

东方寺庙明珠
南禅寺
佛光寺

BRIGHT PEARLS OF THE
ORIENTAL
TEMPLES — NANCHAN
TEMPLE AND FOGUANG
TEMPLE



山西人民出版社

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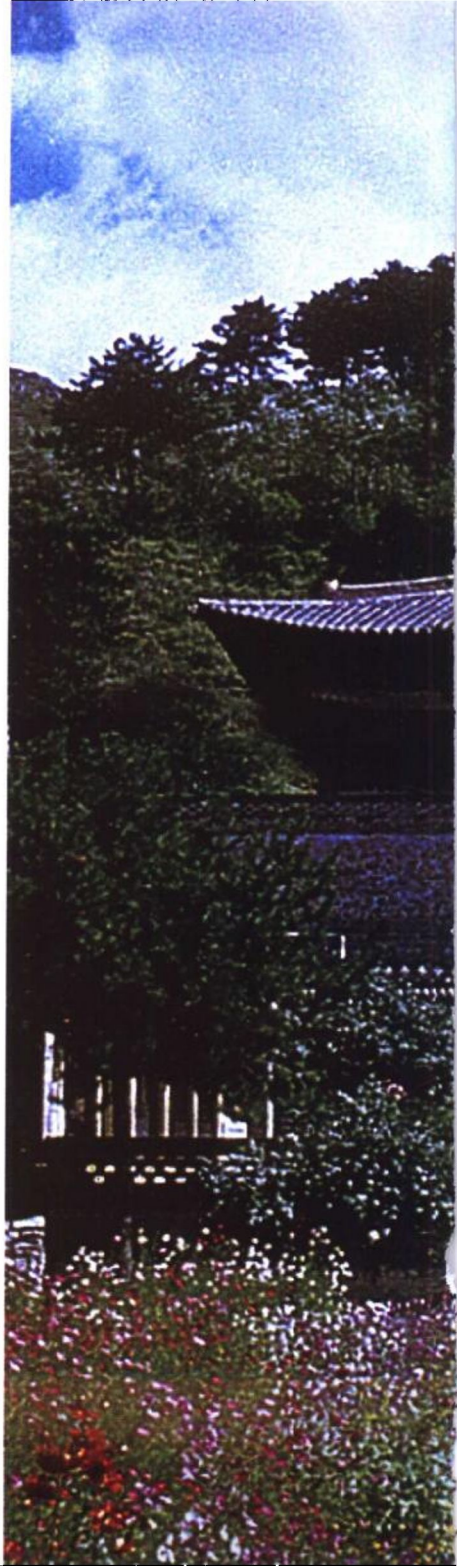
南禅寺 佛光寺

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Bright Pearls of the Oriental Temples
— A brief introduction to Nanchan
Temple and Foguang Temple



When you visit Mt. Wutai, do remember to appreciate the cream of the Buddhist art of the Tang Dynasty in the Nanchan temple and the Foguang Temple. Both Temples are the oldest existing wooden buildings in China which boast a history of over one thousand years. They were respectively built in the third year of Jianzhong Period of Emperor De (782 AD) and the tenth year of Dazhong Period of Emperor Xuan (856 AD) in the Tang Dynasty. In the Buddhist hall of both temples, many fine painted sculptures of that age are well preserved, with frescoes, calligraphy and paintings only preserved in Foguang Temple.

In 1961, both temples were authorized as the "major historical and cultural sites under the State protection". There are not only rare historical relics which can widen your knowledge and sharpen your intellect, but also beautiful scenery for you to enjoy.

The buildings, paintings, sculptures and calligraphy in the Nanchan Temple and Foguang Temple are the finest in the history. There are a huge amount of historical records about various art forms, few of which are still existent (especially the buildings) except in Mt. Wutai. With these rare sculptures and frescoes of the Tang Dynasty, Nanchan Temple and Foguang Temple are more valuable to us.

Nanchan Temple lies in Li village, Yangbai town, 22 kilometer west of the county city of Wutai. It is 95 kilometers away from Taihuai town in Mt. Wutai, with 700 meters above sea level,

and a temperature a little bit higher than that of the Taihuai Town, warmer in winter and cooler in summer than other places, and with a



quiet surrounding. Covered with green trees and grass, the temple locates on a small hillock, backs a green hill and faces a river. When summer comes, the quiet hills are dressed with various flowers in their full bloom and smell of fragrance, which makes it lively and splendid. The exquisite historic temple of the Tang Dynasty is just in the embrace of these beautiful sceneries. During the Tang Dynasty, the Chan sect of the Buddhism was divided into two sects, i.e., the northern sect and the southern sect. The northern sect was popular in Mt. Wutai during the middle period of the Tang Dynasty. But Nanchan (in Chinese it means southern sect) was a small temple of the southern sect, for which it is called. And thus it was lucky enough to escape the Huichang Diaster, and show its simple, vigorous and artistic body to the people today. Thereafter, the southern sect prevailed in Mt. Wutai and Nachan Temple kept its name as a glory.

Nanchan Temple faces the south and is of a small scale. There are six Buddhist halls in the temple with the main Buddhist hall built in Tang Dynasty and all the others in the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

The main Buddhist hall is majestic with a simple and antique style of the Tang Dynasty. Its roof is of single eaves, and of the gentlest slope among the existing buildings in the country. There are no pillars and ceiling within the hall. The structure of the beams is simple, graceful, and of an ancient style. The roof of the hall is tiled. It is supported by the beams and pillars, with the walls just supporting part of the weight. The hall is one of the bright pearls of the ancient buildings in China.

There are 17 painted sculptures of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, servants of the Bodhisattva and Chief Yudian, all of which are vivid, colorful and distinctively outlined, and as superb as the ones in the Muogao grottos in Dunhuang. These painted sculptures are the oldest and finest in Mt. Wutai which have a high artistic and academic value.

There are also in the temple three stone lions, with one lying on the ground and the other two fighting to each other, and one four-gabled and five-floored stone pagoda. Stories of Buddhism were carved on the four sidewalls of the first floor, and relief sculptures of Buddhas carved on the other four storeys. The gracefully-shaped pagoda with its finest carvings is a masterpiece among the pagodas of a garret style in the Tang Dynasty, and is highly praised by experts in this field.

After reaching Dou village along the Xin-Tai Road and, go 5 kilometers further along the Wu-Fan Road (road from Wutai to Fansi) to Foguang village, then go 1 kilometer northward, and you will see a red wall and green pine and cypress trees set each other off. On the wall are written three big Chinese characters—Foguang Temple. Foguang Temple lies at the foot of Foguang Hill southwest of the south peak of Mt. Wutai, with an height of 1320 meters above sea level, and 47 kilometers away from Taihuai Town. The temperature there is a little bit higher than that in Mt. Wutai. The temple faces the west, with three sides surrounded by hills and a river in front of it. It is beautiful with green hills, waters, flowers, birds and fresh air. Visitors can really enjoy the beauty of the nature there. No wonder that innumerable eminent monks in the history have lived there learning and practicing Buddhism, which makes Foguang Temple one of the ten biggest temples in Mt. Wutai and famous in the world. Still more, the tall and vigorous pine and cypress trees add a heavenly and serene atmosphere to it.

Foguang Temple is one of the oldest temples in Mt. Wutai. It reached its zenith in the Tang Dynasty with its fame spreading to Chang'an, Dunhuang and even to India and Japan.

Foguang Temple consists of three yards, with the first yard lower than the other two, the second smelling of fragrance and the third situated the highest. The eastern hall in the third yard is a wooden building of the Tang Dynasty. Its wooden structure and the painted sculptures, frescos and epigraphs in it are all together appraised as the four peerless art works of the Tang Dynasty. The Wenshu Hall in the first yard is an outstanding representative of the buildings in the Jin Dynasty. Various pagodas and stone pillars inscribed with Buddhist scriptures in the temple are rare cultural relics which are famous both in the country and outside.

The eastern hall of the Foguang Temple, with a shorter history than Nanchan Temple, is bigger in scale, perfect in structure, superb in stone art, well preserved and well-known in the world. It is a wooden structure of the Tang Dynasty which reaches a high level technologically and artistically. No wonder the later generations take it as a model of the buildings of the Tang Dynasty. On the altar of the hall, there are 35 painted sculptures of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Buddha's warrior attendants

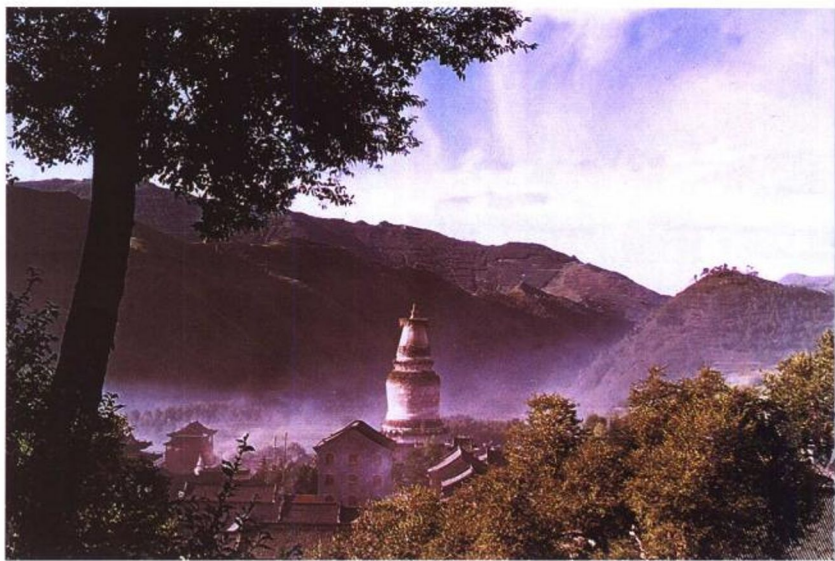


and Bodhisattva's attendants. All of them are vivid, elegant and finely sculpted, which displays the artistic achievements of the period when Buddhism reached its peak, and are outstanding art works among the existing sculptures of the Tang Dynasty.

Wenshu Hall was built in the fifteenth year of Tianhui period in the Jin Dynasty. The painted sculptures of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in it filled for Mt. Wutai the gap of the historical relics in the Jin Dynasty.

In Foguang Temple, there are also many pagodas of the eminent monks in the Tang Dynasty, which are all unique in shapes and finely sculpted, giving full play to the artisan's ingenuity. They supply us with valuable materials in the carving and architectural art of the Tang Dynasty.

The ancient buildings and cultural relics in Nanchan Temple and Foguang Temple are the essence of the Buddhist culture in Mt. Wutai, and fruits of wisdom of the ancient people in the art of architecture, painted sculpture, painting and stone carving.



五台山秋景

The Autumn of Mt. Wutai

东方寺庙明珠概述

五台山历史悠久：风光奇秀。气候凉爽，空气清新。千山万壑，嘉木森森；泉涌溪流，瑞草争芳；山花烂漫，蜂飞蝶舞，是一处修身养性的好地方。因此，许多高僧及其宗派就选中了这块清凉宝地，建寺造像，开辟道场，加之历代帝王尊崇敕建，中外佛教信徒和海内外游人纷至沓来，从事佛教文化交流，遂使五台山到唐代时，已有“大寺三百六，兰若无其数”，佛教达到鼎盛。五台山成了中国佛教四大名山之首、世界佛教五大圣地之一。后经“会昌法难”、五代战乱，五台山佛教随之衰落。宋元时期，藏传佛教传入五台山，五台山成了汉藏佛教圣地。明清时期，是五台山佛教的第三个兴盛时期。新中国成立后，政府拨出大量资金，维修寺庙，翻修殿堂，补修佛像，使五台山佛教又焕发出新的生机。现在五台山尚存庙宇 47 处，古韵依然。其中国家重点文物保护单位 5 处，南禅寺、佛光寺就是其中两处，它们均具有千年以上的悠久历史，是中国现存最古老的木构建筑。它们分别建于唐德宗建中三年（782）和唐宣宗大中十年（856），更可贵的是两处庙宇的殿堂中还保存着同期彩塑，佛光寺中还保存有唐代壁画和唐人墨迹，是我国唐代佛教艺术宝库中的精华。

唐朝是我国封建社会的鼎盛时代，经济、文化和艺术都得到空前发展。交通发达、中外文化交流频繁，特别是唐王朝所施行的兼收并蓄的文化政策，使得不同思想体系、艺术形式互相撞击、互相吸收。在这样的历史氛围中，唐代艺术的各个门类，如建筑、绘画、雕塑、书法等等，都达到了历史的极高水平。史籍中对各类艺术的记载颇多，但现存的实物，尤其是建筑实物，已十分罕见，保存着同期塑像和壁画的寺庙，更是凤毛麟角，南禅寺、佛光寺也就显得越发珍贵了。

南禅寺位于五台县城西 22 公里的阳白乡李家庄村，距五台山台怀镇约 95 公里，海拔 700 余米，气温比台怀高几度，冬季多了





五代时的五台山图

Picture of Mt. Wutai in the Five Dynasties

几分暖意，盛夏又特别凉爽，周围环境清静幽雅。寺庙坐落在土岗上，背靠青山，面临河水；林木葱郁，碧草茵茵。每当夏季来临之时，各种山花竞相怒放，把寂静的山冈装扮得分外妖娆，到处散发着诱人的芬芳，遂使这座幽静的山冈显得十分热闹，五彩斑斓。就在这充满勃勃生机的美景中簇拥着一座历史悠久、艺术精湛的唐代寺宇。《补修南禅寺碑记》载：“于村东南隅，旧有南禅寺古刹也。乃郭家寨、李家庄二村之香火所建。”唐代时，佛教禅宗分为北宗和南宗两大派别。唐中叶之前，五台山是北宗的天下，而该寺则是南宗传入后所占的小寺，故名南禅寺。正因如此，在“会昌法难”时南禅寺才免遭毁坏，侥幸地保存下来，直到今天还以那古朴的充满文化艺术的身姿展现给世人。后来，南宗占领了五台山，南禅寺一直保持其名，成为一种光荣。

寺宇坐北面南，规模不大。寺内现存殿宇6座，除主体建筑大佛殿3间是唐代原物外，其余皆为明清建筑。

大佛殿气势非凡，具有唐代建筑质朴、坚实、苍古的风格。单檐歇山顶式的大屋顶，举折相当平缓，是全国现存古建中屋顶最平缓的一座。殿内无柱，亦无天花板。殿的梁架制作简练，形体美观，是早期建筑的显著特点。殿顶铺瓦，墙身不负重大的承托力，屋顶重量是通过梁架和柱子支撑。大佛殿是我国古建筑中的一颗璀璨夺

目的明珠。

宽敞的大殿内，塑有佛、菩萨、童子、于闐王等17尊彩塑。所有塑像主次分明，神态逼真，性格显明。塑像仪容丰满，神态自然，服饰鲜明，衣纹流畅，雕造精湛，技术高超，与敦煌莫高窟的唐代塑像极为相似。这组唐代彩塑，是五台山最古老最精美的彩塑，具有很高的学术价值和艺术价值。

寺内还存有唐代雕刻的三只石狮和一座小石塔。古狮中的一只为卧狮，高78厘米，另外两只呈二狮相斗之状，十分生动，高均为45厘米。石塔通高51厘米，是一座四角五层楼阁式石塔，第一层四面雕有佛传故事，第二至第五层均有浮雕佛像。此塔造型优美，雕工精细，是唐代楼阁式佛塔中的精品，受到有关专家的赞誉。

沿忻台公路到达五台县豆村后，再顺着五繁公路（五台至繁峙）行5公里至佛光新村，向东行1公里就看到苍松翠柏掩映着的一座红色影壁，上面书有金光闪闪的“佛光寺”三个大字。佛光寺居于五台山南台西南佛光山麓，海拔1320米，离五台山台怀镇47公里，气温比五台山高几度。寺宇依山就势，坐东面西，三面环山，面临河流，青山碧水，鸟语花香，环境优美，空气清新。难怪古往今来有许多高僧大德驻锡于此，修行弘道，研习佛法，遂使佛光寺成了五台山“十大寺”之一、享誉海内外的著名古刹。寺内外那些挺拔高大、古老苍翠的松柏，更是给这座古刹增添了几分古朴静谧的庄严气势。明代参政王陶赋诗赞其曰：

五台山上白云浮，云散台空境自幽。
历代珠幡悬法界，累朝金刹列峰头。
风雪激烈龙池夜，草木凄凉雁寒秋。
世路茫茫名利者，尘机到此尽应休。

《广清凉传》载：“佛光寺，燕宕昌王所立。四面林峦，中心平坦。宕昌王巡礼谒，至此山门，遇佛神光，山林遍照，因置额名佛光寺。”佛光寺始建于北魏太和二年（478）。五台山民间传言：“先有佛光寺，后有五台山。”佛光寺是五台山最早的寺宇之一。唐代，佛光寺达到鼎盛，名播长安、敦煌等地，远及日本等国。

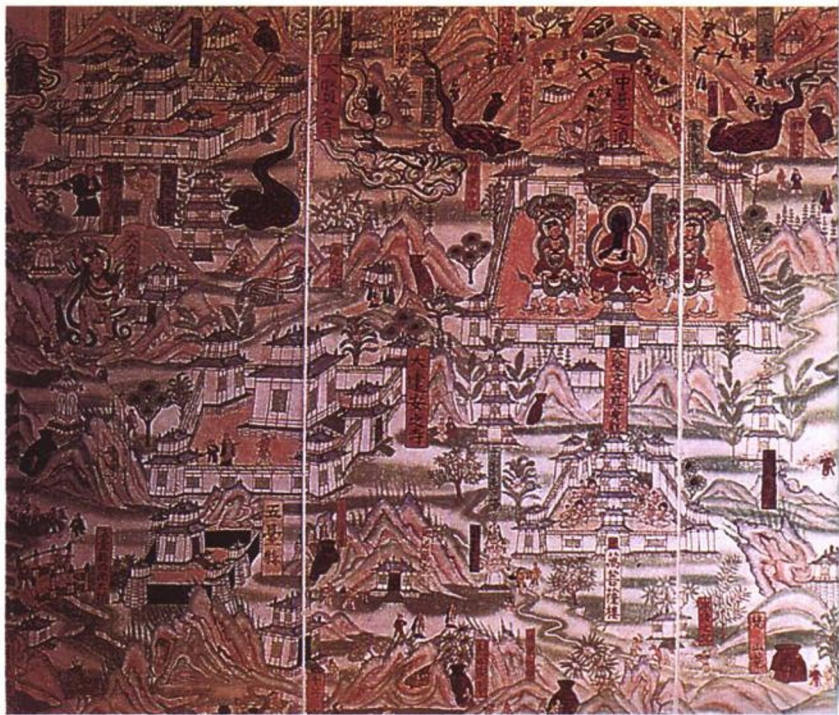
佛光寺分为三个院落，一院低，二院花香四溢，三院最高。三院东大殿是唐代木构建筑，这座唐代建筑与殿内的唐代彩塑、唐代壁画和唐代题记，被誉为“唐代四绝”。一院文殊殿，是金代建筑的杰出代表。寺内外保存的丰富多彩的唐代墓塔和唐代经幢都是驰名国内外



的珍贵文物。

佛光寺东大殿始建年代虽略晚于南禅寺，但其规模宏大，气势非凡，技艺高超，结构合理，保存完整，名扬海内外，是留存下来的无论在艺术上还是在技术上都高度成熟的一座唐代木构建筑，难怪后世人都将它视为唐代建筑的范例。殿内佛坛上塑有佛、菩萨、金刚、供养人等35尊彩塑。这些彩塑造型优美，形象生动，体态丰满，雍容华贵，气度非凡，神态传神，线条流畅，雕工精湛，显示了我国佛教教极盛时期的艺术成就，是我国现存唐塑中极其珍贵的艺术佳品。

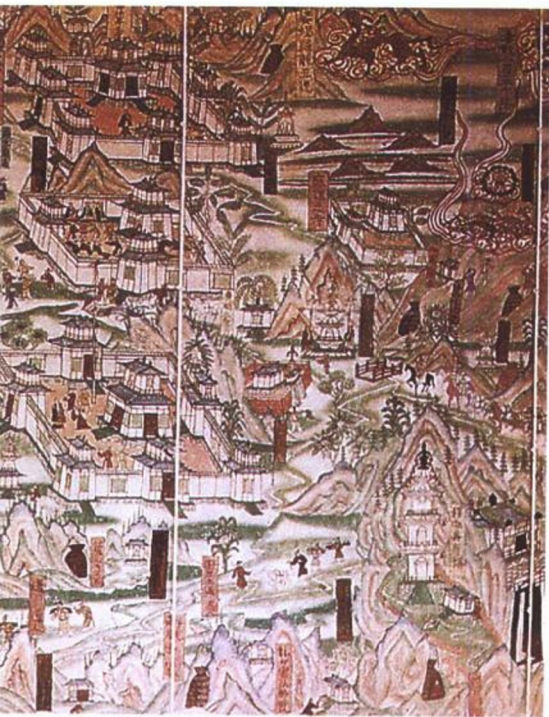
文殊殿建于金天会十五年(1137)，是五台山鲜有的金代建筑。文殊殿在建筑结构上有着十分突出的特征，用长达3间大殿的粗大木材，以拖重垂木和斜木相结合，其构成颇似近代的“人字柁架”结构，扩大了跨度，减少了柱子。这种手法在当时同类建筑中，尤为新颖，是一创举。殿内还有同期塑的佛菩萨像，这组塑像继承了东大殿内的唐塑风格，是在唐塑基础上发展的艺术产物，特别是人物的宝冠与衣褶变得尤为复杂。这种变化，对五台山以后各时期的塑像产生了很



大影响。

五台山的佛塔，千姿百态，丰富多彩，若论规模宏伟，当举台怀镇塔院寺里元代建造的大白塔；若论年代亘古，则推佛光寺祖师塔。佛光寺的诸多高僧墓塔，不仅年代久远，而且形制多样，造型奇特，雕砌精致，匠心独具。从它的形制而言，有楼阁式塔、亭阁式塔、覆钵式塔、花塔等。从塔的平面形式来说，有圆形、方形、六角形。佛光寺这些唐代砖砌墓塔，为我们研究唐代砖雕艺术和建筑艺术提供了弥足珍贵的实物资料。

总之，南禅寺、佛光寺的古代建筑和历史文物，是五台山佛教文化的精华，是我国古代劳动人民在建筑、彩塑、石雕、绘画等方面智慧的结晶，是我国光辉灿烂的历史文化中的一朵奇葩。让我们一起步入这两座古朴典雅的艺术宫殿，共同领略这清静优美的环境和丰富多彩的历史文物，使我们从中得到知识的升华与艺术的享受吧！



五代时的五台山图
*Picture of Mt. Wutai in
the Five Dynasties*