, there had been a distinction between guansi, large Buddhist monasteries that were registered with the government, and smaller, privately maintained monasteries and chapels that escaped official notice. See Fu Xinian, eds. 2001: 472; Robinson, James. 2010: 46.
the central axial line. All above-mentioned features indicate high architectural rank, which is consistent with the eminent position of Guangsheng Monastery under the regulations of Yuan construction.

Although the architectural details, especially the features of beam framework inside of the buildings, are impossible to be detected from the murals, the layout of the monastery as well as the form and appearance of the individual buildings can be reconstructed with high confidence. Surprisingly, in the early fourteenth century, decades after the proclamation of the Yuan Dynasty, the old traditions of Song and Jin architecture had been followed in the region of Southern Shanxi.

On the other hand, innovations were made on the beam frameworks of large halls represented by the main hall of Guangsheng Monastery and a regional style was developed for the buildings reconstructed in the aftermath of the Great Earthquake of 1303. The buildings of this style are always in tingtang structure, and most of them have the following characteristics: rectangular plan, overhanging gable roof, lengthwise framework, combination of slanting beam and massive architrave, column omission and displacement, roughly processed timbers, downgraded standardized timbers and downscaled sizes of most structural members. Because of the simplification and downscaling, the construction saves time and materials. However, with an innovative design of lengthwise framework, the stability of the building is not compromised, and the interior space is enlarged as the result. This structural design meets the needs of quick and large-scale reconstruction in the aftermath of the Great Earthquake.
CHAPTER 3

MURALES OF SOUTHERN SHANXI:
THE HISTORIOGRAPHY, ICONOGRAPHY AND NEW CHRONOLOGY

Southern Shanxi not only has some of the oldest remains of Chinese civilization since ancient times, but also has been an economic and cultural center of Shanxi Province through the centuries. Today, scattered across the Fen River valley are numerous architectural monuments from the Jin and Yuan dynasties, a few of which preserve sculptures and murals from the same period. The region of Southern Shanxi has produced one of the most emblematic collections of the Yuan monastery murals. Typically, with affinities in styles and iconographies, the murals were produced by craftsmen of professional workshops from the periods of late Yuan to early Ming. Aside from several locales, for example, Yongle Palace in the county of Yongji and Qinglong Monastery in the county of Jishan, remnants of murals have been either destroyed, or brought out of Shanxi by art dealers in the early twentieth century.

In 1926 when a colossal Chinese mural entered the permanent collection of the Museum at the University of Pennsylvania, Helen Fernald, then Curator of Asian Art, was amazed by the mural’s tremendous size and overwhelming majestic presence. She claimed that the mural was “among the most important works of art that have ever come out of China”.142 Two years later, the University Museum acquired another large mural that was believed to be the mate of the first one.143 The two murals are practically of the same size, same style, and so similar they can be called of identical technique. It is evident that the murals, as parts of one plan of decoration, came from the same Buddhist hall.

The University Museum was a pioneer among the Western museums in collecting Chinese murals of this size and this type. Between 1929 and 1937, another four colossal murals, which

142 Fernald, Helen, 1926: 229
143 Fernald, Helen, 1928: 110
are stylistically very similar to those in the Penn Museum, had been purchased by the Nelson-Atkins Gallery of Art in Kansas City and the Royal Ontario Museum (hereafter ROM) of Canada. Many other museums had acquired some mural fragments. The murals' high artistic merits soon caught the attentions of scholars of Chinese art, which triggered research ever since.\textsuperscript{144}

Where did these murals come from? The question seems to be simple and straightforward. However, it was difficult to answer because the chaotic conditions of the Chinese antique market in the 1920s and 30s. In fact, it became a puzzle that has plagued scholars ever since. Some murals were stolen from their original sites.\textsuperscript{145} Unsurprisingly dealers would never disclose the provinces of the stolen murals to avoid the possible consequences. Sometimes bogus information was made up instead. In other cases, the murals were acquired legally. However, dealers were not willing to disclose provenances because of market competitions. Once again, false information was provided. Last but not the least, it was not uncommon for a piece of a mural to change hands many times before it made its way to the final buyer. Sellers who cut the final deal, like C. T. Loo and Yamanaka and Co., were not aware of all the facts about where the murals were coming from.

I. School of Zhu Haogu Identified

It was already introduced in Chapter One, in the summer of 1934, Laurence Sickman made a field trip to Southern Shanxi, aimed at finding out the original locality of a mural that was sold to the Nelson Gallery two years earlier by C. T. Loo. Sickman confirmed that the Nelson mural came from one of the two halls of the Guangsheng Lower Monastery.\textsuperscript{146} In his publication of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{144} The pre-1940 scholarship includes Sickman, Laurence. 1937; Sickman, Laurence. 1939; White, William C. 1940; Bachhofer, Ludwig, 1947.
\item \textsuperscript{145} For example, the murals from Qinglong Monastery at Jishan county were claimed to be stolen in the 1914. See Chai Zejun, 1997: 58; See also Sun Bo, 2011: 120.
\item \textsuperscript{146} Some details about this investigation trip were recorded in correspondence between Sickman and the Nelson Gallery during the 1930s. See Wolferman, Kristie. 1993: 83-109. It was also said that Sickman was told by the abbot of Guangsheng Monastery that monks had sold the murals from the Lower Monastery to art dealers in the 1920s in order to finance renovations, and that these paintings were already in the United States. Sickman then inferred that the Nelson mural had come from the Guangsheng Monastery. This inference was confirmed in 1938 when the Chinese students commissioned by William C. White visited Guangsheng Monastery and showed a photograph of the Nelson mural to the abbot. See Baldwin, Michelle,
1939, Sickman noticed that, if he compared the Nelson mural to the Penn murals as well as the ROM mural, they are very similar in general style and technique details; it is likely that all murals under discussion came from the same locality, Southern Shanxi, and were probably the works of the same atelier. Hence, the murals should be studied together as a group. Sickman suggested that further studies of the well-preserved temples of Southern Shanxi “may reveal a ‘Fen River Valley’ school of skilled painter-sculptor craftsmen maintaining a high level within the accepted tradition throughout at least the whole of the thirteenth century.”

Discoveries in 1954 have shed new light on the study of the murals. At Yongle Palace, the Daoist monastery on the north bank of the Yellow River, sixty kilometers southeast of the county township Yongji, murals were found in four buildings, one gate and the three halls, Sanqing Hall 三清殿, Chunyang Hall 纯陽殿 and Chongyang Hall 重陽殿. Surprisingly, there appears to be a close affinity of style, linking the murals of Yongle Palace to the murals already in the collections of the Western museums.

Of all the inscriptions recovered from Yongle Palace, two inscriptions written on the murals of Chunyang Hall are worthy of special attentions, because they give the date of completion as well as the names of craftsmen who were responsible for painting. The inscription on the east end of the south wall reads (Figure 3.1):

“Zhang Zunli, an apprentice of Zhu Haogu from Qinchang and daizhao from Guxin, now residing at Jiangyang, (together with his) apprentices Tian Dexin from Guxin and Cao Demin from Dongxian. It is recorded respectfully that the work is completed on the Double-Ninth Festival, the eighteenth year of Zhizheng, the year of wuxu”.

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1994: 244.
147 Sickman, Laurence. 1939: 17
148 The murals are in good condition except for the ones in Chongyang Hall.
150 Qinchang is the ancient name of Xiangling, home town of Zhu Haogu, which is consistent with the accounts of the local gazetteer. In addition, ancient names are used for indicating the hometowns of all other craftsmen, which are all located in Southern Shanxi. For detailed explanations on where these places are located. See Tsang, Ka Bo, 1992: footnote 12, 13, 14, 15.
The inscription on the west end of the south wall reads:

“Li Hongyi, an apprentice of Zhu Haogu from Qinchang and daizhao from Gurui, (together with his) apprentice Wang Shiyang from Longmen; Wang Chun, (an apprentice of Zhu Haogu) and daizhao from Gufeng, (together with his) apprentices Zhang Xiubao and Wei De.

It is recorded respectfully that the work is completed on the first day of the ninth month in autumn, the eighteenth year of Zhizheng.”

Zhizheng 18 is the year 1358. Besides the date of completion, the inscriptions reveal many details about how and by whom those murals were executed. Firstly, the two inscriptions are parallel to each other, indicating a special rule of duihua, which means all painted works were divided between two competitive teams of craftsmen.151 Secondly, the father-son and master-apprentice relationships suggest the craftsmen came from professional workshops. Thirdly, for each team there are one or two master painters. Zhang Zunli led the team of the east half; Li Hongyi and Wang Chun jointly led the team of the west half. Only master-painters carry the title of daizhao, not the apprentices. Last but not the least, Zhu Haogu was declared as mentor of all three master-painters. There is no evidence that Zhu himself participated in this painting project. With his name appearing on the first column (the beginning of the inscriptions), it is not only a tribute to the master-painter, but also a symbol of the craftsmen’s distinguished stylistic lineage.

A team of craftsmen from Henan was recorded in another inscription discovered on the east side of shanmian qiang (the horizontal partition wall) at Sanqing Hall. It reads:

“Ma Junxiang from Goushan of Luojing, the Prefecture of Henan, (and) his eldest son daizhao Ma the seventh, painted seven bays in front of the main hall, four bays of the east gable side, brackets inside the hall, the east half and decorative patterns of five bays (behind) the main figures.

151 Duihua was discussed in chapter one when the murals of Mingyingwang hall was introduced.
The works are completed on the second year of Taiding.

The apprentices (are) Wang Xiuxian, daizhao Wang the second, daizhao Zhao, daizhao Ma the eleventh, daizhao Ma the twelfth, daizhao Ma the thirteenth, daizhao Fan, daizhao Wei, daizhao Fang and daizhao Zhao."

Taiding 2 is the year 1325. The team of craftsmen, all from Henan, was led by Ma Junxiang and his eldest son Ma the seventh. Unlike craftsmen from Southern Shanxi who executed murals of Chunyang Hall more than three decades later, these craftsmen from Henan all carry the title of daizhao; even the apprentices are also included. Based on this inscriptive evidence, for over forty years since the 1950s, most scholars had attributed the murals of Sanqing Hall to Ma Junxiang and his workshop without noticing some of the early studies which indicated that this specific inscription deals with the decorative paintings of architectural members only, not the featured murals on the walls. In his publication of 1997, Jin Weinuo modified his old point of view, re-attributing the murals of Sanqing Hall to the School of Zhu Haogu. This modification was supported by Meng Sihui who compared the styles and iconographies of the murals from Sanqing Hall with the ROM mural from Xinghua Monastery. Based on in situ observations, Meng further suggested that duihua was adopted in painting the murals of Sanqing Hall, and that original inscriptions were written on the east and west ends of south wall, which were lost in the Qing Dynasty because of repainting.

152 The name of Ma Junxiang also appears on a stele erected in 1299 in Baima Monastery at Luoyang. It is recorded that Ma was summoned to work on the decorations of the newly renovated monastery. See Meng Sihui, 2011: 147-50.
155 Meng Sihui, 2011: 168-83. The ROM murals of Xinghua Monastery will be discussed below in details.
156 Meng Sihui, 2011: 150-1.
The name Zhu Haogu also appeared in a recorded inscription associated with one of the ROM murals, *Assembly of Maitreya*, which was removed from Xinghua Monastery in the early 1920s. Xinghua Monastery (Monastery of Joyful Conversion) is located at the county of Jishan, about 100 kilometers south of the Prefecture of Pingyang and 110 kilometers north of Yongle Palace. Known to the locals as Shenhuasi 神畫寺 (Monastery of Divine Paintings), the monastery had been famous for beautiful murals.\textsuperscript{157} A mural from the main hall was purchased by William C. White (1876-1960) for the ROM in 1928.\textsuperscript{158} However, an inscription left on the north wall until the main hall was destroyed in the early 1940s. The inscription was first published by Li Ji 李濟 (also known as Li Chi, 1896-1979)\textsuperscript{159}, a prominent Chinese archaeologist who visited the monastery in 1926. Another version of the same inscription was transcribed by two Chinese students who investigated the site in 1938 and was published by White in 1940. The inscription transcribed by Chinese students reads:\textsuperscript{160}

"Those who have sponsored the painting of the Great Buddha Hall are, the lecture-priest, monk An who gave land; the lecture-priest, monk Ning who gave land; monk Ning also gave land of twelve mou.

(Painters are) Zhu Haogu, *daizhao* from Xiangling county, and his apprentice Zhang Boyuan.

The time was during the Great Yuan State, in the year *qingshen* [gengshen], and in the mid-autumn month when the plant grows its fourteenth leaf\textsuperscript{161}, the work was completed."

\begin{center}
\begin{array}{l}
\text{當院繪畫大雄殿主,講經沙門安和尚施地,講經沙門甯和尚施地,甯和尚又施地十二畝。}
\text{襄陵縣繪畫待詔朱好古,門徒張伯淵。}
\text{大元國歲次庚申中秋萱生十四葉工畢。}
\end{array}
\end{center}

Probably due to the poor conditions of the mural surface, or to the archaic and poetic form of the inscriptions, the inscription copied by Li Ji is different from the one transcribed by the two Chinese

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{157}]White, William C. 1940: 49.
\item[\textsuperscript{158}]William C. White was the first Church of England Bishop of Henan from 1909-34, and the first keeper of the ROM’s Far Eastern Department in the 1940s.
\item[\textsuperscript{159}]Li Chi, 1926: 36
\item[\textsuperscript{160}]Both the inscription transcription and English translation are modified based on White’s publication which can be seen on White, William C. 1940: 54-6.
\item[\textsuperscript{161}]The time was marked in an archaic form using a poetic expression. The painting work was completed on the eve of the great moon festival of that year.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}

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students. The key difference in the date, which is transcribed by Li Ji as wuxu 戌戌 and by the students as qingshen 庆申. No doubt the students miscopied the date because no such designation of qingshen exists in the sixty-year cycle of the traditional Chinese year system. But Li Ji’s date is also questionable. The choices of two wuxu years during the Yuan period are 1298 and 1358. One appears to be too early and the other one seems to be too late. Both can hardly be accepted as the proper date of completion.¹⁶² Scholarly debates on the date of the mural have continued until today.¹⁶³

I will argue that gengshen 庚申, the year of 1320, might be a date of correct choice.¹⁶⁴ In the first place, the two Chinese characters, geng 庚 and qing 庆, are similar in structure and appearance. It is possible that the students mistook qing for the somewhat similar character geng. Secondly, Xinghua Monastery is 130 kilometers away from the epicenter of the 1303 earthquake. Due to the characteristic of Chinese timber buildings, when an earthquake of such intensity struck Jishan, even if a building did not collapse, the murals housed in this building could hardly have survived because of the damages of the walls. I believe the year 1303 should be established as a terminus post quem for not only murals of Xinghua Monastery, but also extant murals from the whole Southern Shanxi. This assumption nullifies the choice of the first wuxu year, 1298. Thirdly, the inscription stated clearly that Zhu Haogu is the primary painter who was assisted by his apprentice Zhang Boyuan. According to the above-discussed Ma Junxiang inscription of Yongle Palace, the decoration of Sanqing Hall was completed in 1325. It is reasonable to assume that the murals of Sanqing Hall were completed around the same year, shortly after the painting decoration of the architectural members were completed. If the murals of Sanqing Hall can be confirmed as the work of Zhu Haogu, then the 1320s could be the years

¹⁶² The reason will be discussed in detail below.
¹⁶³ For the details of the debates over the years, see Bachhofer, Ludwig, 1947; Lippe, Aschwin. 1965; Steinhardt, Nancy S. 1987; Tsang, Ka Bo. 1992; Baldwin, Michelle, 1994 and Meng Sihui, 2011: 41-53.
¹⁶⁴ The idea was first proposed by Ludwig Bachhofer in 1947. See Bachhofer, Ludwig. 1947: 1-7.
when Zhu was very active. This assumption also excludes the possibility of the second wuxu year, 1358.

The first in-depth study of Zhu Haogu and the style of his painting school was published by Nancy S. Steinhardt in 1987. According to the local gazetteers, Zhu Haogu was a native of Xiangling, a county in the southern outskirts of Pingyangfu; he was skilled in landscape and figure paintings and was known for his paintings which people collected and much treasured. Though his name appeared on the murals of Chunyang hall at Yongle Palace and the ROM murals from Xinghua Monastery only, ichnographically and stylistically many other murals from Southern Shanxi can be closely related to one other, which can be referred to here as school of Zhu Haogu. Steinhardt thus suggested that for the first time one could “isolate a specific dated, regional, craftsman-painter or workshop style in China”.

A follow-up study was published by Ka Bo Tsang in 1992, who regarded Zhu as a professional craftsman, as opposed to a literati painter, and the only one recorded in the historical text in the Yuan Dynasty. Based on her understandings of both inscriptive and historical texts, Tsang suggested Zhu was active “in the first half of the Yuan Dynasty, or more precisely, the last few decades of the thirteenth century to one or two decades of the fourteenth”; the style of his painting was dominant in Southern Shanxi until the third quarter of that century.

Although with differences in themes, as some are Buddhist and others Daoist, some focusing on depicting figures and others on narratives and landscapes, all murals attributed to School of Zhu Haogu are very, very similar in terms of the painting techniques. Because of the characteristic of Chinese timber buildings, instead of being load carriers, the walls of these building are filled in to enclose the rooms. Therefore, inferior material and workmanship may be used in the constructions of the walls, making them unsuitable for painting murals. To overcome this disadvantage, a thick layer of mud mortar, mixed with straw and rushes, is plastered over the

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165 Xiangling xianzhi, as quoted in Steinhardt, Nancy S. 1987: 7
166 Steinhardt, Nancy S. 1987: 19.
167 Tsang, Ka Bo, 1992: 109, 114-8
wall, on which a thin layer of pure lime mortar is covered, providing a smooth surface for painting. Without exception, the murals under discussion were all executed upon dry walls which had a plaster base mixed with straw and covered with clay.\textsuperscript{168}

The pigments were either mineral or vegetable. Red, green, gold, and in some cases, blue are the predominant colors. The murals also feature heavy outlining in black, the lines being strong, unbroken, and of even width, which is rarely seen from murals of other schools and is described by Chinese art critics as \textit{tiexie} 鐵線 (iron wire). Lu Hongnian 陸鴻年, an art educator and professional painter who in the 1950s copied the Yongle Palace murals before the monastery complex was moved from Yongji to Ruicheng, believed that the unbroken, even width lines were achieved through a special paint brush that was made of pig’s bristles.\textsuperscript{169}

As for the similarities in iconographies, it is suggested that pattern books of stock images and designs were passed from masters to apprentices and circulated within the workshop. Certain details might be repeated for generations with only minor changes as long as the standards of craftsmanship were maintained.\textsuperscript{170} A new chronology might be established based on a survey of all known murals attributed to school of Zhu Haogu.

\textbf{II. School of Zhu Haogu: A New Chronology}

It is now certain that \textit{Assembly of Tejaprabha} in the collection of Nelson-Atkins Museum and \textit{Assembly of Bhaisajyaguru} in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art are from the main hall of Guangsheng Lower Monastery and the ROM mural \textit{Assembly of Maitreya} from Xinghua Monastery. The issues of dating, provenance, technique, style and iconography will be re-addressed, based on stylistic analysis, inscriptive evidence and historiographic studies, and moreover, through the comparisons of the murals that still survive \textit{in situ}, including murals from Yongle Palace and Qinglong Monastery.

\textsuperscript{168} In pre-1960 scholarship, the wall-paintings of this type were described as frescoes. However, the technique used is not true fresco because the ground was not wet plaster.
\textsuperscript{169} Lu Hongnian. 1963: 45
\textsuperscript{170} Meng Sihui. 2011: 186-95
Assembly of Maitreya from Xinghua Monastery (Figure 3.2)

The mural was removed from Xinghua Monastery in 1923 and was brought to Beijing in 1926 in search of buyers.\textsuperscript{171} It entered the collection of the ROM in 1929. The knowledge of its original location was supplied by the dealer, which was verified by Li Ji and two Chinese students from Hongtong. Although it was confirmed that the mural came from the main hall, it is not certain from which of the gable walls it came. In his pioneering book on the study of Chinese wall-paintings, William C. White published an in-depth study of this mural. Although he might have made some mis-identifications on the figures represented, he correctly recognized the central Buddha as Maitreya based on the characteristic pose of the figure, who is seated with two pendent legs.\textsuperscript{172} A follow-up study of iconography indicates that the mural is featured by a tonsure ceremony, depicted on either side of the central composition.\textsuperscript{173} According to the scriptures about Maitreya, the figure being tonsured on the left is King Sankha, and on the right his consort Syamavati, the foremost of the 84,000 converted to the new Buddhist teaching.

According to the principle of symmetry, in the main hall of Xinhua Monastery, originally a mural with the same size and conception as that of the ROM mural must have occupied the gable wall on the opposite side. When Li Ji investigated the main hall in 1926, on both gable walls, there were only indications of the remains of murals from former times. Therefore, there is no evidence of the subject the pairing mural may represent. Fortunately, a clue comes from Qinglong Monastery, a Buddhist monastery eighteen kilometers north of Xinghua Monastery, where murals in the style of Zhu Haogu are preserved in the main hall. For Qinglong Monastery, the mural on the west gable wall represents Assembly of Maitreya. Though with smaller size and simpler design, its subject, composition, style and iconography are all the same in comparison with one of Xinghua Monastery murals (Figure 3.3). In the main hall of Qinglong Monastery, facing Assembly of Maitreya, the mural on the east gable wall represents Assembly of

\textsuperscript{171} Meng Sihui, 2011: 13-36.
\textsuperscript{172} White, William C. 1940: 122-53.
\textsuperscript{173} Bachhofer, Ludwig, 1947: 4-6.
Shakyamuni (Figure 3.4).\textsuperscript{174} Meng Sihui attempted a reconstruction of the imagery program of Xinhua Monastery, suggesting, given the proximity in distance between the two monasteries, Xinghua Monastery might have adopted the same imagery program as that of the Qinglong Monastery; thus, the ROM Assembly of Maitreya may also come from the west gable wall of the main hall.\textsuperscript{175}

It has been pointed out that dating the ROM mural became one the most controversial issues in the study of the Yuan murals from Southern Shanxi. I believe the year 1320 might be an acceptable date, which was already discussed above. Based on inscriptionsal evidence, it has been widely accepted that the ROM mural was executed by Zhu Haogu himself, and that it was probably the only surviving work of Zhu. However, the connection between the mural with the inscription is not definite. The mural was removed from the gable wall, but the inscription bearing the date and signature of Zhu Haogu was recovered from the east corner of the north wall. Nancy S. Steinhardt correctly pointed out that, one must determine “if a single inscription can be considered a reference to a work executed at a multi-hall site.”\textsuperscript{176} Executed by the hands of Zhu Haogu or not, no doubt the ROM mural is indicative of his style, and is one of the earlier works of the Zhu Haogu School of Wall-painting. The importance of the ROM mural can never be underestimated. Lippe compared it with the Nelson and MET murals from the Guangsheng Lower Monastery, arguing that the ROM piece is presumably earlier, because the color scheme is a little simpler and the lines are powerful but less flamboyant.\textsuperscript{177}

Seven Historical Buddhas from Xinghua Monastery (Figure 3.5)

Like the above-discussed ROM mural, Seven Historical Buddhas was also removed from Xinghua Monastery in 1923. Acquired by Peking University in 1926, it entered the collection of

\textsuperscript{174} According to the inscriptions recovered from the main hall, Assembly of Maitreya was executed by Guo Siqi from the County of Wanrong in 1385; Assembly of Shakyamuni was executed by Liu Dingxin from the County of Hejin in the same year.
\textsuperscript{175} Meng Sihui, 2011: 63-77.
\textsuperscript{176} Steinhardt, Nancy S. 1987: 10.
\textsuperscript{177} Lippe thus dated the Metropolitan Museum and Nelson pieces to the first half of the fourteenth century, more specifically to the second quarter of that century. Lippe. Aschwin. 1965: 325-35.
the Palace Museum in Beijing in 1952. Not many studies have been carried out because the mural has not been on exhibition for over two decades and thus has not been accessible to most scholars in China and the West. The most comprehensive study of this mural was published in 2011 by Meng Sihui. Although the two murals came from two different halls, as Seven Historical Buddhas was from the middle hall and the ROM Assembly of Maitreya from the main hall, the two murals together with a missing Assembly of Sakyamuni, formed an integrated imagery program for the entire Xinghua Monastery.\(^{178}\) Because of the affinities in style and iconography, it feels safe to me to follow the date of the ROM mural and put the date of Seven Historical Buddhas to circa. 1320.

When Li Ji visited Xinghua Monastery in 1926, he found fragments of murals on the south wall of the middle hall. Proved to be the missing portion of Seven Historical Buddhas, the fragments were removed from the wall and sent to Beijing to be remounted with the mural then in the collection of Peking University.\(^{179}\) Thus, that the mural came from the south wall of the middle hall is verified. Though the monastery was destroyed in the early 1940s, some of its architecture was photographed by two Chinese students commissioned by William C. White. Based on the photos given to him, White makes the following abbreviations regarding the architecture of the middle hall, "according to the principles of temple architecture, this Hall should really be the corridor (kuo t’ing) between the North and South, but the Hall has no south entrance (men), and the figures are orientated facing north. The outside of the Hall is similar to that of the North Hall."\(^{180}\) A special layout, usually for a court enclosed within a monastery compound can be reconstructed from the descriptions above. Normally the court is composed of two halls, with a hall in the south orientated toward the north, and a hall in the north orientated toward the south. Because the hall in the south has an entrance facing north, it is called daozuo 倒座 (translated literally as "seats in the opposite position"), which was popular in Southern Shanxi during the

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\(^{178}\) Meng Sihui, 2011: 63-77.
\(^{179}\) Meng Sihui, 2011: 63.
\(^{180}\) White, William C.: 1940: 53
Yuan period. The southern hall of above-mentioned Qinglong Monastery is also a Yuan example of daozu located in Southern Shanxi.

*Homage to the Highest Power from an unknown Daoist temple (Figure 3.6)*

The two Daoist murals form a pair that was removed from an unknown temple in Southern Shanxi presumably in the 1920s. The murals were in the possessions of Yamanaka and Co. before they were sold to the ROM in 1937. They became two of the three murals White studied in his book of 1940. The murals represent processions of Daoist deities. White named them *The Lord of the Northern Dipper* and *The Lord of the Southern Dipper* respectively, based on the leading figures he recognized in each of the processions. Since the 1950s, when murals of Sanqing Hall at Yongle Palace were discovered, new light has been shed on the Daoist murals of the Yuan Dynasty. In the center of Sanqing Hall is an altar enclosed by the horizontal partition wall, a wall in the north and two shorter walls on the east and west. Facing south, statues of Three Purities are placed on the altar against the north wall. A complete Daoist pantheon is painted on the walls of the hall and the altar. Deities are grouped together, moved in procession toward Three Purities seated on the altar. Apparently, the ROM pair belong to the same temple setting as that of Sanqing Hall, thus carrying the same idea and concept. Therefore, it is reasonable to name the ROM pair after that of Yongle Palace, as *Chaoyuan tu* (Homage to the Highest Power). However, in terms of style, it is closer to the ROM *Assembly of Maitreya*, appearing to be the early work of the Zhu Haogu School.

Based on the information supplied by the dealer, the ROM pair came from Longmen Monastery (the Monastery of Dragon Gate) in the county of Quwo. For nearly half a century, starting from William C. White, scholars have been trying to determine where this Longmen Monastery is located. Unfortunately, neither local gazetteers nor field investigations have shown traces of such monastery in either Quwo or counties nearby.  

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181 There is a place called Longmen just west of Jishan. It gets the name from the narrowing of the Yellow River.
monastery is not even a name of a Daoist temple, I believe, this identification is another unreliable information the dealers made up to mislead the buyers.

Since the 1990s, an entry from a local gazetteer *Taiping xianzhi* 太平县志\(^{182}\) has caught the attention of the scholar. It reads:\(^{183}\)

“Xiu zhen guan was located on a high mound to the south of the West Gate of this township. Its walls were decorated with figures executed by Zhu Haogu of the Yuan Dynasty. His brush work was so refined and divine [that it seemed capable of causing] a painted dragon to fly away by dotting its eyes.”

This Daoist Xiuzhen Temple is believed to have been demolished sometime before 1949. Because the temple had murals executed by Zhu Haogu, a master-painter whose name was recorded in local gazetteers, Xiuzhen Temple cannot be a humble temple in the county of Taiping (part of today Xiangfen). Due to the monumental size and exceptional quality, the ROM *Homage to the Highest Power* should also come from one of the eminent Daoist temples in the region of Southern Shanxi. Is it possible that the ROM pair once belonged to Xiuzhen guan? The hypothesis must be verified by future studies.

**Assembly of Tejaprabha and Assembly of Bhaisajyaguru from Guangsheng Lower Monastery (Figure 3.7 and Figure 3.8)**

Another pair is one mural in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (hereafter MET) and one in the collection of the Nelson Atkins Museum. There is no doubt that the pair came from the main hall of Guangsheng Lower Monastery, as the fragments of murals left on the east gable wall of the main hall have been confirmed as the missing potion of the.

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\(^{182}\) The county of Taiping was renamed Fencheng in the early Republican period. Today it is a part of the county Xiangfen.

\(^{183}\) The Chinese text is quoted by Meng Sihui. See Meng Sihui, 2011: 188; the English translation is after Ka Bo Tsang with modifications. See Tsang, Ka Bo, 1992: 108.
Nelson piece.\textsuperscript{184} Refer to Digital Model 2 for the reconstructions of the Nelson mural and the east gable wall of the main hall.

According to the study of Anning Jing, the date of completion is between 1309 and 1319. Jing argues that, 1309, the construction date of the main hall, is an undoubted \textit{terminus post quem} for the murals housed in the building. He then refers to the 1319 stele on the restoration of the Water God Temple, in which Guangsheng Monastery is described as “most magnificent and beautiful”. Jing argues that, the Lower Monastery must have fully recovered from the earthquake by then, thus the mural of the main hall should already be completed.\textsuperscript{185} Though Jing’s argument has been widely accepted since then, in my opinion, it needs to be re-discussed. I have already discussed in Chapter One that the monastery of “most magnificent and beautiful” as it was described by the stele of 1319 cannot refer to the subsidiary monastery at the foot of the hill, the architecture of which survives today, but the monastery standing on the top of the hill that was destroyed when the Yuan fell.

This puzzle of dating might be removed by a clearly dated mural fragment that is believed to be from the same building of the Lower Monastery (Figure 3.9). This fragment, around 416.9 cm tall and 297.3 cm wide, was given by C. T. Loo in 1950 to the Cincinnati Art Museum as a gift. According to the curatorial files of the museum, Loo declared that the mural came from the Lower Monastery of Guangsheng Monastery.\textsuperscript{186} Laurence Sickman suggested it came from the same hall where the mural in Kansas City was painted. From its size and composition, as well as the inscriptive description, it is now believed by the Cincinnati Art Museum that this fragment apparently occupied one of the two panels on either side of the entrance.\textsuperscript{187}

The Cincinnati Art Museum names the fragment \textit{Wenshu, Bodhisattva of Wisdom, at a Writing Table} because the seated figure represents Bodhisattva Manjushri composing the

\textsuperscript{184} Meng Sihui, 2011: 88+Figure 42.         
\textsuperscript{185} Jing, Anning, 1991: 159.         
\textsuperscript{186} Avril, Ellen B. 1997: 67-8+footnote 1.         
\textsuperscript{187} Lippe, Aschwin, 1965: 326.
Prajnaparamita Sutra (also known as Heart Sutra) The mural is accompanied with an inscription that was written in the upper right-hand corner of the fragment. Unfortunately, a large portion of the inscription is damaged, and only a few characters can be transcribed:

“South [?] wall. [?] upper Zhang village [?]. Li Shih… [2 missing names] … Wang Renqi, Li Hengfu (?), Li Tong[?]

(Buddhist) master Xiao [?], Gao Youde.

May each of you protect your body from harm, may the family soon find tranquility, and may all members, whether senior or junior, be kept safe.

Fourteenth year of the Zhi Zheng reign in the cyclical year Jia Wu [1354], [?] month.”

Shangzhang cun 上张村 (the upper Zhang village) mentioned in the inscription above is located twenty-five kilometers south of Guangsheng Monastery. Nanqiang 南牆 (south wall) mentioned in the text is an indication of location, which could be one of the panels on the south wall flanking the doorway. The curator of the Cincinnati Art Museum believes that the inscription follows a format similar to those of inscriptions dated 1358 in Chunyang Hall of Yongle Palace, which listed the names of the craftsmen with distinctions between masters and apprentices. It seems to me that the Cincinnati inscription is a devotional inscription, as names in the inscription are those of devotees from local villages rather than craftsmen who executed the murals. However, the date of 1354 is definite. If the Cincinnati fragment is indeed from the main hall of The Lower Monastery, the Nelson and MET pieces could also be dated to the same period, circa. 1354.

\[188\) I will come back in the Conclusion to analyze the content and iconography of this mural fragment. For the identification of the Cincinnati Museum, see Avril, Ellen B. 1997: 67-8.

\[189\) Avril, Ellen B. 1997: 67.
III. Case of the Penn Murals: Iconographic Identification

What the Penn Museum acquired in 1926 included three panels plus a small section, all of which were reassembled together in the museum to form an enormous mural. When the mural was removed from the wall of the monastery, it was cut off into small square sections. It seems inevitable that some fragments were destroyed either during removal or transportation. When Helen Fernald pieced all sections together in the gallery, as if she was working on jigsaw puzzle, she found that about two-fifths of the composition was missing. Fortunately, three years later, the museum purchased from C. T. Loo, the same dealer of the first purchase, two missing portions and reunited them with the rest of the mural already installed in the gallery. Some parts were still missing, but the central and main parts of mural were practically complete.

Fernald had made some preliminary studies of the iconography as well as the themes which the murals may have represented. She believed that a Buddhist assembly was represented. The assembly was arranged symmetrically around a large central image of the Buddha in one of his manifestations. The Buddha is flanked by two major bodhisattvas, and the triad is in turn surrounded by a host of other divine and mythological figures. Fernald then identified the Buddha in the center of one picture as Sakyamuni, who is seated cross ankle on a throne, turning the Wheel of the Law.190 Seated on his right was, according to Fernald, Avalokiteshvara, and on his left Maitreya, both seated with legs down and turned slightly toward the Buddha. Minor bodhisattvas and deities are standing around the three major figures. In the foreground, are child devotees making offerings and a figure in a monk’s robe making adoration.

In 1927, the Penn Museum successfully obtained another large mural assumed to be the pair of the previously purchased mural. Thus, the museum possessed almost in their entirety murals from the two gable walls of the same building. The newly acquired mural shared the same scheme of design as the first one: the Buddha Triad. Fernald once again identified the central Buddha as Sakyamuni. She made different identifications for the two great bodhisattvas,

190 Fernald, Helen. 1926: 231.
the one seated on Buddha’s left as Akasagarbha, and he one on the right as Ksitigarbha. For convenience, she referred to the mural of the first purchase as “Kuan Yin” (Guanyin) mural, and the second one “Hu Kung-tsang” (Xu Kongzang 虚空藏) mural based on the Chinese pronunciation of the two Bodhisattvas.\footnote{Fernald, Helen. 1927: 113–4.}

As a pioneering work, Fernald’s identification was tentative and preliminary. However, hers was not an easy task because both murals have some parts missing and there is also a lack of documentary evidence. Neither inscriptions nor historical records are available. According to Mahayana Buddhism, the Buddha has many different aspects and manifestations. The Penn murals may represent two of them. Since the number of the figures, their positions, and even gestures of the figures all have symbolic meaning, a knowledge of this symbolism should make it possible to recognize them. In order to correctly identify the specific manifestations, scholars must be familiar with the Buddhist sutras and the associated symbolism, linking them to the iconographic attributes the murals may carry.

It is almost forty years later when the identification of Fernald was modified by Aschwin Lippe, who in 1965 re-identified the “Kuan Yin” mural as Assembly of the Buddha Tejaprabha (Figure 3.10).\footnote{Lippe, Aschwin. 1965: 325-35.} It is a book which was held by one of the flanking bodhisattvas that gave Lippe clue. The book has a title of five Chinese characters. Unfortunately, the third and fourth characters are almost illegible. Shortly after the mural’s arrival at the Penn Museum in 1926, John E. Lodge (1876-1942), the director of Freer Gallery, helped to decipher the title which reads as Foshuo xiaozaizi jing 佛說消災經, translated as Sutra Spoken by the Buddha Which Dispels All Calamities.\footnote{Helen Fernald, 1927: 122.} The full title is Sutra Spoken by the Buddha, [giving] the Mantra of the Gold Wheel Buddha-head of Great Virtue, Tejaprabha Tathagata, Which Dispels All Calamities 佛說熾盛光大
威德消災吉祥陀羅尼經, also known as the Tejaprabha Sutra, which was translated into Chinese by the famous Indian monk Amoghavajra 不空 (705-74) in the eighth century.

With the name of Sutra identified, there is no doubt that the central Buddha of the first Penn mural represented the Buddha Tejaprabha. According to the Sutra, Buddha Tejaprabha should hold a golden sun-chariot wheel which symbolizes universal sovereignty and the Law in action; the Buddha should have an entourage of celestial divinities known as jiū yào 九曜 (Nine Luminaries), which includes the five known planets (Mercury, Venus, Saturn, Jupiter and Mars), plus the Sun and the Moon and two dark stars (Rahu 羅睺 and Ketu 計都).\(^{194}\)

Lippe thus successfully recognized most figures that appear on the mural. Their identities match the descriptions of the Sutra perfectly.\(^{195}\) It can be seen on the Penn mural (Figure 3.11) that the Buddha Tejaprabha is holding a golden sun-chariot wheel in his left hand. Flanking the Buddha and the two seated bodhisattvas, there are two standing figures wearing Chinese royal robes. The male figure who looks like the emperor has a red disk in his crown, which represents the Sun; the female figure who looks like the empress has a white disk in her crown, which represents the Moon. Between the Buddha and the seated bodhisattvas, two female figures are standing on each side. The figure on the left has a star-shaped disk in her crown containing a monkey. She represents Mercury who is holding a scroll in her left hand and a pen in her right hand. The figure on the right has a disk in her crown containing a cock. She represents Venus because of an instrument, a pipa 琵琶, that she carries. Jupiter is standing on the left of the Sun bearing a plate with three peaches. Behind the Sun and Jupiter are two demonic creatures with green faces, representing Rahu and Ketu, stellar deities which are thought to cause eclipses. Based on the principle of symmetry, Lippe believed that at least three deities were missing from the Moon's side. The missing deities should include Mars and Saturn.

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\(^{194}\) Rahu is the cause of solar eclipse; Ketu is the cause of lunar eclipse.

\(^{195}\) Lippe, Aschwin. 1965: 332.
Only one bodhisattva is mentioned in *The Tejaprabha Sutra*, Manjusri, the bodhisattva of wisdom. Therefore, the identifications of the two seated bodhisattvas become a problem. Manjusri often appears in a triad with the Buddha Sakyamuni and the bodhisattva Samantabhadra to form *Huayan sansheng* 華嚴三聖 (The Three Sacred Ones of Huayan). Lippe suggested that, the two seated bodhisattvas should represent Manjusri and Samantabhadra because Tejaprabha is a rather late arrival in the Buddhist pantheon and his assembly might borrow the deities from the assembly of Sakyamuni. However, one contradiction lies in the fact that Manjusri often holds a book and always occupies the place of honor on Buddha’s left, and in the Penn mural, the book is hold by the bodhisattva seated on the right.

Lippe successfully solved the puzzle of the first Penn mural, but problems remained for the second one. Although he agreed with most scholars suggesting the subject of it to be the Assembly of Sakyamuni, he emphasized that “no specific interpretation can be offered with any confidence whatever”. The puzzle was removed in 1991 with the new identifications proposed by Anning Jing who suggested that the central Buddha depicted represents Buddha Bhaisajyaguru (Figure 3.12). Jing claimed that the iconographies of the second Penn mural are a good match with the descriptions of *Yaoshi liuliguang rulai benyuan gongde jing* 僧師琉璃光如來本願功德經 (*the Bhaisajyaguru Purvapranidhana Sutra*). The Sutra gives the Buddha Bhaisajyaguru three iconographical attributes: teaching *mudra*, a monk’s staff and a medicine jar. It also gives names of two great flanking bodhisattvas of Bhaisajyaguru: Suryaprabha, also known as the Sun-light Bodhisattva, and Candraprabha, also known as the Moon-light Bodhisattva. According to the Sutra, the Buddha Bhaisajyaguru also has an entourage of twelve

197 Ibid
guardian generals, symbolizing the Buddha’s twelve great vows, which is to protect the faithful and to free the men from sufferings.\footnote{Jing, Anning, 1991: 153}

It can be seen on the mural (Figure 3.13) that, the Buddha has his right hand in the teaching \textit{mudra}, and has his left hand placed on his left knee with palm turned downward. Two martial figures are standing on each side of the Buddha. On the left, one figure holds a medicine pill and the other holds an empty jar. On the right, a monk’s staff is carried by one guardian general, but no items are depicted for the other one. With all three attributes of Bhaisajyaguru identified, the identity of the Buddha should be accepted with no doubts. This identification is verified by more evidence, as Sun disk is shown on the headdress of the seated bodhisattva on the left, and moon disk on the right. Thus, Suryaprabha and Candraprabha can also be recognized. Eight generals are depicted, with six standing on the right side and two on the left. Once again, considering the composition in symmetry, four figures are missing from the left, which would total twelve generals in the original composition, a good match of the twelve vows as is stipulated in the sutra.

Recently an important discovery was made by Meng Sihui, who identified three mural fragments now in the collection of the Musée Guimet in Paris as the missing portion of the Penn mural.\footnote{Meng Sihui, 2011: 112-3.} The three fragments had been in the processions of C. T. Loo’s since the 1920s and were given to the Musée Guimet as a gift in the late 1940s (Figure 3.14). In her book of 2011, Meng published a digital reconstruction that pieces together the Penn mural and its missing parts. Four guardian generals are depicted on three fragments in the Musée Guimet, which confirms the assumption of twelve generals in the original composition.

Tejaprabha, known as the Buddha of Blazing Light, has a primary function of giving protection against natural calamities, especially of celestial origin. Bhaisajyaguru, known as the Healing or Medicine Buddha, is always associated with longevity and guards against untimely death. However, it is pointed out by Anning Jing that traditionally, Bhaisajyaguru was not paired
with Tejaprabha. In about ninety-six caves in Dunhuang which contain paradise paintings of Bhaisajyaguru, ranging in date from the Sui Dynasty (581-618) to Song Dynasty, there is not a single case in which the Paradise of Bhaisajyaguru is paired with the Assembly of Tejaprabha.\textsuperscript{201}

Interestingly, the case of the Penn mural is not unique. The Nelson mural and the Metropolitan Museum mural that came from the two gable walls of the same building, form the same pair of Bhaisajyaguru and Tejaprabha.

\textbf{IV. Case of the Penn Murals: Date and Original Location Reconsidered}

It has been widely accepted by scholars, including the curators of the Penn Museum, that the Penn murals should be dated to the fourth quarter of the fifteenth century. This date is determined by the construction date of a building, the front hall of Guangsheng Lower Monastery, which is believed to be the source of the Penn murals. According to a commemorative stele erected in front of this building, the construction was completed in 1475, which is established as the \textit{terminus ante quem} for the Penn murals.\textsuperscript{202}

When the University museum made its first mural purchase in 1926, the museum was told that the mural "came from a mountain monastery of Honan province which tradition says was built in the Tang Dynasty".\textsuperscript{203} In the 1920s, all confirmed Tang murals known to art historians were preserved in the Buddhist grottoes in the remote desert, for instances, Dunhuang, Turfan and Kucha. It is doubtful that any Tang murals are still in existence in north China due to the lack of confirmed Tang buildings that have survived in the same area. Fernald was excited about the comparisons between the mural and other well-known Ming and Qing murals from Henan, Hebei and Beijing, because this one was not only unique in style, but also of a higher artistic merit. In the Tang Dynasty, wall-painting reached its highest mark in China under its great Master Wu Daozi 吳道子 (active in the first half of the eighth century). Without much hesitation, Fernald

\textsuperscript{201} Jing, Anning. 1991: 155
\textsuperscript{202} Chongxiu qianfodian luochengji bei 重修前佛殿落成记碑 \textit{(Stele of the Completion of the Rebuild of the Front Hall)}, erected in 1476.
\textsuperscript{203} Fernald, Helen. 1926: 244
attributed the mural to the Wu Daozi school of Tang Dynasty, arguing that “some time, in some hidden and forgotten mountain monastery near the old seats of Chinese civilization, some fresco of an earlier period might be brought to light”. The provenance provided by the dealers tended to confirm her argument.

When the second purchase was made in 1927, the dealer provided more information regarding the murals’ original locality. It was claimed that the murals came from Yueshan Monastery 月山寺 (Moon Hill Monastery), which is situated at the foot of the mountains along the Shansi-Henan border, about five li north of “Ching Hua Chen” (清化鎮) of Henan Province.

From all the information available, Fernald focused her study on local gazetteers in order to find out more details about his Yueshan Monastery. The text tells her that the monastery was not yet established in the Tang Dynasty but was founded “in the Song period in 1181”. There are also accounts indicating that the monastery was partly rebuilt around 1325 in the Yuan period and was repaired extensively in 1405 of the early Ming. Taking the records of repair into consideration, in her third article on the Penn murals published in 1929, Fernald abandoned the Tang Dynasty hypothesis and re-dated the murals to the early Ming Dynasty executed following the Tang tradition. This date was modified again in the 1930s by Horace Jayne (1898-1975), the Chinese art curator who succeeded Fernald, who argued that the murals “evidently follow closely the artistic traditions of the great Tang Dynasty and yet contain elements of a considerably later date. It would seem safe to assign them to sometime between the beginning of the fourteenth and the end of the sixteenth century”.

The provenance given to the curators of course was not reliable, which misled the studies that followed. It seems that antique dealers have told the same story many times. Moon Hill Monastery and the mountains along the “Shansi-Honan border” were claimed to be the source of

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204 Fernald, Helen. 1926, 231.
205 Fernald, Helen. 1927, 109.
206 During that period the area was under the rule of the Jin Dynasty.
many other famous objects sold to Western collectors. For example, from 1924-25 George Eumorfopoulos (1863-1939) purchased a group of Buddhist murals, which was claimed to come from Yueshan dong 月山洞 (Moon Hill Cave), five li north of the county Yuanqu 垣曲. In 1949 C. T. Loo tried to sell a group of Song murals and claimed they came from a mountain monastery near the “Shansi-Honan border”. In both cases, the claimed source has never been verified by scholars.

In his publication of 1937, Laurence Sickman revealed a new place, Guangsheng Monastery of Zhaocheng, which he believed was “the source of a series of great Buddhist wall paintings now exhibited in various Western museums”. In a footnote of that article, he included the Penn Museum as one of those Western museums but did not explain how he determined this. One year after, William C. White commissioned the two Chinese students from Hongtong to investigate Buddhist monasteries in the counties near Linfen, especially Xinghua Monastery and Guangsheng Monastery. As mentioned above, White claimed in his book of 1940 that doubt about the Penn mural’s source has now been removed “by the fact that the chief abbot of the Kuang Sheng Ssu (Guangshengsi) has recognized, from the photographs, the Philadelphia frescoes as originally belonging to his monastery, and has given assurance that they came from the Lower Monastery.”

To offer further verification, Ashwin Lippe compares the size of the Penn murals to that of the front hall. Each of the Penn murals is measured about eighteen feet high and thirty feet long. Taking the missing portion into consideration, Lippe assumes that the original length is about thirty-two feet. As the gable walls of the front hall is about thirty-three feet long, it seems safe to conclude that the Penn murals came from the Lower Monastery and were originally located at

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209 George Eumorfopoulos was a British collector of Chinese, Korean and Near Eastern art. The murals discussed are now in the collection of the British Museum.
210 Binyon, Laurence, 1927:1
211 C. T. Loo & Co. 1949: 2
212 Sickman, Laurence. 1937: 53 and footnote 2.
213 White, William C. 1940, 23.
either end of the front hall. This conclusion has been accepted by scholars who are interested
in the Penn murals ever since. Then, the date of the murals must be sometime after the
construction date of the host building, which makes the year 1475 as the date terminus post
 quem of the Penn murals.

However, the conclusion that the Penn murals were painted after 1475 has puzzled me. Not
to mention the other places in the region of Southern Shanxi, in the Upper Monastery there are
existing murals of the fifteenth and sixteenth century, the dates of which are proved by
inscriptions. For example, mural from the front hall (the Amitabh hall) is 1591 (Figure 3.15) and
those of the back hall (the Vairocana hall) and xi duodian (the western ear building) are
both 1513. By comparing the Penn murals with others from the same region, especially those
still in situ in the Upper Monastery, it is hard to date them to either the fifteenth or sixteenth
century. They contain certain elements of considerably early date and employ a markedly
different style and technique. On stylistic grounds alone one would attribute them to school of
Zhu Haogu, more likely works of first half of the fourteenth century.

Furthermore, it will be discussed in the next section of this chapter that most of the works of
the Zhu Haogu school were produced in the first half of the fourteenth century. The latest known
work is from the main hall of Qinglong Monastery at Jishan. Bearing a date of 1385, the
murals already show a sharp decline in quality if compared with the earlier works of the Zhu
Haogu School. Is it possible that the Penn murals are indeed fourteenth century works but
without the characteristics clearly associated with that period in southern Shanxi? To answer this
question, some “established facts” must be re-examined accordingly.

The issue of provenance must be re-examined for more historical facts. Unsurprisingly,
based on the evidences I have collected, I will prove that it is not possible for the Penn murals to

216 For details of the three inscriptions, see Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 109-12.
be from the front hall of Guangsheng Monastery, or from any other buildings of that monastery, including the Upper and Lower Monastery. Firstly, let us reevaluate the accounts made by Laurence Sickman, the first scholar who proposed Guangsheng Monastery as the source of the Penn murals. According to the study of Michele Baldwin, on his visit to Guangsheng Monastery in 1934, Sickman was told by the abbot that the monks had sold the murals from the Lower Monastery to art dealers in the 1920s in order to finance renovations, and that these paintings were already in the United States. Sickman then inferred that the Nelson murals had come from Guangsheng Monastery. This inference was confirmed in 1938 when the Chinese students commissioned by William C. White visited the monastery and showed a photograph of the Nelson-Atkins murals to the abbot. The Abbot confirmed that it was one of the paintings that had been sold by his temple.217

For Laurence Sickman, it is the Nelson mural, not the Penn mural, the focus of his investigations, though he did add in a footnote of his 1937 article that the Penn murals also came from Guangsheng Monastery. Sickman confirmed that murals were removed the monastery and sold to the dealers in the 1920s. Nevertheless, he did not mention it was a sale of high profile, as local gentries and the mayor of Zhaocheng county, all participated in negotiating the deal. The monk took the sale of this property very seriously. Even a stone stele was erected in 1929 to explain why this sale was made in the previous year218.

Last year, guests coming from afar, said antique-likers are interested in the wall-paintings of the Buddha hall, which are worth more than a thousand pieces of gold. Thus, monk Zhenda invited the gentries nearby to jointly evaluate the price. The general opinion is that, lacking restoration funds has become a pity for many years; if (the monastery) did not take this opportunity, the building might collapse in the future, and the images within would be destroyed as the result. Therefore, after many negotiations, the murals were sold for one thousand six hundred silver dollars.

217 Baldwin, Michelle, 1994: 244-6 and footnote 19, 20. Baldwin received the quoted information from her correspondence with Heather Peters, the keeper of Asian art at the Penn Museum, in 1990.
218 The stele is standing in front of the main hall of the Lower Monastery. The stele text is titled Chongxu Guangsheng xiasi fomiao xu (The Preface to the Restorations of the Buddhist Temples of Guangsheng Lower Monastery)
According to the inscription, the murals were sold in 1928, which is two years before the purchase of the Penn murals. It has also been verified that the murals sold all came from the main hall. 

*Assembly of the Buddha Tejaprabha*, located on the east gable wall, was acquired by the Nelson-Atkins Museum in 1932. *Assembly of the Buddha Bhaisajyaguru*, located on the west gable wall, was sold to Arthur M. Sackler (1913-87) who later gave it to the Metropolitan Museum in 1964 in honor of his parents. So far, no inscriptive evidence regarding the murals of the front hall has been recovered from the monastery. Is it possible that murals of the front hall were removed and sold to the antique dealers some time before 1926 without a record? Considering that these activities occurred in the 1920s, the monastery had been well-managed by the monks and supervised by the gentry nearby, it is possible but unlikely.

Secondly, as for the confirmation of the two Chinese students in 1938, according to White, the abbot of Guangsheng Monastery recognized the Penn murals from the photographs and confirmed that they came from the Lower Monastery.\(^{219}\) However, I suspect if the abbot had made the correct identifications, because the Penn murals, the Nelson mural and the ROM mural appear to be similar in all aspects including composition, conception, iconography and style. The abbot merely confirmed that murals came from the Lower Monastery, without specifying which hall they came from.

Thirdly, more doubts have been raised by *in situ* observations. In 2006, when the monastery went through a major restoration, fragments of murals were recovered from the east gable wall of the front hall. The fragments contain some standing figures, about fifty centimeters tall, who are grouped, five or six figures in one group, in terms of their identities. Title cartouches were made to indicate the identities of the deities (Figure 3.16). From the figures depicted as well as the title cartouches, there is no doubt that these newly recovered fragments are works of *shuiluhua* 水陸

\(^{219}\) White, William C. 1940, 23; Lippe, Ashwin. 1965: 326
(paintings of water and land), produced for the service of the Water-Land Ritual. In Chinese Buddhist monasteries, *shuilu fahui* (the Water-Land Assembly) is organized to perform “the ritual of the hungry ghosts” for the salvation of the souls of the dead on land and sea, especially the sponsoring family’s ancestors and deceased relatives. The rituals have been popular since the Northern Song and remained so until the early Republican period. Images are the essential component of the Water-Land Ritual. Due to the large number of deities summoned, the images were either painted on the walls or on the hanging scrolls, which are usually composed to form a large set.

The fragments left on the east gable wall appear to be in late Ming style. On the one hand, it is unlikely that murals with late style were covered by ones appearing in earlier style. On the other hand, to remove the murals from the walls and transport them long distances, the surface and its thick plaster bases must be kept together to protect the murals from damages. If the Penn murals were indeed removed from the front hall, there is little chance that large pieces of fragments remained on the gable wall of that building.

Fourthly, the imagery program of the front hall and the entire monastery must be considered. It is confirmed that that the Penn murals represent the assemblies of Buddha Tejaprabha and Bhaisajyaguru. The Nelson and Metropolitan Museum murals represent the same assemblies, and it is confirmed that the pair came from the main hall of the Lower Monastery. The hall is dedicated to Vairocana, a celestial Buddha and fundamental principle of universe according to the Huayan doctrine of Chinese Buddhism. However, known as Mituo dian (the Amitabha hall), the front hall of the Lower Monastery is dedicated to Amitabha, Buddha who presides the Pure Land of the West as the savoir of the deceased. Can Tejaprabha and Bhaisajyaguru be

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220 For the nature and details of the rites performed in the Water-Land Assembly, see Atkinson, Alan G. 1994: 280-7.
221 For the surviving works of the Water-Land murals, the famous examples include the Jin murals from Yanshan Monastery at Fanshi, the Yuan murals from Qingsong Monastery at Jishan, the Ming and Yuan murals from Pilu Monastery at Shijiazhuang, the Ming murals from Zhaohua Monastery at Huaian, the Ming murals from Gongzhu Monastery at Fanshi and the Ming murals from Yunlin Monastery at Yanggao.
accommodated in the hall of Amitabh? No such program has been found in other places of Shanxi or anywhere in China. Unsurprisingly murals of Water-Land were recovered in the front hall, because it is a proper place for performing the Water-Land Ritual. In Southern Shanxi, the Amitabh/Water-Land program is seen also at the front hall of the Upper Monastery and the front hall of Qinglong Monastery at Jishan. Furthermore, it is also less likely that, images of Tejaprabha and Bhaishajyaguru, which already occupy the gable walls of the main hall, be repeated at the front hall of the same monastery.

Finally, in terms of size, the Penn murals may not fit into the front hall. I measured the length of the Penn murals when they were exhibited in the Chinese rotunda of the Penn Museum. Because large portions are missing from the left side of the Bhaishajyaguru piece and the right side of the Tejaprabha piece, I measured two relatively complete halves, then estimated the full length based on the principle of symmetry. According to my estimation, each of the Penn murals is at least thirty-four feet long, which cannot be painted on the thirty-three feet long gable walls of the front hall.222

Unfortunately, the original location of the Penn murals cannot be determined yet based on the information we’ve known so far. We know for a fact they came from a Buddha hall which has a similar imagery program, Tejaprabha-Bhaishajyaguru, as that of the main hall of the Lower Monastery. Considering similar cases – from the main halls of Xinhua Monastery and Qinglong Monastery – of Maitreya and Shakyamuni, this unidentified monastery could be in the vicinity of Guangsheng Monastery.223 If the Penn murals are indeed not from the front hall of the Lower Monastery, the date of 1475 as terminus post quem should be reconsidered accordingly.

222 Lippe estimates the length of each of the Penn murals to be about thirty-two feet. See Lippe, Ashwin. 1965: 326. For the plan of the front hall, see Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin, 2006: 193.
223 I investigated a number of sites in the nearby area. So far, no places have been found as a possible source of the Penn murals. The monasteries I investigated include Taiyun Monastery at Shiqiao Village 石橋村泰雲寺 and Huayan Monastery at Mamu Village 馬牧村華嚴寺. Both monasteries are located in the county of Hongtong and have the main hall dated to the first half of the fourteenth century survived at the site.
Murals had been extensively painted in temples and monasteries since the Tang period. But there are no records of any distinguished painters of the Ming and Qing dynasties who decorated walls with murals. The Yuan period seems to be transitional. Da’ange (the Pavilion of Great Peace), the audience hall of the palace compound in Shangdu, was decorated with murals executed by Wang Zhenpeng 王振鵬 (circa. 1275-1330), who began his career as a craftsman, whose works were appreciated by Mongol elite, including Ayurbarwada, the future emperor Renzong. In 1311, after Ayurbarwada came to the throne, he made Wang a court painter. Literary evidence reveals that Zhu Haogu was also a craftsman. Though he was famous for landscape and figure paintings, he never had the national names of Wang did. The murals we discussed so far were executed by Zhu Haogu and his followers whose profession was hereditary. In most cases, their works were to be signed and inscriptions include the native places and the genealogical lists of the craftsmen. It is indicated that masters and apprentices worked together as a team. Normally, master-painters sketched the outlines and draw over in thick black ink, then apprentices filled up the colors. Similarities in the surviving examples suggest common sources, pattern books circulated and inherited within the workshops.

**Concluding notes:**

The region of Southern Shanxi is the economic and cultural pulse of Shanxi province throughout the centuries. Today, scattered across the region are numerous architectural remains from the Mongol-Yuan period, many of which had murals and statues preserved in the early twentieth century. It is widely acknowledged that Southern Shanxi has produced one of the most emblematic collections of Yuan-period murals in terms of both styles and compositions. However, aside from two locales – the one being Yongle Palace in Yongji County, and the other being Qinglong Monastery in Jishan County – almost all remnants of historical murals have been lost; many were brought out of Shanxi by art dealers in the 1920s.

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224 For the biography of Wang Zhenpeng and his role in painting the murals for Da’an ge, see Liang Qixiong, 1930: 138.
Scholars from both China and abroad have extensively studied this body of murals and accumulated detailed knowledge of their styles, iconographies, techniques and chronology. In the 1980s, Nancy S Steinhardt proposed the now generally accepted term “the Zhu Haogu School” to refer to this body of murals. Presently, only one prominent work remains in China in the collections of the Palace Museum in Beijing, titled *Lecture of the Seven Buddhas of the Past* taken from the Xinghua Monastery of Jishan County. Collections by North American institutions are comparatively abundant. Four North American museums hold collections of murals from not only Xinghua Monastery, but also ones from the Guangsheng Lower Monastery of Zhaocheng County (part of present-day Hongtong County) as well as a series of seven murals from an unspecified monastery. Additionally, partial mural remains are known to exist in even more museums and personal collections in North America and Europe.

The existence of a distinctive school of wall-paintings can be established. The School worked for both Buddhist and Daoist monasteries, flourished in the first half of the fourteenth century and waned after the Ming Dynasty was founded. All extant works, *in situ* or in museum collections, were recovered in the region of Southern Shanxi. There is little doubt that the school was dominant in Southern Shanxi but had limited influence elsewhere. Inscriptional evidence indicate that Zhu Haogu was the ultimate mentor of the school. No doubt Zhu is a professional craftsman specializing in mural paintings. Probably the given name Haogu (meaning love the antiquity) is not a real name, but nickname reflecting his penchant for antiquity. The “antiquity”, I believe, is the old tradition of Song and Jin murals which was revitalized by Zhu and his followers in the early of the fourteenth century.

Refer to Table 3 for the new chronology I propose for the works attributed to the School of Zhu Haogu in museum collections as well as *in situ*. 
In addition to murals, the majority of Jin and Yuan period sculpture in the collections across the world can also be traced to the region of Southern Shanxi. However, unlike the murals, which have commanded enduring scholarly fascination, the sculptures from the same or associated temples in the same area have been rarely visited in academia, even though the images are central to religious practices in China, including Buddhism, Daoism and other local beliefs. Judging from comparable roles and importance of sculptures and murals in the context of Chinese religious worship, this discrepancy is unjustified. As both art forms were extensively used to portray icons and create sacred atmospheres for worshippers, they are often closely associated and mutually dependent. Yang Huizhi (active in the first half of the eighth century) from the Tang Dynasty is a prime example of an artist who gave up painting in pursuit of sculpture and attained great artistic achievements.

Today, based on the sculptures in the museum collections only, we may infer a school of skilled sculptors from the Jin and Yuan dynasties in Southern Shanxi who specialized in Buddhist statues. Since their works we can see today were originally discovered in the Fen River Valley, it is appropriate to call it the “Fen River School of Sculptures”. In terms of their legacies and influences on Chinese art, they could perhaps be thought of as the sculptural equivalent of the Zhu Haogu School of wall-paintings, which originated in the same region.

I. An Overview of Jin and Yuan Wooden Sculptures from Southern Shanxi

Before the seventh century CE, Chinese Buddhist sculpture is primarily stone or bronze. In the middle of the Tang Dynasty, wooden statues began to increase in popularity. However,

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225 In 1950, a group of wooden statues, most of which are thirty centimeters tall, were recovered from the inside of the clay Buddha statue. They are among the rare examples of Tang wooden statues that survive in
wood statues from that early period we see today are generally small-scale portable representations of solitary figures, the vast majority of which are preserved in monasteries in Japan. Some examples include those in the miniature shrine from Kongō-ji at Koyasan (Figure 4.1) and the nine-headed Kannon statue from Hōryū-ji at Nara. Throughout the Heian and Kamakura periods (794-1333) in Japan, wooden sculptures continued to rise in popularity. Many excellent examples appeared during this period. This trend is most likely inspired by contemporary trends in China. Sherman E Lee believes that the fine Japanese examples of these periods also indicate the glory of Chinese monumental sculpture in this medium. Unfortunately, we can only surmise the extent of wooden sculpture’s popularity in China during this period, as very few examples remain to this day. The only and best examples were found in the Fen River Valley in Southern Shanxi, in large part thanks to the many traditional buildings that housed them. There is evidence that in the beginning of the twentieth century, in Southern Shanxi, clay and wooden sculptures from the Jin and Yuan periods were still housed in local temples and monasteries. However, the disturbances in China following the fall of the Qing Dynasty have threatened the existence of local temples and monasteries. Pressures of economic and political conditions forced the custodians of many temples to sale the properties which, as we have seen in the last chapter, had a negotiable value.

In 1920, the British Museum acquired a painted wooden statue of a bodhisattva, 170cm tall and life-sized (Figure 4.2). The bodhisattva is seated on rocks looking outward, with a thoughtful expression denoting deep meditation. His head is adorned with a wealth of hair which has been gathered in plaited coils held firm on the top by two rings. The chest and stomach are partly bare, and the nudity of the arms and breast is relieved by wristlets, armlets, and a necklace. The right foot is raised to the level of the seat and supports the right arm. From the left shoulder hang the folds of a scarf which lightly drapes the body in front. Below each knee the drapery is held up by

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226 Other famous examples include the five wooden statues preserved in Tōji at Kyoto that were brought by ê-ün Sozu (798 - 871) from China in 847.

a chain of beads and gems. According to Oscar C. Raphael (1874-1941), a collector of Asian art, "It is the first specimen of its kind to be added to the National collections, none of which possesses any fine specimens of Chinese sculpture of the great periods." Based on the prettiness of the whole, and a certain realism about the attitude and features, Raphael dated the statue to the Southern Song Dynasty.

In the subsequent decades, numerous wooden statues of the same type had appeared on the art market and were greatly sought after. Unlike clay statues, wood statues are easy to move and transport. In a short amount of time, art dealers brought almost every wooden statue they could lay their hands on out of Southern Shanxi. Today, only very few remain in Chinese museums, including the Palace Museum in Beijing and the Shanghai Museum, and not even these were discovered in their original settings, but confiscated from the storage of art dealers in the early 1950s.

From the records of art dealers, we learned that the group of these wooden statues with similar forms and styles originate from Southern Shanxi, although oftentimes it was unclear from which specific monastery they were taken. Huo Mingzhi 霍明志 (also known as Paul Houo-Ming-Tse) was a Beijing-based antique dealer famous for dealing in wooden statues in the 1920s and 30s. In a brochure published in 1930, Huo claimed that the wooden statues he was handling were recovered from cave temples south of the county of Lingshi. Though it has been quoted widely ever since, this claim is not believable. To ascertain his knowledge of those statues’ place of origin was one of the tasks Laurence Sickman had when he paid a visit to Southern Shanxi in 1934. During his travels in the vicinity of Hongtong and Zhaocheng, he noticed the broken remains of wood statues left behind in local monasteries and temples. Therefore, he was

228 Raphael, Oscar. 1920: 263.
229 In the 1920s, the wooden statues of the same kind entered the collections of many prominent museums in Europe and North America. The museums in the US include the Metropolitan Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, Cleveland Museum of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, University Museum at Penn; from Canada: the ROM; from Great Brittan: the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum; and from Germany: The Museum of East Asian Art at Berlin.
230 Huo is the owner of Daguzhai 達古齋 (the Studio of Wonderful Antiques), an antique shop in Beijing. The brochure was published in French. See Paul Houo-Ming-Tse, 1930: 289.
confident that, (Southern Shanxi) “has also been the chief source of the impressive figures in wood that have found their way in such numbers into Western collections. Today, one may still see in the temples of Lu An-fu in the southeast of Chao Ch’enghsien in the southwest, the lotus pedestals that once supported the carved and painted bodhisattvas, or, more depressing far, the figures still there but headless.”

Few of the remains can still be seen in the monasteries of the same region today. Their forms and styles bear a remarkable resemblance to statues in museums across the world, giving further evidence to help us pinpoint the places of origins of the statues. Figure 4.3 compares a set of four wood statues, including two statues – Bodhisattvas of Wenshu 文殊 (Mañjuśrī) (C) and Puxian 普賢 (Samantabhadra) (D) – still housed in Guangsheng Upper Monastery, one in the collections of the Shanghai Museum (A), and one in a private collection abroad (B). These four statues bear unequivocal similarities in their body forms, garment styles and facial expressions. It is reasonable to assume that they were created around the same time in the same place, perhaps from the same groups of sculptors.

II. Original Locations of the two Statues in the U.S. Museums

Recently I successfully verified the origins of two statues currently in the collections of the US museums whose origins are unknown. Based on the inscriptions recovered from inside the statues as well as the relevant textual and documentary evidence, I arrived at the conclusion that the two statues in question came from two monasteries no more than three kilometers outside of the township of Hongtong.

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231 Sickman, Laurence. 1939: 11.
232 The two statues (C and D from fig. 4.4) are housed in the Great Buddha Hall (the middle hall) of the Upper Monastery which was constructed in the middle of the Ming Dynasty. Because the wooden statues can be repaired and transported, they can be housed in the buildings of late date. Keep in mind this is not the case for dating the murals. Laurence Sickman also noticed the similarities between the two statues and those in the ROM collections. See Sickman, Laurence. 1939: 13.
The first of these statues is a bodhisattva (Guanyin) in the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City (Figure 4.4). The statue is 183 cm tall, wearing a tall crown with plume ornaments, silky scarves draping over one shoulder and a long skirt falling to the ground. It is a rare specimen being so immaculately preserved and finely sculpted. More interestingly, the museum discovered zhuangzang（装臟）(installed guts) stored in a cavity on the back of the statue. Accompanying the various objects installed, a piece of paper bearing inscriptions in ink was also recovered (Figure 4.5). The inscription has a composition of nine lines and eighty characters, which reads:

(The time) was during the reign of the tenth emperor of the Great Yuan State233, the fifth month of the ninth year of Zhizheng (1349).

Three divine statues of Buddha and bodhisattvas were repainted by daizhao Feng Xiaoda, with makeup daizhao Xin from Xin village and Jing from Nanyang village of this county, and others.

Abbot Ying, higher acolyte Chen, lecture-priest Ti, lecture-priest Yan, lecture-priest Ai and other thirty monks from this monastery participated.

The guts are installed by Taiyun Chan Monastery.

大元國弟[第]十帝,至正九年五月日。

重粧佛菩薩聖像三尊,待詔馮小大、補粧待詔本縣辛村並南樣社辛待詔、景待詔等。

本寺僧銀尊宿、琛尚[上]座、體講主、演講主、愛講主，並大眾等三十眾施工。敕賜太雲禪院置。

“Taiyun Chan Monastery”泰雲禪院 and “Nanyang village”南樣社 mentioned in the inscription can both be traced to the region of Hongtong. This Taiyuan Monastery almost certainly refers to the present-day Taiyun Monastery located in Shiqiaocun（石橋村）(village of stone bridge) near the township of Guangshengsi 廣勝寺鎮, eight kilometers away from the Guangsheng Lower Monastery. When I further investigated the written and stele inscriptions housed in the Lower Monastery and the adjacent Water God Temple, I discovered countless instances when the names of “Taiyuan Monastery” and “Nanyang village” appeared. The earliest appearance of

233 The tenth emperor of the Yuan Dynasty is Toghan-Temür (r. 1333-68).
“Nanyang Village” in these records came from *Chongxiu Mingyingwang miao zhi bei*, a stele of 1283 commemorating the repair of the Water God Temple. The inscription recorded a list of local villages whose fields were irrigated from the Southern Huo Canal. Nanyang is one of these villages. Another mention comes from *Chongxiu Mingyingwang dian zhi bei*, a stele of 1319 commemorating the reconstruction of the same temple. In this stele, names of Taiyun Monastery and Nanyang village are recorded one after the other.

We know that the Huo Spring is the primary water source in this region. The spring water is channeled through two canals, one northbound and the other flowing to the south, to irrigate local farms in counties of Hongtong and Zhaocheng. Taiyun Monastery today is located to the south of the Huo Spring. An even better piece of evidence came from an inscription of 1324 that accompanied the murals of the Mingyingwang Hall. It was discussed in chapter one that the murals of the western half of the hall were sponsored by the Southern Huo Canal. The inscription is titled *Nan Huoqu caihui shuishen diannei xiqiang bihua tiji* *(Note on the Murals on the West Wall of the Water God Hall by the Southern Huo Canal).* In the inscription, Nanyang village is mentioned twice; the first time, Nanyang village is described next to Shiqiao, which we know refers to Shiqiao village near the township of Guangshengsi. Interestingly, Taiyun Monastery today is in none other than Shiqiao Village.

In the second instance where Nanyang village was mentioned, the village was associated with one of the craftsmen who painted the murals, Jing Yanzheng. This mention reminds me of another reference: from the inscription of 1349 recovered from the Nelson statue, in which a craftsman with the same surname, Jing, from the same village, Nanyang, was mentioned. We

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234 Both steles are discussed in chapter one.
235 The inscription remains on the west side of the south wall of the Mingyingwang Hall. In addition, Nanyang village was also mentioned on a stele of 1283, *Nan Huoqu Chengzao Sanmen xia ershen jibei* *(The Stele Commemorating the Completion of the Statues within the Main Gate Sponsored by the Southern Huo Canal).* Taiyun Monastery was also mentioned on a stele of 1476 (discussed in chapter three). In the inscription, the names of the abbot of Taiyun Monastery, Juexin and Benming, were mentioned as the cosponsors of the reconstruction project in the Lower Monastery.
cannot know for sure if both painters were in fact the same person, but we can reasonably hypothesize that, at least, they may both came from the same family workshop.

Liang Sicheng made a visit to Taiyun Monastery in 1936. Unfortunately, the survey and measuring reports Liang had made during this visit were lost during the subsequent years of Japanese invasion. However, we know that Liang had dated the main hall of the Monastery to the Yuan Dynasty based on its architectural styles. I visited Taiyun Monastery myself and found out that now the main hall is the only building that survives from the Yuan period (Figure 4.6). The main hall is three-bay-wide and six-rafters-deep, topped by a single-eave overhanging gable roof. One cluster of bracket sets is placed between the columns and a simple one-arm fourth rank *puzuo* applies to all bracket sets either on top of or between columns. Its transverse frameworks use a six-rafter construction, a two-rafter beam in the font abutting a four-rafter beam in the back with three columns. We know from the architectural style that the main hall was rebuilt in the first half of the fourteenth century, sometime after the 1303 earthquake.

Taiyun Monastery is a humble place of worship located in a rural area. However, it boasts a long history that can at least be traced to the Jin Dynasty. A piece of the monastery’s history during the Jin Dynasty can be gleaned from a stele now standing outside the west wall of the main hall. The stele was erected to commemorate the bequest of monk Hui Kuan 慧寬, who was a local gentry and later became a monk at Taiyun Monastery. The inscription, *Kuangong anzhu tuoji zuxian gongdeji* 延公庵主托祭祖先功德記 (*Notes on the Merits of Master Kuan who Requests Offerings of Ancestors*), recounts the story of Hui Kuan. Kuan lost his family in the wars of Mongol invasions and bequeathed all his properties including land to Taiyun Monastery.

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236 According to an announcement made by the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture in 1936, (The society) “had surveyed the following ancient buildings in the Provinces of Shanxi and Shaanxi: on the second half of October in 1936, Liang and two graduate students, Mo Zongjiang and Mai Yanzeng, made a third visit to Shanxi, then enter Shaanxi through Tong Gate. The counties they visited in Shanxi include Yangqu, Taiyuan (both city and county), Zhaocheng, Hongtong, Linfen, Fencheng, Xinjiang …, and the architectures they visited include the Yuan Taiyun Monastery and Longxiang Daoist Temple, the Song Mile Monastery, the Yuan Temple of God of Fire, the Ming Confucius Temple and Temple of Mount Tai…”. See Society for Research in Chinese Architecture, 1936: 148.
leaving only the request for the monks at the monastery to make offerings to the ancestors of the
Zhang family.  

When we consider all the circumstances laid out above, I believe the statue in the Nelson-
Atkins Museum was removed from Taiyun Monastery during the 1920s when art dealers
searched the area of Southern Shanxi for antique sculptures and murals. When we return to the
statue’s inscription, we learned that the statue was repainted in 1349. The original date of the
sculpture’s creation must be earlier. Could it have been made before the great earthquake of
1303? Could it even be from the Jin Dynasty? Considering that wooden statues can be repaired
and reassembled, these speculations are entirely possible.

This leads us to the discussion of the second statue from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
This Guanyin statue in water-moon form (Figure 4.7) is 76.8 cm tall, sitting atop mountain rocks
gazing downward with a calm expression. The bodhisattva leans on the left arm while the
flexed left leg rests horizontally on the ground. The right knee is bent to support the extended
right arm. The figure wears a loose-fitting dhoti. The deeply cut drapery covers the leg but
leaves the feet exposed. Heavily jeweled necklace and silky scarves falling from the left shoulder
across the waist adorn the half bared upper body and arms. Like the Nelson statue, inscription
written on the inner surface of the wood slab used to close a chamber that once held consecrated
material is recovered. The eight lines of written text include seventy-seven characters, some of
which had become indecipherable. The inscription is transcribed below:

“The residents of Dong’an village and weina Xin Zhongwen have initiated devout
wishes to construct a temple to guard the road. The wood-carver daizhao Feng
Xiaozhong and his son from the same village were invited to get the materials ready,

237 Zhang is the surname of Kuan before he became a monk. According to the inscription, Kuan traveled to
Yanjing (a name for the central capital of the Jin Dynasty, today’s Beijing) and became a disciple of
Wansong Xingxiu 萬松行秀 (1166-1246), a famous Chan master in the late Jin and early Mongol period.
238 The bodhisattva seated in the pose of “royal ease” represents a uniquely Chinese from known as
Shuiyue Guanyin 水月觀音 (Water-and-Moon Guanyin).
239 The inscription was published by the Metropolitan Museum. See Leidy, Denise P and Strahan, Donna.
2010: 146.
240 Weina means Buddhist deacon, a Chinese term originated from Sanskrit. See Liu Yingsheng. 2001:
footnote 3.
and carved Guanyin statues in heave cloth with refinement. Three statues were produced for one hall.

Wishing the residents of this village …the whole family, peace and happiness.

(The time was) on the first month of 1385.”

東安村眾村人等與維那辛仲溫等, 謹發虔心, 起蓋鎮路廟一座, 請到本村刊木侍詔馮孝中
並男馮, 優工細刊天衣觀音三位一堂。

為願本村□□□□鬱家安樂。

洪武十八年正月□□□

According to my study, the Dong’an village mentioned in the text is none other than the Dong’an Village in Hongtong County today, situated three kilometers away from both Guangsheng Lower Monastery and Taiyun Monastery. Dong’an village has been repeatedly mentioned in stele and inscriptions from the Yuan and Ming dynasties that were discovered in the Lower Monastery as well as the nearby Water God Temple.241

Besides, the inscription from the Metropolitan Museum statue mentions names of people who are rather familiar to us from the inscription on the Nelson statue. One keeps in mind that the former is dated 1385, and the latter 1349. The Metropolitan Museum inscription mentions woodcarver-in-attendance Feng Xiaozhong and his son, as well as Buddhist deacon Xin Zhongwen, while the Nelson inscription mentions painter-in-attendance Feng Xiaoda and makeup attendant Xin Daizhao. The Nelson inscription was written in a rather casual cursive script with wrongly written characters. For example, for craftsman Feng Xiaoda, the middle name 孝 might be mistaken as 小. Thus, his name is indeed 馮孝大 instead of 馮小大, having the same genealogy name as that of 馮孝中, who was the one to complete the Metropolitan Museum Guanyin statue. Judging from the similarities in their names, Feng Xiaoda mentioned in the Nelson inscription may in fact be related to Feng Xiaozhong, perhaps belonging to the same

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241 The steles include Chongxiu Mingyingwang miao zhi bei and Nan Huoqu Chengzao sanmen xia ershen jibei, both erected in 1283, and Chongxiu qiandongluocheng jibei erected in 1476. The writing inscription is from the 1324 Nan Huoqu caihui shuishen diannei xiqiang bihua tiji. All inscriptions have been discussed above.
family workshop in the same generation. The difference of thirty-six years between the two statues’ dates of completion is a reasonable amount of time for both sculptors to be contemporary with each other.

Additionally, the name of Xin Zhongwen mentioned in the Metropolitan Museum inscription is also likely connected to the name of daizhao Xin in the Nelson inscription, considering Xin is a relatively uncommon surname in China. All in all, the echoing names from both inscriptions give us ample evidence to trace the Metropolitan Museum statue to Dong’an village of Hongtong county today.

III. Stylistic Evolution and Dating

In order to have a full picture of the stylistic evolution of the Fen River School of Sculpture, we must acquire a better understanding of the wider regional and period artistic trends that accompanied the school’s development. To this end, I conducted a broad survey of Buddhist sculptures from the Jin and Yuan periods in collections across the world. Amongst this body of sculptures, we noticed the prevalence of bodhisattva statues in contrast to statues of Buddhas, arhats, and disciples. There are two primary poses for the bodhisattvas – standing and sitting. The sitting poses include various positions: yogic, half-yogic and royal ease. These statues are often life-sized; some are larger than life, such as a 305 centimeters tall standing specimen in the collections of the Royal Ontario Museum (Figure 4.8). The torsos of these wood statues are carved from a monolithic piece of wood, while protruding limbs are carved separately and then assembled to the torso whether using mortise and tenon techniques or simply nails. The torsos are typically hollowed out to create room for the storage of consecratory material, including “installed guts”, pieces of raw and colored silk, various seeds and grains, incense and semiprecious stones. These materials were intended both to sanctify the statue and to enliven it.

Efforts at dating these wooden statues have been rather rudimentary. In the early years, they were roughly attributed to the Song Dynasty; later, the date was revised to Jin Dynasty.
Today, there is ample room to improve upon these earlier efforts. Despite the general likeness of these statues, there exist traces of period characteristics still discernible by a pair of trained eyes. There are, of course, obstacles, not the least of which is the long removal of these statues from their original monastery settings, which contain available and reliable evidence to aim in their dating. Another obstacle is the lack of a standardized group of specimens with confirmed dates to compare the statues against. The lack of wooden sculpture with established dates has led many scholars to rely on indirect evidence from murals, stone sculptures and cast figures. However, when we evaluative the evidence, imperfect as it is, it seems that their reference value may be further compromised by China’s vast territorial extent and prevalent regional traditions in art. It is futile to hope that we can further our knowledge of a statue from Shanxi by comparing it with specimens from Sichuan or Xinjiang.

Most recently, efforts at dating have narrowed in on two streams of development in US and European museums. The first stream is the development of Carbon-14 isotope-dating techniques. The second stream consists of studies on period-matching technical measures, such as sculpting techniques, assembly techniques and selection of raw materials. However, neither streams has yielded the desired breakthroughs. In the following pages, I will attempt to conduct my own dating of these wooden statues. I will compare the forms and styles of three wooden Buddhist statues, all from the vicinity of Hongtong and securely dated with inscriptions. In the end, I hope to provide a clearer picture of the stylistic evolution of the Fen River School of wooden sculpture.

The first set of sculptures is in the collections of the ROM: a pair of standing statues of Guanyin and Dashizhi 大勢至 (Sanskrit: Mahāsthāmaprāpta) (Figure 4.9). Both statues stand at 190 centimeters tall, and both came from the same monastery, where they once flanked a central Buddha statue. From an inscription on the back of the wooden cover used to close the cavity at

242 For details of the techniques applied to repairing and dating, see Lorne, Aleth and Rösch, Petra and Scheurleer, Lunsingh. 2002: 364-89.
the back of one statue, we learn that both came from the county of Hongtong and were made in 1195 during the Jin Dynasty.243

At the time of Mingchang 6 (1195), monk Cuan from Nanbucun Village visited the county of Hongtong at Pingyang Prefecture.

Jiayan records this.

昔日明昌六年南步沉村爨行者請道平陽府洪洞縣。

The bodhisattvas wear tall, ornate crowns with plume-shaped decorations, similar to the statues of Wenshu and Puxian from the Upper Monastery aforementioned (Figure 4.3 C and G). It seems that this particular type of headdress carries a distinct regional flavor of Southern Shanxi.

The bodhisattvas are square-faced, fleshy-cheeked, with braided hair draping on their shoulders. In the traditional iconography of Xifang sansheng (the Three Saints of the West), Guanyin serves on the left side of Amitābha. From this we can surmise that both bodhisattva statues are posed with their outside arms raised and inner arms lowered to hold the edge of their skirts. The figures are full-bodied with prominent abdomen and a slight lean towards the center. Intricate neck-rings rest on their bare chests; silky scarves drape loosely from their shoulders. The figures’ garments are tied on one shoulder; they’re otherwise bare chested. A thick short skirt is tied at their waist with a softer, full-length dresses worn underneath. All in all, the garments on the figures are extremely elaborate. The overall forms and styles of the figures bear a great number of similarities to the statues from Taiyun Monastery that was discussed above. Because of the likelihood, the statue coming from Taiyun Monastery might be also a Jin Dynasty piece. We know that the buildings of the monastery were destroyed in the 1303 earthquake, but it is plausible that the statues housed inside may have survived.

The second example that is brought to the discussion is a standing statue of Guanyin from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City (Figure 4.10 A). The figure is one hundred

243 The inscription was published by William C. White in 1940. See White, William C. 1940: figure 8B.
centimeters tall, crowned with a tall, plume-adorned headdress, similar to the ones seen on the twin figures from the ROM as well as Guangsheng Monastery statue. The accompanying inscription tells us that the statue was completed in 1282 during the Yuan Dynasty. The body form and stylistic flourishes of this figure echo those of the statues from the ROM: protruding hips, shoulder long braids, raised right arm and lowered left, half-bare chest, short skirt at waist and long dress touching the ground. However, despite inheriting most of the important traits of the earlier statues, this Yuan Dynasty piece developed its own unique features. The face of the Bodhisattva is visibly elongated and oval-shaped. The earlier figures’ burly bodies gave way to a slender form. The lanky limbs of the figure give it a graceful appearance. The portrayal of muscles gave the figure a naturalistic appearance. The iconic “S” curve re-emerged. Furthermore, the garments of the Bodhisattva are far less elaborate and naturalistic.

The statue was appreciated by Ludwig Bachhofer because “the facture is subtler, and the taste more refined.” He thus realized that many wooden figures that were generally dated to Song were actually done under the Yuan, especially those statues “whose garments display a charming contrast of large smooth planes with a ripple of folds at the edges”. Denise P. Leidy also suggested that, this Metropolitan Museum statue “provides one of the first examples of the sophisticated blending of Indo-Himalayan and Chinese imagery”, because, while the overall appearance belongs to well-established Chinese traditions, the slight twist in the torso reflects “Indo-Himalayan prototypes”.

The Metropolitan Museum statue is not the only instance of these emergent changes: similar observations can be made from other figures, as well. Another example is the 218 centimeters tall eleven-headed Guanyin statue housed in the Cleveland Museum of Art (Figure 4.10 B). We could reasonably infer that the latter statue was also a Yuan Dynasty piece completed in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century.

244 The inscription was found on the back of the wood cover used to close the cavity at the back of the sculpture. For the picture of the inscription, see Leidy, Denise P and Strahan, Donna. 2010: Figure 103.
245 Bachhofer, Ludwig. 1946: 83.
246 Leidy, Denise P. 2011: 108.
Yuan Dynasty clay sculptures gives even more credence to our observations. Unlike the wood sculptures, clay figures are immobile. As a result, those that remain are still housed in their original monastery. Unfortunately, not many are preserved today. Clay sculptures from the Song, Jin, and Yuan dynasties are exceedingly rare. Among those that have survived, most have been defaced by later-day repaints. Even so, there are still two specimens from Southern Shanxi which we could reference. The first is a pair of statues of attendant bodhisattvas in the main hall of Fusheng Monastery in Xinjiang County completed around 1322. The second is the statue of the attendant bodhisattva found in the back hall of Shanhui Monastery 善慧寺 at Fencheng. The statues of Shanhui Monastery were destroyed during the wars against Japan, but we can still glean their appearances from photographs of them taken by Liang Sicheng in 1936.247

The third example is the above-mentioned 1385 Water-and-Moon Guanyin statue from Dong’an Village, currently in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum. Despite the statue’s obvious attempt to imitate earlier works, its techniques and forms show significant regression. This is perhaps not merely indicative of a lesser sculptor, but rather reflective of the overall regression of the Fen River School itself. It could be said that this statue symbolizes the demise of a brilliant age of sculpture art in the region of Southern Shanxi.

Ludwig Bachhofer remarked that the wood sculptures from Southern Shanxi exert strong visual appeal, and that these sculptures, with their fleshy bodies, exaggerated forms and elaborate garments, mirror Europe’s baroque art. He then praised the artistic attainment of the ROM statues as “very imposing, with a touch of grandiosity, and rather complacent”. This highly elaborate and visually appealing sculptural style, he declared, would reach its zenith in the late twelfth century.248

The research of Bachhofer, although conducted in the 1930s, is still instructive to our current study of the Fen River School. All works of sculpture we have examined above, including the

247 The photo was published in 1999. See Lin Zhu. 1999: 111.
ROM pair and the Nelson statue, to name a few, together tell the tale of a wide-spread, sophisticated, and mature art form with distinguishing characteristics: full bodied figures, curved lines, elaborate garments… Considering the origins and roots of this style, they are far closer to Liao Dynasty works from northern Shanxi than they are to the grotto sculptures from the Northern Song Dynasty in northern Shaanxi. In Figure 4.11 we can glimpse other artworks sharing the same style.

Amongst the wooden sculpture in collections outside of China, there are a few that demonstrate a rare air of simplicity and litheness, such as the seated bodhisattvas from the British Museum and the Penn Museum (Figure 4.2 AB). These could in fact have been works of the Northern Song Dynasty that predates the works of the Fen River school during the Jin and Yuan dynasties. Alternatively, they could have been works of other schools. On the other hand, Yuan Dynasty sculptures, such as the Metropolitan Museum statue and the Cleveland statue (Figure 4.10 AB), are decedents of the Jin Dynasty style despite similarly plain garments. They demonstrate a return to the relatively simple, naturalistic, and three-dimensional representations of the earlier period.

The preceding discussions attempt to delineate the distinctive styles and their evolutions of the Fen River School of Sculpture. In the process I hoped to overcome the dual difficulties presented by the lack of known references and the obfuscation of these original materials from years of renovations and repaints. In fact, using techniques developed by the Rijksmuseum, a Guanyin statue in its collections was found to have been repainted eleven times.249 In the end, fortunately, the few rare instances of well-preserved works of sculpture that we are able to trace back to Southern Shanxi’s Fen River School during the Jin and Yuan dynasties are just enough to give us a good idea of the school’s artistic heritage. We are able to gain a glimpse of its artistic achievements during its peak years in the late twelfth century. We can also trace the regression

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of the school as the years wore on, culminating its final obsolescence during the early Ming Dynasty at the end of the fourteenth century.

IV. Legacies of Fen River Sculpture Art and Rise of the Zhu Haogu School of Murals

Both the Zhu Haogu School, with its achievement in monastic mural paintings, and the Fen River School, with its achievement in Buddhist wooden sculpture, are the prime examples of the distinctive artistic formations that originated in Southern Shanxi, carrying recognizable regional styles and period marks. The murals of Xinghua Monastery executed by Zhu himself are one of the early examples of the Zhu Haogu school. There have been extensive debates surrounding the completion date of these murals. I believe he worked around the year 1320, which is partly inferred from the timing of the great earthquake of Southern Shanxi in 1303. Zhu must have worked after 1303, as earlier murals were devastated by the earthquake. Further, the rise of his style to prominence may also be due to the strong demand for mural paintings during the rebuilding of the monasteries in the aftermath of the earthquake.

The murals of the Zhu Haogu School often depict scenes of grand scale with remarkable finesse of representation and composition. How was this style developed and perfected over the years? Zhu’s rendering of the figures may have been derived from the Song and Jin Buddhist paintings as exemplified by the varieties of hanging scrolls excavated from Kharakhoto. The symmetric and balanced composition dominated by the central, frontal Buddha may have derived from mural paintings in the Song and Jin traditions in North China as seen at Kaihua Monastery in the county of Gaoping, and Yanshan Monastery in the county of Fanshi. Even if we synthesize all available evidence, including not only the murals but also paintings on scrolls from this period and location, we still lack sufficient evidence to draw confident conjectures. However, the wooden sculptures from the same region of Southern Shanxi may have provided a source of inspiration.
The wooden sculpture and murals demonstrate remarkable similarities in styles and iconographies in the representations of figures. Figure 4.12 compares the statue of Wenshu inside the Great Buddha Hall of Guangsheng Upper Monastery with the painted depiction of an attendant Bodhisattva in a mural from Xinghua Monastery in the county of Jishan. Despite their different art forms, both have square faces with relatively large features, fine, arched eyebrows, and long thin noses with flaring nostrils. Their bodily proportions, facial expressions, garment and hair styles are remarkably similar. The necklaces, scarfs, and silky robes the bodhisattvas wear in the figures appear to have been copied from the same standard design. In Figure 4.13, we can once again marvel at the uncanny similarities of the two half-bare-chested, seated bodhisattva figures in Oxford University Museum and the Penn Museum, respectively. In Figure 4.14, the three in both sculptural and painted forms also demonstrate unmistakable similarities.

None of these observations should be considered surprising. After all, traditional Chinese sculptures and paintings are widely known to be mutually influential. The parallels have already been evident since the Tang Dynasty grottoes from Dunhuang, and the connections of these two art forms are once again demonstrated in the artistic remains of Southern Shanxi. The most important aesthetic elements of these Buddhist statues, in terms of body forms, representation techniques, strong and distinctive contours, floating garments, and etc., are widely shared amongst the painters and the sculptors of Southern Shanxi.

There may be somewhat of a time discrepancy between the two parallel schools of art. While the school of wooden sculpture matured during the Jin Dynasty in the late twelfth century, the school of mural painting did not form until after the 1303 earthquake. Still, Laurence Sickman, proposed an all-encompassing name for these different streams of a similar art style, “a Fen River Valley school of skilled painter-sculptor craftsmen maintaining a high level within the accepted tradition throughout at least the whole of the thirteenth century”. He also remarked that
the sculptures borrowed from the styles of the murals. The murals are used as a backdrop to the sculptures to enhance the solemn, sacred ambience of the monastic setting.²⁵⁰

Sickman’s conclusion is somewhat confounding. Logically, if the murals, as he said, serve but a secondary role to the sculptures, the direction of influence should be reversed. In reality, I believe, the painters and the sculptors may have come from the same workshop, but we need even more historical documentation to suggest such. Still, we cannot overlook the potential competition between the two art forms. We have reasons to believe that, from the Northern Song Dynasty until Jin Dynasty, the wood sculpture of this school was well regarded amongst the monasteries in Southern Shanxi. Later, in the fourteenth century, Zhu Haogu and his apprentices capitalized upon the popular style to win the affections (and, in turn, the commissions) of these same monasteries. These commissions made possible the creation of some breathtaking pieces of mural paintings, some of which we can see today.

A late example of a Zhu Haogu school mural can be seen in the main hall of Qinglong Monastery in Jishan County. The murals were completed in 1385 during the early Ming Dynasty, appearing to be rather crude in comparison with the early works of Zhu Haogu School. Little of the elegance and sophistication of earlier murals, such as those from Xinghua Monastery and Yongle Palace, are preserved here. Interestingly, 1385 was also the year when the Dong’an Village bodhisattva statue in the Metropolitan Museum was created. These early Ming Dynasty works signify the concurrent demise of both forms of Buddhist art in this region. Perhaps this fall from grace had roots in the changing social, political, and religious environments of the time. Further studies are needed to better understand this phenomenon.

Concluding Notes

During the Jin and Yuan periods, a school of sculptors from the region of Southern Shanxi has attained remarkable achievements in Buddhist sculptural art. Their influences have been

compared to the Zhu Haogu School of mural paintings from around the same region. As it is with murals, the bulk of wood sculptures from Southern Shanxi have been lost during the early twentieth century, many having been taken abroad. Through a close examination of stylistic features as well as other evidence from written and stele inscriptions, the precise origins of two wooden sculptures housed in two museums in the United States are determined. The study aids the current conclusion that Southern Shanxi is the origin of a vast number of Chinese wood sculptures featured in collections abroad.

Typically, Chinese wooden sculptures present a challenge to efforts at dating due to similarities in styles, motifs, and techniques used across different regions and different periods. In this study, the stylistic features of three groups of wood sculptures from the same region with precisely known dates are compared in an attempt to reinforce our capacity to date the works by better understanding the period trends surrounding the school's most productive years. From this investigation, a conclusion is reached that the School of Sculpture in Southern Shanxi reached its peak artistic expression during the Jin Dynasty in the latter part of the twelfth century. Sculptures from this period exhibit the rich forms, supple expressions, and ornate decorative features that resonate with the artistic expressions from earlier periods, such as Liao period sculptures from Northern Shanxi. In contrast, works of the same School during the latter Yuan Dynasty made use of less ornate garments and more naturalistic, three-dimensional forms.

The School of Sculpture in Southern Shanxi declined during the early Ming Dynasty at the end of the fourteenth century. By comparing these wood sculptures with murals from a latter period, I believe the school's legacy continues to influence the iconographic and stylistic trends that emerged after the Great Earthquake of 1303, including the Zhu Haogu School of mural paintings.
CONCLUSIONS

The main hall at the Guangsheng Lower Monastery is one of the best-preserved Yuan period timber buildings in China and is most representative of the building styles developed in the aftermath of the Great Earthquake in the region of Southern Shanxi. As a Buddha hall, it was established with the aims of worshipping the Buddha and providing monks and followers with a place for meditation and prayer. Today, statues and mural fragments that remain in the buildings are all original, which makes the main hall a rare specimen of Yuan-period architecture in China. Most of the murals once housed in the hall were removed from the walls and brought out of China in 1926. Fortunately, they are not lost and are now in the collections of different museums, being exhibited and published. With information on architecture, statues and murals available, the dissertation concludes with another reconstruction, the imagery program and the original layout and installment of the images housed in the main hall after the building was constructed in 1309.

A brief review of the architecture already discussed in Chapter Two: The main hall of the Guangsheng Lower Monastery is a seven-bays-by-four-bays with an overhanging gable roof. Basically, the beam framework is in tingtang structure, with two rows of interior columns arranged both in the front and back. Column omission and displacement are employed, as a total of six interior columns are eliminated and two columns on each side of the back row are placed in positions not on the column grid. The interior space of the hall is enlarged as a result. The interior space is enlarged further because of the employed of slanting beams.

Today, the main hall still houses original clay statues dated to the Yuan period. The statuary is installed on a large, rectangular brick dais, positioned in the rear of the hall. Four interior columns of the back-row line the front of the dais which makes it a three-bay-wide and one-bay-deep structure. However, according to the length of interior bays of the building, the dais is four-bays wide and less than one-bay deep. Because the rear side of the dais is so close the north wall (about half-a-meter wide), there is not enough space in the back of the dais for monks and worshipers to circumambulate (Figure 5.1).
Three Buddhas – Vairocana, Rocana, and Shakyamuni – sit in the middle of the dais, flanked by two seated bodhisattvas and a standing one. In Chinese Buddhism, there are different representations of the three Buddhas. Here, they are refereed to Sanshenfo 三身佛 (Trikaya), or “the three bodies of Buddha”. At the center sits Vairocana, identified by his crown as well as zhiquanyin 智拳印 (the wisdom-fist mudra) the Buddha performs. Specifically according to the doctrine of Huayan Buddhism, Vairocana is fashenfo 法身佛 (the dharma-kāya), a reference to the transcendence of form and realization of true thusness. On the left sits Shakyamuni, baoshenfo 貨身佛 (the nirmāṇa-kāya), a reference to the body manifested in response to the need to teach sentient beings. On the right of Vairocana sits Rocana, yingshenfo 應身佛 (the saṃbhoga-kāya), a reference to the body of enjoyment of the merits attained as Buddha. The bodhisattvas Wenshu and Puxian flank each side of the Trikaya. Originally Vairocana was attended by a pair of standing bodhisattvas in front of him. Because one bodhisattva was lost, only one survives at the Buddha’s right. Today, a total of six statues are placed on the dais and no other figured statues are at presence anywhere inside of the hall.

It was pointed out that the mural from the east gable wall is in the collection of the Nelson-Atkins Museum at Kansas City, MO; the mural from the west gable wall is in the Metropolitan Museum; the mural from one of the sides of the south wall is in Cincinnati Art Museum. Mural fragments remained on the two upper corners of both gable walls until the early 1980s. Still housed in the main hall, these mural fragments were removed from the walls to be framed for better conservations (Figure 5.2). All are scenes that represent Shancai tongzi wushisan can 善才童子五十三參 (Offerings of Sudhana to Fifty-three Good Teachers) described in the chapter of

251 Sanshenfo means three bodies of the Buddha. The three bodies are representative of how the Buddha is revealed in a variety of ways to individuals depending on their spiritual capacities. (Digital Dictionary of Buddhism)
More statues were housed in the main hall when Jiang Weixin made his visit in 1934. According to the account of Jiang, “… in the back is the main hall, with large interior space. Housed in the hall are three Buddhas, surrounded by Arhats who are seated beneath…. (It is said) that on the south wall are murals with representations of two masters, Vasubandhu and Asanga. Unfortunately, they were removed from the walls by the unfaithful monks and sold. Today only traces remain on the upper part of the walls.”

For the sake of reconstruction of the original imagery program of the main hall, the statues of Arhats seen by Jiang Weixin in 1934 can be ignored, because they are later additions of the Ming period. A stele dated 1622, Chongsu jin toxiang jibei 重塑金佛像記碑 (Stele on Repainting and Re-gilding the Buddha Statues) reads,

“The main hall was reconstructed in the Yuan Dynasty. Originally the three bodies of Buddha and the bodhisattvas of Four Kinds of Cognitions were sculptured. … The divine statues have suffered damages over a considerable long period of time. Because the paint and gold on the statues have peeled off, the statues are not viewable by the visitors. Although many times monk have decided to repair the statues, they just could not afford the costs … thus, money was raised from the followers of ten directions. It is agreed to add aureoles to the old statues and create new statues of sixteen Arhats and the deity who guards the dhamma, Weituo.… The date is the twenty-eighth day of the eleventh lunar month of the year Tianqi 2 (1622), renxu year of the sixty-year circle.”

According to the sutra, Sudhana, son of a merchant, had searched for enlightenment in ancient India. On the advice of the Bodhisattva Wenshu, he sets out to visit a good teacher in order to learn how to carry out the conduct of a bodhisattva. After travelling far and wide across India visiting another fifty-two good teachers of various occupations, including the Buddha-to-be, the bodhisattva Maitreya, he had his final visionary experience of the bodhisattva Puxian and merged with him.
From the inscription on the stele, we learn that in addition to the three Buddhas, originally in the Yuan Dynasty, the main hall also housed Sizhi Pusa 四智菩萨 (the Bodhisattvas of Four Kinds of Cognitions). The four kinds of cognitions represent four kinds of purified awareness attained upon the full enlightenment, which was introduced by Asanga, a fourth-century Buddhist philosopher whom I will discuss below. In Chinese practice, the Bodhisattvas of Sizhi normally refer to Wenshu, Puxian, Guanyin and Dizang 地藏 (Sanskrit. Kṣitigarbha). Today the statues of Wenshu and Puxian are still housed in the main hall; those of Guanyin and Dizang were either lost or moved to other places of worship.

What makes the account of Jiang Weixin more interesting is his description of the murals on the south wall. Jiang did not see the murals himself because they were sold to antique dealers six years before his visit. But Jiang was informed by locals that the murals depict Vasubandhu and Asanga. Born in the fourth century from Gandhara, Vasubandhu (Chinese: Tianqin 天親 or Shiqin 世親) was converted to Mahayana beliefs under the influence of his half-brother Asanga (Chinese: Wuzhu 無著). Both became the main founders of the Yogacara School of Mahayana Buddhism (Chinese: Yuqie xingpai 瑜伽行派). They are fruitful writers, especially Vasubandhu who composed a number of voluminous treaties and commentaries on Mahayana sutras, the works that set forth the standard of the Weishi School 唯識宗 ("mind only" or "appearance only") of Chinese Buddhism.

Having a wide influence across East Asia, the writings of Vasubandhu and Asanga were translated into Tibetan in the ninth century, becoming the major source of Tibetan Buddhism. The brothers had been worshipped fervently in Tibet since then. They are members of ersheng liuzhuangyan 二勝六莊嚴 (Two Supreme Ones and Six Ornaments) whose iconic images appear widely in a variety of mandalas. Legends say, that during the mediation, Vasubandhu had his

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255 Vasubandhu is also considered the twenty-first founder in Zen Buddhism and the second founder in Pure Land School and Jōdo Shinshū of Japanese Buddhism. (Digital Dictionary of Buddhism)
mind ascended in Tusita Heaven, thus receiving the teachings directly from Maitreya. It was already pointed out that one of the murals from the south wall of the main hall is now in the collection of the Cincinnati Art Museum with a title *Wenshu, Bodhisattva of Wisdom, Writing at a Table*. If the account of Jiang Weixin in 1934 is reliable, the representation of the Cincinnati mural can be re-identified as either Vasubandhu or Asanga, accordingly. In composition, the figure is facing toward viewer’s right. Because it was painted on the south wall, there is a high possibility that the Cincinnati piece was removed from the east side of the south wall. Thus, the figure should represent Vasubandhu, the younger brother of the two, because in Chinese tradition, Asanga, the elder brother normally takes the superior position, the one on the left (the east side of the south wall). According to the iconographies of Tibetan Buddhism, Vasubandhu has always been depicted as “writing at a table”. Refer to Figure 5.3 for the comparisons between the Cincinnati piece and a nineteenth-century Tibetan representation of Vasubandhu.

So far, the original imagery program of the main hall can be partly reconstructed based on historical inscriptions, personal accounts and the current situation. On the dais are clay statues of the three bodies of Buddha and Bodhisattvas of Four Kinds of Cognitions. The mural on the east gable wall represents the assembly of Tejaprabha, faced by the mural on the west gable wall that represents the assembly of Bhaisajyaguru. Asanga is on the east side of the south wall, while Vasubandhu appears on the west side of the south wall. Scenes of fifty-three offerings of Sudhana are painted on the upper corners of both east and west gable walls.

A full reconstruction becomes possible because of some recent discoveries which have not been analyzed carefully up till now. When the main hall was repaired in 1996, doorframe was detected in the central bay of the north wall. Chai Zejun suggested the door was blocked in the Ming Dynasty.\[256\] I will further suggest that it was done in 1622 when the statues were repainted and re-gilded. Because of the existence of this blocked door, originally the main hall was designed with a passageway in the rear which leads to the back of the courtyard. Because there

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\[256\] Chai Zejun and Ren Yimin. 2006: 56.
was a passageway in the rear of the building, the current dais cannot be the original construction of the Yuan Dynasty. Instead, it was reconstructed in a later period and was moved from its original position.

In an article on defining the Yuan Dynasty hall, Nancy Steinhardt noticed the relations between the position of the altar and the placement of interior columns.\(^{257}\) She pointed out that, at Sanqing Hall of Yongle Palace, all interior pillars are placed around the altar; at Chunyang Hall from the same Daoist monastery, two pillars rise at each side of the altar; at Chongyang Hall again from the same monastery, four pillars line the back of the altar. According to my own investigation on the Yuan-period timber halls in Southern Shanxi, the main hall of the Lower Monastery is a unique example in which pillars of the back-row line the front of the altar. Because of the existence of the rear passage, it is reasonable to assume that originally, the dais was placed in front of the interior pillars of the back-row. Figure 5.4 illustrates the differences between the original plan I suggest and the current plan of the main hall.\(^{258}\)

During a repair in the early 2000s, murals were recovered from the north wall of the main hall. The building has seven bays across the façade. Murals were recovered from the wall above the doorframe in the central bay and the walls of flanking bays of each side. Although the murals are in poor conditions and large portions are lost, we can still tell that, in comparisons with the ones from the gable walls, the two murals of the north wall, though smaller in size, are of the same concept and composition: the Buddha sits in the center, flanked by two major bodhisattvas, and surrounded by retinues and devotees. Because they are not officially published yet, few scholars have been aware of the existence of these murals. Through a careful examination of the murals remaining on the north wall, another puzzle that bewildered museum curators in the US is solved. Now it is certain that the mural fragment that was used to decorate the doorway of C. T. Loo’s New York office (Figure 5.5) and later given to the Detroit Institute of Art is from the east side of

\(^{258}\) Because the reconstruction is preliminary, in Figure 5.4 I only move the dais forward to its original Yuan location without changing its plan. I believe the original dais might be in a U-shaped plan in order to hold all statues mentioned in the text.
the north wall of the main hall. A digital model that reconstructs the mural on the east side of the north wall is created accordingly (Digital Model 3).

Therefore, besides the two assemblies from the gable walls, two more Buddha assemblies were housed in the same building. In an attempt to reconstruct the entire imagery program of the main hall, I make a hypothesis based on a recently discovered book *Tiandi mingyang shuilu yiwen* (Water-Land Rituals of Heaven and Earth, Living and Dead) that was composed during the Song period. According to the study of Dai Xiaoyun, the book records Water-Land Rituals that had been practiced in North China from the tenth century to the early eighteenth century. Follow up studies have also proved that the book is a reliable textual basis for the Water-Land paintings created during the Jin, Yuan and Ming periods. In the middle of the Water-Land Rituals, Buddhas will be invited one by one in the following order. The text reads,

“The Great Vairocana, Rocana, Shakymuni, Maitreya, Bhaisajyaguru, Amitabh, and all Buddhas from ten directions and three generations.”

大毗卢遮那佛，卢舍那佛，释迦牟尼佛，弥勒尊佛，药师琉璃光佛，阿弥陀佛，十方三世一切诸佛

It was already pointed out that, at the main hall, the first three Buddhas - Vairocana, Rocana, Shakymuni – are installed on the dais; the fifth Buddha – Bhaisajyaguru – is on the west gable wall. It can be inferred that the fourth Buddha – Maitreya – is on the west side of the north wall; the sixth Buddha – Amitabha – is on the east side of the north wall. Though the Buddha Tejaprabh, represented on the east gable wall, is not mentioned in the text, his appearance may due to the Buddha’s special function as celestial controller against disasters. In the aftermath of

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259 For the text and commentaries, see Dai Xiaoyun. 2014. Studies on its connections to the images include Sun Bo. 2011; Xiong Wen. 2011; Hou Huiming. 2015; Shi Honglei. 2015.
the Great Earthquake, his power was called upon to provide the strongest protection against
natural calamities.\textsuperscript{260}

The original imagery program of the main can be constructed below.

Statues on the altar
Buddhas: Vairocana, Rocana, and Shakymuni
Bodhisattvas: Wenshu, Puxian, Guanyin and Dizang

Murals on the north wall
Assembly of Maitreya (west side)
Assembly of Amitabh (east side)

Murals on the east gable wall
Assembly of Tejaprabha

Murals on the west gable wall
Assembly of Bhaisajyaguru

Murals on the south wall
Asanga (east side)
Vasubandhu (west side)

Murals on the upper corners of the gable walls

Offerings of Sudhana to Fifty-three Good Teachers

The reconstructed imagery program of the main hall further supports the idea that the murals
are intended to be viewed directly, instead of being the background of the statues. Seven
Buddhas, all in monumental size and in hierarchies, are worshipped together in one building, an
innovation never seen anywhere in either the earlier period or later period. Somehow the concept
might have borrowed from the idea of mandala in Tibetan Buddhism.

There is less doubt that the imagery program is centered upon the three bodies of Buddha,
especially Vairocana, which is the focal point of worship in \textit{Huayan Jing}. The Huayan beliefs are

\textsuperscript{260} The subject of Tejaprabh and its appearance in the aftermath of earthquake has been well-studied. See
Soper, Alexander C. 1948: 21-5; Lippe, Aschwin. 1965. 334; Jing, Anning. 1991: 158-9; Gridley, Marilyn,
further emphasized by the presence of Sudhana and the fifty-three good teachers. Additionally, the Water-Land Rituals might also be referred to when the program is in design. The appearance of Tejaprabh is due to the need for protection against natural disasters in the aftermath of the Great Earthquake. Last but not the least, Vasubandhu and Asanga may reflect the influence of Tibetan Buddhism.

It was already pointed out that Guangsheng Monastery was a guansì, a monastery registered by the state. The monastery was well connected to the Mongol elites and served as a royal shrine of Khubilai Khan. Inscriptional evidence indicates that during the Mongol and Yuan periods, at Guangsheng Monastery, a few monks had a special title of jìxiàng (auspiciousness). For example, Wen jìxiàng 溫吉祥 appears in the 1283 stele, Restoring the Temple of Mingyingwang. According to the 1324 inscription, Note on the Murals on the West Wall by the Southern Huo Canal, monks of the same title include the abbot Chun jìxiàng 春吉祥, abbot in deputy Xìng jìxiàng 幸吉祥, Yi jìxiàng 意吉祥, and Lin jìxiàng 林吉祥.

In 1272, Khubilai convened many Han Chinese monks from the provinces, letting them be ordained by the state preceptor, the high lama of Tibetan Buddhism. After ordination, these Han Chinese monks were granted the title of jìxiàng by the court. In the later Yuan period, for Han Chinese monks, especially those of the Huayan Sect, whoever studied with Tibetan lamas and received ordination could be titled jìxiàng. In the first half of the fourteenth century, the abbot of Guangsheng Monastery is a jìxiàng, and so are a few other monks of high rank. On the one hand, the influence of Tibetan Buddhism on the monastery during this period is without doubt. On the other hand, Guangsheng Monastery had become a Chan monastery in the Song Dynasty. In the Yuan Dynasty, it might have remained to be so, but the increasing power of Huayan in the monastery is also evident. Both trends are reflected on the iconographies of the main hall at the Lower Monastery. However, the architecture, sculptures and murals of Guangsheng Monastery

indicate that, in the region of Southern Shanxi, it is in the old traditions of Song and Jin that the innovations are made.
APPENDIX A: DIGITAL MODELS

Digital Model 1:

Reconstruction of the Monastery Complex, Guangsheng Monastery in the Late Yuan Period
Digital Model 2

Reconstruction of the Murals from the East Gable Wall, the Main Hall, the Guangsheng Lower Monastery in the Late Yuan.
Digital Model 3
Reconstruction of the Murals from the East Side of the North Wall, the Guangsheng Lower Monastery
APPENDIX B: TABLES AND MAPS

Table 1 Royal Monasteries of the Yuan Dynasty (Data collected based on Chen Gaohua. 2015: 31-65)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMPEROR NAMES</th>
<th>REIGNED</th>
<th>MONASTERY NAME</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Khubilai</td>
<td>1264-1294</td>
<td>Da huo renwangsi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Da shengshou wan’ansi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Da xingjiaosi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Qianyuansi</td>
<td>The Upper Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temür</td>
<td>1294-1307</td>
<td>Da tianshou wanningsi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Da wansheng youguosi</td>
<td>Mount Wutai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khaishan</td>
<td>1307-1311</td>
<td>Da chong’en fuyansi</td>
<td>Outskirts of the Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Da zhiquansi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Puningsi</td>
<td>Mount Wutai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayurbarwada</td>
<td>1311-1320</td>
<td>Da chenghua puqingsi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Da yongfusi</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da yushan puansi</td>
<td>Mount Wutai</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shidebala</td>
<td>1320-1323</td>
<td>Outskirts of the Great Capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da zhaoxiaosi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yesün Temür</td>
<td>1323-1328</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da tianyuan yanshengsi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shuxiangsi</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mount Wutai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tugh Temür</td>
<td>1328-1332</td>
<td>Outskirts of the Great Capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da chengtian hushengsi</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toghan-Temür</td>
<td>1333-1368</td>
<td>The Great Capital</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baoxiang yongmingsi</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 Construction Dates of the Buildings in the Guangsheng Upper Monastery, Lower Monastery and the Water God Temple.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUILDING NAMES</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>REIGN DATES</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Hall</td>
<td>Lower Monastery</td>
<td>Zhida 2</td>
<td>1309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mingyingwang Hall</td>
<td>Water God Temple</td>
<td>Yanyou 2</td>
<td>1315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Buddha Hall</td>
<td>Upper Monastery</td>
<td>Jingtai 3</td>
<td>1452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Hall</td>
<td>Lower Monastery</td>
<td>Chenghua 11</td>
<td>1475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vairocana Hall</td>
<td>Upper Monastery</td>
<td>Hongzhi 10</td>
<td>1497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flying Rainbow Pagoda</td>
<td>Upper Monastery</td>
<td>Jiajing 6</td>
<td>1527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amitabha Hall</td>
<td>Upper Monastery</td>
<td>Jiajing 11</td>
<td>1532</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 New Chronology of the Works of the Zhu Haogu School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Location</th>
<th>Current Location</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Murals from Xinhua Monastery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Wall of the Southern Hall</td>
<td>Palace Museum, Beijing</td>
<td>Circa. 1320</td>
<td>Seven Historical Buddhas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the gable walls of the main hall</td>
<td>ROM</td>
<td>Circa. 1320</td>
<td>Assembly of Maitreya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Murals from an Unknown Daoist Monastery in the Pingyang Prefecture</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>ROM</td>
<td>Circa. 1320</td>
<td>Homage to the Highest Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Murals from Yongle Palace</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanqing Hall</td>
<td>In situ</td>
<td>Circa. 1325</td>
<td>Homage to the Highest Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chunyang Hall</td>
<td>In situ</td>
<td>1358</td>
<td>Miracles of Lu Dongbin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chongyang Hall</td>
<td>In situ</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Biographies of Wang Chongyang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Murals from the Guangsheng Lower Monastery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Gable Wall of the Main Hall</td>
<td>Metropolitan Museum of Art</td>
<td>Circa. 1354</td>
<td>Assembly of Bhaisajyaguru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Gable Wall of the Main Hall</td>
<td>Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art</td>
<td>Circa. 1354</td>
<td>Assembly of Tejaprabha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Museum or Source</td>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Mural Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Wall of the Main Hall</td>
<td>Cincinnati Art Museum of Art</td>
<td>1354</td>
<td>Vasubandhu or Asanga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Penn Museum</td>
<td>Circa. 1310s</td>
<td>Assembly of Bhaisajyaguru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Penn Museum</td>
<td>Circa. 1310s</td>
<td>Assembly of Tejaprabha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Hall</td>
<td>In situ</td>
<td>1356</td>
<td>Water and Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Gable Wall of the Main Hall</td>
<td>In situ</td>
<td>1385</td>
<td>Assembly of Maitreya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Gable Wall of the Main Hall</td>
<td>In situ</td>
<td>1385</td>
<td>Assembly of Sakyamuni</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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B. Guanyin. Private collection (photo: Internet)

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A. Dashizhi
B. Guanyin with inscriptions
Figure 4.10 Standing bodhisattvas, wood with traces of pigment

A. Guanyin, 1282. The Metropolitan Museum of Art (photo: The Metropolitan Museum of Art)
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A. Yale University Art Gallery
B. The Cleveland Museum of Art
C. The Victoria and Albert Museum
D. The Harvard Art Museum
E. The Philadelphia Museum of Art
Figure 4.12 Seated bodhisattvas

A. Wooden statue in the Great Buddha Hall, the Upper Monastery, Jin Dynasty.
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APPENDIX D: LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS AND STELE TEXTS

G

Guo Ziyi (郭子儀). 769. “奏牒碑”, stone stele, Vairocana hall, the Guangsheng Upper Monastery. (The stele was re-carved in 1064.)

J

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