



NANHUASI TEMPLE

南華寺



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前言

南华禅寺是中国佛教著名寺庙之一，是禅宗的主要道场，向有“岭南禅林之冠”和“岭南第一山”之称。寺址在广东省韶关市南22公里处，它依南华山（亦称宝林山），面曹溪水，峰峦奇秀、景色佳美。

南华禅寺初名宝林寺，因为禅宗六祖惠能前后在此寺传法四十余年，死后真身又供奉在这里，所以成为禅宗的“祖庭”，声名远扬。相传，梁武帝天监元年（公元502年），梵僧智药三藏率徒来我国五台山礼拜文殊菩萨。在路过曹溪口村时，发现水源甚好，认为此处必有胜地“堪为沙门居止，代代高僧不绝。”于是劝村民修造住处。经过五年之久，建成寺庙，名为宝林。当时的韶州刺史侯敬中曾问智药，为什么名此寺为宝林？智药回答说：“吾去后一百七十年，有无上法宝于此地弘化，有学者如林，故号宝林耶！”这里一百七十年的悬记，即为暗示惠能来此寺弘法，它完全是禅宗门徒后来为神化惠能而编造出来的神话^①。

隋朝末年，宝林寺遭兵火破坏，遂至荒废。关于宝林寺的修葺和复兴时间，在禅宗史料的记载中略有出入，说法不一。但当以惠能定居此寺传法后较为合乎实际。据《曹溪大师传》记载，惠能在唐仪凤元年（公元676年），于广州法性寺落发受戒，然后归曹溪宝林寺开堂传法，由是宝林寺得以重兴。《六祖大师法宝坛经略序》则说是次年归宝林，同时得里人陈亚仙舍山，筑蓝若十三所。唐中宗神龙元年（公元705年）敕名中兴寺。三年（公元707年）后，又赐额法泉寺，并诏韶州刺史重加崇饰。总之，曹溪宝林以此时为最盛。唐玄宗开元元年（公元713年）八月三日，惠能在新州（今广东省新兴县）国恩寺圆寂。同年十一月十三日迁六祖“真身”归曹溪，次年七月建成祖师塔，二十五日将“真身”移置塔内^②。惠能示寂后一百零六年，岭南节度使马颙为六祖请称号。唐宪宗元和七年（公元812年）诏谥大鉴禅师，塔曰“元和灵照”^③。

宋太祖开宝年间（公元968—976年），南汉残兵为患，六祖塔庙被毁为灰烬，六祖“真身”为守塔僧救护，未被损坏。以后，宋太祖将此寺赐名南华禅寺。会太宗嗣位，于太平兴国元年（公元976年）遣郎中李颂等重建寺塔，加谥六祖为大鉴真空禅师，塔为太平兴国之塔。其后，真宗、仁宗、神宗三朝优礼，曹溪复又兴盛^④。

元末，南华寺又受兵燹。明洪武年间（公元1368—1398年）已颓败不堪。永乐年间（公元1403—1424年）稍加修葺。成化十三年（公元1477年）灵照木塔被改建成八角五

层砖塔。成化二十一年（公元1485年）重建信具楼。正德二年（公元1507年）重修说法堂，十二年（公元1517年）重修大雄宝殿。嘉靖十六年（公元1537年）重修祖殿，二十年（公元1541年）重建方丈，其后又渐衰败。到万历二十八年（公元1600年）释德清主持南华，重修寺宇，南华寺又得中兴^⑤。

明末寺复荒秽。清初顺治四年（公元1647年）重修大殿，十七年（公元1660年）重修方丈。到康熙七年（公元1668年），平南王尚可喜将全寺重新修饰，禅宗名利焕然一新^⑥。清末，南华寺又趋败落，伽蓝颓废，殿堂倾圮，名胜荒芜。直至1934年，虚云大和尚来粤，募款重建南华寺，寺貌才得以改观。然而，当时建筑规模虽大，但质量较差，历时不久即有不少殿堂房舍出现歪斜塌漏现象。尤其令人遗憾的是主要殿阁被移建到灵照塔下，形成一条中轴线，改变了唐宋四合院式的寺庙结构，使人无法再睹曹溪伽蓝原貌^⑦。

解放后，人民政府十分重视文物古迹的保护工作，尊重和维护宗教信仰自由，多次拨款重修大雄宝殿、藏经阁、六祖殿、钟楼和鼓楼等建筑。1972年以来，又陆续拨款20多万元对主要建筑进行修缮，并于1976年成立南华寺文物管理处，与寺僧共同搞好寺庙文物的保护和开放工作。1983年后由宗教部门管理。

如今，寺前已有广韶公路通过，乘汽车到达寺前即可见山门。山门两侧挂“庾岭继东山法脉”“曹溪开洙泗禅门”对联。进山门，越园坪，有千年巨樟。登桥，经五香亭、放生池，即到二门“宝林道场”。门两侧并有对联“东粤第一宝刹”“禅宗不二法门”。过二门至天王殿，殿内五大楹，宽敞壮观。正中塑弥勒佛像，两旁分列四大天王塑像，后面立韦驮像。出天王殿是一座小花园，两翼有钟、鼓楼。钟楼内悬南宋孝宗乾道三年（公元1167年）所铸万斤大钟一口，铭文清晰，音响洪亮，击则声闻数里。鼓楼上有大鼓一面，下有清雍正年间（公元1723—1735年）佛山铸千佛铁塔一座。过钟、鼓楼登丹墀达大雄宝殿。大殿面阔与进深均七开间，规模巨大，气魄雄伟，是广东最大的寺庙建筑。殿中塑三宝大佛（释迦、药师、阿弥陀佛），每尊佛像高8.31米，形貌庄严，延袭清代则例。东、西、后三壁有泥塑五百罗汉群像，色彩华丽，神形怪异，继承清代风格。这些塑像是1936年大殿建成时雕塑的，背景塑成大海，所有的造像都置于波浪滚滚的大海之上，在设计中有“苦海无边，回头是岸”的佛教寓意^⑧。殿后有元惠帝至元四年（公元1338年）铸大铁锅一口，锅沿上铸有铭文。大雄宝殿后面还有藏经阁、灵照塔、陈亚仙墓和六祖殿。全寺面积约12000平方米。寺后绿树成荫，古老的水松高耸云霄，香椿树巨大繁茂，卓锡泉（俗称九龙泉）水清冽甘美，此处是自古著称的南华幽境。

南华禅寺除了在宗教和历史上的重要意义以外，还保存了许多珍贵的历史文物。

时代最早的文物是北齐孝昭帝皇建元年（公元560年）的铜佛造像。造像小巧精美，

高仅6厘米，佛像面型清秀，髻较高，一手向前，一手旁摆，两边飘带飞舞，后有圆光和背光，上刻纤细火焰纹。足踩莲座，座下为四脚方台，莲座下有尖插入方台中心，座和台高2厘米。背后阴刻铭文为“皇建元年五月五日淳于忠为善养造佛像一区”。此像原放海会塔内，非南华寺当时所供佛像，何时何人所遗赠不可考。

最著名的文物是六祖“真身”、千佛袈裟和圣旨。

六祖“真身”是唐玄宗开元元年（公元713年）八月三日六祖惠能圆寂后，用他的尸体制成的特殊的塑像。内部是人体干尸，外表贴布，涂香灰泥，上漆。形象生动逼真，写实传神，表现出惠能大师的气质。这座真身塑像是六祖惠能的弟子，唐代著名的雕塑家方辩创作的杰出作品。

千佛袈裟是罕见的唐代传世刺绣。长方形，长2.86米，宽1.46米，绢地现呈杏黄色，里面颜色较深，原来似为朱红色，佛像全部为跏趺坐式。手式有入定、接引、说法、降魔、合掌等。口、鼻、眼和发髻清晰分明。用金线绣出形象，然后配以蓝色、浅蓝色、朱红色、柠檬黄色丝线加以陪衬。莲瓣绣成蓝或浅蓝色。背光和圆光亦为蓝或浅蓝色。周边绣出光芒。每行二十个佛像共五十行，总计为一千个佛像。袈裟周围绣十二条形象生动，张牙舞爪，戏弄宝珠的龙纹，这件袈裟绣工精巧绝妙，确为唐代具有代表性的刺绣作品。文献记载唐代武则天和唐中宗曾分别赐袈裟给六祖惠能大师。这件袈裟上的千佛手印多样，有密宗影响，反映盛唐以后的风格，可能为唐中宗所赐袈裟^⑨。

唐武则天万岁通天元年圣旨，上面没有印玺，纸和书体都似明代的复制品。还有罕见的元代巴思巴文圣旨、蒙文圣旨各一卷和明正统十年（公元1445年）颁大藏经的圣旨，都是文物珍品^⑩。

数量最多、艺术研究价值最大的文物是北宋木雕五百罗汉造像，现存三百六十尊。这批木雕罗汉造像为我国现存唯一的宋代木雕五百罗汉群像中的一部分。这些罗汉造像不仅形象生动、雕工洗炼、具有相当高的艺术水平，而且很多木雕造像上有铭文可考，使我们知道这批五百罗汉造像是雕于北宋仁宗庆历三年——八年（公元1043——1048年），雕造地点在广州，造好后运到韶州（今广东省韶关市）。创作这批珍贵木雕艺术品的匠师有张续、蔡文赞、廖永昌、王保、郝璋等人。

明代的四大天王木雕像也是南华寺的文物精华。木雕的形象具有广东人特点，面貌、表情、姿态和动作各不相同。多闻天王表情威猛，手持宝剑；增长天王戴冠披甲，身围玉带，面部饱满丰润，左手执琵琶，右手弹弦，生动传神；持国天王面部肌肉紧张，两眼圆睁，右手执伞，威风凛然，似有不可侵犯之势；广目天王下巴上翘，咬筋强韧，手捉大蛇，显示出勇敢的气概。每尊像高86.5厘米，外表涂金，辉煌耀目，雕工高明，刀法卓绝，是明代木雕的杰出作品。

此外还有隋代的铁铸摩利支天造像、南汉大宝七年（公元964年）铜钟、宋代的铁铸观音菩萨造像、明代的金书华严经残卷等文物，也有一定的历史价值。

古代著名的唐王维撰“六祖能禅师碑铭”、柳宗元撰第一碑“曹溪第六祖赐大鉴禅师碑”、刘禹锡撰“六祖大鉴禅师第二碑”和宋苏轼撰“卓锡泉铭”等碑刻均已无存。现存最重要的碑刻是宋淳熙十五年（公元1188年）秋镌石的六祖像碑，还有明代的“御制六祖坛经法宝序碑”及后代修缮庙宇的碑记^①。

南华寺的珍贵历史文物和在佛教史上的重要地位，使它成为广东省著名的风景游览胜地和宗教活动场所，吸引了大批游人、学者和佛教徒。每逢节假日，更是车水马龙，人潮涌涌，人们争相来这里欣赏、探索、研究禅宗胜利，瞻仰六祖大师遗像，游览风景名胜和参观罕见的古代文物精华。

注释：

① 《曹溪大师传》、《曹溪大师别传》。

② 丁福保《六祖坛经笺注》，广东人民出版社1963年出版。

③ 马元、释真重修，刘学礼重镌《曹溪通志》。

④ 隋斋居士《南华小志》，广州登云阁1937年3月印。又见《曹溪通志》。

⑤ 释德清《中兴曹溪禅堂香灯记》，《曹溪通志》卷四。又见《憨山大师生谱疏》，苏州弘化社1935年3月版。

⑥⑨⑩⑪ 《曹溪通志》卷一、卷三、卷五。

⑦⑧ 《南华小志》第四章。又见《菩提流动月刊·曹溪专号》，曲江泰兴印刷局，佛历二九七六年印，菩提流动学会发行。

PREFACE

Nan Hua Temple (the South China Temple) is one of the famous temples in China held sacred by Buddhists. It is a main Buddhist site of the Chan Dhyana sect of Buddhism. It is often known as the top of the forest of Chan in the area covering Guangdong and Guangxi. The temple is 22 kilometres south of Shaoguan city of Guangdong province. The temple is close to Nan Hua mountain (also known as Bao Ling mountain). It faces Caoxi river with peaks and wonderful views in sight, and the scenery is excellent and attracting.

At first, Nan Hua temple was named Bao Ling Temple, because of that the Sixth Ancestor Hui Neng came here to lecture on Buddhism and stayed here for more than forty years, and his body was burned here, thus making the temple "the ancestral shrine" of the Chan sect. It was said, that in 502 A. D. during the first year of the reign of Tian Jian of the Liang period, when monk Zhi Yao San Zhang led some monk students to go on a pilgrimage to Wutai Mountain, passing by Cao Xi Kou village, he found the source of Cao Xi river here very good, believing that there must be a respected place around here, 'suitable for monks to live and to propagandize the Buddhism, generation by generation for ever'. So he advised the villagers to build up the temple. The construction of the temple took 5 years, which was named Baolin Temple (the treasure forest temple). The local governor at that time (He Jingzhong) of Shao area asked the monk Zhiyao the reason to name the temple as Baolin Temple, Zhiyao answered, 'after 170 years of my death, there would be a great master to publicize the buddhism sect and there would be scholars as many as a forest. So it should be called Baolin temple'. Here, 170 years hints that Huineng would come and give the publicity of the Chan Sect. It completely was made for the deifying of Huineng.

At the end of Sui dynasty, Baolin Temple was damaged by the armed forces and fire, then it was deserted. About the rebuild and reconstruction and the recovery time of Baolin temple, there is a slight difference in the records of the historical materials of the Chan Sect. Anyhow, it seems more real that they happened after Huineng came, lived and lectured the Buddhism here. According to the record of 'the biography of Caoxi great master', in 676 A.D., during the first year of the reign of Yi Feng of the Tang dynasty Huineng shaved his head and became a Buddhist monk at Faxing Temple in Guangzhou city, afterwards he came back to Caoxi Baolin Temple to publicize the Buddhism sect. Consequently Baolin Temple was recovered again, 'the brief

preface of the Sixth Ancestor great master' says he came back to Baolin Temple in the next year, at the same time, he got the offer of the hill from a villager named Chen Yaxian, where the thirteen sites of the temple were built. In 705 A. D. the first year of the reign of Shenlong of the Tang dynasty, Emperor Tang Zhong zong named it 'Zhongxing Temple'. Three years later (in 707 A.D.), it got a horizontal tablet engraved with the character for 'Faquan Temple' in the calligraphy of Emperor Zhong Zong. The Emperor had the provisional governor renovate it. In a word, Caoxi Baolin Temple was most prosperous in this time. In the first year of Xuanzong Kaiyuan on 3th August 713, in Tang dynasty, Hui Neng died at Guoeng Temple (present-day Xinxing County, Guangdong). On 13th November in the same year the Body of the Sixth Ancestor was moved to Caoxi; in July the following year the Ancestor Master Pagoda was built and on 25th the Body was moved into the pagoda. 106 years after Hui Neng's death, Ma Cong, the officer of Lingnan had asked for the name of the Sixth Ancestor from the Emperor. In the 7th year of Yuan He years of Xianzong(812) in Tang dynasty, the name of the great Master Jian was given by the Emperor and also the name of the pagoda 'Yuan He Ling Zhao'.

During the Kaibao years of Song Taizu (from 968 to 976 A.D.) (No.1, emperor in Song dynasty), the pagoda and temple of the Sixth Ancestor were burnt. The Sixth Ancestor's body was saved by a watching monk. After the war, Song Taizu named the temple Nanhua Temple. When Hui Tai Zong had succeeded to the throne, in the first year of the reign of Tai Ping Xing Guo of the Song dynasty. The Sixth Ancestor was named Tajian Zhenkong Master (Highly Empty Master), the name of the pagoda became Taiping Xingguo pagoda (Peaceful and Prosperous Country). Through successive dynasties (Zhen zong, Renzong and Shengzong) Caoxi became prosperous again.

At the end of the Yuan dynasty, ravage of war brought Nanhua Temple to a state of ruin. During the years of Hong Wu (1368-1398 A. D.) in Ming Dynasty, the temple was deserted. It was repaired a little during the years of Yongle (1403-1424 A.D.), and in the 13th year of Chen Hua (1477 A.D.). Ling Cao wood-pagoda was rebuilt into a 5 floor brick pagoda with 8 corners. In the 20th year of Chenhua (1485 A.D.) Xingzu Building was reconstructed in the 2nd year of Zhen De (1507 A.D.), the lecture House Building. In the 12th year (1517 A. D.), the Main Hall Building. In the 6th year of Jiaging the Sixth Ancestor Temple was rebuilt. In the 20th year (1541 A.D.), the abbot's room was rebuilt, afterwards it declined. In the 28th year of Wanli (1600 A. D.), Deqing, an old monk managed Nanhua Temple, then the temples has undergone renovation and reconstruction so that Nanhua was prosperous again.

At the end of Ming dynasty, the temple fell into disuse. In the 4th year of Shunzhi (1647 A. D.), (at the beginning of Qing dynasty), the main hall of the Buddhist temple was repaired. In 17th year (1660 A. D.), the abbot's room repaired either. In 7th year the Ping Nan King Shang Ke Xi ordered the complete (1668 A. D.) Kexi reing, in Qing dynasty rebuild of the temple and the famous temple had an entirely new look. At the end of Qing dynasy, Nanhua Temple was on the wane. The temple was decadent and the main hall of the Buddhism temple was decadent, too. The famous place went out of cultivation. These conditions were continuous till 1934, Xiyuan the great Buddhist monk came to Guangdong province, collected the fund to rebuild South China Temple. The face of the temple then was improved. Anyhow, at that time the construction was broad in scale but the quality was poor. Not long after the temples had been rebuilt, the walls of halls and rooms were out of order and their roofs leaded and collapsed soon. Especially it was a pity that the main temple had been moved to the north-south axis of Lingzhao Pagoda and spoiled the Tang-Song architectural style-courtyards enclosed on four sides. Thus, it is impossible for a viewer to appreciate their original form.

Since 1949, the People's Government has paid more attention to the protection of cultural relics and historic sites, respecting and safeguarding freedom of religious belief, and has allocated large sums for restoring Mail Hall of Daxiong, The Pavilion Preserving the Buddhism Classics, the Sixth Ancestor Bell Tower Building, Drum Tower Building and other building. Since 1972, the government allocated 200,000 Yuan to rebuild and repair the main constructions. In 1976, the 'Managing Office of Nan Hua Temple Culture Relics' was established for the protection and the open work of the temple's culture relics in cooperation with the temple's monks. After 1983, the management has been transferred to the religion's managing department.

Now in front of the temple there passes Guangshao road, one can arrive in front of the temple by bus. Then the gate can be seen. On the two sides of the temple are hung the two antithetical couplets. Which mean Gen Lin (Gen Hill) goes continues from Dongshen (Dongshen Hill Peaks), Cao (Cao River) flows with the temple gate open'. When one comes through the gate, passes the lawn, he will be in front of the thousand years great camphor tree, after walks over the bridge, passes Wuxiang pavilion, free captive life pool then comes Baolin Taoist place. On both sides of the gate there are also two antithetical couplets, which say 'Here is the No.1 Temple in Dongyue area'. Here is solely for Buddhism. When one passes the second gate, to the Hall of Tian Wang, (the King of the Heaven). In the hall, there are four great Tianwang Statues. At the back of them Weituo statue is standing. Out of the Hall there is a small garden, a Bell

Tower and Drum Tower on both sides. A 10,000 jin heavy bell is hung in the Bell Tower which was made in 1167 during the third year of the reign of Xiaozong Jiaodao of the Southern Song dynasty. The inscription are clear. The sound is sonorous. The sound of striking can be heard several Chinese Li away. There is a great drum tower. Under the drum there is a thousand Buddhists Iron Tower casted in Foshan city during the years of Yongzheng (from 1723 through 1735 in the Qing dynasty). After passing the Bell and Drum Towers, stepping on the flight of the steps, one reaches to the great Hall (Da Xiong Bao Hall). The hall had a frontage and depth of 7 bays with a great scale and a magnificent feeling. Which is the largest Temple in Guang Dong province. There are statues of three treasury great Buddhists in the hall (SKt Sakyamuni, Bhaisa Jyagru and SKt Amitabha). Each of them is 8.31 metres high. The shapes are dignified, following the examples of Qing dynasty. On the eastern, southern and northern walls, there are five hundred monks of clay sculpture. Their colour is gorgeous. Their shapes and outlooking are different, which carry forward the style of Qing dynasty. These statues were made in 1936 when the hall was constructed. The background of the statues is the sea and all statues are located above the wave-rolling sea. The design implies a Buddhist idea 'The bitter sea of life has no bounds, at a landing place if you repent is a hand. At the back of the hall there is a big iron pot which was made in 1338 during the fourth year of the reign of Zhi Yuan of the Yuan dynasty. On the pot's edge some inscriptions were casted. At the back of the main hall are the Building Preserving the Buddhism Classics, Ling Zhao Tower, Cheng Yaxiang Tomb and the Hall of Sixth Ancestor. The temple occupies an area about 12,000 square metres. At the back of the temple there are many green trees. The ancient China cypresses are straight to the sky. Chinese toones are growing luxuriantly. The water of Caoxi spring (popular name is Nine Dragons Spring) is clear and sweet. Here has been a famous quite place in south China since ancient time.

In addition to the religious and historical significance, Nanhua Temple has preserved many treasury historical relics as well.

The earliest relic is a bronze statue of Buddha made in the first year the reign of Xiaozao of the Northern Qi dynasty (560 A.D.). The figure is small and exquisite, and is of 6 centimetres high. It has a fine delicate feature and the coiffure is higher. One hand is pointing forward in front and the other is putting on one side. Flames are executed to suggest the sacred hale around the Buddha. The figure stands on a lotus throne. Under the throne there is a square table with four-legs and a tip is inserted at the centre of the square table. The throne and the table is of 2 centimetres high. At the back of it some

words were inscribed. It says the figure was made by Chun Yu Zhong on 5th May of the first year of Bei Qi Xiao zhao. Originally this figure was housed in Haihui pagoda. It was not the Buddha figure owned by Nan Hua Temple when and who sent it here can not be known.

The most famous relic is the Sixth Ancestor's Body, the kasaya of thousand monks and the imperial edict.

The Sixth Ancestor's Body is a special statue. In 713 A.D. during the first year of the reign of Xiao zong of the Tang dynasty. Ancestor died, the statue was made with his corpse inside. The surface of the body was stuck cloth then coated with grey earth and painting. The statue is vivid and true to life. It shows temperament during Hui Neng's life. The statue of the real body was a masterpiece made by a Hui Neng's student, a famous craftsman in Tang dynasty.

The kasaya of a thousand monks is a rare embroidery in Tang dynasty which was handed down. The background of silk is apricot yellow and the colour inside is a little dark. Originally was known as bright red. Some posture of the monks on the kasaya are different. All the statues are in a manner of sitting, with hands bearing of thinking, introducing, lecturing, defeating the devil, clapping etc. The appearances of the mouths, noses, eyes, and hairs can be seen clearly. Their out wards were embroidered by golden line then, contrasted with blue, light blue, bright red and light yellow lines. The segments of the lotus flowers are embroidered with blue or light blue colours, and the halo are embroidered blue and light blue as well. Around them embroidered with the rays of the light. There are twenty monks each line. There are fifty lines. So there are 1,000 monks altogether. Around kasaya, twelve dragons embroidered. Their images are vivid, bare fangs and brandish claws and seem playing peals. The kasaya is exquisite and extremely wonderful, really representing the embroidery in Tang dynasty.

According to the record of the historical documents Wu Ze Tian and Zhong Zong in Tang dynasty respectively bestowed kasaya to Sixth Ancestor Hui Neng Master. The impresions of the hands of the thousand monks are various. It shows influence of The Chan Sect on it, reflecting the style after the flourishing Tang dynasty Buddhism. It is quite possible to be bestowed by reflecting the style after Tang Zhong zong.

The emperial edict in first year of Tongtian years of Wu Ze Tian emperor has not been sealed in it. The paper and the handwriting seen are to be the replica in Qing dynasty. Again there are rare edicts one in Baenba, one in Mongolian in Yuan dynasty. The edict ordered about Ta Zang Buddhism sutra (in the tenth year in reign of Zeng Tong (in 1445 A. D.) in Ming

dynasty), they are precious relics.

The relics of the largest number and the biggest volume of art study are the statues of woodcut monks. Originally there should be five hundred. Now there are 360 left. These statues are a part of five hundred statues of woodcut monks existed from Song dynasty only. Not only the statues are vivid, cut well, higher level of art but also many statues have inscription which can be checked and which lead us to know that these statues were engraved (from 3th year to 8th of Qing Li year from 1043 to 1048 year, in North Song dynasty), in Guangzhou. Then moved to Zao Zhou, Guan Dong province). The artisans of these precious statues were Zhang Xu, Ca Wen Zhi, Lao Yong Chang, Wang Bao, Hao Zhang and so on.

Four Great Lokapalas (Tian Wang) woodcut are also the crem of relics at Nanhua temple. The images of statues convey a form peculiar to the Cantonese in a wide variety of expressions, postures and actions. Virudhaka Southern Lokapala wears an official hat, a suit of armour and a belt. His face is full, plump and smooth-skinned. His left hand holds a pipe and right hand is playing it. This is vivid and life like. The face's muscles of Eastern Lokapala are nervous and his eyes are big opened. His right hand holds an umbrella and he appears majestic-looking. It seems he can not be infringed. Virupaksa, Western Lokapala's lower jaw protruding upward. He is holding a great snake. This shows his brave spirit. Dharada, Northern Lokapala's expression is of power. His hand is holding a double-edged sword. Each statue is of 86.5 centimeters high, painted golden colour outside. They are brilliant. The craft is wise and the cut outstanding. They are the remarkable representative woodcut works in Ming dynasty.

In addition, there are cast iron statue of Supporting the Sky (Mo Li Zhi Tian) made in Sui dynasty, copper bell made in the 7th year of Da Bao of Nan Han, the cast-iron statue of Budhisattva in Song dynasty, a fragmentary manuscript of Buddhist sutra of the Adornment of Buddha (Buddha-avatamsaka-sutra) and so on. These relics have some historical value as well.

The Inscription of Sixth Ancestor Master wrote by Wang Wei, 'Stele sent to Sixth Ancestor Master in Caoxi' by Lin Zhong Yuan, 'Second Stele of Sixth Ancestor Ta Jian Master' wrote by Liu Yu Xi of Tang dynasty, and the words that praised Caoxi Stream wrote by Su Shi in Song dynasty are no longer existed. Now the most important style is the stele Sixth Ancestor's portrait which was cut on the stone in autumn of (fifth year in reing 1188 of Chunxi, in Song dynasty). There are a stele of Sixth Ancestor which was made through the order of the Emperor and some steles of recording the repair of the temple by later generations.

The precious historial relics of Nan Hua temple and the important position on Buddhism history make it become a famous scenery tour place and the spot of Buddhism activities, attracting many tourists, the scholars and the Buddhists. On festival occasions and holidays, the temple is crowded with visitors. The tourists come here to study the Chan (Dhyana) Sect and the pagoda, pay a visit to the portrait of the deceased of Sixth Ancestor Master, go sight-seeing to scenic spots and historical sites, visit the treasures of ancient relics.

Translated by Li Xingruo



1 南华寺全貌



- 2 五香亭
3 钟楼