

**History, Material Culture and Auspicious Events at the Purple Cloud:
Buddhist Monasticism at Quanzhou Kaiyuan**

by

Brian J. Nichols

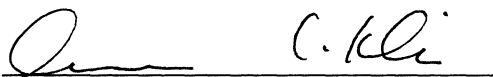
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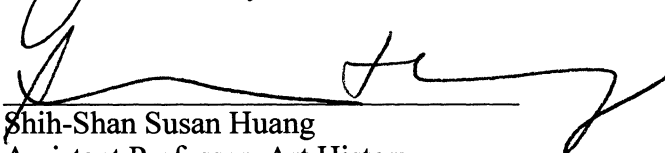
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ABSTRACT

History, Material Culture and Auspicious Events at the Purple Cloud: Buddhist Monasticism at Quanzhou Kaiyuan

Brian J. Nichols

Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery is an important Buddhist monastery on the Southeast coast of China, in Fujian. It was founded in the seventh century and survives with artifacts from every imperial dynasty stretching back more than one thousand years. Today it is the home of more than eighty monks and the site of a vibrant tradition of devotional life. The following chapters examine Kaiyuan monastery from multiple points of view (time, space, inhabitants and activities, discourse and relations with the state) in order to produce a multi-dimensional portrait considering the contributions of each element to the religious and institutional life of the monastery. In shedding light on monastic Buddhism in contemporary China, this study contributes to a small but growing body of knowledge on the revival of religion in post-Mao China.

The study begins with a historical survey of the monastery providing the context in which to understand the current recovery. Subsequent chapters chronicle the dual interplay of secular and non-secular forces that contribute to the monastery's identity as a place of religious practice for monastics, laypersons and worshipers and a site of tourism and leisure for a steady stream of visitors. I survey the stages of recovery following the Cultural Revolution (chapter four) as well as the religious life of the monastery today (chapter five). Other chapters examine how material culture (chapter six) and memorials to auspicious events and eminent monks (chapter seven) contribute to the identity of the monastery. Chapters eight and nine consider how Kaiyuan balances demands to

accommodate tourists while remaining a place of religious practice.

For Jamie, Charles and William
我幸福的家庭

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: "The great fruit has not been eaten."

The Buddha Land of Quanzhou is truly full of old monasteries, but of those existing more than a thousand years there is only one, the Kaiyuan monastery—"The great fruit has not been eaten." Its reputation has not declined, and those nostalgic for things old can still hear about and experience it.¹

Written in 1643 by Yuanxian 元贤, a monk from Fuzhou's Yongquan Monastery (永泉寺) on Mount Drum (*Gushan* 鼓山), this passage hails the longevity and greatness of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery. The enigmatic aphorism "The great fruit has not been eaten" (*Shuoguo bu shi* 硕果不食) has been chosen by Yuanxian with care and warrants closer examination. The line is taken from the *Yijing* 易经 or *Book of Changes* and appears in the exegesis of the top and only *yang* (unbroken) line of hexagram twenty-three (*bo* 剥, "peeling," "stripping," "splitting apart" or "flaying").² The scene painted by this hexagram is the end of autumn when all things are turning brown and dying and a destructive storm blows in, tearing apart the trees of an orchard. Atop a lone damaged tree is a large fruit left uneaten that is destined to fall and bring forth a new tree and, ultimately, a restored orchard. That is the positive message of the top line referenced by Yuanxian.

When the scholarly monk Yuanxian visited Kaiyuan at the end of the Ming dynasty, it was emerging from a period of neglect, demise and occupation. He artfully chose this image from the *Yijing* to suggest Kaiyuan's promise of revival after a century

¹ *Quanzhou Kaiyuansi zhi* I.1a. (henceforth *Sizhi*)

² Huang 2001:197-203.

of disaster. The poetic metaphor suggests Kaiyuan monastery re-emerging from the seeds of its own fruit after a period of terrible neglect. Kaiyuan had suffered occupation and mistreatment during the sixteenth century and was at last beginning to see signs of recovery and new life. Yuanxian's image from the twenty-third hexagram was both poetic and apt.

Yuanxian hailed Kaiyuan monastery as the oldest and one of the grandest surviving monasteries in the region. More than three hundred and fifty years later, these claims remain as true as they were in the seventeenth century. And Kaiyuan is once again in the midst of period of restoration. Today's Kaiyuan is the largest monastery in the region occupying about 19 acres (78,000 square meters) and supporting a community of some eighty monks.³ In addition, it has buildings and artifacts from every imperial dynasty since the ninth century of the Tang dynasty.⁴ While other Chinese monasteries were left in ruins from a string of disasters stretching from the Taiping Rebellion of the mid-nineteenth century through the Cultural Revolution of the mid-twentieth century, Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery has survived remarkably well. It was Kaiyuan's impressive state of preservation that gave rise to my initial line of inquiry: what factors, I wondered, had contributed to Kaiyuan's longevity? What was the nature of Kaiyuan's "great fruits" that enabled it to survive and return to life as a center of Buddhist devotion in Communist China? This line of questioning led to the desire to understand the many dimensions of

³There are about eighty monks that permanently reside at Kaiyuan, while visiting monks can bring the population close to one hundred. As of October 2007, Fuzhou's illustrious Yongquan monastery on Gushan maintains approximately the same monastic population. Smaller temples in China may have only a handful of resident monks; Nanputuo monastery in Xiamen, which includes an Institute of Buddhist Studies (*foxue yuan*), on the other hand, houses some six hundred monks (Ashiwa and Wank. 2006:337).

⁴ These properties include a Tang dhāraṇī pillar (ninth century), early Song dynasty stupas (twelfth century), monumental pagodas from the late Song (thirteenth century), sculptures from the Yuan (fourteenth century) and a main hall and statues from the Ming dynasty (seventeenth century) and the Ordination hall, sculptures and bells from the Qing (nineteenth century).

the monastery—religious, social, cultural, economic, political, historical and institutional. This dissertation explores all of these dimensions and folds them into an explanatory matrix which emphasizes two of these dimensions: religious and institutional. By “religious” I mean to indicate the forms of doctrine and practice made manifest by individuals in their actions or discourse. In addition, “religious” entails the manifestation of doctrine and practice in the material culture of the monastery, for example, in its memorials to the auspicious past and in literature produced by the monastery. The exploration of these components will reveal their imbrication with social, historical, cultural, political and economic realities.

By “institutional” I intend to indicate an organization or corporation dedicated to acquiring and managing resources in the interest of self promotion and propagation. Michael J. Walsh emphasizes this notion of institution in his study of medieval Chinese monasticism: “A large Buddhist monastery was thoroughly institutional, that is, a social and physical structure that defined, imposed, and maintained sets of social values, and sought to acquire and distribute capital—economic, cultural, or otherwise—in a competitive manner.”⁵ Walsh does a good job of pointing out the importance of accumulating wealth and how this was accomplished by exchanging merit (cultural capital) for land etc. (economic capital). At the same time his argument, based on medieval sources, tends to reduce monasteries to this institutional (competitive, wealth-concerned) dimension. My presentation of Kaiyuan avoids this kind of reductionism by portraying Kaiyuan as an organism with an institutional life and a religious life—an entity of two fundamental orientations, religious and institutional. In the chapters to

⁵ Walsh 2010: 6.
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follow it will become clear how the monastery has both dimensions. My central thesis is that Kaiyuan negotiates a balance between these two demands by successfully deploying monastic signifiers including devotional practice, material culture and auspicious events.

Both the religious and institutional natures of Kaiyuan monastery have been conditioned by the particular circumstances of the post-Mao era and its historical antecedents. This dissertation inquires into this historical background and finds that it is marked by shifting relationships between the monastery and the Chinese state (both the central state and its local representatives). This approach combines a diachronic view of the monastery with a synchronic focus on “the present” (i.e. the post-Mao period).

The Post-Mao Revival of Religion

Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s current revival began soon after the death of chairman Mao in 1976. In December of 1978 at the meeting of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress Central Committee, Deng Xiaoping initiated the economic reforms that soon led to the opening of cities and special economic zones along China’s Southeast coast. The first provinces opened were Fujian (across from Taiwan) and Guangzhou (across from Hong Kong).⁶ Four cities in these provinces were designated special economic zones in 1980, this included Xiamen, which is a one hour drive from Quanzhou. In tandem with these economic measures, the repressive measures directed against religion

⁶ In 1979 four special economic zones are established on an experimental basis: Shenzhen深圳, Zhuhai 珠海 and Shantou汕头 in Guangzhou province and Xiamen in Fujian. The experimental nature of the zones quickly faded as they met with rapid success and the model was eventually expanded across China’s east and southeast coasts.

during the Cultural Revolution were repudiated and a form of religious freedom was revived.⁷

The new religion policy was formalized in 1982 with the issuance of the document *On the Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question during Our Country's Socialist Period*. Commonly known as *Document 19*, this policy guaranteed the freedom to believe or not believe in religion and the freedom to practice religion at officially recognized religious activity sites (*zongjiao huodong changsuo* 宗教活动场所). The five officially recognized religions are Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Protestantism and Catholicism and each of these has an official mediating association between it and the state. In the case of Buddhism this mediating agency is the Chinese Buddhist Association (*zhongguo fojiao xiehui*, 中国佛教协会; CBA).⁸

The economic opening and the relaxing of controls against religious practice were a boon to temples throughout Fujian and it has come to have the largest number of Buddhist monasteries and temples in all of China.⁹ Quanzhou Kaiyuan, as the most prominent monastery in an important home of overseas Chinese with links to Taiwan and Southeast Asia, was quick to receive financial support from overseas Chinese to fund its

⁷ The germ of China's current policy on religion can be traced back to 1945 when Mao called for the protection of the freedom of religious belief and disbelief (Welch 1972: 2). Within two years of founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Mao's notion of freedom of religious belief was articulated in Article 5 of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) which guaranteed the freedom to believe or not to believe religious ideas. The justification in the eyes of communist ideology was that people were still backward and in a low stage of development and would leave religious beliefs behind as they advanced in understanding (class consciousness) and technology (means of production) (Welch 1972: 3-4.). It was pointed out that after thirty years of socialism in the Soviet Union there were still remnants of the old religion; it was therefore unreasonable to attempt to wipe them out by force (Welch 1972: 5). While this policy of tolerance (in a more restrictive sense than we're accustomed to think of) abruptly ended with the onset of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, it was revived under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping in 1979.

⁸ Religious practices that fall outside these five official religions, such as folk practices and Falun Gong, are in danger of being labeled superstitions which or not protected by the law or cults and prohibited. Kaiyuan monastery is an official site of religious activity and so is not affected by the same concerns.

⁹ Ji Zhe 2004.

revival. The precise nature of its revival will become clearer as one reads chapters four through nine.

In shedding light on monastic Buddhism in contemporary China, this study contributes to a small but growing body of knowledge on the revival of religion in post-Mao China. In this introduction I will situate and describe the major components of my project, introduce key terms, discuss sources and methods and contextualize this study within relevant fields of scholarship. I will close with a brief synopsis of the chapters to follow.

Object of Study and Themes

“...it is only through particularity that we see Buddhism in action, and that is usually the best posture in which to observe it.”¹⁰

In short, the object of this study is a particular place—a large, famous, urban Buddhist monastery in Southeast China possessing historic cultural properties. Each word of description is important. If one were changed, the particulars of the religious and institutional life, as well as the state of revival, would be different. Why that is so will become clearer as we proceed, but for now, let’s examine each of these elements individually in an effort to get a better fix on the object of study.

“Large” means that historically it was among the largest monasteries (in terms of size, land holdings and population of monks) in Fujian and today, as previously mentioned, it is said to be the largest temple in a province of hundreds. It currently serves

¹⁰ Brook 2005:147.
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as home to some eighty monks and can accommodate up to ten thousand visitors.¹¹

Smaller temples, which have long been in the majority, often house as few as two or three monastics.

“Famous” is a reputation that Kaiyuan has enjoyed for centuries; today this translates into a steady stream of visitors from all over China. Temples that are not famous have neither the income nor problems associated with tourism and pilgrimage. “Urban” indicates that it has always been in or near the middle of the city of Quanzhou. In other words, it is not in the mountains or countryside where many famous monasteries are, nor has it ever been. The history of the monastery has been linked with fortunes (rising and falling) of the city of Quanzhou and the colorful history of this city will be revealed in the next chapter. “Buddhist” draws attention to the fact that it is the religion which is enjoying a relatively robust revival in its Han form, but one that remains under close restraint and supervision in Tibet.¹² It is a designation that invites us to inquire into the nature of Buddhist practice represented by the monastery.

The word “monastery” translates *si* 寺, a word that is often translated as “temple.” I use “temple” when I wish to indicate or stress the non-monastic nature or features of a *si*, such as its use as a museum or tourist attraction. I also use “temple” for a site with only a few monastics or a shrine with no monastics. Thus I generally apply “monastery”

¹¹ Local publications often tout it as the largest monastery in the region. The ten thousand figure is an estimate based on the fact that some 3,000 visitors are known to fit comfortably along the central axis and this leaves open two very large areas to the east and west, which could easily accommodate many more thousands if necessary.

¹² The Buddhist revival that is described here is thus focused on Han Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism has also enjoyed gains in the post-Mao period, but it has suffered repressive measures that have not affected Han Buddhism. The rationale for the different treatment of Han and Tibetan Buddhists has to do with Chinese fears of Tibetan independence movements. One change is the requirement that monks be 18 to be ordained; their monastic education used to begin as early as age 6. See Goldstein, Melvyn and Matthew Kapstein (eds.). 1998. *Buddhism in Contemporary Tibet*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

to a Buddhist site that is tended by a sufficiently large number of monastics.¹³ The differences between “monasteries” and “temples” suggests in miniature some of tensions and contentions that will emerge as the story of monastic Buddhism in China unfolds in the chapters ahead.

Monasteries deserve scholarly attention because they are the central pillar of Buddhism in East Asia, the home of monastics, sites of education and libraries, homes of artistic treasures and a gathering place for lay Buddhists and worshipers. In his introduction to the recent volume *Buddhist Monasticism in East Asia* (2010), Harvard professor James Robson states that:

It would be difficult to overstate the significance of monasticism within Buddhism...Indeed, it is a topic that some might argue has been distinctly understated given the central role that it has played throughout the historical development, and geographic spread, of the tradition. ... If there is one thing that we can say for certain about Buddhist monasteries and monasticism it is that they warrant the sustained attention of scholars of Buddhist studies, since what goes on inside and outside of their imposing gates is of central concern to our understanding of Buddhism as it functioned as a living religious tradition.¹⁴

Robson indicates the need for more studies of Buddhist monasticism and connects the value of studying Buddhist monasteries to understanding how Buddhism functioned as a living religious tradition. Robson is introducing a collection of essays on medieval monasticism in China and Japan and he therefore writes “functioned” in the past tense rather than in the present. This dissertation situates itself between the demand for more

¹³ There are many terms in Chinese that are generally translated as monastery, but they range in meaning from a small private chapel to a large public monastery, a mountain hermitage to a busy urban temple. See Robson 2010a: 43-47 for a discussion of the meaning of *si* 寺 and related terms. If it is only a small community of six or fewer monastics, such as one commonly finds at most *si*, in both urban and rural areas, I tend to refer to it as a temple.

¹⁴ Robson 2010a:2.

studies of Buddhist monasteries to reveal their “occluded histories”¹⁵ and a demand for more anthropological and historical studies of living religious traditions in China and Fujian that the late great scholar of Chinese religion Michel Strickmann called for twenty years ago.¹⁶

Michel Strickmann recognized the religious importance of Fujian and suggested that it holds the most promise for understanding Chinese religion be it Daoism, Buddhism or folk religion. He wrote:

Sophisticated studies of the Fukinese cultural area may well have a stimulating effect on sinology in general. They will certainly help clarify the role of religion at the local level, and this in turn should aid us in understanding the function of religion in Chinese history. ... Perhaps it is the too frequent abstraction of sinology from living realities that in part accounts for our backwardness in coming to grips with Chinese religion. In the perspective of local society, religion has been the vital cohesive force rather than an academic enigma.¹⁷

The phrase “Southeast China,” which I used to locate my site, indicates Fujian, a province famous for a rich and enduring religious culture. It is the home of the national and transnational cult of virgin goddess of seafarers Mazu (promoted to Empress of Heaven or *Tianhou* under the Qing).¹⁸ It is the home of the most vibrant traditions of Daoist and folk religious practices.¹⁹ In addition, Fujian was one of two provinces first opened to international investment. Fujian is directly across from Taiwan and the two

¹⁵ Robson 2010a:16.

¹⁶ Kenneth Dean was first to respond to his call, conducting early studies of Daoism in Fujian (Dean 1993, 1998).

¹⁷ Strickmann 1980: 248. When he spoke of the Fukinese cultural area, Strickmann meant Taiwan, Malaysia and Indonesia which are home to significant numbers of immigrants from Fujian.

¹⁸ Mazu is the subject of many studies including James Watson (1985) and Mayfair Yang (2004); there is much more research in Chinese.

¹⁹ Many studies on Daoism by Kenneth Dean and John Lagerwey have been based in Fujian. See also Stephan Feuchtwang’s work on popular religion. De Groot also conducted his groundbreaking research on Chinese religion in Fujian.

enjoy close historical links; the geographic and ancestral links have generated increasing cross-straits exchanges. The wealth generated through the collusion of economic opening and Fujian's many overseas connections has contributed to the revival of the region economically as well as culturally and religiously. Kaiyuan as well as other monasteries in Quanzhou have benefited from the economic growth of recent years. Popular religious vitality is linked to economic prosperity in Fujian; when people do well financially, they traditionally reward the local deities for what is perceived as their efficacious assistance.

The most direct benefit from economic growth has been financial support in the form of donations and fees paid for ritual services. While an economic motive may inform Kaiyuan's collection of donations it is also true that it is a means of provisioning merit (*gongde* 功德) for Buddhists and spiritual efficacy (*ling* 灵) and blessings for worshipers. We will see that the monastery promotes a reputation for *ling* in part through its memorialization of auspicious events associated with its founding (chapter seven). Buddhism throughout Asia recognizes giving (*dāna*) as the first of the six or ten "perfections" (*pāramitā*) to be cultivated by Buddhists.²⁰ Lay Buddhists in particular have made giving a core feature of their practice of Buddhism throughout Asia. The most common form of charity is giving to the monastic community or Sangha which, according to tradition, generates greater amounts of merit than other good works such as social charity.²¹ The exchange of offerings for merit or blessings is an important feature

²⁰ The other five are ethics, patience, energy, meditative concentration and wisdom (*prajñā*).

²¹ Sangha can be used to refer to both laypersons and monastics (as in the fourfold sangha), but it is commonly used to refer specifically to monastics, which is how I use the term here. For an excellent discussion of the primacy of giving as means of generating merit in Burmese Buddhism see Spiro 1970: 103-112.

of both the religious and institutional life of Buddhist monasteries; it may be characterized as an exchange between economic capital and cultural capital.²²

In order to understand the different forms of Buddhism represented by the laity engaged in acts of patronage on one hand and those monks who are involved in higher practices on the other we might borrow the distinction between *nibbanic* and *kammatic* forms of practice suggested by Melford Spiro, in his study of Burmese Buddhism (Spiro 1970). *Nibbanic* indicates the search for release from samsara (the cycle of rebirth and “redeath”), a form of “radical salvation” classically pursued by monks. *Kammatic*, meanwhile, indicates a concern with good works (karma) and merit in order to receive a higher, more comfortable birth (within samsara). Spiro describes this latter form of Buddhism as a form of “proximate salvation” which helped spread the faith among the masses.²³ It is within the *kammatic* form of Buddhism that laypersons in China and elsewhere engage in giving in order to generate merit in the hopes of being rewarded in the future. Interestingly, the soteriological goal has shifted from seeking transcendence of the world and samsara to seeking the more proximate goal of a higher birth within samsara, which includes birth in heavenly realms.²⁴

Scholars and non-scholars alike may be found speaking about Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, Zen, Tantra and so on as naming coherent traditions that can be identified

²² The notion of cultural capital is, of course, adapted from Pierre Bourdieu. Ji Zhe 2004 characterizes the exchange as one between material capital and cultural capital (nt. 19). See also Walsh 2010.

²³ Spiro 1970. Spiro identifies two other forms that I will not use here: Apotropaic (magical protection) and Esoteric (related to alchemy and spirit worship in Burma). *Kammatic* practices are naturally part of the salvic practice of “*nibbanic*” Buddhism; a distinction between the two is recognized in order to help highlight different levels of motivation, marked by different emphases in practice.

²⁴ At the same time, I do not wish to over-stress these differences, which indeed form part of a continuum of practice. Other scholars have tried to develop other means of distinguishing types of Buddhist practice. Reginald Ray, for example, in his study of Buddhist saints, has proposed a three-tiered model of understanding Buddhism: settled monastics, forest yogis and household believers (Ray 1994:433-447); See also Yu 2001:198.

with distinctive practices and goals—and they can. But it bears stressing that each of these designations also accommodates *divergent* practices and goals. Atiśa (eleventh century) in his *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment (Bodhipathapradīpa)*, for example, speaks of three kinds of motivation (low, middle and high) which are marked by three different goals (samsaric reward, self-liberation, global-salvation) met by different practices or vehicles. The individual with the lowest form of motivation engaged in the *kammatic* form of Buddhism, while the higher forms of motivation relate to the *nibbanic* and, we might say, *buddhanic* forms of Buddhism.²⁵ Monasteries accommodate monks of varying motivations and talents and welcome patrons of varying interests and motivations. The most visible manifestation of these different forms of Buddhism is in the economic engine of the cash-merit exchange (*kammatic*) that supports the monastic order (*kammatic, nibbanic, buddhanic*).

The monastery of this study is marked by the salience of its material culture and, in particular, its properties of cultural heritage. Such elements of material culture have played a prominent role in the institutional, devotional and ritual life of Buddhism in Asia, but scholars have only recently begun to make sustained inquiries into the material and embodied dimensions of religion. Within the field of Buddhist studies the shift in focus to material culture is evidenced by Gregory Schopen's pioneering work (1997, 2004), *Living Images* by Elizabeth Horton Sharf and Robert Sharf (2001), John Kieschnik's *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (2003) and Germano and Trainor's *Embodying the Dharma* (2004). Kaiyuan's cultural properties have been instrumental in securing state support for preservation and in making the monastery into a tourist

²⁵ *Buddhanic* suggests Buddhahood (for all sentient beings) is the ultimate goal (the path of the bodhisattva), rather than arhatiship (liberation from samsara) or (individual) nirvana.

attraction. Cultural properties and the deployment of space also serve to frame and condition forms of religious practice and experience at the site. I trace the historical evolution of Kaiyuan's physical plant (chapter two) and reflect on the role played by buildings and material objects in the production of religious and institutional space (chapter six).²⁶

The work of David Morgan has been helpful in thinking about the place of material culture in religion. Rather than seeing it as opposed to belief, he seeks to reorient our understanding of material culture in order to view it as an enabler and conditioner of belief.²⁷ I see the turn towards greater appreciation of material objects in religion as a means to draw attention to our embodied experience of the world and the way we learn and know with our bodies and through contact with other material objects. Temples and monasteries are physical sites marked by the presence of material structures and sacred objects, what roles do they play individually? Collectively? Institutionally? Religiously? Experientially? These are some of the questions that will be explored in chapter six.

Twice-weekly one can witness a large gathering of lay Buddhists at Kaiyuan being lead by monks in the most popular form of practice in Chinese Buddhism today: *nianfo*, which is reciting and/or remembering the Buddha's name.²⁸ It is the central practice of Pure Land Buddhism and the Buddha called to mind is the Buddha Amitabha (*Amituo fo*), the Buddha of Infinite Life and Light. In a previous life, this Buddha vowed to bring all who called his name into his Pure Land once he became a Buddha. He is said to preside over the Western Land of Bliss (*Sukhāvātī*) and this is where the faithful hope

²⁶ Henri Lefebvre has explored and theorized the social production of space (Lefebvre 1991).

²⁷ Morgan 2010:7.

²⁸ See also Qin 2000: 359ff.

to be reborn with his assistance. Amitabha is thought to fulfill his vow by bringing those who sincerely call his name at the moment of death into his Pure Land. Pure Land Buddhism dominates Chinese Buddhism and is the form publically practiced at my field site and the vast majority of Chinese Buddhist monasteries.

The key religious components that Kaiyuan shares with other Buddhist temples and monasteries in China are those we have been discussing : *ling* (spiritual efficacy), *dana* (giving) and merit (*gongde*) and *nianfo* 念佛 (Buddha recitation/mindfulness). This dissertation will explore their place in religious practice at Kaiyuan and in the monastery's institutional structure. It will be found that these elements along with others may be interpreted in different ways (e.g. *nibbanic* and *kammatic*). I refer to this as the multivalence of Quanzhou Kaiyuan's monastic signifiers, that is, those elements which signify Kaiyuan as a monastic institution. Signifiers refer to Kaiyuan's devotional activities, material culture and memorials to auspicious lore; each of these is variably interpreted by monks, laypersons, worshipers, tourists and officials. There are two dominant interpretive schemes which generate the two principal views of Kaiyuan held by locals and non-local visitors: tourist attraction and religious site. How these views are generated and how Kaiyuan accommodates both views is a recurring theme of this dissertation.

Sources and Methods

This study utilizes two general types of sources: 1. written, archival materials including epigraphy and 2. a data stream collected from fieldwork including interviews, field notes from observations, videos and photography. These two data streams feed into two dimensions of this interdisciplinary dissertation: historical and ethnographic.

The most important textual source for the imperial history of Kaiyuan is the seventeenth century *Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple* (*Quanzhou kaiyuansi zhi* 泉州开元寺志) by Yuanxian.²⁹ The excerpt at the top of this introduction was taken from this text and two of its four sections are translated in the appendix in full (buildings and biographies). Composed by Yuanxian in 1643 (and re-carved in 1927), the *Monastery Record* is divided into four sections: 1) history of the temple and its buildings, 2) biographies of eminent monks of the temple, 3) literature associated with the temple including inscriptions, and 4) economic information such as the lands owned by the temple.³⁰

Monastic Records (*sizhi* 寺志) such as this were compiled for many monasteries during the Ming and Qing dynasties and serve as excellent and underutilized sources of information about Chinese Buddhism. Monastery records, like mountain gazetteers (*shanzhi* 山志), are a form of historiographic literature that became popular at the end of the Ming dynasty (early seventeenth century); they are a subgenre of gazetteers (*zhi*) most of which deal with administrative regions such as sub-prefectures (*zhou* 州) or districts (*xian* 县).³¹ Scholars working at the Dharma Drum Buddhist College in Taiwan have recognized the importance of monastic records (or “gazetteers”) and have digitized

²⁹ The final character, *zhi* 志, is commonly translated as “gazetteer.” I choose to translate it here as “Record,” which is another meaning of the word *zhi*, because it does not have the same broad coverage of features that mark gazetteers of place (*difangzhi* 地方志) such as prefectural or city gazetteers. It is, on the other hand, a monastic record (*sizhi* 寺志).

³⁰ Another name for Quanzhou which is used in the title of the text is Wenling 温陵 (thus, the *Wenling Kaiyuansi zhi*). The record contains 27,555 characters.

³¹ The *Zhongguo difangzhi zongmu tiyao* 中國地方志總目提要 (Jin & Hu 1996) lists 8577 gazetteers of administrative regions (a number that excludes temple records and mountain gazetteers); Bigenheimer 2009:2, n.5.

237 of them to facilitate their use as sources for the study of Chinese Buddhism.³² Marcus Bigenheimer, one of the project leaders, describes monastery records as “[a]mong the most precious sources for the study of later Chinese Buddhist history.”³³ As written on the website of the database these sources are “treasure houses containing topographical descriptions, biographies, poems, maps, portraits, miracle stories and much more.”³⁴

Yuanxian’s *Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery* (hereafter referred to as the *Monastery Record*) has been checked against and supplemented with Dagui’s *Daizhu Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas* (*Ziyun kaishi zhuan*, 紫云开士传) from 1348. Dagui’s text contains biographies of eminent masters associated with Kaiyuan temple and was used by Yuanxian in his compilation of the *Monastery Record*.³⁵ It may be classed a part of genre of biographies of eminent monks (*gaoseng zhuan* 高僧传); historiographic in nature, the text is full of facts and legends associated with Kaiyuan’s monks.

Kenneth Dean and Zheng Zhenman 郑振满 of Xiamen University have painstakingly collected religious inscriptions from Fujian; I used their three volume collection of materials from Quanzhou entitled *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion in Fujian: Quanzhou Region* (*Fujian zongjiao beiming huibian: Quanzhou fufence* 福建宗教碑铭汇编:泉州府分册).³⁶ They looked for original inscriptions, but if none were available textual sources were used. I consulted more than thirty inscriptions

³² The Dharma Drum database of monastery records or gazetteers may be accessed at <http://dev.ddbc.edu.tw/fosizhi/#lis>. Marcus Bigenheimer’s biographical research has counted 280 temple gazetteers and he estimates that a complete count of *sizhi* could exceed 350 (Bigenheimer 2009:4).

³³ Bigenheimer 2009:1.

³⁴ <http://buddhistinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/fosizhi/>

³⁵ A second edition was printed in the Ming dynasty with information on eight additional masters, four from the Yuan (including Dagui) and four from the Ming. Reprinted in 1929 by the monk Chaochen 超尘 during the Republican Period (eighteenth year of Mingguo) at Kaiyuan Quanshui yixuan 开元泉水一轩.

³⁶ Published in Fuzhou by the Fujian Renmin Publishing House 福建人民出版社

in this collection which were directly relevant to Quanzhou Kaiyuan. The earliest record of the monastery is an inscription by Huang Tao 黄滔 from the year 897 (not extant) and there were several Qing dynasty inscriptions which helped fill in gaps in the monastery's history since the *Monastery Record* ended at the Ming.

I consulted many other primary historical sources including Huang Zhongzhao's 黄仲昭(1435-1508) *Gazetteer of Fujian (Bamin tongzhi 八闽通志)* and the Hu Zhiwu 胡之錕, Zhou Xuezheng 周学曾 et al. edited *Gazetteer of Jinjiang County (Jinjiangxian zhi 晋江县志)* from 1830.³⁷ Details about Kaiyuan's Republican era orphanage are taken from two rare documents acquired over the course of my fieldwork from private libraries. The first was written by Wu Zexu 伍泽旭 in 1979, "A Simple History of Quanzhou Kaiyuan's Children's School and Foster Care" (*Quanzhou kaiyuan ertong jiaoyang yuan jianshi 泉州开元儿童教养院简史*).³⁸ The second is the *Report on the First Class of Students from Quanzhou Kaiyuan's Compassion for Children School (Quanzhou Kaiyuan cieryuan diyijie baogaoshu 泉州开元慈儿院第一届报告书)* compiled by Ye Qingyan around 1929. These documents provided information about the Republican Period charity and transnational funding networks that were part of Kaiyuan's response to early twentieth century pressures to modernize that had caused Kaiyuan and other monasteries to lose their income-producing lands (the traditional source of monastic wealth; see chapter three).

³⁷ The earliest known collection is the Qianlong edition of 1765, it was updated in 1830 (Daoguang period of the Qing) and printed (according to Ecke and Demiéville) in 1866. The edition now available, which I have, is a modern printed book in two volumes (1,870 pages) from 1989. This book, in seventy-seven chapters, surveys the history, people, geography, weather, culture, customs and so on of Jinjiang county which includes Quanzhou city.

³⁸ This is a typed report hand signed by the author (property of Huang Yushan 黄玉山).

My ethnographically acquired materials were collected over the course of four trips to Quanzhou from the summer of 2005 to December 2009. I spent about two years overall conducting research in China during that period, approximately seven months of which were spent living on site at the monastery. The materials I collected include many hours of informal interviews, dozens of hours of more formal interviews, more than 300 pages of field notes, about twenty hours of video and thousands of images. The following discussion of method will shed more light on this body of ethnographic data and how it was acquired and utilized.

Approach and Methods

I have A) consulted texts and epigraphy in order to understand the history of the monastery and its patterns of evolution and B) conducted fieldwork consisting of participant observation and interviews (open and closed, formal and informal) to understand the recent history, current revival and the attitudes of the community toward the monastery. The nature of the two streams of sources that I have utilized suggests the interdisciplinary nature of this study. The disciplinary boundaries I most frequently crossed were those between religious studies, history and anthropology.

Over the course of my research I became viscerally aware of the gap between certain prescriptive accounts in Buddhist literature and the lived reality of the monastery. I have made an effort to generate descriptive accounts collected through ethnographic research in order to more faithfully reflect the lived reality of religion at the site. I was initially interested in the doctrinal understanding of monks, for example, an interest that is likely shared by most scholars of Buddhism. I found that questioning monks about

Yogacāra or even something as basic as the six perfections was usually a recipe for frustration. The vast majority of China's monks are neither scholars nor advanced practitioners and possess only a basic knowledge of Buddhist doctrine.

John Lagerwey, a scholar of Chinese religion with joint appointments at the Sorbonne and the Chinese University Hong Kong who has conducted research in China for many years, offers such would be researchers the following propaedeutic: "You do not know the answers; you don't even know the questions."³⁹ It is an approach particularly suited to fieldwork in contemporary China where phenomena are in such a fast and, sometimes, radical, state of transition. By remaining open to new research foci, I was drawn to examine the phenomenon of tourism and the factors contributing to it such as the temple administrative commission (chapters eight and nine). The administrative commission was a factor that had emerged in listening to stories told by the monks. I was not looking for information about this, but it emerged as a key factor conditioning the presence of non-monastic bureaucrats at Buddhist temples all over China and contributing to a process I refer to as "museumification." The method of moving from specific observations to more general conclusions is inductive analysis.

I sought to understand the monastery, its historical trajectory and religious and institutional life from the ground up. I conducted interviews and collected data in an open-ended, qualitative fashion⁴⁰ and followed-up on points that were brought up by my

³⁹ Talk given by John Lagerwey to China Fulbright grantees in Hong Kong, April 2009. It is part of what Kevin J. O'Brien calls a form of exploratory analysis that "treats research as an ongoing process and emphasizes discovery rather than verification." O'Brien 2006: 28. For exploratory analysis see: Gerring, John. 2001. *Social Science Methodology: A Critical Framework*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 231-232; See also Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory; Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.

⁴⁰ There are several reasons that I did not attempt to collect quantifiable data, but fundamentally such an approach did not serve my goals. In addition there are greater restrictions placed on formal surveys in
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interlocutors. The flow of my research was thus intentionally colored and influenced by the perspectives of my interlocutors and the impressions of my on-site observations, especially those that were recurring.⁴¹

Along with being open to new angles, I also practiced empathy with my informants; empathic understanding that was personal, cultural and historical in order to give them a fair hearing without jumping to conclusions. Exercising empathy does not mean becoming an advocate or an instrument in the rationalization of inconsistencies, hypocrisies and failures, but it should include taking time to examine what may appear to be instances of these and presenting them in the fairest, least tendentious light possible.⁴²

There is an additional challenge of which I became aware as I proceeded in my research, namely that the accounts provided by interviewees could themselves include prescriptive rather than descriptive information. I tried to balance these prescriptive accounts with direct observation. It was important for me to live at the monastery, not in a guest house at a remove, but in a room that lay between the abbot's quarters and the rooms of two senior monks, in order to understand the texture of the religious and institutional lives of the monastery. I ate with the abbot and the senior monks on a daily basis and observed the comings and goings, was present for the elite visitors that arrived, as travel plans were made and executed, for the crises that arose and the responses to

China, as well as more oversight and individuals may be less reluctant to commit certain answers in writing. See Heimer and Thøgersen 2006.

⁴¹ My use of the term "hardware," for example, to describe the current focus of recovery efforts is a word used by my informants.

⁴² As scholars we are wont to believe that we can speak objectively about phenomena, if not as an omniscient third person observer, then at least, as it were, above the fray of private agendas. This, of course, is not the case; but we can remain self-aware and exercise vigilance, understanding our situatedness. This is related to what Gadamer calls the history of effect (*wirkungsgeschichte*) by which he means how our understanding is historically situated and conditioned, and the importance of becoming aware of this in the interpretive or hermeneutic endeavor (Gadamer 1989: 298-301).

them. The full access I enjoyed at the monastery enabled me to develop an unusually complete picture of the life and functioning of the monastery.⁴³ I even traveled with some of the monks to the World Buddhist Forum in 2009 in Wuxi, Jiangsu.

I made two trips to Kaiyuan monastery in 2005 and 2006 in which I collected material for exploratory analysis. I examined this material and formed an initial approach to my subject; I determined a group of factors that appeared to be most relevant in the identity of the monastery. In doing this I pursued lines of inquiry such as, “What did the monastery possess that enabled it to survive the trauma of the twentieth century?”, “What internal factors condition life at the monastery? Its reputation?” After isolating the most prominent characteristics of the monastery (people and their practices, material culture, history, lore and state relations) I returned to Kaiyuan on two subsequent trips for follow up fieldwork to explore these factors and confirm or modify my analyses.

When I initially turned to my ethnographic data, I was confronted with data that fell into the messy interstices between popular and elite religion. On the one hand, the monastery was an organ of official state-recognized religion in China, a formally recognized Buddhist institution. Yet the monastery was visited daily by throngs of incense-burning, prostrating worshippers whose devotions have more in common with popular religious practice than with the ideals of monastic Buddhism. In addition, many of the monks were fresh out of the village and had more in common with the older ladies chanting Amitabha than the urbane monks who had graduated from university (one of these monks is at Kaiyuan, the others I met at different monasteries). The heterogeneity

⁴³ The access that I enjoyed was more than anything a result of my personal connections (*guanxi*) with provincial authorities who made it possible for me to stay there and have unfettered access to the monastery.

of practitioners within the monastic grounds and within the population of monks exposed the inadequacies of considering a monastery and its inhabitants solely as representatives of an elite or official tradition. The monastery did represent institutional Buddhism, but it accommodated a diversity of individuals, with a diversity of perspectives: monks, lay persons, worshipers and tourists. The exchanges between these individuals and the life of the monastery will be explored in the chapters to follow. What did they get from the monastery? What did they contribute to its identity?

Scholarly Context

Scholars of Chinese Buddhist history can attest that the walls of monasteries tended to be rather high, and the texts at our disposal rarely afford an unimpeded look inside their gates.⁴⁴

In terms of content and approach this study is situated at the intersection of several lines of emerging research. One of these is a new field of research into the current revival of religion in China, which is part of China's dramatic post-Mao reform and opening. While several articles, monographs and edited volumes have been published on the post-Mao revival of religion, to my knowledge there has yet to be published a monograph dedicated to the post-Mao revival of Han Buddhism.⁴⁵ To date there are only book chapters, articles and dissertations available which treat the post-Mao revival of Han Buddhism.

⁴⁴ Robson 2010b:44.

⁴⁵ There are three books on Tibetan Buddhism in post-Mao China, Makley 2007, Goldstein and Kapstein (1998) and Ester Bianchi (2001). Books on popular forms of religion include Adam Chau (2006), Jing Jun (1996), Erik Mueggler (2001), Wang Mingming (1997), Ole Brun (2003), Thomas Dubois (2005) and Guo Yuhua (2000). On Daoism there is Kenneth Dean (1993, 1998). Studies of Catholicism by Richard Madsen (1998) and Eriberto Lozada (2001), on Islam by Dru Gladney (1996). Edited volumes on different religions including Buddhism: Yoshiko Ashiwa and David Wank (2009), Mayfair Mei-Hui Yang (2008), Daniel Overmyer (2003), Julia Pas (1989) and Adam Chau (2011).

Three recent dissertations that deal with post-Mao Buddhism are Qin Wen-jie's "The Buddhist Revival in Post-Mao China: Women Reconstruct Buddhism on Mt. Emei" (Harvard, 2000), Thomas Borchert's "Educating monks: Buddhism, Politics and Freedom of Religion on China's Southwest Border" (University of Chicago, 2006) and Gareth Fisher's "Universal Rescue: Remaking Post-Mao China in a Beijing Temple" (University of Virginia, 2006). Qin's dissertation is a study of nuns on Mt. Emei. Borchert studied monastic education in a Theravadin Buddhist community in China's Southwest and Fisher studied the phenomenon of lay preachers gathering at Beijing's Guangji Temple. None of these studies was thus of a Han Buddhist monastery (of monks) and none of these depicted the life of the monastery in as much detail or depth as one will find here.

Qin's study of nuns on Mt. Emei revealed an inside look at life behind the monastery walls and it has the most in common with my study; though the two remain very different. Qin looks at the lives of the women who become nuns and examines how they are transformed by their choices to leave home. My focus is much more institutional in scope, designed to understand the organic functioning of the monastery and its meaning and significance within the broader community. Another major difference between Qin's study and mine is that her site was under the leadership of a nun of considerable accomplishment in terms of doctrinal understanding and practice. While Qin could explore such issues with her and her disciples, my site lacked such leadership and discipleship.

Borchert looks at relations between the state and the Dai monks of his study and examines how education contributes to their identity. All of these dissertations shed light on various aspects of the post-Mao revival of Buddhism to which this dissertation will

further contribute. While there has been a growing number of articles, dissertations and book chapters dealing with Buddhism in contemporary China, it is important to note that publications, such as textbooks, are still released which do not recognize the current shift in policy in China and the growth of Buddhism that is underway.⁴⁶ This dissertation contributes to correcting the outdated perceptions that are still common regarding religion in post-Mao China.

Related to the study of post-Mao religion is the study of lived religion. Text-based research typically provides prescriptive accounts of the way doctrine and practice are understood by the elite or idealized in some branch of canonical Buddhism. This scholarship is valuable for its preservation and elaboration of the highest aspirations and achievements of various religious traditions. Significantly, however, prescriptive accounts are typically remote from the lived experience of the majority of Chinese religious believers (those who live in or visit temples, burn incense, make donations and so on). Buswell, whose *Zen Monastic Experience* was based on participant observation, contends that the text-based approach that has dominated Buddhist studies has prevented the development of other non-text-based approaches.⁴⁷

Although many scholars have spent time in Asia, too often our research fails to reflect the living religious environment one finds there. Text-based scholarship reflects the tendency in Orientalism critiqued by Edward Said in which “abstractions about the Orient, particularly those based on texts representing a ‘classical’ Oriental civilization,

⁴⁶ We find, for example, “Although there are few Chinese Buddhist activities on the mainland, in Taiwan a number of far-reaching Buddhist organizations have emerged...” in Prebish, Charles and Damien Keon (eds.) 2007. *Introducing Buddhism*. New York: Routledge. Textbooks, however, are catching up; the 2002 Oxford University Press textbook *Buddhism: Introducing the Buddhist Experience* by Donald Mitchell, for example, had no coverage of the contemporary revival, but the 2008 edition does.

⁴⁷ Buswell 1992: 11 Buswell’s body of scholarship is balanced by valuable translations such as those in *Tracing Back the Radianance* (1991).

are always preferable to direct evidence drawn from modern Oriental realities.”⁴⁸

Sounding this note, Strickmann, somewhat acerbically, writes: “Although many North American Buddhologists (as they barbarically term themselves) enjoy long periods of publicly subsidized residence in Japan, most seem to prefer the atmosphere of libraries and language schools to that of the society in which they temporarily dwell. Nor do American university programs in Buddhist studies appear to encourage research and fieldwork in the living Buddhist tradition; their neo-scholasticism excludes the phenomenal world.”⁴⁹ Although I think the situation has improved since this was written, with more scholarship exploring lived religious situations, it remains true that our understanding of the lived practice of Asian religions remains less developed than our philological studies. This dissertation focuses on the phenomenal world and attempts to bridge it with non-canonical textual sources. To understand the religious culture of the majority of Chinese we must continue to supplement our philological studies with descriptive accounts based on ethnographic research that provides details of religion in practice. This dissertation hopes to contribute to this project.

The most relevant study of lived religion for my purposes is Adam Chau’s *Miraculous Response*, a study of popular religion in North China (Chau 2006). Chau finds the popular explanation of the revival, namely that the Chinese people feel “spiritually empty” after being let down by the Communist ideology, to be a misleading oversimplification. As an alternative, he seeks to lay out the many complex social factors that have gone into the revival. Chief among the factors is the belief in spiritual or

⁴⁸ Said 1978: 300; Buswell 1992: 11.

⁴⁹ Strickmann 1990: 108, n.3; Buswell 1992: 11.

magical efficacy (*ling*). He points out that the miraculous responses are socially constructed by actions which establish human-deity relations. These actions include worship, building temples, organizing festivals, and many other activities related to the revival of folk traditions and negotiations with the state—the actions are related to *ling* in that they are meant to please the deity and therefore elicit his magical response. Chau writes: “An adequate interpretation of popular religious revival has to take into consideration all the different social actors’ desires and actions.”⁵⁰ What Chau writes about popular or folk religion largely applies to much of the “elite” tradition of urban monastic Buddhism. Central in both traditions is the importance of *ling* or magical efficacy in attracting worshipers and their donations. *Ling* is a central concept in Chinese religion that has been identified as such by several ethnographers (Jordan 1972; Wolf 1974; Sangren 1987; Weller 1987; Lu 2005). It simply refers to the efficacy of a deity, Buddha or Bodhisattva in responding to petitions and offerings. If the deity is found to be efficacious then they will receive more donations (as repayment). In short, the success of a temple is often linked to its reputation for magical or spiritual efficacy (*ling*). The place of *ling* in the religious and institutional life of Kaiyuan will be a recurrent theme in this dissertation.

Another recent study of lived religion is Stephen Covell’s examination of what he labels “Temple Buddhism” in contemporary Japan (Covell 2005). He contrasts the worldliness of the priests including the tourism at their temples with their rhetoric of renunciation. Although his presentation is neutral, he resorts to using the terms “real” and “authentic” employed by critics of Temple Buddhism to describe what it is not. In my

⁵⁰ Chau 2006: 2
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examination of the issue of tourism at Kaiyuan I present it from within the walls of the monastery in a way that is missing in Covell. My study seeks to paint a more comprehensive and balanced portrait of life at the monastery which includes accounts of religious practice and tourism.

The concern with lived religion is related to the efforts to develop a re-description of Chinese Buddhism by reaching beyond the canonical sources and master narratives to local texts, material cultural and oral testimony (see Ng, Zhiru 2007:18-19; Sharf 2002; Robson 2010b). This dissertation joins this trend by shifting the focus from doctrinal debates to institutional practice, from the scriptural cannon to the use of non-canonical gazetteers, epigraphy and oral history. This shift is made to bring in an alternative pool of data on religion that will presumably enable scholars to develop a more rounded understanding of religious phenomena. One sensitive to the lived realities of, in this case, Asian Buddhists, but one could say the same for most religious traditions. I say all this, it may be worth noting, as a scholar enamored with canonical depictions of Asian religions.

Within this important project of nuancing the older narratives here and overturning them there, my dissertation breaks new ground by anchoring this study on a single significant monastery, which I examine through time and from multiple angles, rather than focusing, as is customary, on a single lineage, school, text or historic period. Two previous studies of Chinese monasticism, which serve as the foundation for later scholarly studies of the phenomenon, are Johannes Prip-Møller's *Chinese Buddhist Monasteries* (1937) and Holmes Welch's *The Practice of Chinese Buddhism 1900-1950* (1967). Taken together these two texts provide an excellent overview of the monastic layout, monastic architecture, the organization, duties and practices of monks, as well as

much of the prominent statuary. Both of these studies may be said to focus on what Welch refers to as the “elite” or model monks and monasteries as opposed to the much more numerous monks who lived at small hereditary temples.⁵¹ By Welch’s estimate the “model” monasteries constituted about 5% of the total. Their goal was to present an account of the ideal or model of Chinese Buddhist Monasticism. This study presents a multi-dimensional profile of an important monastery in all its particularity. It has much in common with the models described by Prip-Møller and Welsh, but details and observations that neither was able to include because they did not engage in long term fieldwork at a single active site. Welch, in fact, relied on interviews with refugee monks in Hong Kong and elsewhere. While material culture is examined by Prip-Møller, his approach is strictly descriptive and neither of these foundational studies analyzes the role of auspicious events, *ling*, sacred space, tourism and commodification which are prominent features in the life of many monasteries.⁵² Nor do they take a long historical view such as that which is taken here.

Monasteries have long been the central pillar of Buddhism throughout Asia and focusing on the life a single prominent monastery through time presents a portrait of the Chinese Buddhist experience from one monastery’s perspective. James Robson has recently written about the lack of scholarly attention paid to monasteries which he contrasts with their importance within Buddhism.⁵³ In addition he points out that the representation of Chinese monasteries as numinous sites in historical texts remains a

⁵¹ Welch 1967:3-4.

⁵² Welch has a brief section on examples of extra wage-earning techniques, but doesn’t examine the question of commodification (Welch 1967: 329-334).

⁵³ Robson 2010a:2.

“significant gap in our understanding of Chinese Buddhist monasteries.”⁵⁴ Chapter seven of this dissertation takes as its focus the memorialization of eminent monks and preternatural events associated with Kaiyuan and discusses how they contribute to Kaiyuan’s identity as a numinous site and tourist attraction—multivalence at work. Robson’s essay points out that “some of the *underrepresented* characteristics of monasteries found in contemporary local sources include a focus on setting (natural landscape), the structure (architectural elements), the contents (relics, statuary, paintings, powerful deities), and the history (eminent monks associated with the site, key political recognition) of those sites.”⁵⁵ My research confirms that these are features that are prominent not only in the literature associated with the monastery past and present, but also in the experience of the monastery by monks and visitors.

One of the few exceptions to the lack of attention paid to Buddhist monasteries as sacred sites is an article by Susan Naquin’s on Beijing’s Tanzhe Monastery, which makes for an interesting comparison with my analysis of Quanzhou Kaiyuan.⁵⁶ She notes how religious and secular values were fused in the depiction of Tanzhe’s sights, but she doesn’t perceive or attempt to analyze the way in which these different factors appeal to different groups of people, those attracted to the religious values of the monastery and those by its secularly informed historical and cultural value, which is what I do. My analysis works with a similar set of observations, but I draw a different, and, perhaps more precise, set of conclusions. My conclusions are that the diverse factors which

⁵⁴ Robson 2010b:47-48.

⁵⁵ Robson 2010b:44.

⁵⁶ Naquin 1998.

combine to encourage patronage and protection do so by appealing to both religious and secular interests, to revivalists and curators.

Thesis Summary

All Buddhist monasteries, if they are to survive, must tend to the institutional demand to accumulate capital in a systematic way. The basic mechanism for the generation of Sangha-supporting income has been the exchange of merit (religious capital) for personal property (economic capital). Successful monasteries must tend to economic and political realities; taking care of these demands is, in large measure, what I refer to as the institutional dimension of a monastery. Apart from this is the religious dimension, which is the monastery's *raison d'être*. My thesis is that Kaiyuan negotiates a balance between the demand to be a self-perpetuating institution and the requirement to serve as a site of religious cultivation by successfully deploying monastic signifiers including devotional practice, material culture and auspicious events. Each signifier is variably interpreted by monks, laypersons, worshipers, tourists and officials. There are two dominant interpretations which generate two dominant narratives for Kaiyuan today: tourist attraction and religious site.

Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery has become a thriving Buddhist monastery in contemporary China because it has successfully promoted qualities that appeal to both secular and religious forces. The secular and religious interest generated by cultural properties, memorials to auspicious events and devotional activities, has effectively served to fashion Kaiyuan's dual identity as a functioning Buddhist monastery and a popular tourist attraction. I demonstrate that while such a dual identity is common

among Buddhist temples, there are degrees of museumification and degrees of restoration of religious practices that are conditioned by various factors. One of the key factors is the extent to which secular authorities are responsible for the administration of a site.

Kaiyuan presents a healthy balance between tourism and religious practice, in part, because the current abbot has fought to achieve greater autonomy for the sangha.

While tourism can negatively impact the environment for religious practice, it should not be portrayed simply as a force of corruption at odds with the religious pursuit, as is typically presumed. Monasteries have been sites of leisure and retreat throughout history and many individuals are attracted to monastic life by visiting Buddhist sites. Furthermore, I demonstrate that the possession of qualities which have attracted curatorial interest and tourists are the same factors that were instrumental in safeguarding Kaiyuan during the Cultural Revolution and have been essential in the rebuilding and restoration of countless monasteries and temples in China.

While other monasteries, such as Hebei's Longxing Temple, have survived intact with valuable cultural properties, they do not survive as centers supporting the sangha because they have fallen under the management and domination of secular authorities. This dissertation has provided a means for distinguishing monasteries that may be economically successful but lack infrastructure to cultivate religious practice from those that are successful both as institutions and as places of religious practice. I develop a notion of three axes (foundational, physical and functional) around which Kaiyuan has successfully distinguished itself as a living sacred place. My analysis of Kaiyuan in this manner provides a model for determining to what extent other monasteries and temples may be considered sacred sites that promote religious activities. At the other end of the

spectrum is the tourist temple that has been incorporated into disenchanted modernity. These may have once been sacred sites, but they are no longer sites of living religiosity (at least not as I define “religiosity” in this dissertation—e.g. chapter nine). The factors I present as contributing to religiosity at Kaiyuan provide a framework for analyzing other temples or monasteries to determine how well they may or may not accommodate religious cultivation. My analysis of Quanzhou Kaiyuan suggests how a balance between religious practice and tourism may be achieved, a balance of relevance for religious sites in all traditions, in all places. My very particular study thus provides findings of relevance for other monasteries in China and, more generally, for sacred sites.

Chapter Summaries

The chapters of this dissertation examine Kaiyuan monastery from multiple points of view (time, space, inhabitants and activities, discourse and relations with the state) in order to produce a multi-dimensional portrait anchored around considerations of their contributions to the religious and institutional life of the monastery. This study begins with a historical survey of the monastery providing the context in which to understand the current situation. What unfolds throughout the subsequent chapters is the dual interplay of secular and non-secular forces that contribute to the monastery’s identity as a place of religious practice and tourism. Kaiyuan proves to be a site where many perceived dichotomies intersect. Some of the dichotomies that Kaiyuan resists are: sacred/profane, religious/secular and elite/folk. Also challenged is the notion that commodification and tourism are necessarily forces of corruption. If they are, one wonders where and when Buddhist monasteries were not corrupt?

Narrating Kaiyuan's history from its founding in the Tang Dynasty to the end of the Qing dynasty, chapter two surveys more than twelve centuries of history. This chapter introduces the characteristics of the monastery and the story of its evolution so as to provide a perspective on the most recent period of revival. Strong patterns that emerge in this survey of imperial history are patronage by elites, architectural evolution and government involvement (both supportive and repressive).

Chapter three continues the historical survey of Kaiyuan by focusing on a tumultuous twentieth century. This chapter covers three distinct developments in Kaiyuan's confrontation with China's project of modernity and secularization: social-engagement and globalization in the Republican period and the "curatorial turn" during the Maoist era. The curatorial turn sets the stage for the survival of Kaiyuan's material culture during the Cultural Revolution and globalization aided the post-Mao recovery.

Chapter four traces three stages of the post-Mao recovery of Kaiyuan: laying the groundwork with the help of Zhao Puchu, full restoration in time for a visit by Jiang Zemin and the era under Daoyuan's leadership. This chapter details the focus of Kaiyuan's restoration efforts on Kaiyuan's "hardware" (building-restoration, eviction of non-monastics, re-population of monastic bodies). There has been a clear lack of stress at Kaiyuan on the revival of traditions of education or training in meditation; this is true for most temples and monasteries in China today, but not all.

While chapters two through four are historical in nature and present a diachronic (through time) view of developments at the monastery, the next five chapters, five through nine, present essentially synchronic (with time) analyses of features of the monastery in order to understand the nature of its current revival. Chapter five surveys

the religious life of Kaiyuan monastery. This chapter uses a person-centered approach to understanding religiosity and identifies three groups of religious actors at Kaiyuan: monks, laity and worshipers. The characteristic religious behavior of each group is examined and biographies of five monks are provided. All of this material together presents a portrait of religious life at Kaiyuan today, a mixture of “elite” and “popular” beliefs and practices.

Chapter six examines major components of Kaiyuan’s material culture. I look at the monastic space in a composite manner as well as individual items of cultural heritage. I examine the role played by material culture in the religious and institutional life of the monastery. I propose that material culture conditions the religious and aesthetic experiences of visitors. I also analyze mayor Wang’s protection and introduce the concepts of reverence and civic pride to explain how cultural properties inspire protection and preservation by participating in two distinct circuits of synergy related to worship and tourism.

Chapter seven examines how auspicious events associated with eminent monks of the past are memorialized at Kaiyuan and how these memorials serve to mark the space as sacred (sanctification) and also provide imagistic nicknames for Kaiyuan (branding). As were cultural properties in chapter three, memorials to auspicious events are shown to contribute to Kaiyuan’s revival by appealing to both religious and secular interests. Most importantly, however, these memorials promote Kaiyuan as a site of spiritual power which in turn attracts greater numbers of worshipers seeking to have their petitions answered by Kaiyuan’s Buddhas, Bodhisattvas or generic sacred powers.

Chapters eight and nine focus on recent events at Kaiyuan monastery and provide a unique window into the current revival of Buddhism in China. Chapter eight examines Kaiyuan's efforts, under the leadership of Daoyuan, to achieve greater autonomy from agents of the state, the "curators." This struggle is set in the broader context of the Buddhist revival in China and introduces comparative data which enables us to appreciate Kaiyuan's position among its peers. I introduce the concept of "museumification" to describe how Buddhist temples have been converted into museum-like spaces to varying degrees in contemporary China. While Kaiyuan is a popular tourist destination, it has also succeeded in negotiating an identity which leaves a space for living religious practice.

Chapter nine examines Kaiyuan's dual identity as a tourist site and Buddhist monastery. I focus, in particular, on the problems associated with tourism and the issue of commodification. I point out how Kaiyuan has limited the presence of vendors, maintained distinct borders and buffers and maintained regular daily services and twice-weekly *nianfo* sessions. These factors and others, I argue, account for the preservation of a distinctly religious atmosphere at Kaiyuan that provides opportunities for religious cultivation. Commodification, if skillfully managed, can be used to support religious practice. Like tourism, commodification is not inherently at odds with the religious pursuit. Evidence suggests that tourism and commodification have been dimensions of large monasteries in China for centuries.

The conclusion, chapter ten, reviews the themes of Kaiyuan's religious and institutional life and considers the nature of Buddhist monasticism in contemporary China. The conclusion also considers the contributions of this dissertation to the study of Chinese Religion, Buddhist Studies and the study of material culture and religion.

Without further ado, let's commence our journey by turning to the first twelve centuries of the Dharma World of the Lotus-Blooming Mulberry.

CHAPTER TWO

The Imperial Period: Patterns of Development

Quanzhou Kaiyuan is today, as it has been since its founding, the largest Buddhist monastery in Quanzhou: it occupies the most expansive grounds, houses the largest number of monastics and boasts the oldest and most valuable buildings and antiquities. The Kaiyuan monastery of today is predicated on more than 1,300 years of history. Traces of these 1,300 years of history remain present at the monastery in the form of buildings, artifacts, trees, inscriptions and stories that are told by tour guides and residents. In order to appreciate these features of the monastery one must have an understanding of their history. This history, punctuated with miraculous events, strewn with cultural properties and dignified with eminent personages, serves as the source of the monastery's distinguishing features which have been instrumental in securing its longevity and reputation. This chapter provides the chronology and historical context in which these features developed; this, in turn, supplies a framework for understanding the current conditions (political, economic, social) governing revival.

The present and the following chapter examine the history of Kaiyuan monastery during its imperial and post-imperial periods respectively. Each chapter surveys the periods for patterns as well as for singular events of lasting consequence with an eye to revealing the historical texture of the monastery so that the reader may better understand not only what a Chinese Buddhist monastery is, but what kinds of information was considered important by compilers and authors of records such as gazetteers and stele inscriptions. The present chapter sketches the history of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery

from its founding in 686 to the end of imperial China in 1911, a span of more than 1,200 years. This history is presented chronologically in six sections: 1. The Tang, 2. The Interregnum, 3. The Song, 4. The Yuan, 5. The Ming and 6. The Qing. Each section relates major developments at Kaiyuan monastery and aims to place this information within the wider context of Chinese Buddhist history.

The primary source used in this compilation of Kaiyuan's history is Yuanxian's seventeenth century *Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery* (*Wenling kaiyuansi zhi*). I have also cross-checked this source with Mengguan Shi's 梦观氏 (a.k.a Dagui) fourteenth century *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas*, it was one of the primary sources used by Yuanxian in his composition of the *Kaiyuansi zhi*. These sources were supplemented by municipal, prefectural and provincial gazetteers and inscriptions. Among the gazetteers consulted were the eighteenth century [Daoguang] *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* (*Jinjiang xianzhi*), the eighteenth century *Quanzhou Prefectural Gazetteer* (*Quanzhou fuzhi*) and the twelfth century *Gazetteer of Fuzhou* (*Sanshan zhi*). Epigraphical sources include steles from the Tang, Ming and Qing dynasties and *in situ* inscriptions from the Song, Yuan and Qing dynasties. Some material on the late Qing comes from oral interviews with antiquarians and amateur historians in Quanzhou. Information from interviews was cross-checked with inscriptions or other archival materials to the extent possible; if I have used material that was difficult to corroborate this will be noted.

The diachronic perspective employed to relate history in this chapter will reveal patterns of growth and periods of contraction, times of inspired leadership and times of neglect. Holmes Welch, in his pioneering surveys of modern Chinese Buddhism, has

termed such patterns of decline and renewal the "monastic cycle."¹ The nadir of the cycle occurs when a monastery's buildings have fallen into a state of disrepair and most of its monks have dispersed. Restoration (*chongxing* 重兴) typically begins with the emergence or appointment of a capable monk who leads the material and moral renewal of the monastery with lay and monastic support. While cycles of decline and renewal are evident in the history of Kaiyuan, these cycles are far from even or regular.

Closely related to patterns of decline and renewal are the inter-related themes of elite patronage and state involvement (both supportive and regulatory). The Chinese state has always considered the regulation of religion as one of its tasks. State policies and their implementation have variously promoted and expanded the monastery on the one hand and suppressed its growth or activities on the other. This chapter will reveal the ways that patronage and neglect are related to broader economic, social and political conditions. As those conditions change we witness corresponding shifts in the evolution of the monastery. I refer to this as continual modulation and track the modulation of Kaiyuan's physical plant and monastic population. As this chapter traces Kaiyuan's imperial period history the contours of elite patronage, state involvement and continual modulation of the monastery will emerge in greater relief.

The six chronological divisions of this chapter exhibit similar, though not identical, organizational structure. Each section begins by relating the history of the monastery in relation to political and cultural developments of the time both within the empire at large and locally, within Fujian and Quanzhou. This is followed by an account of the founding of new structures as well as the repair and rebuilding of structures at

¹ Welch 1968: 87-90.

Kaiyuan; in some cases this material is woven into the treatment of local history since local leaders were often important patrons of Kaiyuan. This, in turn, is followed by an account of notable monks of Kaiyuan during the age in question.

The patterns and themes that emerge in the history of Kaiyuan monastery as well as unique and salient developments provide a context in which to understand its survival and current restoration. The diachronic portrayal of the current chapter will serve as a framework for the synchronic analysis of features of the contemporary monastery in chapters five through nine.

THE TANG DYNASTY

Founding and Early History 源远流长

In lunar February of 686 (the second year of *Chuigong*) during the Tang dynasty, citizen Huang Shougong 黄守恭 had a dream while napping. A monk begged to have his land for a temple. Mr. Gong said, "Should my trees bloom white lotuses, I shall concede." Pleased, the monk thanked him and suddenly disappeared. Two days passed and the mulberry trees really bloomed white lotuses. The local authorities considered this an auspicious story and asked to build a place for practice (*daochang* 道场). The empress granted permission and named it "Lotus Flower." The monk Kuanghu 匡护 was asked to serve as abbot.²

The well known legend cited above relates the story of how Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery was established when Huang Shougong 黄守恭 (629-712) donated his mulberry orchard to the monk Kuanghu 匡护 after the mulberry trees miraculously bloomed white lotus blossoms.³ While the blooming of lotuses in mulberry trees

² *Sizhi* I.1a-b. References to the *Quanzhou Kaiyuansi zhi* within the body of this text will be abbreviated *Monastery Record* and in the notes as *Sizhi*.

³ At this time during the Tang dynasty peasant families were assigned on average about 13.5 acres per couple with more land allotted for children. This was done so as to provide a fair basis for the per capita tax system. "Only one-fifth of the allotment could be held permanently, usually as a mulberry orchard for silk culture; the remainder of the land had to be returned to the government in case of death, or the cultivator's exceeding the given age limit." (Morton and Lewis 2004: 95, emphasis added) This leads me to suspect that Mr. Huang may have been a rather average land owner in his day, a point that has not been suggested

challenges our rational sensibilities,⁴ there is no reason to doubt the historical veracity of a land donation to establish a monastery in 686 (or 687) C.E.⁵ It was at precisely this time that the conversion of private estates into monastic estates had become so widespread that emperor Xuanzong, in 713, issued a decree to curtail the practice.⁶ When the monastery was founded at the end of the seventh century it was located on what was then a sparsely inhabited frontier coastal plain between the Luoyang 洛阳 and Jin Rivers 晋江.⁷ The settlement was not yet called Quanzhou, nor was the monastery called Kaiyuan. When the local authorities petitioned Empress Wu Zetian 武则天 (r. 683/90-705),⁸ an ardent patron of Buddhism, to establish a monastery, she consented and dubbed

in other literature. Dates for Elder Huang are from the *The History of the Purple Cloud Huang Clan of Xiangtang* [Putian] (*Ziyun xiangtang huangshi zupu* 紫云象塘黄氏族谱, 国家档案局文件, 泉州, 国档会, 1984: p. 280; personal copy of Huang Yushan 黄玉山).

⁴The interpretation and use of the story of mulberry trees blooming lotus blossoms will be examined in chapter five.

⁵Historical records (gazetteers, inscriptions etc.) agree on the timing (686) and the name (Huang Shougong) of the donor, e.g. *Quanzhou fuzhi*: book 16:18a-b; *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1650; *Bamin tongzhi*:1160; *Huang Family History*: 275-286. The earliest source, an 897 inscription by Huang Tao 黄滔, however, suggests a date of one year later. Huang Tao's 897 *Quanzhou Kaiyuansi fodian beiji* 泉州开元寺佛殿碑记 ("Stele record of the Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery Buddha Hall") suggests a the year 687 (the third year of *Chuangong*). Huang Tao was a poet and official who composed many inscriptions glorifying the works of Wang Shenzhi. This inscription, preserved in the *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 ("The Collected Works of Tang Literature"), includes exaggerations and other suspect information to be mentioned in the discussion of the Five Buddhas in the Main Hall below so it is not clear that it reflects a more accurate date despite its greater antiquity. The inscription may be found in Dean and Zheng 2003:4-6, Inscription #4. While the *Bamin tongzhi* 八闽通志 agrees that the founding year is 686, rather than designating this as the second year of *Chuangong*, it records the date as the third year of *Sisheng* 嗣聖 of Tang emperor Zhongzong 唐中宗; while Sisheng's reign began in 684 it lasted less than a year, being deposed by his mother, the later Empress Wu in favor for his younger brother Ruizong. See also Wang 2008:11, nt.21.

⁶ The emperor's decree forbid princes, dukes and other landowners from presenting petitions in their own names for the transference of their own lands to be used as monasteries or monastic estates. See Gernet 1995: 122.

⁷ The "Hills and Rivers" chapter (*Shanchuan pian* 山川篇) of the *Gazetteer of Quanzhou Prefecture* (*Quanzhou fuzhi* 泉州府志) relates a legend that claims the Jin River was named for the Jin 晋 dynasty by those who settled in the region of Quanzhou fleeing the collapse of the Jin dynasty as it fell to Northern nomads in the fourth century. See Chéng 1939: 9 who argues that archeological finds support this legend. It should also be noted that the Luoyang River may be seen to be named for the Jin capital of Luoyang 洛阳.

⁸ Empress Wu was the only woman in Chinese history to assume the title of emperor. It was suggested that she was an incarnation of the Buddha Maitreya by the monks Huaiyi and Falang in their translation of and

it the "Lotus Flower Temple" in commemoration of the incredible appearance of lotus blossoms in Mr. Huang's mulberry trees.

The monk Kuanghu was asked to serve as the first abbot and he immediately set out to build a main hall. Tradition holds that as the main hall was being built a purple cloud was seen hovering over the area. Recognizing this as an auspicious sign, the hall was nicknamed the "Purple Cloud Hall" and the monastery itself became nicknamed the "Purple Cloud." The main gate, referred to as the threefold gate (*sanmen* 三门),⁹ was built the following year, in 687. That same year Kuanghu built the Venerated Site Cloister (*zunsheng yuan* 尊胜院)¹⁰ which contained his living quarters. The cloister would have also contained a shrine to the land where the monastery was built. Within two years, then, Kuanghu had established three structures that formed the initial nucleus of the monastery: the main gate, the main hall and the Venerated Site Cloister.

The Kaiyuan 开元 period of Emperor Xuanzong which lasted from 713 to 741 is noteworthy in religious history. It was during this period that the first Daoist canon was compiled as well as the catalogue of Buddhist translations in China up to that time, the *Kaiyuan shijiaolu* 开元释教录 compiled by Zhisheng 智昇 in 730.¹¹ It was at this time,

commentary to the *Mahamegha Sutra* (Great Cloud Sutra 大云经). Considered apocryphal by many scholars, an earlier and "undoctored" version at Dunhuang suggests there was a Sanskrit original. See Ning 2004: 114. On Empress Wu and her relations with Huaiyi etc. see Forte 1976. For more on Empress Wu see Guisso 1978. It was also Empress Wu who invited the important Chan monk Shenxiu 神秀 (606?-706) to the capital at Luoyang. McRae points out that the support and reverence given to Shenxiu by the empress made it possible for the preservation of Shenxiu's teachings, making Shenxiu the earliest historical figure in the Chan tradition of whom we possess a detailed record of his ideas (McRae 2003: 46-53).

⁹ At other monasteries it may be called a "mountain gate" *shanmen* 山门.

¹⁰ I have translated *zunsheng* 尊胜 as "venerated site," since the cloister was built in the place where lotus are said to have miraculously bloomed in mulberry trees. I would like to point out that it could be translated as "great" or "honorable" "victory" as the phrase is used to translate the Sanskrit term *vijayā*.

¹¹ It was also the time of the compilation of the Tang dynasty code of rituals, the *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li* 大唐开元礼 completed in 732. See McMullen 1987 for a discussion of the background, contents and legacy of the *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*.

also, that Tantra took imperial China by storm. Tantric master Śubhākarasiṃha (Shan wuwei 善无畏, 637-735) arrived in the capital of Chang'an 长安 (today's Xi'an 西安) in 716 and became the national teacher.¹² Not long thereafter, the central Asian Tantric master Vajrabodhi (Jin'gang zhi 金刚智, 671-741) and his student Amoghavajra (Bukong 不空, 705-774) brought esoteric teachings to the Eastern capital of Luoyang 洛阳.¹³

Noted for his dedication to Daoism, Emperor Xuanzong also expressed interest in Tantra; in 726, Emperor Xuanzong requested Vajrabodhi to conduct Tantric ceremonies to bring rain, and, in 746, sought Amoghavajra's ritual assistance for victory on the battlefield.¹⁴

In a move that would ultimately cause the name of this vibrant era to remain in circulation up to the present, Xuanzong ordered each prefecture to have a monastery named for the current period, that of Kaiyuan.¹⁵ In 738, then, our monastery received the name by which it has been known since, Kaiyuan monastery. As part of their responsibility to the Emperor, Kaiyuan monasteries were to hold national ceremonies such as that marking the emperor's birthday, services on the fifteenth day of the first, seventh and tenth months of the lunar year and memorial services for deceased emperors.¹⁶ Charged with responsibilities to honor the emperor, Kaiyuan was sent a buddha statue by Emperor Xuanzong himself; for reasons to be discussed below I take this statue, installed in Kaiyuan's main hall, to be that of the Buddha Vairocana.

¹² For his biography see Chou 1945: 251-272; reprinted in Payne 2005: 39-47.

¹³ Strickmann 2002: 228-229. Vajrabodhi, a native of South India, reached Canton by sea in 719. For biographies of Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra see Chou 1945: 272-284, 284-307 reprinted in Payne 2005: 47-60.

¹⁴ Ebrey and Gregory 1993: 2.

¹⁵ According to Chou Yi-liang the Empress Wu had ordered the establishment of temples in each prefecture and capital named "Great Cloud" (*dayun* 大云) in 690 and it was these that were changed to Kaiyuan in 738 (Chou 1945: nt. 47 p. 293). While this may be true, there is no record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan having been named "Great Cloud."

¹⁶ In prefectures which maintained a Longxing monastery, the ceremony for deceased emperors would be held there rather than at the Kaiyuan. Chen 1964: 223.

Although this statue has long disappeared a stone inscription hangs above the door of the main hall today which reads "Buddha statue bestowed by the emperor" (*yuci foxiang* 御賜佛像).¹⁷

While Buddhism enjoyed imperial patronage throughout much of the Tang dynasty, it was also during the Tang that it was suppressed with great force by Emperor Wuzong 武宗 (r. 841-846) who led the Huichang Persecution of Buddhism 会昌法难 from 841 to 845. The Huichang Persecution dealt Buddhism a crippling blow. The conventional narrative of Chinese Buddhist history claims that the development of Chinese Buddhism reached a climax during the Tang dynasty marked by vibrant doctrinal and institutional developments that dramatically Sinified Buddhism. This apogee, so the narrative holds, collapsed in the Huichang persecution of 845; the widespread laicizing of monks and destruction of monasteries and texts is said to have "damaged the Buddha sangha permanently."¹⁸ Both theses, that of the permanently damaged sangha and the Tang Buddhist apogee, are problematic, especially with respect to Fujian. While the synthesis of Indian materials may be seen to have reached a climax in the Tang, it is far from evident that Chinese Buddhism reached its "golden age." Scholars are now taking a closer look at the Song dynasty which brought about a level of maturation in Buddhist thought and practice that may well turn out to be as important as the doctrinal and

¹⁷ The date of this inscription is not known but I believe it to be from the Yuan dynasty as that is when we have recorded of a list of six unique sites being articulated, one of which is the "imperial-bestowed Buddha image." Furthermore it is in a different style than other Ming dynasty sculptures at the Main Hall. It appears to have been saved from an early building and incorporated into the Ming building. It was present when a survey of antiquities was conducted in the early years of the People's Republic, but it was not listed; Wang Hanfeng 王寒枫 notes its origin is unknown (Wang 2001:5).

¹⁸ Ibid.: 226-233. On the year 845, Chen says, "That year is therefore a pivotal date, marking the end of the apogee and the beginning of the decline of the religion." Ibid.: 232.

interpretive accomplishments of the Tang, vying with the Tang as a "golden age" of Chinese Buddhism.¹⁹

Buddhism in Fujian certainly remained vibrant from the end of Tang rule in Fujian in 879 until the closing years of the Yuan dynasty (1280-1368); if Kaiyuan temple enjoyed a golden age it was during the 500 years between 850 and 1350. Kaiyuan's properties were spared in the Huichang Persecution because Kaiyuan, as the official state monastery in the prefecture of Quanzhou, was protected. As Fujian absorbed Buddhist refugees from the North and more monasteries were established, cloisters were established at Kaiyuan to accommodate masters and their disciples. The first two were the Western Arhat Cloister and the Eastern Vinaya Cloister. In 865 a wooden pagoda was built in the eastern part of the monastic grounds and named "Country Stabilizer" (*Zhenguo* 镇国) by Emperor Yizong 懿宗. Although Kaiyuan's east pagoda would go through several transformations over the next four hundred years, it had been established and would retain the imperially bestowed name of *zhenguo*.

Quanzhou Kaiyuan's first two hundred years were a period of continual growth and development. During this period Kaiyuan produced structures and cultural properties that remain part of its identity today, namely, the mulberry tree, the east pagoda, the main hall, the gate, a sutra library, and the mummy of master Zhiliang 智亮, one of three eminent monks from this period.

Zhiliang also known as the Bare-shouldered-monk (*Tanbo heshang* 袒膊和尚), thought to have been an Indian, is reputed to have possessed the power to bring rain. His mummified corpse, said to remain at Kaiyuan monastery, was known for its spiritual

¹⁹ See, for example, Gregory and Getz 2002: 1-6; Ebrey and Gregory 1993: 20-22; McRae 2003: 119-121.

power. Quanzhou's port was already involved with maritime exchanges with South India and the presence of Indians in Quanzhou is therefore plausible. Kuanghu, the founding abbot, is said to have strictly adhered to the vinaya and to have lectured to large crowds on the *Sutra of Maitreya's Ascent to Tusita Heaven* (*Shangsheng jing* 上生经) during summer retreats. Wencheng, who built the first East pagoda, had established a reputation as an eminent monk before being invited to Kaiyuan. He was principled and kept to himself; contented with chanting the *Diamond Sutra* (*Jin'gang jing* 金刚经), he did not venture out, nor did he handle money.²⁰

THE POST-TANG INTERREGNUM

Expansion under Wang Family Patronage 闽中多僧

"In days of old this was a Buddhist kingdom, the streets were full of sages."²¹

How did Quanzhou and Kaiyuan monastery fare in the turmoil that accompanied and followed the dissolution of the Tang dynasty? They both thrived. With the fall of the Tang and the ascent of Wang 王 family rule in Fujian, Quanzhou and Kaiyuan monastery began their climb to national and ultimately international distinction. The Wang family's generous patronage of Buddhism established Buddhist monasteries as the most important institution in Fujian apart from the state and secured Quanzhou and Kaiyuan monastery as centers of Buddhism in China. The Wang family, according to the twelfth century

²⁰ See biography #2 in the appendix for more on Wencheng.

²¹ *Cidi gu cheng foguo; manjie dou shi shengren* 此处古称佛国，满街都是圣人。This couplet about the city of Quanzhou is attributed to Zhuxi 朱熹; it is inscribed on boards which hang in front of the main hall and inside the main gate (*san men*) of Kaiyuan monastery.

Sanshan zhi, built 267 Buddhist temples in Fuzhou alone.²² In addition they had hundreds of Buddhist images cast, thousands of volumes of scripture copied, and oversaw the ordination of thousands of monks over the course of their sixty-odd years of rule in Fujian from 884 to 945.²³ The Song dynasty Neo-Confucian scholar Huang Gan 黄榦 (1152-1221) reported that, “After the Wang’s entered Fujian belief in Buddhism became extremely enmeshed in the culture, Fujian abounded with temples and pagodas, more than anywhere under heaven. Inside peoples’ homes were wooden statues and portraits of Buddha and the items one would find in the halls of a temple inside the living room. People carried out morning and evening worship with diligence.”²⁴ One would have to survey records for other provinces to assess the extent to which Huang Gan was exaggerating, if at all, when he said that since the Wang family patronized Buddhism in Fujian, the province came to have more temples than anywhere; as for Fujian, I have counted 4,521 Buddhist temples, cloisters and nunneries in the fifteenth century gazetteer of Fujian, the *Bamin tongzhi*—no small number.²⁵ Given the importance of their patronage of Buddhism and Kaiyuan, I will review the establishment of rule by the Wang family in Fujian, with special mention of the prefects Wang Yanbin 王延彬 and his father, Wang Shengui 王审邽, who, according to our records, are Kaiyuan's first great patrons after Mr. Huang.

²² Liang Kejia 梁克家, writing in the twelfth century, counted a total of 781 temples in Fuzhou at the end of the interregnum, a number including an additional 221 temples built immediately after Wang family rule. (*Chunxi*) *Sanshan zhi* 33:2a.

²³ 884 is the year that Wang Chao entered Quanzhou, laid siege and ultimately gained control of the city and served as prefect. From 944-945 the Empire of Min collapse and most of the Wang family was eradicated. Thus my years for Wang rule in Fujian- 884-945.

²⁴ 王氏入閩，崇奉釋氏尤甚，故閩中埕廟之盛，甲於天下。家設木偶、繪像、堂殿之屬，列之正寢，朝夕事之惟謹 (Huang Gan, *Mianzhaiji* 37:17).

²⁵ I suppose there is a margin of error (I counted “by hand”), but no more than +/- 100. According to my count there are 1,928 Buddhist temples (寺), 1,604 cloisters or shrines (院), 124 nunneries (尼院 or 尼寺), 865 nunneries (庵) listed in the *Bamin tongzhi*.

Arriving in Fujian in 884, Wang Chao with his forces successfully laid siege to Quanzhou, captured and beheaded Liao Yanrou and declared himself prefect.²⁶ Buddhism was well established in Quanzhou and it may have been reasons of political expediency that led Wang Chao and his brothers to patronize Buddhism in Quanzhou and at Kaiyuan monastery in particular. Regardless of his specific motivations, Wang Chao sponsored the copying of three thousand volumes (*juan* 卷) of the Tripitika (*dazangjing* 大藏经) for Kaiyuan's Sutra Library.²⁷ The fact that Wang Chao's contribution to Kaiyuan was a sutra library rather than a statue, pagoda or cloister, suggests a dedication to learning that marked the development of Quanzhou during the interregnum. John Chaffee has suggested that the phenomenal success of Quanzhou in earning *jinshi* degrees throughout the Song, was built upon "not merely a tradition of government service but also an unusual commitment to classical education during the Min period, a widespread willingness to assume literati lifestyles and values."²⁸ Wang's choice of gift may be read as an indication of such dedication to learning that put Quanzhou on its path to remarkable scholarly success for several centuries to follow.²⁹

Wang Chao died January 2, 898 and Wang Shenzhi took over leadership of the kingdom of Min. Shenzhi was a great patron of Buddhism in Fujian and is credited with extravagant support of Buddhist monasteries. The biography of Shenzhi's nephew Wang

²⁶ Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongjian* tells the story of the Wang family's journey from Henan refugees to dominance of Fujian. The narrative contains a tradition that elders of Quanzhou requested Wang Chao to free them from the misrule of Quanzhou prefect Liao Yanrou 廖彦若 (*Zizhi tongjian* [1956 vol. 18]:256:8320, 8325-6, 8339.) It is not known whether or not this is a later justification for the year long siege which brought down Quanzhou in the autumn of 886 (Clark 1991: 39; nt.3, pp.208-209.)

²⁷ *Sizhi* I.10a . See also *Puyang Huangyushi*: 46b; Clark 1991:60; Clark 1981:142.

²⁸ Chaffee 1995: 150.

²⁹ In the first century of the Song Quanzhou produced an impressive 194 *jinshi*. The province of Fujian produced more *jinshi* than any other region throughout the Song. Fujian's total number of *jinshi* for the Song were 7,144. See Chaffee 1995: 132-133, 149. Chaffee includes charts of *jinshi* awarded by region.

Yansi found in the *Fujian tongzhi* 福建通志 describes the fervor of the Fujian peoples' support for Buddhism and adds that "Shenzhi too was infatuated with that doctrine, and quite exhausted building materials in raising Indian edifices."³⁰ Many sources attest to Wang Shenzhi's dedication to the Buddhist Sangha and many of the statues and structures he erected were in Fuzhou.³¹

It is recorded that when Wang Shengui (Shenzhi's older brother) arrived in Quanzhou he initially lived at Kaiyuan monastery.³² Kaiyuan monastery was located just outside the Western wall of the city and would have been an ideal place to reside during the siege of Quanzhou in 884. It is not known how long he stayed at the monastery, but I believe he remained there for two or more years for it is said that his son Yanbin was born in one of Kaiyuan's halls, which most likely took place in 885 or 886.³³ Kaiyuan monastery thus held a special significance for both Shengui and his son Yanbin and the two of them became two of its most important patrons. The *Monastery Record* suggests that in 895, soon after Shengui took office, a fire broke out which destroyed Kaiyuan's main hall, sutra library and bell tower. Regardless of precisely when and how these

³⁰ *Fujian Tongzhi* 171.3a translated in Schafer 1954:92.

³¹ Many inscriptions made by Huang Tao 黄滔 attest to Shenzhi's patronage of Buddhism as well as accounts in local and provincial gazetteers (e.g. *Puyang huangyushi ji* 289, 325-326 and *Minhouxian zhi* 19.1b). See Schafer 1954:92. As an example of his support for the Sangha, Shenzhi endowed Xuefeng monastery with a main hall, dharma hall, a release of life pond that took 10,000 workers to build, an abbot's quarter for Chan master Yicun and rebuilt the meditation hut that Yicun had established for meditation. This monastery supported 15,000 monks by the end of the ninth century and Chan master Yicun became the most influential Chan master Fujian has known. For this and more on Fuzhou Xuefeng monastery see Huizhou 2000: 44.

³² *Wuguo gushi* 五国故事 b.9b. The text reads that after Shengui arrived in Quanzhou he lived at Kai□si 开□寺. While the second character cannot be read, I know of no other temple this could be other than Quanzhou Kaiyuan 开元寺. When Tao Zongyi 陶宗仪 used the *Wuguo gushi* in his *Shuofu* 说郛 (late Yuan, early Ming) he changed the name to Kaihua Temple 开化寺, but I know of no sources that mention a Kaihua temple and it is possible he guessed the character *hua* 化 based on the bottom strokes of *yuan* 元, rather than any historical data. The story of Wang Yanbin receives mention in Clark 1981: 178, nt. 17 and Schafer 1954: 106, but neither suggest that the temple in question is Kaiyuan. Zhang Jianguang and Sun Li follow Tao Zongyi in their modern edition of the *Wuguo gushi* in the *Quan song biji* 全宋笔记 (Zhu Yian 朱易安 et. al. 2003:253).

³³ *Wuguo gushi* b:9b.

structures were destroyed, the *Monastery Record* states that Wang Shengui as prefect had each of them rebuilt in or around 897. Shengui had a new bell cast and installed in a new bell tower.³⁴ Most significantly, he had four Buddha statues made and added to the one figure that had been donated by Emperor Xuanzong. This innovation brought the number of Buddhas in the main hall to five with the original statue donated by the emperor occupying the central position. Soon afterwards, Zhaowu 朝悟, who is described as a monk from the West, brought *pratyekabuddha* (*pizhifo* 辟支佛) relics to enshrine in the statues.³⁵

The presence of five Buddhas in one hall immediately evokes the five Buddhas of esoteric Buddhism. No explanation is given for Shengui's addition of four Buddhas bringing the total of Buddhas in the main hall to five, as it has remained to this day; but these five Buddhas were, as they are now, most likely the Buddhas of the five directions (the paradigmatic configuration in esoteric Buddhism).³⁶ The tradition of five Buddhas would have been present in China since at least the early eighth century when Śubhākarasiṃha and Vajrabodhi were busy translating Tantric scriptures and producing

³⁴ This would be Kaiyuan's last bell tower; after this bell tower was destroyed it was never rebuilt.

³⁵ *Ziyun kaishi zhuan* 15b and *Sizhi* I.2b. Given the establishment of maritime links at this time, the "West" likely refers to India.

³⁶ The earliest inscription recorded in the *Monastery Record* dates from the time of Shengui's rebuilding of the hall in 897. This inscription relates the rebuilding of the main hall by Shengui and describes the statues inside as follows: "From the east there are Kāśyapa Buddha (*Jiaye fo* 迦叶佛) and Shakyamuni Buddha (*Shijiamuni fo* 释迦牟尼佛), to the left and right [of these] are Maitreya Buddha (*Mile fo* 弥勒佛), Amitabha Buddha (*Mituo fo* 弥陀佛), Ananda, Mahākāśyapa, Bodhisattvas and guardians." *Sizhi* 2.3a. Unfortunately, the inscription imprecisely meanders at the end and only mentions four Buddhas, rather than five, and these Buddhas are not ones traditionally placed together. The author of the inscription is Huang Tao (840-911), a famous Tang dynasty poet and military official from Putian, Fujian. Huang Tao authored many inscriptions glorifying Wang Shenzhi and here seems to be engaged in more of the same, that is, he seems more concerned to flatter Wang Shenzhi (he "could advise Sunzi 孙子 in the art of war and teach the ancients of the Xia 夏 and Shang 商 dynasties the arts of civilization") than to record the details of Wang Shengui's rebuilding. I agree with the scholar Wang Hanfeng 王寒枫 that Huang Tao's inscription is not a reliable source of identifications for Shengui's additional Buddhas and they were most likely four Buddhas to complete a group of Buddhas of the five directions (Wang 2001: 4-5.)

mandalas for use in initiations.³⁷ Significantly, the time of Tantra's ascent in China was also the time when emperor Xuanzong donated the original statue in the main hall. Although the identity of this Buddha figure is not specified, given emperor Xuanzong's keen interest in esoteric Buddhism as well as the general presence and dominance of Tantra at the time, it is most likely that the single statue installed in 738 was of Vairocana Buddha, the central Buddha (literally and figuratively) of esoteric Buddhism. In 724-5, the *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi-sūtra* was translated into Chinese by Śubhākarasiṃha and his Chinese disciple Yixing 一行(683-727). This text is one of the two most important texts of Tantric Buddhism in East Asia and features a resplendent Vairocana Buddha explaining the cause, root and culmination of perfect enlightenment as well as the construction of a mandala with Vairocana in the middle.³⁸ This resplendent, powerful and all-knowing Vairocana would have been an especially appropriate Buddha to install at Kaiyuan monastery as one of the monasteries responsible for safeguarding the nation. Accepting Xuanzong's Buddha as Vairocana, Shengui's addition of four statues was a matter of completing the group of five Buddhas of esoteric Buddhism: Vairocana (*Piluzhena* 毘盧遮那), Akṣobhya (*Ajiu fo* 阿閃佛), Ratnasambhava (*Baosheng* 寶生佛), Amitābha (*Amituo fo* 阿彌陀佛) and Amoghasiddhi (*Chengjiu fo* 成就佛). This group of five Buddhas is the most plausible grouping, and it matches the identity of the five Buddhas enshrined today.

Shengui's addition of four Buddhas may be seen as a move to establish his temporal authority and that of the Wang family by acting in a manner analogous to the

³⁷ Chou 1945: 280-281.

³⁸ The *Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi-sūtra* (Taishō no. 848) is available in English translation by Giebel 2005. The other basic text of East Asian esoteric Buddhism is the *Sarvatathāgatattvasaṃgraha*. Giebel 2005:xv-xvii.

Tang emperor. While the precise motivations of Shengui can only be surmised through circumstantial evidence, the origin of the five Buddhas of esoteric Buddhism enshrined in the main hall of Kaiyuan can be traced back to this formative time between imperial dynasties.

Quanzhou prefect Wang Shengui died in 904 and was succeeded by his son Wang Yanbin, who was then about 18 or 19 years old. He had been born in one of Kaiyuan's halls within two or three years after the arrival of the Wang clan in 884. It is said that his birth was marked by the auspicious appearance of a white sparrow which nested in this hall at the time of his birth and departed at the time of his death.³⁹ Wang Yanbin was a dedicated supporter of Buddhism in Quanzhou and an unmatched patron of Kaiyuan monastery—records suggest that he sponsored the building of more cloisters at Kaiyuan than any other single individual. After Wang Yanbin's active tenure as prefect, both the city of Quanzhou and Kaiyuan monastery were on their way to national, and ultimately international, prominence. He made Quanzhou a center of Buddhism and is credited with encouraging the maritime trade that would make Quanzhou a cosmopolitan hub of international products and world religions. For his role in the development of overseas trade he was called the "official who beckons treasure" (Zhaobao 招宝).⁴⁰

Wang Yanbin served as prefect of Quanzhou from 904 to 930. In the first years of his reign as prefect, Yanbin enlarged the city walls that had been built during the Tang dynasty. Specifically, he had the wall extended to enclose the Xichan Temple 西禅寺 where his sister lived as a nun.⁴¹ It was also early in his career as prefect that he built a

³⁹ *Wuguo gushi* b:9b.

⁴⁰ *Wuguo gushi* b.9b. See also Schafer 1954:78.

⁴¹ *Jinjiang xianzhi*; Clark 1981: 143-144.

new Buddhist monastery, Zhaoqing Monastery 招庆寺 and invited Chan master Changqing Huileng 长庆慧棱 (854-932) to serve as abbot. Huileng, a native of Hangzhou, had arrived in Fujian in 879 and become one of the principal disciples of the extremely influential Chan master Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰义存 (J. Seppo Gisōn 822-908). When Huileng's master, Xuefeng, died in 908, Huileng accepted the position offered by Yanbin.⁴² Wang Yanbin's gesture may be read as a politically motivated attempt to enhance the prestige of Quanzhou at the expense of Fuzhou, by persuading Huileng to leave Fuzhou and take up residence in Quanzhou thus making it an alternative center of Min Buddhism.⁴³ At the same time, it should not be seen in purely instrumental terms, for multiple sources indicate that Wang Yanbin possessed an abiding reverence for Buddhist masters and an unmatched enthusiasm for their promotion. It is said that Yanbin "was a talented writer of poems and loved to discuss Buddhist theories—whenever poets or Chan masters visited, he would keep them as long as he could."⁴⁴ The *Compendium of the Five Lamps* (*Wudeng huiyan* 五燈全書) includes Wang Yanbin as a disciple of Huileng and one of the venerable ancestors of the Chan school. Yanbin thus appears on

⁴² Xuefeng had many eminent disciples. One of his direct disciples was Yunmen Wenyan 云门文偃(864-949) founding patriarch of the Yumen 云门(J. Ummon) school of Chan. One of his great-grand disciples was Fayen Wenyi 法眼文益(885-959), the founding patriarch of the Fayen 法眼 (J. Hōgen) school of Chan. From his teaching, then, arose two of the five traditional houses of Chan. See Dumoulin 2005: 230-236 for an introduction to these two schools and their founding patriarchs. For more on Huileng see Ferguson 2000: 278-281. Huileng also studied under Xuefeng's disciple Xuansha Shibe 玄沙师备. Shibe received dharma transmission from Chan master Xuefeng and became the abbot of the Fuzhou's Xuefeng monastery 雪峰寺 and the leading Chan master of Fujian at the time.

⁴³ Such has been the view of Suzuki Tetsuo and Hugh Clark. See Suzuki Tetsuo. 1975. "*Senshu ni okderu zsenshu: Godai jidai o chushin to site*" in *Indogaku Bukkyogaku kenkyu* 24:1; Ibid: 136-13 and Clark 1991: 41.

⁴⁴ *Wuguo Gushi* b:9b; See also Clark 1981: 178, nt. 19.

Andy Ferguson's "Lineage Chart of the Zen Ancestors" (Wisdom Publications, 2000) as a fourteenth generation Zen ancestor.⁴⁵

The *Monastery Record* provides many accounts of Wang Yanbin's relationships with Buddhist masters at Kaiyuan in offering them promotions, building them residences while alive and pagodas when deceased.⁴⁶ Yanbin received imperial titles for the monks Shuduan, Xili 袭礼 and Daozhao 道昭 (d. 951) — Shuduan received the title Bright Teacher 明教; Xili received the title Blithe Great Master 逍遥大师 as well as a purple robe. Daozhao is credited with authoring eighty volumes (*juan* 卷) of commentary on Xuanzang's *Cheng weishi lun* 成唯识论 (*Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi-śāstra*, "Treatise on the Theory of Consciousness Only") and was considered by devotees as an emanation of Manjushri (*Wenshu* 文殊), the bodhisattva of wisdom. One of Kaiyuan's lost treasures is calligraphy by Daozhao known as "Manjushri's Precious Handwriting" (*wenshu mobao* 文殊墨宝).

Yanbin invited master Shiji, who was held in highest regard by Xuefeng and several Quanzhou prefects, to Luyang 卢阳; Shiji later built a residence at Kaiyuan.⁴⁷ In 916, during Yanbin's tenure as prefect, the Western pagoda was first constructed by Yanbin's uncle and king of Min, Wang Shenzhi; it was a wooden seven-story pagoda named the "Pagoda of Amitāyus" (lit. "infinite life" *wuliang shou* 无量寿). At the same time, Shenzhi also established the Western Pagoda Cloister.

⁴⁵ *Xuzangjing* Vol. 81, No. 1571 五燈全書. Four koans associated with Yanbin are found translated into English in Ferguson 2000:304-305.

⁴⁶ Details of cloisters established during the time and Yanbin and names of monks included in the appendix history.

⁴⁷ *Sizhi* I.29a-b, biography #17.

In the 930s, Wang family patronage of Buddhism continued with the establishment of the Empire of Min by Shenzhi's son Wang Yanjun 王延鈞 (Taizong 太宗, r. 926-936). Tradition holds that Min emperor Wang Yanjun is said have ordered a survey to rank the land into three grades the best of which was divided among Buddhist and Daoist monasteries.⁴⁸ Whether or not such a policy was actually implemented, it is clear that Buddhist monasteries controlled most of the best land in Fujian by the start of the Song. It is also recorded that Yanjun decreed that 20,000 monks were to be allowed ordained in Fujian and his successor, Wang Xi 王曦(r. 940-943), authorized another 11,000 be ordained.⁴⁹ Since that time people have said, "There are many monks in Fujian" (*Minzhong duoseng* 閩中多僧).⁵⁰ The only figures on monastics in Quanzhou during this period are those mentioned by emperor Taizong 太宗 of the Song dynasty (r.976-998) who reported 4,000 novices and several 10,000s of fully ordained monks—figures he remarked were“truly alarming”(尤可驚駭). Critical of the social and economic strain thought to be generated by the need to support so many monks in Fujian, Taizong remarked: "Of old, one man could feed three others and still have enough for himself. Today it takes twenty men to feed the same number."⁵¹

The patronage of Wang Yanbin and the Wang family demonstrates the connections between Kaiyuan monastery, political elites and the city of Quanzhou that remains a feature of Kaiyuan's identity from that time to the present. In general, when

⁴⁸ *Songshi* 173:4191. Clark 1981: 142-143, 215. Clark 1991: 61.

⁴⁹ *Zizhi tongjian* 276:9026 and 282:9216 respectively [1956 v.19]. See also Clark 2007:183.

⁵⁰ *Zizhi tongjian* 276:9026 [1956 v.19].

⁵¹ 古者一夫耕，三人食，尚有受其餒者。今殆二十人矣。東南之俗，連村跨邑去為僧者，蓋慵稼穡而避徭役耳。泉州奏未剃僧尼系籍者四千余人，其已剃者數萬人，尤可驚駭。Li You 李攸 (12th C.), *Songchao shishi* 宋朝事實(“Records of the Song Dynasty”) 7:23a. See also Clark 1991: 62 and Clark 1981: 214-215. Despite the imperial critique, there is no record of Kaiyuan suffering loss of land at that time.

Quanzhou flourishes under the leadership of its political elite, Kaiyuan thrives with the support of the same political elite. History has shown furthermore that even when Quanzhou is not thriving, political or military elites will step in to support Kaiyuan. This is not to attribute the success of Kaiyuan solely to such support, but only to recognize it as a prominent feature in Kaiyuan's history. This is naturally a pattern not unique to Quanzhou Kaiyuan or Fujian, but is found through Chinese monastic history, especially among other large urban public monasteries.

The Fall of the Wang Family and the End of the Interregnum

From 944 to 945 the empire of Min collapsed. By 948 only Quanzhou under Liu Congxiao 留从效 and Zhangzhou 漳州 under Dong Si'an 董思安 remained independent with Fuzhou having fallen to the kingdom of Wu-Yue and Jianzhou and Tingzhou under the Southern Tang.⁵² Dong Si'an was a military commander from Quanzhou and a Wang family loyalist who stayed with the Wang's till the very end. His undying loyalty to the Wang's who had been great patrons of Kaiyuan and builders of Quanzhou earned him the great respect of the people of Fujian and a shrine at Kaiyuan monastery during the Southern Song.⁵³ Kaiyuan's Resting Hermit Chan Cloister (*qiying chan yuan* 栖隐禅院) was built as an ancestral hall for Dong Si'an by his wife, Ying Chuajun 颖川君, and son Quanwu 全武 in the middle of the *Boada* period (943-957).⁵⁴

⁵² Schaffer 1954:53-62. Events covered in Sima Guang's *Zizhi tongzhi* vols. 284-287. See also Clark 1981:140-141.

⁵³ In the old Donor's Ancestral Shrine. *Sizhi* I.10b.

⁵⁴ During the Song dynasty it became a public Chan cloister with the Chan masters Ziran 自然 and Youping 有评 both serving terms as abbot (*Sizhi* I.16a). The building of monasteries and cloisters by private individuals for their deceased relations had long been a common practice in China. See Gernet 1995: 283. Clark explores the development of sites for the observance of ancestral rites in Minnan in chapter seven of his *Portrait of a Community* (Clark 2007).

Liu Congxiao ruled Quanzhou until his death in 962 when he was succeeded by his close associate Chen Hongjin 陈洪进 (r. 962-978). The vitality of Chan in Quanzhou during the reign of Liu Congxiao is suggested by the compilation of the *Anthology of the Patriarch Hall* (*Zutang ji* 祖堂集), the earliest known text in the "transmission of the lamp" genre of Chan encounter dialogues or koans, in 952 at Quanzhou's Zhaoqing monastery.⁵⁵ Liu is said to have donated his south garden (*nanyuan* 南园) for the building of Chengtian monastery 承天寺.⁵⁶ Chengtian became one of Quanzhou's three most important monasteries; its founding is associated with Liu's donation rather than any auspicious or miraculous event such as Kaiyuan. He also founded Kaiyuan's Eastern Cloister of the Sixth Patriarch (*liuzu dong yuan* 六祖东院).⁵⁷

In the mid 960's, Chen Hongjin enlarged the wall so that it would enclose Chongfu Monastery 崇福寺 which Hongjin had built for his daughter who lived there as a nun.⁵⁸ Chongfu became Quanzhou's third most important Buddhist monastery (after Kaiyuan and Chengtian). Like Chengtian, its origin lacks the legendary character of Kaiyuan (a point that will become more significant when we examine memorials to auspicious events in chapter seven). Chen Hongjin was the last holdout in South China to submit to Song rule; this occurred in 978.

⁵⁵ The *Zutang ji* 祖堂集 contains the earliest known reference to Chan master Liji founder of the Linji or Rinzai school of Zen (Albert Welter, "The Formation of the *Linji lu*") and it contains more than 200 biographies and the earliest lineage of Chan masters with multiple branches after Huineng (Faulk and Sharf. 2003. "Chan Portraiture in Medieval China." in Faure (ed.). *Chan Buddhism in Ritual Context*, 98-99.). Lost in China, the *Zutang ji* was preserved in Korea having been included in the 1245 Korean Buddhist Canon at Heinsa (Faure 1993: 109).

⁵⁶ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1653. See also Clark2007:182.

⁵⁷ Ruyue's grand-disciple Zhitian 志添 was also a well-known Chan master (*Sizhi* I.16a, 38b)

⁵⁸ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1654; Clark 1981:143-144.

The interregnum from 907-970 was a period of growth and expansion of cloisters (or sub-temples) at Kaiyuan in tandem with the founding of Quanzhou's second and third most prominent monasteries, Chengtian and Chongfu respectively. Fujian became a place where Buddhism received support that allowed it to not only persevere but to thrive and develop. This is particularly evident with respect to the Chan school in Fujian with luminaries such as Yanbin's master Huileng, but especially Huileng's master Xuefeng. It was also in this period that the *Anthology of the Patriarchal Hall* was compiled in Quanzhou. Clark, Chikusa Masaaki and Xu Xiaowang 徐晓望, three historians of this period of history in Fujian writing in English, Japanese and Chinese, all single out the increasing power of Buddhism under the patronage of the Wang family as one of the distinctive features of the period.⁵⁹ While Quanzhou's Kaiyuan temple was founded and given the national orientation of a "Kaiyuan" temple during the Tang dynasty, it took shape as the central monastery of Quanzhou, a rising urban and maritime power during the post-Tang interregnum. It was then that it became a home of eminent monks that were masters of meditation, discipline (vinaya) and learning generously supported by the patronage and policies of the Wang family of He'nan as well as their successors, prefects Liu and Chen .

By the onset of the Song, Kaiyuan was a growing monastery with dozens of cloisters (or sub-temples) that were led by Chan masters, masters of the vinaya and masters of Yogācāra. I consider thirty-five to forty a conservative estimate for the actual number of cloisters established before the Song. Some of these cloisters were built near other monastic buildings of the monastery's central axis, others were slightly removed in

⁵⁹ See Xu 2004:134-135. Chikusa Masaaki writing about Buddhism in Fujian during the late Tang and Min has argued that "as a result of the patronage of the Wang family, Buddhism became the single most important institution in the province" (Masaaki 1982:46). See also Clark 1981: 142.

alleys near the monastery. One may get an impression of what sort of institution had developed — a central monastic complex incorporating smaller relatively autonomous cloisters — by visiting Daitokuji Zen monastery in Kyoto, which is a massive complex comprised of dozens of largely independent cloisters or sub temples.⁶⁰ Another way to think about Kaiyuan's development may be to think of a university divided into somewhat autonomous individual colleges that are responsible for hiring faculty, admitting students and training them in special fields. In Kaiyuan's case, cloisters were established around masters of Chan meditation, masters of monastic discipline (vinaya) or masters who exhibited proficiency in particular texts such as the *Lotus Sutra* or the *Weishi lun*. These masters would accept disciples who trained under them and lived in their cloisters. The *Monastery Record* notes several instances of accomplished masters producing accomplished disciples and grand disciples. This system highlights the nature of Kaiyuan as a truly public monastery where monks are ordained and trained by many different lineages representing different teaching traditions within Buddhism. With the development of a system of loosely affiliated independent cloisters, monks at greater Kaiyuan were able to receive specialized training in sutras, scholastic commentaries, meditation or monastic discipline depending on the cloister to which they matriculated. This system produced many eminent monks and was strong transmitter of culture and education. While this system of education was marked by Buddhist doctrinal and devotional elements, it also cultivated more general knowledges of literacy, management, art and engineering —we will encounter Kaiyuan monks that held expertise in the building of bridges, for example, as we move into the Song dynasty.

⁶⁰ Gregory Levine's *Daitokuji: The Visual Cultures of a Zen Monastery* (2005) examines the artistic treasures of Daitokuji and the social dimensions of their creation, use and display in the monastic setting.

The *Monastery Record* relates the diversity found among Kaiyuan's monks during this period. Among the Chan masters mentioned are Changji 常岌,⁶¹ Xingtong 行通⁶² and Congyun 从允.⁶³ Chan master Qinghuo 清豁 was ordained at Mt. Drum (Gushan) and his awakening was confirmed by master Shuilong Pu 睡龙浦 ("Sleeping Dragon" Pu).⁶⁴ Chen Hongjin petitioned the emperor who bestowed Qinghuo with the purple robe and the title "Emptiness" (Xingkong 性空). Lingyan 令言 was known for teaching the *Lotus Sutra* and the *Mile Shangsheng Sutra*.⁶⁵ Master Xicen 栖岑 was a master of both the vinaya and Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośa*. Liu Congxiao petitioned the emperor who bestowed upon Xicen a purple robe and the title, Great Master Chan Jiao 阐教.⁶⁶ Master Xixia 栖霞, a dharma brother of Xicen, was renowned for his lifestyle of austere simplicity; he visited many Chan masters and retired into a small hut in the Northeast corner of Kaiyuan.⁶⁷

Developments during the interregnum sealed Kaiyuan's reputation as a great monastery abounding in eminent monks, graced with two pagodas and featuring a main hall with five Buddhas. It would seem that the following description of Quanzhou attributed to the great Confucian scholar Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200) must refer to this rich period of Kaiyuan's history: "In days of old this was a Buddhist kingdom, its streets were full of sages." This couplet, in the calligraphy of master Hongyi, today hangs outside the

⁶¹ *Sizhi* I.22b-23a, Biography #5.

⁶² *Sizhi* I.28b-29a, biography #16. He once successfully predicted a drought-ending rain during the rule of Chen Hongjin.

⁶³ *Sizhi* I.26b-27a, biography #12.

⁶⁴ *Sizhi* I.31b-32b, biography #22.

⁶⁵ *Sizhi* I.23a.

⁶⁶ *Sizhi* I.29b-30a, biography #18.

⁶⁷ *Sizhi* I.30a-b, biography #19.

main hall as well as inside the main gate of Kaiyuan monastery, bringing echoes of this glorious past into the present.

Kaiyuan at this early period had flowered into a monastery marked by three traits that would continue to shape its identity for centuries to come: it was made grand by cultural properties, its founding had been marked by auspicious events that set it apart from Quanzhou's other major monasteries (e.g. Chengtian and Chongfu) and it served as home to eminent monks that attracted patrons and preserved its reputation as a place of extraordinary merit. These three factors and how they have contributed to Kaiyuan's religious and institutional life will be the focus of chapters six and seven.

The flurry of sub-temple construction at Kaiyuan may have slowed with the end of Wang family rule, but it continued through the twelfth century. Kaiyuan had become a center of Buddhism in Fujian with imperial patronage under the Tang and the patronage of the Wang family and the prefects of Quanzhou during the post-Tang interregnum. While several distinctive features had taken shape such as the main hall with five Buddhas and the two pagodas, there was still no Chan hall or ordination platform; these were to await further developments in the Song to which we now turn.

THE SONG DYNASTY

The Song Dynasty 宋代 (960-1279) came eighteen years later to Southern Fujian (Minnan 闽南) than it had to other parts of China; it arrived in 978. By this time Quanzhou had become a busy international port specializing in the transshipment of goods from the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia to China's inland cities. The wealth generated by this trade would lead to the construction of magnificent stone bridges and pagodas throughout the region that have remained remarkably well preserved into the

twenty-first century; monks played an instrumental role in the construction of both pagodas and bridges. Quanzhou's magnificent granite architecture is thought to represent a local tradition which is not found in other parts of China [See figures 29-31].⁶⁸ The two major developments to the physical plant of Kaiyuan monastery during this period both involved monumental construction carried out under the careful guidance of Buddhist monks. The first was the establishment of Kaiyuan's Ordination Platform. The second was the conversion of the East and West pagodas from brick into stone toward the end of the Song dynasty from 1228 to 1250. We will come to these developments as we survey the history of Kaiyuan in the context of developments in the city of Quanzhou during the Song dynasty. As was the case in the earlier centuries, Kaiyuan's fortunes will be found to be linked in great measure to those of the city.

The Song dynasty is divided into two periods: the Northern Song (960-1126) with its capital at Kaifeng 开封 and the Southern Song (1127-1279) with its capital at Hangzhou. Throughout the Song, Quanzhou developed into a thriving metropolis with what was possibly the busiest international port of the medieval world. Quanzhou had morphed from a malarial plain beyond China's frontiers into a prosperous and cosmopolitan city. It produced scores of Confucian literati and Chan masters and played host to imperial clansmen and world travelers.

Developments under the Northern Song

The Quanzhou region witnessed an increase in agricultural productivity in the tenth and eleventh centuries which was vital in supporting its rapidly growing

⁶⁸ Pearson et al 2002: 34. Two detailed studies of the pagodas exist which examine their artistry and architecture: Ecke and Demiéville's *Pagodas of Zayton* (1935) and Wang Hanfeng's *Quanzhou dongxi ta* 泉州东西塔 (Quanzhou's East and West Pagodas, 1992).

population.⁶⁹ A prime beneficiary of such increased productivity were the Buddhist monasteries in the region which held large tracts of the most productive land. By the Southern Song, Kaiyuan held 273.5 *qing* 顷 (about 4,620 acres)⁷⁰ of land, which may have been the largest amount of land then held by a monastery in the region.⁷¹ The largest temple in Fuzhou, by comparison, is said to have held 150 *qing* (about 2,500 acres) of land⁷² and a wealthy individual may have held as little as 10 *qing* of land.⁷³ Kaiyuan's impressive land holdings provided it with the income needed to maintain a vast complex of buildings housing vast numbers of monastics.

While much of the landed wealth was in the hands of monasteries, the development of a brisk and profitable maritime trade created an alternative avenue to prosperity. Quanzhou's growing international trade was recognized by the state in 1087 with the establishment of a customs office known as a trade superintendency (*shibosi* 市舶司). The move was immediately rewarded and revenue from customs tax doubled from 500,000 to 1,000,000 strings of cash.⁷⁴ Trade continued to expand for the next hundred years or so and the number of foreign permanent residents grew as well.⁷⁵

As if marking the official recognition of Quanzhou's port by the state, a tall stone pagoda named Stone Lake Pagoda was erected at the entrance of Quanzhou Bay in 1111, serving as a landmark of the city and a lighthouse for ships entering and exiting the bay.

⁶⁹ So 2000: 27-29. Clark 1991:74-75.

⁷⁰ One *qing* 顷 is about 16.7 acres or 100 *mu* 亩.

⁷¹ The *Sizhi*: II.35a-37b gives the land holdings as follows: In Jinjiang district 95*qing* 顷 8*mu* 亩 3*fen* 分, in Nan'an 90*qing* 65*mu* 2*fen*, in Huian 36*qing* 16*mu*, in Tong'an 44*mu* 4*li* 厘 1*hao* 毫, in Anxi 16*qing*, 73*mu* 6*fen*, in Yongchun 10*qing* 29*mu* 5*fen*, in Xianyou 15*qing* 56*mu* 5*fen*, Putian 3*qing* 76*mu* 3*fen*, in Longxi and Changtai 5*qing* 14*mu* 6*qian* 钱. These figures make a total of approximately 273.5*qing*.

⁷² So 2000:32; Chikusa.1956. "Sodai Fukken no Shakai to jiiin," *Toyoshi kenkyu*. 15 (no2) pp.6-7.

⁷³ So 2000:321, nt. 48.

⁷⁴ Clarke 2001:52. Trade superintendencies had already been opened in Guangzhou in 971, Hangzhou and Mingzhou in the 980s. Guy 2001: 286-87; Chaffee 2006:403; Clark 1981: 246.

⁷⁵ So 2000:53. Zheng Xia's *Xitang ji* 西塘集 8:20b in Chaffee 2006:406.

This five-story pagoda covered with sculpted figures from Buddhist history welcomed ships from as far as India laden with goods from as far as Somalia and people from all points in between. If this pagoda and the stone bridges leading to the city, all decorated with Buddhist figures, marked it as a land of Buddhism, they also served to mark it as an enclave of tolerance marked by communities of foreigners who practiced a great diversity of faiths.⁷⁶

The prosperity and cosmopolitanism that had come to mark Quanzhou is illustrated in a snapshot provided by the scholar-official Zheng Xia 郑侠 (1044-1119): "Maritime merchants crowd the place. Mixing together are Chinese and foreigners. Many find rich and powerful neighbors."⁷⁷ Zhang Chan 张阐 notes in the same vein that "The ways of Quanzhou are simple and honest (*Quan zhi wei jun fengsu chunhou*), the people are happily kind (*qiren leshan*), it has long been known as a Buddha land (*suhao foguo*)."⁷⁸ Foreigners of different ethnicities and faiths arrived, stayed, amassed wealth and set up houses of worship. The earliest recorded instance of a religious institution established by a foreigner in Quanzhou is the Baolin Buddhist temple (*Baolin yuan* 宝林院) which was founded by an Indian monk between 984 and 987 with funds donated by foreign merchants.⁷⁹ Muslims maintained a high profile in the maritime trade and established several mosques in Quanzhou over the years. Quanzhou's earliest mosque

⁷⁶ This pagoda still stands and may be visited today. The architecture of this pagoda as well as the style and arrangement of its sculptures evoke the stone pagodas of Kaiyuan monastery which were built more than 100 years later.

⁷⁷ Chaffee 2006:406.

⁷⁸ 泉之為郡 風俗淳厚 其人樂善 素號佛國 This quotation is contained in the *Yudi jisheng* 130:6a, which provides the source as the preface of the 赵都官契雪录 (The Collected Works of City Official Zhao). Clark [incorrectly] references *Yudi jisheng* 130.11b and attributes the passage to a "Zhen Dang" (Clark 1991:140).

⁷⁹ Related by Zhao Rugua in his *Zhufan zhi* A, 21b. Unfortunately little else is known about this temple other than what is related here. See also S0 2000:35.

was erected in 1010.⁸⁰ Another mosque was built in 1131 by a Muslim from Siraf (in what is now Iran).⁸¹ Around 1150 a merchant from Srivijaya (in what is now Indonesia) established a cemetery for foreigners. The Confucian scholar Lin Zhiqi 林之奇(1112-1176) praised the act as one of benevolence that would attract foreigners and ease their minds about living and dying in Quanzhou.⁸² One of the most important accounts we have of the Asian, African and Mediterranean cultures known to China in the thirteenth century is the “Description of Foreign Peoples” (*Zhufan zhi* 诸蕃志) written from 1224 to 1225 by Zhao Rugua 趙汝适 the superintendent of trade and then prefect of Quanzhou. This text is a collection of information about the countries that had trade relations with Quanzhou including their cultural features and products; it supports the picture of Quanzhou as an enclave of ethnic and cultural diversity during the Song dynasty.⁸³

The prosperity that was achieved in the late eleventh century lasted until the end of the twelfth. As might be expected, Quanzhou’s economic rise helped to fund renovations and improvements to Kaiyuan monastery. The *Monastery Record* suggests that this was a time of increasing prosperity accompanied by a series of general renovations at Kaiyuan. When Youpeng 有朋, for example, assumed leadership of the

⁸⁰ Chen 1984: 8-10; XV.

⁸¹ So 2000: 57. Some have thought this to be the same mosque that stands in Quanzhou today, but So argues against this. See So 2000: 328, nt. 38.

⁸² The story is also related by Zhao Rugua about a century later, but many details of the story are altered. So takes the earlier, firsthand account by Lin Zhiqi to be more reliable (So 2000:53-54).

⁸³ Zhao Rugua's 1225 "Description of Foreign Peoples" (*Zhufan zhi* 诸蕃志) has been translated into English by Friedrich Hirth and W. W. Rokhill as *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, entitled Chu-fan-chi*. First published in 1911 by the Imperial Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg in, it is available in a 1966 reprint by Paragon Book Reprint Corp. (New York) which includes the Chinese text in a separate volume.

Venerated Site Cloister in 1079 at the invitation of prefect Chen Shu 陈枢, “Patrons enthusiastically gathered in support; a hundred deteriorated things were revived.”⁸⁴

Kaiyuan's flourishing in the latter half of the eleventh century coincided with an official change in Kaiyuan's identity; Kaiyuan became a Chan monastery. Like other changes to come, this was a top-down change initiated by secular authorities; the official named in the *Monastery Record* is a former cabinet secretary turned prefect of Qizhou 蕲州 named Qiao Langzhong 乔郎中.⁸⁵ Qiao thought that Kaiyuan should be a Chan monastery and invited the distinguished Chan master Ziqi 子琦 (d. 1115)⁸⁶ to serve as its first official Chan abbot. The *Monastery Record* gives no explanation for the change in affiliation but simply states:

The prefect of Qizhou Qiao Langzhong thought Kaiyuan should be a Chan monastery and invited Qi to serve as its first abbot. After some years it became a crowded place of practice with people gathering from the four directions like clouds. The buildings and rooms of the monastery were renovated and a full collection of dharma instruments assembled.⁸⁷

The accession of a Chan abbot and Kaiyuan's official affiliation with the Chan school reflect the growing dominance of Chan during the Song dynasty which was achieved, in part, through state support. The Song state at this time made a strong effort to register monasteries through a process of granting them name plaques (e 额) and

⁸⁴ *Sizhi* I.37a-b. Biography #32.

⁸⁵ *Sizhi* I.35b-36b. The Langzhong 郎中 of Qiao Langzhong 乔郎中 is a title that indicates the director of a bureau or section of a Ministry. Thus it seems that Qiao held a higher position before becoming prefect of Qizhou 蕲州 and thus had the power to influence affairs at Quanzhou's Kaiyuan.

⁸⁶ Ziqi was from Hui'an and is the author of the *Collected Sayings of Wuhui* (*Wuhui Yulu* 五会语录). He received a purple robe and the title Great Master Zhaojue 照觉 from the emperor. When it was ordered in 1102 that every state (*zhou* 州) should have a Chongning 崇宁 temple to pray for the benefit of the emperor, master Ziqi became the first abbot of Quanzhou Chongning temple. See Biography #30 in the *Sizhi* I.35b-36b.

⁸⁷ *Sizhi* I.35b-36b. Biography #30.

designating them as public Chan monasteries (*shifang chansi* 十方禪寺).⁸⁸ This was a practice carried out especially during the Northern Song and with particular vigor under the emperors Zhenzong 真宗(r.997-1022) and Yingzong 英宗(r. 1063-67).⁸⁹ In granting name plaques to monasteries the government attempted to gain greater influence and control over the monasteries. Part of that control was the power to approve appointments to abbeys in which secular officials played an important role. In many cases secular authorities appear to have directly appointed abbots as in the case of master Ziqi as abbot of Quanzhou Kaiyuan. Given that any monastery with thirty bays was eligible for a name plaque, it would follow that Kaiyuan was eligible to receive one, but as it was already in possession of an imperially granted name board this was not necessary. In addition, Kaiyuan had long been a public monastery in which the abbacy was not transmitted from master to disciple, but rather open to selection by monastic and secular authorities. With these consideration in mind, it appears that, for the moment, this designation of Quanzhou Kaiyuan as a public Chan monastery with an abbot of the Chan school did little to upset the nature of the monastery as a vast monastery housing dozens of cloisters lead by masters with teaching and ordination lineages within Chan as well as outside Chan lineages. In designating Kaiyuan a public Chan monastery authorities were acting in conformity with practices that prevailed during the Song dynasty. Practices designed to give the state a better handle on the growing power of the Buddhist monastic order and practices welcomed by the Chan school which enabled it to effectively monopolize control, at the level of the abbot, over most of the largest monasteries in China.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ See Schlütter 2005 for the discussion of Song efforts to register monasteries in this fashion and the special relationship between public monasteries and the Chan school.

⁸⁹ Schlütter 2005: 139. See also Chikusa 1982: 109 and Huang 1989: 304-305.

⁹⁰ See See Schlütter 2005 and Foulk 1993:191-194.

While masters of non-Chan lineages (e.g. vinaya, Pure Land, Tiantai) continued to teach and practice at Kaiyuan, a process of cloisters becoming aligned with the Chan school that had begun in the ninth century accelerated following Kaiyuan's official change in affiliation. The Old Lotus Sutra Cloister (*jiu fahua yuan* 旧法华院), for example, had been converted into a Chan cloister by Quanzhou prefect Lin Hu 林鄠 in the ninth century and Chan master Changji 常岌 was called to be its first Chan abbot.⁹¹ While such realignments did occur in the past, they began to occur with greater frequency after the designation of Kaiyuan as a Chan monastery. The Western Pagoda Cloister (*xita yuan* 西塔院) was changed to a public Chan cloister during the *Yuanyou* period (1086-1093) by prefect Chen Kang 陈康 who invited Chan master Wenyou 文宥 to be its first Chan abbot.⁹² The Resting Hermit Chan Cloister (*qiyin chan yuan* 栖隐禅院), which had been built by Dong Si'an's family at the end of the interregnum was similarly changed into a public Chan cloister during the Song.⁹³ Another cloister was originally called the "Congee Cloister" being named for its founding monk who was the head chef responsible for preparing congee for 1000 monks. During the *Xining* period (1068-1077), the prefect Chenshu 陈枢 changed it to a public Chan cloister and re-named it the Flourishing Prosperity Chan Cloister (*xingfu chanyuan* 兴福禅院) and invited Chan master Benguan 本观 to teach there.⁹⁴

⁹¹ *Sizhi* I.13a.

⁹² *Sizhi* I.15a-b.

⁹³ *Sizhi* I.16a.

⁹⁴ *Sizhi* I.16b-17a. It was Benguan 本观 who later exhorted the gentry to lend money for relief for victims of the famine of 1092 (*Sizhi* I.34b. Biography #28.). Having done so at the request of prefect Chen Shenfu 陈慎夫 (r. 1091-1093, listed as Chen Dunfu 陈敦夫 in Clark 1981: 395) illustrates one of the social functions that monks could have as well as a dimension of the relationship between Kaiyuan monks and Quanzhou officials.

These developments within the cloisters associated with Kaiyuan indicate the relative autonomy enjoyed by cloisters in choosing their leadership and in ordaining disciples. It would appear that the conversion of these cloisters into Chan cloisters may reflect a desire of Quanzhou officials to gain greater influence in the appointment of cloister leaders. If a cloister remained hereditary with leadership passed from the head master to one of his disciples this reduced the influence of secular officials. The top-down nature of these re-designations strongly suggests that the re-designation of cloisters and monasteries into Chan-affiliation was to a certain extent driven by the desire of secular authorities to achieve greater regulatory control over the Sangha. Becoming a public Chan monastery or cloister essentially meant two things, both of which bore on the selection of the abbot: 1. the abbot must be a member of a Chan lineage and 2. the selection of the abbot must be approved, if not made, by secular officials. Kaiyuan's chronicler Yuanxian expresses no concern, much less disapproval, over such outside interference in monastic affairs.⁹⁵ We will visit the question of the autonomy of the Sangha in contemporary China in chapter eight, for now we want to note the emergence of Kaiyuan's official association with the Chan school in the mid to late eleventh century and see it in the context of the Song state's promotion of public Chan monasteries over hereditary ones.⁹⁶

Developments under the Southern Song

Between 1126 and 1127, The Song capital at Kaifeng fell to Jurchen invaders from the north who established the Jin dynasty in North China. The Imperial clan was dispersed and came to be relocated in Fujian with the Western office of the clan

⁹⁵ See also Schlütter 2005:146-147.

⁹⁶ There were public monasteries associated with Tiantai, Huayan and later the Vinaya school, but there was an especially close association between the Chan school and public monasteries. See Schlütter 2005.

transferred to Fuzhou and the Southern office re-established in Quanzhou. A large contingent of the imperial clan arrived in Quanzhou at the end of 1129 and put Quanzhou on the path to becoming the “preeminent center for the imperial clan in the Southern Song.”⁹⁷ Meanwhile a new Song, or rather Southern Song, capital was established at Hangzhou. The population of central Quanzhou during this period was likely more than 200,000⁹⁸ while that of Greater Quanzhou would have been several times larger.

The relocation of the Southern Office of the imperial clan to Quanzhou may have been a boon to Quanzhou’s political and cultural life, but it also produced sharp fiscal strains. The tax base of the Song shrank by some fifty percent with the loss of control of the North. At the same time the need to defend the Northern borders became even more acute, necessitating the need to support a larger military. Fiscal needs such as these and the inability to meet them with revenues from taxes is said to have induced the Southern Song to sell increasingly larger numbers of ordination certificates which were valued for the tax exemptions they would earn the bearer. It is also known that the purple robe and honorary titles extended by the emperor to eminent monks became available at a price.⁹⁹ Two years after the imperial clan offices had been transferred to Fujian, a notice appears that the Fujian government under Zhang Shou 张守(1084-1145) began to auction off the abbacies of public monasteries to the highest bidders.¹⁰⁰

The sale of monk certificates, honorable titles and abbacies during the Song has been used by Kenneth Chen to support the view of Song Buddhism as a period of moral

⁹⁷ Chaffe 2001:16.

⁹⁸ Estimate suggested by Clark. Clark 1991: 139, n.71, and appendix 2.

⁹⁹ Chen 1956: 308-324; Chen 1964: 390-394

¹⁰⁰ Xu Song’s *Song huiyao jigao*, fasc. 134.5240d; Chikusa 1982, 163. See Schlütter 2005: 149.

and intellectual decline following the apogee of the Tang.¹⁰¹ Although such developments were no doubt deleterious to morale and disheartening to the Sangha, it was possible for elite institutions such as Kaiyuan to remain removed from some of these decadent practices. Top monasteries such as Kaiyuan were excluded, for example, from such provisions as the auctioning off of abbacies.¹⁰²

Kaiyuan, nonetheless, suffered privations in tandem with the economic recession which settled over Quanzhou by the early part of the thirteenth century. One indication of Kaiyuan's loss of momentum at the end of the twelfth century is the fact that no records exist for the founding of new cloisters after the *Chunxi* period (1174-1189).¹⁰³ The *Monastic Record* mentions no new cloisters being added during the thirteenth century or later. The dynamism and growth of earlier days had ended and Kaiyuan began to settle into a pattern of conservative institutional consolidation that would accelerate during the Yuan dynasty. The slowdown in Kaiyuan's development coincided with a meltdown of Quanzhou's economy.

The first indication of Quanzhou's late Song economic recession is recorded in a memorial of 1217 by Zhen Dexiu 真德秀(1178-1235)¹⁰⁴ who served as prefect of Quanzhou from 1217 to 1219 and from 1232 to 1234. Zhen Dexiu's 1217 memorial came two years after the capture of Beijing by Genghis Khan (1167-1227) and indicates the impact of the state's attempt to raise revenue to fight the Mongolian threat. When Dexiu assumed office in 1217 he claims that only three to four ships were arriving at Quanzhou

¹⁰¹ Chen 1964, 1956.

¹⁰² Xu Song's *Song huiyao jigao*, fasc. 134.5240d; Chikusa 1982:163; Schlütter 2005: 149.

¹⁰³ The last cloister discussed in the Monastery Records is the Cloister of Bliss, also known as the Amitabha Hall, it was founded by Liaoxing (who rebuilt the east pagoda) and his disciple Shoujing 守淨 *Sizhi* I.17b.

¹⁰⁴ Zhen Dexiu was a famous scholar official who holds an important place in the history of Neo-Confucianism.

per year due to excessive duties.¹⁰⁵ Through Dexiu's efforts the number of ships arriving for trade was increased to thirty-six by the next year. Leaving Quanzhou in 1219, Dexiu returned as prefect in 1232; his memorial of that time indicates that Quanzhou's economic situation had deteriorated even further with merchants moving away and income from tariffs dropping from 100,000 strings in 1219 to 40,000 strings in 1232.¹⁰⁶ With this dramatic loss in revenue, maintenance of the 2,300 clan members was extra burdensome, even with the lowering of their stipend.¹⁰⁷

Financial strains pushed clan members to not only enter into maritime trade, but also to encroach on the land holdings of monasteries and to push others to do the same. A 1233 memorial by Dexiu relates this development: "During the past twenty to thirty years, most temple property and public fields were illegally occupied by the powerful families. When land transactions took place, people often put down the estimated value before the deal was made [so as to pay less land tax to the government]...Consequently, the regular revenue decreased significantly."¹⁰⁸ Although Dexiu was concerned to show the fiscal problems faced by his government, he also provides evidence of economic losses suffered by religious institutions like Kaiyuan whose income-generating land suffered incursions from the rich and powerful. Dexiu's complaints about Quanzhou were echoed with respect to other parts of Southern China in 1250 by the monk Silian 思廉 who protested the occupation of monastic properties by the elite.¹⁰⁹ This problem had been developing for some time as evidenced by an 1109 decree issued prohibiting the

¹⁰⁵ So 2000: 88-89.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Chaffee 2001:13-14.

¹⁰⁸ *Zhen wenzhonggong wenji* 15: 132b in So 2000: 97-98. See also Clark 1991: 174-175.

¹⁰⁹ *Songshi* 407.1a-11b; Chen 1956: 99-100.

elite from appropriating officially recognized temples to serve as merit cloisters.¹¹⁰ The court officially forbid such seizures of property under Gaozong 高宗(1127-1162) and abolished the tax privileges they previously enjoyed under Ningzong 宁宗(1195-1224), but these measures were ineffectual in curbing the detrimental practices.¹¹¹ Loss of temple property in Quanzhou would have been exacerbated by the sudden transfer of the imperial clansmen to the South and the lack of immediate housing for the imperial clan.

In short, a financial recession had begun by the early thirteenth century with detrimental effects on both the state and religious institutions. This situation simply worsened as the Song dynasty wore on. To the economic stress that was felt by urban monasteries we might add the philosophical challenge waged against Buddhism by Fujian's formidable Neo-Confucian scholar Zhu Xi 朱熹(1130-1200).¹¹² Both of these blows, economic and moral, would have contributed to the comparative lack of dynamism in Kaiyuan's development from the thirteenth century onward. We will return to this after surveying developments to the physical plant of Kaiyuan during the Song and their lasting presence in the stones of Quanzhou.

*The Stones of Quanzhou and Kaiyuan Monastery:
Structures Added During the Song*

Visitors to Kaiyuan monastery today are met by a vast stone courtyard shaded by huge trees hundreds of years old and containing a trove of stone relics from the Tang, Song, Yuan and Ming dynasties. Two of these relics are dhāraṇī pillars (*jingchuang* 经幢

¹¹⁰ Chen 1964: 401.

¹¹¹ Chen 1964: 401-402.

¹¹² Borrell 1999: 62.

) which date to the early Song dynasty [Figures 41-44].¹¹³ The dhāraṇī inscribed on these pillars was the most popular choice of text for such pillars in China and they were erected during the Tang by the hundreds.¹¹⁴ Dhāraṇī are a type of text/incantation developed in Indian Buddhism technically distinct from mantras which are pan-Indian. Dhāraṇī are thought to have developed as mnemonic devices used by monastics to remember points or entire bodies of doctrine. They came to be used as spells, especially to ward off demons and their influence and it is in this use that they entered Chinese Buddhism. Chinese Buddhist texts refer to them as effective means to combat evil influences in the age of dharma's decline.¹¹⁵

Another pair of stone structures from the Song dynasty that greets visitors today are two stone stupas decorated with sculptures depicting stories selfless behavior by the Buddha in previous lives¹¹⁶ Known as “treasure box” (*baoqie* 宝篋) stupas they are said to be copies of bronze stupas cast by Qian Shu 钱俶 king of Wu-Yue in 955.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Ecke and Demiéville 1935: 88. The pillar stands in the main courtyard. It was most likely moved to Kaiyuan during the late Ming or early Qing. Both dhāraṇī pillars bear the text of the *Uṣṇīṣavijayādhāraṇī*; the first of these was erected in 1008 by Yuanshao 元绍. The text on the pillar is from the translation by Amoghavajra and the calligraphy is that of Lin Xun 林簣. This pillar contains a notice written by the monk Zongmei 宗美 and was originally located at the Water and Land temple (*Shuilu si* 水陆寺). The second Song dynasty dhāraṇī pillar was erected in 1031 (Ecke and Demiéville 1935: 88). For additional information on Kaiyuan's dhāraṇī pillars see Wang 2008:34-40.

¹¹⁴ Kieschnick 1997: 89-90 and Liu Shufen 1996. Clark notes the proliferation of dharani pillars in Minnan during the late Tang and early Song and translates several recorded dedicatory inscriptions (Clark 2007:185-187).

¹¹⁵ See Strickmann 2002:103-109.

¹¹⁶ They were erected by the laywoman Liu Sanniang 柳三娘 and her husband Liang An 梁安 in 1145. *Kaiyuansi Liu Sanniang zaota ji* 开元寺柳三娘造塔记 (“Record of Liu San Niang's building of stupas for Kaiyuan Monastery”) and *Kaiyuansi shengzhang tike* 开元寺神帐题刻 (“Inscription on Kaiyuan monastery's saintly drapes”), these two inscriptions are collected in Dean and Zheng 2001:23-24, inscriptions 22 and 23. The latter of these inscriptions was made after 1166 and is taken from the *Fujian jinshi zhi* 福建金石志 (“A Record of Fujian Metal and Stone Inscriptions”) 8:18b; it is also found in the *Minzhong jinshi lue* 闽中金石略 (“Assorted Metal and Stone Inscriptions From Fujian”) vol. 10. For more on these pagodas see Wang 2008: p.32-33.

¹¹⁷ See Ecke and Demiéville 1935: 87.

Another feature of the Kaiyuan monastery of today is its Nanshan vinaya ordination platform which is one of only three such ordination platforms remaining in China, the others being at Zhaoqing monastery 昭庆寺 in Hangzhou and Jietai monastery 戒台寺 outside Beijing. Although the current platform dates from the Ming dynasty, Kaiyuan's first ordination platform was built during the Southern Song in 1019 about the same time as the construction of Quanzhou's oldest mosque, the Ashab mosque.¹¹⁸

While the traditional master narrative of Chinese Buddhism stresses the dominance of the Chan and Pure Land schools during the Song dynasty, it is evident that the schools of Tiantai, Huayan and the Vinaya proceeded to produce masters and serve as the focus of cloisters and monasteries, especially in the provinces of Zhejiang 浙江 and Fujian.¹¹⁹ Kaiyuan's Dunzhao 敦炤 set out to rebuild the 1019 platform according to specifications in Daoxuan's *Nanshan Ordination Platform Illustrated Sutra* (*Nanshan jietan tujing* 南山戒坛图经) in 1128.¹²⁰ It was a complicated yet graceful structure of five levels and witnessed the ordination of thousands of monks over the years. According to the *Monastery Record*, the emperor Gaozong 高宗 bestowed Dunzhao's platform with the traditional name "Amrita Ordination Platform" (*ganlu jietan* 甘露戒坛

¹¹⁸The construction of Kaiyuan's first ordination platform was initiated in response to emperor Shenzong's call for universal tonsure and ordination (*pudu* 普度). *Sizhi* I.3a-b. *Pudu* 普度 would appear to refer to a *pudu sengni* 普度僧尼 which was a periodic call for "universal tonsure and ordination" that the government might use for celebratory reasons in which restrictions on ordinations were lifted for a period of time. The *pudu* was a policy governing religious ceremonies (Jianying 2007 and Dazhuo 2007, personal communication).

¹¹⁹ If Quanzhou Kaiyuan is to serve as an example of developments in Chinese Buddhism, it was in the Ming and Qing dynasties that Chan and Pure Land truly began to assert their dominance, especially in their joint practice.

¹²⁰ *Sizhi* I.3b Dunzhao's concern with establishing an orthodox Nanshan vinaya platform was likely inspired by the spirit of renewal initiated by vinaya master Yuanzhao (see appendix).

);¹²¹ a name it has retained since. Tradition also holds that its name is derived from a Tang dynasty well known as the Amrita Well (*ganlu jing* 甘露井) which sits below the platform.¹²²

We have seen that since its founding Kaiyuan has been constantly engaged not only in the maintenance of its facilities, but in expansion and renovations. While the heart of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery has occupied the same piece of land since its founding in 686, the monastery and its structures have evolved with changes in leadership and trends within Buddhism, society and governance. We have seen changes as broad as the eleventh century's conversion to Chan affiliation or as minor as the re-decoration of a hall. In 1095, for example, the monk Fashu 法殊 oversaw renovations to the main hall in which he had 1000 Buddha statues installed.¹²³ The following year Fashu established the Eastern Tripitika Hall which superseded the earlier Sutra Hall as Kaiyuan's main repository of sutras, preserving the Tripitika as well as calligraphy by Tang Taizong (founding emperor of the Tang dynasty).¹²⁴

While new or renovated structures might reflect social or economic trends, behind all such construction and maintenance, both its funding and execution is the economy of merit. Monks and laypersons earned merit not only through the construction of stupas, dhāraṇī pillars or monastic buildings such as ordination platforms, but they could also earn great amounts of merit in supporting public works such as the building of bridges or the digging of wells.¹²⁵ Monks in Quanzhou were actively involved in the construction of

¹²¹ *Sizhi* I.3b

¹²² A well was in fact discovered under the platform during the Qing dynasty. The entrance to this well lies to the back of the current ordination platform but it has been sealed off.

¹²³ *Sizhi* I.2b-3a.

¹²⁴ *Sizhi* I.11a.

¹²⁵ See discussion of merit with special reference to the building of bridges in Kieschnick 2003:191-219.

dozens of bridges from the period of the interregnum throughout the Song and Yuan dynasties. Monks were involved on many levels of the building process; they were involved as technical advisors, planners and fundraisers. While the canonical motivation of monks is compassionate service, it may also be that involvement in high-level public works such as the building of civic infrastructure like bridges was also accepted by monks as a means to defuse literati criticism of the Sangha as an unproductive burden on society. There is no reason why monks would not have been motivated by a combination of compassion and self-interest. Regardless of their precise motivations, monks played an important role in the construction of monumental stone edifices in Quanzhou and at Kaiyuan monastery, many of which remain today.

One of Quanzhou's most famous Song dynasty bridges is commonly referred to as Luoyang bridge 洛阳桥. It spans the mouth of the Luoyang River at the northeastern entrance to Greater Quanzhou and is said to have been crossed by Marco Polo when he entered Quanzhou at the end of the thirteenth century. It was constructed from 1053 to 1059 under the auspices of Quanzhou prefect and noted Song dynasty calligrapher Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012-1067) with the assistance of the Kaiyuan monk Yibo 义波. Officially known as the Wan'an Bridge 万安桥, it is about one mile long, or more than 3,600 Chinese feet (*chi* 尺). The bridge was outfitted with Buddhist stupas, shrines and inscriptions some of which remain today. Before the construction of the bridge, the Wan'an ferry operated in this location and inclement weather could cause delays and even deaths. The building of this bridge was thus an act of civic responsibility for Cai Xiang and an act of compassion toward sentient beings for Chan master Yibo. Yibo, who was the seventh generation grand-disciple of Xingzhao 行昭, served as head of Kaiyuan's

Amitabha Cloister (*Mituo Yuan* 弥陀院).¹²⁶ He played an instrumental role in the construction of Luoyang Bridge and his role is noted in the famous inscription by Cai Xiang marking the completion of Luoyang Bridge.¹²⁷ Shrines on the bridge were built for both Cai Xiang and Yibo.¹²⁸

Luoyang bridge served as an important element of Quanzhou's transshipment infrastructure during the Song and Yuan dynasties when ships from all of the known world unloaded goods at Quanzhou for distribution throughout China and picked up goods destined for Southeast Asia, India and the Middle East. Of the forty-three bridges recorded built in Quanzhou during the Northern Song ten were built or repaired under the guidance of Buddhist monks and the role monks played was even more prominent under the Southern Song when more than one hundred additional bridges were built.¹²⁹

Kaiyuan, like most other monasteries in China, has periodically suffered devastating fires which have leveled buildings thus necessitating large scale reconstruction. The first great fire suffered by Quanzhou Kaiyuan occurred in 895; a second devastating fire swept through the monastery in 1155 destroying all the major buildings including the main hall, the main gate, both east and west pagodas, the Eastern Tripitika Hall and the Venerated Site Cloister. It is not known what caused the fire, but all of the structures just mentioned were rebuilt without much delay.

¹²⁶ *Ziyun kaishi zhuan* 13a.

¹²⁷ Cai Xiang's *Wananqiao ji* 万安桥记(The Record of Wan'an Bridge); Cai Xiang, 2005. *Cai Xiang Shu Wan'an qiao ji* 蔡襄书万安桥记. Tianjin: Tianjin yangliuqing huashe 天津杨柳青画社.

¹²⁸ Pearson et al 2002:50.

¹²⁹ 19 in Jinjiang, 7 in Tong'an, 6 in Huian, 6 in Nan'an etc. Clark 1981:256-57. Monks were especially active in building bridges in the interior. For example, the monk Huaiying conducted a road building project in Nanyang around 1100 which included three bridges: Qiantai, Lin-wan and Gaogang. The monk Fazhao built Beiji bridge during the Huangyu period (1034-1038), the monk Genhui repaired the Yulan bridge during the Shaoxing period (1131-1162). Clark 1981: 258-259; Clark 1991:95-107.

The east and west pagodas were rebuilt over the next thirty-five years by Kaiyuan's eminent monk Liaoxing 了性 and his disciple Shoujing 守净. Liaoxing was a member of the Huang family of Anxi 安溪 and is known for his role in the construction of several bridges in Greater Quanzhou including Anxi's Longjin bridge 安溪龙津桥, Jinjiang's Anji bridge 晋江安济桥, Gantang bridge 甘棠桥, Tangyin bridge 棠阴桥, Guishan bridge 龟山桥, Shixun bridge 石荀桥 and Jianning Wanshi bridge 建宁万石桥.¹³⁰ When Liaoxing was rebuilding Kaiyuan's east pagoda, his disciple Shoujing became his close assistant. They rebuilt the east pagoda as a thirteen-storied wooden structure; it was completed in 1186. Together, Liaoxing and Shoujing established the Cloister of Bliss (*jile yuan* 极乐院); dedicated to Amitabha, it was nicknamed the "Hall of Amitabha." Shoujing himself went on to become a famous builder responsible for Shengsengqie pagoda 圣僧伽塔, Anping Chaotian gate 安平朝天门楼, Xinghuajun Anli bridge 兴化军安利桥, Yanping Kedu bridge 延平可渡桥, Wuping Jinji bridge 武平金鸡桥, Xianyou Shima bridge 仙游石马桥, Qinglong bridge 青龙桥 and Quanzhou Longji bridge 泉州龙济桥.¹³¹ Both Liaoxing and Shoujing were especially skilled at raising funds for the completion of these costly construction projects. They are models of the engineer monk who was engaged in construction projects designed to ease suffering, earn merit and please the political powers thus earning religious, social and political capital for the Sangha.

¹³⁰ *Fujian Tongzhi* volume 263 (*Song Fangwai*) lists Longjin and Anji bridges. The other bridges are mentioned in Huang Minzhi's "Socio-economic study of Song Dynasty Buddhist temples in Fujian" pp. 131-132. The *Qianlong jinjiang xianzhi* notes Anji (2.31a), Gantang (2.31a) and Guishan (2.34b) bridges (see Clark 1991: 220, nt. 58).

¹³¹ Shima, Qinglong and Longji bridges are given by Huang Minzhi (see previous note) while the others are found in the *Fujian Tongzhi* vol. 263 (*Song Fangwai*).

Kaiyuan's pagodas were rebuilt by the monk Shouchun 守淳 as seven-story brick pagodas in the early thirteenth century. Soon however, the monk Zizheng 自证, set out to rebuild the pagodas in granite. The five-story west pagoda, completed in 1237 has remained standing to this day.¹³² The conversion of the east pagoda from a seven-storied brick pagoda into a five-storied stone pagoda began in 1238 under the supervision of the monk Benhong 本洪. Benhong was only able to complete the first level, but the carvings in "greenstone" (*qingshi* 青石)¹³³ which he oversaw along the base are considered the finest at the monastery. Not only are the panels artistically masterful, but they exhibit a most impressive knowledge of Indian Buddhist literature.¹³⁴ A monk named Tianxi 天锡 completed the fifth story and the pinnacle in 1250.¹³⁵

The reconstruction of the east and west pagodas in stone was the crowning event of a prosperous period of growth and consolidation during the Song dynasty. While the early decades of Song dynasty were a period of efflorescence for both Quanzhou and

¹³² The five-story Stone Lake pagoda appears to have been used as a model for Zizheng's pagoda.

¹³³ A type of diorite.

¹³⁴ See Ecke and Demiéville 1935: 80-81, 92. They provide an excellent account of the narratives depicted in these carvings which demonstrate a broad knowledge of Buddhist traditions and Indian Buddhist literature (Ecke and Demiéville 1935:42-65.)

¹³⁵ The *Monastery Record* refers to Tianxi, not by name, but as a "preaching monk from Tianzhu 天竺." His being described as a "preaching monk from Tianzhu" has led some to speculate that he was an Indian monk because *Tianzhu Guo* 天竺国 is India. Li Yukun 李玉昆 notes this was the view presented in *The Port of Quanzhou and Ancient Maritime Communications (Quanzhou gang yu gudai haiwai jiaotong* 泉州港与古代海外交通) (Li Yukun 李玉昆 1988:31). 法音. 1988年01期. This unsupported notion is also part of an oral tradition in Quanzhou. The identity of this monk, however, can rather securely be identified with Tianxi 天锡 (a.k.a. Chuzhuo 樗拙, 1209-1263) from Kaiyuan's own Tianzhu cloister (*Tianzhu yuan* 天竺院) who is named in three local records (*zhi* 志) as the builder of the top story of the east pagoda. These records are the *Gazetteer of Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1652; the *Gazetteer of Quanzhou Prefecture* XVI, 20a; and the biographical section of the *Record of Xuefeng Temple (雪峰寺志 Xuefengsi zhi)*. See also Li Yukun 李玉昆 1988:31. Demiéville suggested that *Tianzhu* might refer to Tianzhu temple near Hangzhou. Demiéville also noticed the name of Tianxi 天锡 in the *Gazetteer of Quanzhou Prefecture*, but thought that Tianxi 天锡 was most likely a misprint of Tianzhu 天竺 (Ecke and Demiéville 1935: 92). The evidence from the three sources above and the existence of a Tianzhu cloister at Kaiyuan lead me to favor the interpretation that the monk is Tianxi from Kaiyuan's Tianzhu cloister.

Kaiyuan monastery, the closing decades of the dynasty became a time of consolidation in contrast to the expansion and innovation witnessed during the interregnum and early Song. Whereas the interregnum was a time of feverish construction of cloisters to house masters of diverse backgrounds, by the end of the Song there was a dramatic drop in the establishment of new cloisters. Nevertheless, by the end of the Song dynasty Kaiyuan monastery included some one hundred and twenty cloisters housing well over a thousand monks.¹³⁶

Kaiyuan's Song Dynasty Monks

In reviewing the developments to the physical plant of Kaiyuan monastery we have met several of Kaiyuan's eminent Song dynasty masters. Throughout the Northern Song dynasty Kaiyuan continued to expand along the lines established during the interregnum with the construction of more cloisters inhabited by masters of Chan, Yogācāra, Vinaya and Pure Land. While the establishment of new cloisters dropped off during the Southern Song, Kaiyuan retained a robust population of monastics. A brief résumé of Kaiyuan's more distinguished Song dynasty masters will demonstrate a great diversity that has remained a feature of Kaiyuan throughout much of its history.

We have already met master Dunzhao who built the Amrita Ordination Platform in 1128. Dunzhao lived at Kaiyuan's Guanzhu Cloister (*guanzhu yuan* 观主院) and was, along with the monk Kezun 可遵, one of the most noteworthy masters of vinaya at Kaiyuan during the Song dynasty.¹³⁷ We have also met Chan master Yibo the seventh generation grand-disciple of Pure Land master Xingzhao. The most notable master of

¹³⁶ For more complete coverage of Kaiyuan's cloisters please refer to the first chapter of the *Monastery Record* in Appendix I.

¹³⁷ See *Sizhi* I.40b, biography #38 for more on Dunzhao.

Yogācāra at Kaiyuan during the Song was Jingbin 景彬 (active 1008-1016), a grand disciple of Xingzhao 行昭.¹³⁸

Benguan was patronized by a string of Quanzhou prefects; the prefect Chen Shu 陈枢 invited him to give teaching at the Congee Cloister when it became affiliated with the Chan school. He was honored with a purple robe and the title master Yuanjue 圆觉 from emperor Song Shenzong 宋神宗 (r. 1067-1085).¹³⁹ Master Weishen studied under Linji Chan Patriarch Shishuang Chuyuan 石霜楚圆 (J. Sekisō Soen, 987-1040).¹⁴⁰ Special mention should be made of Ziqi 子琦 (d. 1115) who served as the first Chan abbot of Kaiyuan. He was especially learned in the *Śūramgama Sutra* and the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment* (*Yuanjue jing* 圆觉经).¹⁴¹ The emperor bestowed him a purple robe and the title Zhaojue Dashi (照觉大师). He wrote the *Wuhui yulu* 五會语录 which was available in the Song dynasty.¹⁴² More information on these masters may be found in the translation of the *Monastery Record* in the appendix. Nevertheless, this brief summary at least gives an idea of the diversity in Buddhist doctrine and practice that continued to be accommodated under at Kaiyuan during the Song.¹⁴³

¹³⁸ See *Sizhi* I.13b.

¹³⁹ For more on Chan master Benguan see biography #20, *Sizhi* I.34b.

¹⁴⁰ See biography #27, *Sizhi* I.34a.

¹⁴¹ The full title is *Dafanguang yuanjue xiu duoluo liaoyi jing* 大方广圆觉修多罗了义经. Zongmi (780-841) wrote several commentaries on this sutra and may be credited with enhancing its popularity. It is divided into twelve chapters discussing meditation. It was a text important in early Chan.

¹⁴² For more on Ziqi see *Sizhi* I.35b-36b, biography # 30.

¹⁴³ In the interest of noting other dimensions of Quanzhou's Buddhist environment beyond Kaiyuan monastery I would like to make a note of notable Chan masters who were either from Quanzhou or lived in one of its monasteries during the Song dynasty. Chan master Baoci Xingyan was a native of Quanzhou and became a disciple of Fayen Wenyi 法眼文益. He became abbot of Jiangnan's Baoci monastery in today's Nanjing (See Ferguson 2000: 343-345). Another disciple of Fayen Wenyi and a native of Quanzhou is Chan master Chongshou Qizhou (d. 992). Chengtian Chuanzong taught at Quanzhou's Chengtian monastery; he was a disciple of Xuedou Chongxian (See Ferguson 2000: 367). Dahui Zonggao 大慧宗杲 (1089-1163) who advocated koan meditation over silent illumination gave teachings in Fuzhou, arriving there in 1134 (Levering 1999: 194).

Economically, Quanzhou had begun to enter a recession during the Southern Song which made rebuilding after the fire of 1155 that much more demanding. Prefects were not busy building cloisters for Chan masters in the twelfth century not only due to a lack of funds, but also due to the rise of the Neo-Confucian school of Zhuxi which offered a formidable challenge to Buddhists and drew official patronage away from monks. The Zen school was no longer new and perhaps some of its iconoclastic brilliance had begun to fade. If such conditions had been left to fester Kaiyuan may have fallen into a downward spiral of neglect, but the Yuan dynasty intervened and led to a different kind of contraction which will be examined shortly.

A theme that remained strong in the development of Kaiyuan during the Song as well as throughout its history is the relationship between Kaiyuan monks and the elite. Throughout the Song, as it was throughout the interregnum, the relationship was one of enthusiastic support. This support was especially evident throughout the Northern Song and it was through the patronage of local prefects and other elites that so many cloisters were constructed to house so many distinguished monks. What Chi-Chiang Huang has written about the relationship between elites and the Buddhist clergy in Northern Song Hangzhou is applicable to Kaiyuan's situation in Song dynasty Quanzhou: "Whether officials in the national bureaucracy serving in a local post or local scholars, prefects or members of a small district staff, these elites formed an alliance with the clergy to bring order and prosperity to their jurisdiction. ... They were as much of an impetus to the flourishing of Buddhism in their area as were the leaders of the local Buddhist institutions."¹⁴⁴ Throughout the Song, Kaiyuan monastery flourished with the support of

¹⁴⁴ Huang 1999: 297. "Elite and Clergy in Northern Sung Hang-chou: A Convergence of Interest." in Peter Gregory and D. Getz eds. *Buddhism in the Sung*. Huang points out that the behavior of local elites

elites all the way from the emperor down to the district magistrate. Just as Kaiyuan could expand under the patronage of the state, it could also contract with the loss of state enthusiasm. We now turn from the Song to the Yuan dynasty where a different set of conditions and a different set of elite actors effected dramatic changes in the complexion of Kaiyuan monastery.

THE YUAN DYNASTY:

The Birth of Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Monastery 化零为整

In 1276, twenty-six years after the completion of Kaiyuan's east pagoda, Pu Shougeng, the former superintendent of maritime trade who is thought to have been a Muslim of Arab heritage, surrendered Quanzhou to the invading Mongols. Mongol forces massacred 3,000 members of the imperial clan. Soon afterward, the Yuan dynasty 元代 of the Mongolians (1280-1368) was established. While it would come to be seen as a period of disgraceful conquest by the Mongol Horde, from an outside perspective it was the *Pax Mongolica* which witnessed more peaceful commercial intercourse between China and the outside world than has perhaps ever been known. While there was discrimination against the Han Chinese, especially the Southern Han Chinese who had resisted Mongol rule the longest, foreigners enjoyed a tremendous level of opportunity and integration into the Chinese polity. This integration is evident in both the archeological and literary record of Quanzhou. An account of the cosmopolitan nature of Quanzhou during the Yuan dynasty is included as an appendix.

contrasts with the critiques of Buddhism found in official Song histories. Huang finds that local elites in Hangzhou worked harmoniously with the Buddhist clergy and adds that "the importance of Buddhism in Hang-chou meant that, whatever personal opinion officials may have had of Buddhism, their official duties would have inclined them to adopt a pragmatic and open minded attitude in their dealings with the religion." Huang 1999: 299.

While the foreign communities in Quanzhou flourished, the Han Chinese suffered forms of systematic discrimination. Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery was not exactly punished as a stronghold of Han Buddhism, but it did suffer dramatic privations that forever altered its identity as a sprawling monastic complex.

We have seen how from the end of the Tang through the end of the Song, Kaiyuan may be seen to have developed into a kind of Buddhist university, where individuals were admitted to study under the supervision of a master. One could pursue intense study or practice in the arts and sciences that had become associated with Buddhism in China. We have seen that these fields of specialization included not only scriptural exegesis, meditation and ritual, but also engineering. Under the Yuan dynasty, Kaiyuan would lose its cloisters and its status as a Buddhist “university.”

In 1285, nine years into Mongol rule, the old Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery was abolished and in its place arose the Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Monastery (*Da Kaiyuan Wanshou Chansi* 大开元万寿禅寺). It was a big name for what was in reality a dramatically smaller, controllable and cohesive monastery. By the thirteenth century Kaiyuan had grown to immense proportions for a central urban monastery and encompassed one hundred and twenty separate cloisters in addition to the central buildings of the monastery such as the main gate, the main hall, the ordination platform and the Tripitika hall. In 1285, the reach of the monastery retracted considerably as 117 of the 120 affiliated cloisters that clustered around Kaiyuan's central axis were abolished. The resulting monastery was a mere fraction of its former size. With these changes in circumstance Kaiyuan took on a less universal role; with the loss of its land and therefore its economic base it reined in its ambitions as a Buddhist kingdom or university and

settled on the more modest goal of being a Chan monastery. Only three of Kaiyuan's one hundred and twenty cloisters are known to have remained after the dramatic consolidation of 1285—these were the Venerated Site Cloister, the East Pagoda Cloister and the Cloister of Bliss.

The choice of these three cloisters for preservation speaks to a certain logic as well as to a certain sensibility. The Venerated Site Cloister formed part of the original nucleus of the monastery, it was the first cloister established and marked the site where mulberry trees had bloomed lotus blossoms. It had served as the home of founding monk Kuanghu who was associated with the school of Yogācāra. Its preservation indicates the persistence of historical memory and a desire to maintain ties to Kaiyuan's historical origins. The East Pagoda Cloister, established in the ninth century with the founding of the East Pagoda by the venerable monk Wencheng, was one of Kaiyuan's earliest cloisters and associated with the Vinaya school. The Cloister of Bliss, it will be recalled, was founded by the monks Liaoxing and Shoujing who rebuilt the East and West pagodas after the great fire of 1155. Established between 1174-1189, at the heart of this cloister was a shrine to Amitabha Buddha and it would have served as a focus for devotees of Pure Land practices. The choice of cloisters to survive the consolidation of 1285, then, suggests both an historical consciousness as well as a desire to maintain a link to other, non-Chan, schools of Buddhist thought, namely Yogācāra, Vinaya and Pure Land while Kaiyuan assumed the shape of a more restricted Chan monastery.

Yuan emperor Kublai Khan (r. 1271-1294) consented to local administrator's requests to have the cloisters united as one temple.¹⁴⁵ In 1286, the year following the

¹⁴⁵ *Sizhi* I.1b-2a

consolidation, the Chan master Miao'en 妙恩 (d. 1293) was invited to become the inaugural abbot:

Although he declined, he was not allowed to persist in his refusal. Arriving at the gate, he said, "The first sentence is the first step. If speech is followed by action, the chiliocosm (*daqian* 大千) will be held in the palm of one's hand." He then yelled, "Don't block my freaking doorway!" (*mo lailan wo qiumen lu* 莫来拦我毬门路)¹⁴⁶

We can imagine the crowd that had gathered to greet the new abbot, a combination of the reverent and curious, and Miao'en, anxious to get to work at a job he didn't choose, effectively yelling out in characteristically irreverent Chan master style: "I've got work to do. Now get the hell out of my way!" Miao'en had a job to do and once he had committed himself to it (through "speech") he was determined to turn Kaiyuan's losses around (through "action"). Miao'en, a disciple of Chan master Xuefeng Kexiang 雪峰可湘 (1206-1290), was respected as both a Chan master and for his ability to refashion Kaiyuan as a centralized Chan monastery without independent cloisters. Yuanxian spoke highly of both Miao'en's and Miao'en's successor Qizu's 契祖 abilities to lead and attract aspiring monks to Kaiyuan: "As the Chan way spread far and wide, novice monks raced here in droves."¹⁴⁷

Over the seven years he served as abbot, Miao'en led Kaiyuan in a spate of building designed to refashion Kaiyuan as a distinctively Chan monastery. To this end, his building program included Kaiyuan's first Chan hall and its first hall of patriarchs (*zushi tang* 祖师堂). With the abolition of Kaiyuan's cloisters came the need to establish

¹⁴⁶ See Biography #41, *Sizhi* I.41b-2a

¹⁴⁷ *ibid.* For more on this period and Chan master Miao'en's tenure as abbot from 1286-1293 please see the appendix.

additional halls that could assume functions previously carried out by the many cloisters. These new halls included a Shrine to Monastery Protectors (*qielan ci* 伽蓝祠), the Donor's Ancestral Shrine (*Tanyue ci* 檀越祠), a Hall of Five Hundred Arhats, a seven room kitchen and a resting hall for the monastery's general manager (*jianyuan* 监院) known as the *Meng* Hall (*meng tang* 蒙堂).

The halls which fit most squarely into the Chan tradition were the Chan Hall where monks could engage in group meditation and the Hall of Patriarchs where offerings could be made to Chan patriarchs and former abbots.¹⁴⁸ These two halls represent two central features of the Chan tradition, a concern with the cultivation of meditative realization and an equally powerful concern with lineage and transmission.

From this building activity it seems that Miao'en was indeed busy constructing a new type of monastery henceforth known as Great Kaiyuan Chan Monastery (大开元禅寺), a name found on its letterhead today. The Yuan dynasty presented a challenge that Kaiyuan weathered under the energetic leadership of Miao'en and his immediate successors. As recorded in the *Monastery Record*: "The monastery's dharma was in decline but he restored it to vigor."¹⁴⁹

Miao'en chose master Qizu 契祖 (1230-1319) to succeed him as abbot just before his passing in 1293. Qizu continued to make changes to the physical plant of Kaiyuan. Qizu also made a revolving sutra cabinet (*zhuanlun zang* 转轮藏) for the Eastern Tripitika Hall and ordered the monk Bofu 伯福 to pave the main courtyard (*dating* 拜庭)

¹⁴⁸ See Foulk 1993: 172-176 for a discussion of the arrangement of portraits in the Patriarch Hall, their derivation from Confucian practices and their use in Chan monasteries of the Song dynasty. For a more contemporary account of practice in a Chan hall in Korea see Buswell's informed and engaging account in *The Zen Monastic Experience* (Princeton, 1992).

¹⁴⁹ *Sizhi* I.41b.

in front of the main hall with stone; it remains so to this day. The revolving sutra cabinets became trendy during the Song. They are said to be a means of earning the merit equivalent to reading their contents (typically the entire Tripitika) by simply rotating them a full turn or circumambulating them.¹⁵⁰ This structure along with the paved courtyard suggests an effort to make the monastery more appealing to visitors and devotees.

Qizu died in 1319 and was succeeded as abbot by Ruzhao 如炤 (d. 1331) who had served as Miao'en's close attendant for several years. Ruzhou, who is said to have carried on Qizu's dharma, made a practice of writing sutras in his own blood. He copied the *Lotus Sutra* in blood while at Fuzhou's Xuefeng monastery and then wrote the *Flower Ornament Sutra (Huayan jing)* in blood after returning to Kaiyuan; this blood sutra remains in Kaiyuan's library. Hearing of his reputation, the emperor bestowed upon him the title Foguo Hongjue 佛果弘觉 ("Buddha Fruit Great Awakening").¹⁵¹ Unlike Miao'en and Qizu, Ruzhou's talent did not include institution building; he was known, rather, for the ascetic devotional practice of writing sutras with his own blood (a form of offering one's "body" to the Buddha).

While it lost its status as a kind of Buddhist research university, Kaiyuan preserved an impressive library of Buddhist scriptures and although its size had become a fraction of what it had been, it remained the largest monastery in Quanzhou with some 1000 monks. Miao'en and Qizu made the best of a compromised situation, but the trajectory they established (focus on the support and training of Chan monks) was short-

¹⁵⁰ For more on revolving sutra cabinets see Carrington 1942. For their popularity during the Song see Huang Minzhi 黄敏枝. 1996. "Zailun songdai siyuan de zhuanluncang" 再論宋代寺院的轉輪藏 (Revolving Scripture Cabinets in Song Temples). *Qinghua xuebao* 清華學報 26.2 : 139-88. (Thanks to Susan Huang for references).

¹⁵¹ *Sizhi* I.43a-b, biography #43.

lived. As the Yuan dynasty wore on signs appear that Kaiyuan monastery began to cultivate a role that would form part of its identity from that time to the present—it became self-conscious as a site of religious, historic and cultural value, in today's vernacular, a site of religious tourism.

The first clear indication of this historical self-consciousness comes in 1327 when two ornamental walls were erected outside the main gate known as the East and West Bounding Walls (*dongxi erfang* 东西二坊). On these walls were notices announcing the presence of "Eight Auspicious Phenomena" (*ba jixiang* 八吉祥) and "Six Unique Sites" (*liu shusheng* 六殊胜).¹⁵² Such publicly displayed notices indicate a need the monastery felt to advertise its propitious features, features which pointed to the past greatness of Kaiyuan and the virtue of its monks. Kaiyuan monastery had reached a peak during the Song dynasty in terms of its size and its number of eminent residents; decline had set in from the Yuan onward. The self-reflexivity, the looking to the past for evidence of greatness and the need to self-promote that greatness through billboard-like inscriptions all point to a kind decadence that had set in and still haunts Kaiyuan as it does all great institutions that outlive a glorious past.

This historical self-reflexivity on the part of Kaiyuan's monks is further revealed by the composition of *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas*. Written by Kaiyuan's

¹⁵² The Eight Auspicious Phenomena were the: 1. Purple cloud covering the land (*ziyun gaidi* 紫云盖地), 2. Mulberry trees with white lotus blossoms (*sangshu bailian* 桑树白莲), 3. Courtyard without grass (*fancao busheng* 凡草不生), 4. White dove listening to sutra (*baige tingjing* 白鸽听经), 5. Dream of the arhats (*yingmeng luohan*, 应梦罗汉), 6. Eminent monks of branch cloisters (*zhiyuan gaoseng* 支院高僧), 7. Manjushri's handwriting (*wenshu moji* 文殊墨迹) and 8. Mummy of the bare-shouldered monk (*tanbo zhenshen* 袒膊真身). The Six Unique Sites were the: 1. Stone-arisen peony (*shisheng mudan* 石生牡丹), 2. Purple Cloud twin pagodas (*ziyun shuangta* 紫云双塔), 3. Silk-burning furnace (*fenbolu* 焚帛炉), 4. Buddha statue from the emperor (*yuci foxiang* 御赐佛像), 5. Amrita Ordination Platform (*ganlu jietan* 甘露戒坛) and 6. Ancient dragon-eye well (*gu longyan jing* 古龙眼井). See Chapter seven for a discussion of these auspicious signs and sites.

Mengguan Shi 梦观氏 (i.e. Dagui the builder of the Mengguan Hall) at the end of the Yuan dynasty in 1348, this is a collection of biographies of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monks from Kuanghu onward. The timing of Mengguan's writing during the disintegration of the Yuan dynasty suggest that he quite rightly sensed the impending disaster and sought to record for posterity what was known about the luminaries of Kaiyuan's illustrious past—it was a curatorial impulse. It was Mengguan's record that inspired Yuanxian to write the *Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery* at the end of the Ming dynasty and served as his primary source.

Just after Mengguan completed his *Biographies*, the departmental magistrate (*jianjun* 监郡) Xie Shiyu 偁世玉 wrote a name board for Kaiyuan's main gate reading, "The Buddha Land of Southern Quanzhou" (*Quannan foguo* 泉南佛国). This final gesture of exaltation came in 1350 and may be seen to mark the end of an era, not only for the monastery of Kaiyuan but also the city of Quanzhou. Along with the self-promotional "Bounding Walls" and Mengguan's *Biographies* this inscription looks to Kaiyuan's past, to a golden age that once was. Those examining Kaiyuan at the end of the Yuan dynasty saw its greatness in its past, rather than in the present or the future and perhaps they were prescient. For soon the city and the monastery would be devastated in the violence that accompanied the end of the Yuan, neither can be said to have ever recovered their pre-Ming greatness.

In the middle of the fourteenth century China and the city of Quanzhou were undergoing the birthing pains of what would become a new dynasty. Unrest, rebellion and lawlessness were spreading out from points of intense suffering born of flood and famine. In 1357 Kaiyuan suffered wholesale destruction by fire; the only remains were

those things made of stone: pavements, foundations, platforms, columns, stupas, inscriptions in stone and, most notably, the pagodas. The city came to be replaced as the commercial center of the region by Yueh-kang [Yuegang 月港] under the Ming and then by Xiamen (Amoy) in the seventeenth century.¹⁵³ The collapse of the Yuan dynasty sounded the death knell for Quanzhou's international trade and although Kaiyuan would rebuild it would never flourish as it had before. As the *Monastery Record* relates, "The recurring famines and widespread pillaging and plundering at the end of the Yuan dynasty were disheartening to the temple. By 1397 (30th year of *Hongwu*) the temple monks were nearly wiped out in the disaster."¹⁵⁴

The Yuan dynasty survived for less than one hundred years but it radically refashioned Kaiyuan monastery in a way that has since left its mark. Superficially Kaiyuan received a new name that has since graced its main entryway: Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Monastery. More profoundly, Kaiyuan lost one hundred and seventeen cloisters and remade itself in the image of other Chan monasteries with a dedicated Chan hall and a hall of Patriarchs. The Yuan dynasty also brought radical changes to the socio-political structure of Quanzhou; Han Chinese and literati lost their positions of dominance and foreigners enjoyed greater freedom and opportunity. This change affected patterns of patronage at Kaiyuan during the Yuan, namely, this period showed a noticeable drop in the activity of Quanzhou prefects or other local elites in supporting Kaiyuan monks and the building and maintenance of its structures. The reinvention of Kaiyuan as a Chan monastery without its many cloisters was orchestrated by Fujian officials and the Yuan court. Kaiyuan had heretofore remained above state-initiated

¹⁵³ Kumar 1987: 604.

¹⁵⁴ *Sizhi* I.2a

measures to restrict, suppress or otherwise discipline monasteries, but the socio-political atmosphere had sufficiently changed that it was now Quanzhou Kaiyuan's turn to reign in its ambitions and lose some of its privileges. In the process it indeed became smaller and more manageable and also more easily laid waste in 1357.

The Yuan dynasty had reversed the economic recession that had settled over Southern Song Quanzhou, the port of Quanzhou once again prospered and foreign communities boomed. Tragically, the glorious cosmopolitanism of the Yuan was doomed. At the heart of the doomed dynamic was the Yuan caste system which favored foreigners and discriminated against the Han; it was this system that led to the fateful establishment of a powerful military garrison led by Persians. The Yuan caste system led to resentment among the Han which exploded in the dissolution of the Yuan and establishment of the Ming. The transition was marked in Quanzhou by ethnic violence that took a toll on Quanzhou's foreign communities. Quanzhou's Hindus, Nestorians and Catholics, in particular, would disappear only to be rediscovered with the unearthing of tombstones and other stone fragments in the 1940s. It was in this crucible of transition that both the city of Quanzhou and the monastery of Kaiyuan imploded—neither one achieving again the heights they had once known.

THE MING DYNASTY:

Early and Late Restorations 东山再起

The founding of the Ming dynasty 明代 (1368-1644) returned order to the city but it would be thirty years before the full restoration of Kaiyuan's monastic buildings while its sangha would never reach pre-Ming levels. Quanzhou itself would never recover the prosperity or the cosmopolitanism of earlier days. Not only had it lost its international

population, but the Ming court drastically altered the trading policy of the Song and Yuan dynasties and drew trade away from Quanzhou's port which led to the loss of Quanzhou's world-class, cosmopolitan status. Soon after the establishment of the Ming dynasty, offices of Maritime Affairs were set up in the three port cities of Ningbo 宁波, Quanzhou and Guangzhou 广州. The only official trade, however, for most of the Ming was tributary trade and the only vessels officially received at Quanzhou were those from the Ryukyus (modern Okinawa).¹⁵⁵ The effect of these measures was to profoundly curtail trade in Quanzhou, and increase illegal trade and piracy along the Southeast coast.¹⁵⁶ It was not until 1567, a hundred years after the founding of the Ming, that private maritime trade was again legally permitted, but this trade was to pass through Zhangzhou's port of Yuegang rather than Quanzhou. Some one hundred years later, during Qing times, Amoy (Xiamen 厦门) would become the regional maritime port for South Fujian, but neither Yuegang nor Xiamen have ever reached the heights of prosperity enjoyed by Quanzhou during the Song and Yuan dynasties.¹⁵⁷ Just as Quanzhou would never return to pre-Ming levels of prosperity, Kaiyuan would never approach its pre-Yuan levels of vitality.

At the same time as the Ming court sought to exercise tighter control over trade, it sought greater regulation of religion. The founder of the Ming, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398), was an orphan who spent time as a Buddhist monk before joining the messianic sect of rebels known as the Red Turbans. Known as Taizu 太祖 after his enthronement, the founder of the Ming had first-hand knowledge of the danger that religious groups could pose to the state and, like previous emperors, he attempted to gain

¹⁵⁵ Boats from Japan and Korea were to call at Ningbo while Guangzhou was the designated port to receive the South Seas tributary trade.

¹⁵⁶ So 2000: 125-127.

¹⁵⁷ So 2000: 126-127

greater control over Buddhist monks and Taoist clerics. Five years into the Ming, Taizu issued his first decree aimed at regulating the Sangha. The imperial edict of 1373 sought a dramatic reduction in the number of China's monks and monasteries:

Right now the Emperor feels that in recent years people have believed excessively in Buddhism and Taoism. As a result, monks and priests have increased day by day. They eat without labor and there is nothing more wasteful to the national economy than this. Therefore, it has been decreed that in each prefecture (*fu*), district (*zhou*), and county (*hsien*), only one large Buddhist monastery and Taoist temple will be allowed to exist. All monks and priests are to be housed in one place and persons with good discipline will be chosen to lead them.¹⁵⁸

The extent to which this edict was implemented was limited and the order was reiterated by a second imperial edict in 1391 decreed that there should be only one large public monastery (*shifang conglin* 十方丛林) and Taoist temple per prefecture, district and county and that all the monks of a given prefecture should live in these large monasteries.¹⁵⁹ While implementation of this order was inconsistent, the policy did prevent the rebuilding of many monasteries that had been damaged at the end of the Yuan and a subsequent diminishing of the Sangha. Kaiyuan, as the prefecture's most prominent monastery, was naturally marked for preservation.

Although Kaiyuan's population of monks was dwindling, there remained monks with the wherewithal to organize and execute the work of restoration. Kaiyuan's main hall was the first structure to be rebuilt after the great fire of 1357; the rebuilding project was undertaken under the direction of the monk Huiyuan 惠远 in 1389. Heartened by the return of the main hall, the monk Huiming 惠命 repaired the Hall of Five Hundred Arhats

¹⁵⁸ *Ming shilu* (1537) vol. 86: 4. Translation in Yu 1981: 145-146.

¹⁵⁹ Yu 1981: 144-45. This edict further stipulated that monasteries be categorized according as Chan, doctrine and ritual performance, a change from earlier classification into Chan, doctrine and vinaya. See Yu 1981: 147-152 and Ch'en 1964: 435-436.

in 1393 and the following year built the Western Tripitika Hall (*xi zang dian* 西藏殿) to replace the Eastern Tripitika Hall which had been lost in the fire. Also in 1393, the monk Fajian 法坚 rebuilt the Cloister of Bliss, providing a few monks with a place to live in addition to a place to make offerings to Amitabha. This cloister reflects the growing popularity of Pure Land practice during the Ming and the joint practice of Chan and Pure Land that so profoundly marks Chinese Buddhism to this day.

This early Ming activity was encouraging, but Kaiyuan's monastic population was still alarmingly on the wane and other buildings remained in a state of ruin. As mentioned earlier, "By 1397 the temple monks were nearly wiped out in the disaster."¹⁶⁰ Local officials reported the dire situation to the emperor who, nearing the end of his reign, took action to find a suitable abbot to lead Kaiyuan's rebuilding. The emperor sent the eminent monk-official Zhengying 正映, who was then serving as the Tripitika prefect (*dianzang* 典藏) at the leading monastery of the Ming capital, Nanjing's Tianjie monastery 天界寺,¹⁶¹ to serve as Kaiyuan's abbot. The *Monastery Record* provides the following account:

At that time it was stated by imperial decree: "The sangha of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery, facing disaster, must find a suitable abbot. Through the drawing of lots Zhengying was chosen and presented to the emperor. The emperor decreed, "He shall go serve as abbot. These days it is difficult to be an abbot. If you are too lenient others will take advantage of you. If you are too strict you will be maligned. Only if you keep a pure heart and clean self can you endure for long. This has been decreed by the emperor (*qinci* 钦此)." Following imperial orders the master came to the monastery. In the sixth lunar month of 1398 (31st year of

¹⁶⁰ *Sizhi* I.2a. Biography #45.

¹⁶¹ Nanjing Tianjie monastery was then the principal monastery in the Ming capital of Nanjing; it was also the location of the Buddhist Worthies Department (*Shanshi yuan*) established by Taizu in 1368 as the central coordinating office of Buddhist affairs; this department later became the Central Buddhist Registration (*Senghusi*) and was known as such by the time Zhengying was sent from there to Quanzhou Kaiyuan. See Yu 1981: 166-170 for more on the Buddhist Worthies Department during the Ming dynasty.

Hongwu), he began to give teachings to a receptive audience of one mind (*zhong zhi xiran* 众志成城). He first rebuilt the dharma hall, then the Amrita ordination platform. Not long afterwards many things that had been abolished were all repaired or restored.¹⁶²

Kaiyuan's main hall had already been rebuilt when Zhengying became abbot in 1398, so he immediately set out to rebuild the dharma hall, the ordination platform and the Hall of Patriarchs. The emperor's perceptive words of encouragement to Zhengying suggest a sincere wish to restore monastic discipline: "If you are too lenient others will take advantage of you. If you are too strict you will be maligned. Only if you keep a pure heart and mind and clean self can you endure for long." Zhengying, taking these words to heart had four pertinent characters from the emperor's statement inscribed on a board that was hung above the entrance to the rebuilt dharma hall: "Keep heart and mind pure and self clean" (*qingxin jieji* 清心洁己).¹⁶³ Zhengying's ability to rebuild monasteries was in demand in the early Ming and he was soon compelled to leave Kaiyuan, being pressed into service as abbot of Xuefeng monastery in 1403, which, like Kaiyuan, required significant rebuilding. Then again, in 1425, having sufficiently restored Xuefeng, he was appointed abbot of Linggu monastery 灵谷寺 by imperial decree. Zhengying had led Kaiyuan's rebuilding forty-one years after its destruction by fire in 1357. His 1398 rebuilding is a classic case of a comprehensive restoration following a period of decline and destruction. Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery would have been one of only a handful of large Buddhist monasteries in Fujian during the early Ming, but while physical improvements continued to be made at Kaiyuan the general quality of the Sangha at

¹⁶² *Sizhi* I.44b.

¹⁶³ *Sizhi* I.4b.

Kaiyuan and throughout China remained underwhelming at best throughout the entire dynasty.

Five years after the death of the Hongwu emperor (Taizu), a great patron of Buddhism assumed the imperial mantle, the Yongle 永乐 emperor (Chengzu 成祖, r. 1403-1424).¹⁶⁴ During the Yongle period, Kaiyuan continued the renewal of its physical plant which had begun at the end of the Hongwu period under Zhengying. Developments that continued during the Yongle period were carried out under the direction of the monk Zhichang 至昌. From 1408 to 1411 Zhichang carried out a series of improvements that contributed to the aesthetic appeal of the monastery and made it more accommodating to visitors. Zhichang oversaw repairs to the corridors along the main courtyard and added four corridors to the ordination hall. Zhichang also focused his attention on a series of improvements to the area just in front of the main hall. He expanded the platform that fronts the main hall and dug two small ponds to the left and right sides of the main courtyard. He also built several small stupas arranged along the sides of the main courtyard (these remain *in situ* today).

Although no record confirms this, it seems most plausible that it was during Zhichang's expansion of the main hall's platform that the seventy-two decorative sphinx carvings (figures have a human face and lion's body, known in Sanskrit as *vyala-vari*) were incorporated into the base of the platform [Figure 12]. The temple from which these

¹⁶⁴ Yongle was a disciple of the Lamaist monk Halima 哈立麻 (De-bshin-gsegs-pa), but is most famous for his building of Beijing as the Ming capital and his association with the maritime voyages of Zheng He 郑和. The Yongle emperor moved the capital from Nanjing to Beijing and set to work on a new imperial palace, the Forbidden City. Zheng He is recorded to have stopped at Quanzhou to pray in one of the mosques, but otherwise had no strong connections with the city whose once busy international port was no longer in operation. Two books about Zheng He suggest that Emperor Jianwen 建文帝 temporarily and secretly took refuge at Kaiyuan in 1403 before taking a boat to Southeast Asia. See *Jiechu hanghaijia Zheng He* 杰出航海家郑和 by the Taiwanese writer Chen Shuiyua 陈水源 and *Zheng He xia xiyang* 郑和下西洋 by the Japanese scholar Chitoshi Uesugi 上杉千年.

sculptures originated was destroyed in the violence that accompanied the collapse of the Yuan. These sculpted stones were thus available and their incorporation into the base of the platform may have simply been a matter of recycling useful, aesthetically valuable materials. In support of this view is the incorporation of Yuan dynasty stone tombstones into the Ming dynasty city wall which in addition to showing a lack of respect to those buried and their ancestors, expresses a recycling spirit.¹⁶⁵ A spirit of recycling combined with aesthetic appreciation seems to account for the incorporation of two elegant Hindu columns at the back of the main hall during the Late Ming Restoration to be discussed below.¹⁶⁶

The Yongle period (1403-1424) was a final period of rebuilding before the onset of a decline that would last until Kaiyuan's Wanli period (1573-1619) restoration. From 1398 to 1411 under the leadership of Zhengying and Zhichang Kaiyuan's halls were rebuilt and the grounds were restored and even enhanced with additional stupas, ponds and corridors. The fifteenth century gazetteer of Fujian records that Kaiyuan "was restored during the Hongwu and Zhengtong (1435-49) periods 洪武正统 and given a name board reading (*bianyue* 匾曰) "Number One Chan Monastery" (*diyi chanlin* 第一禅林)."¹⁶⁷ I refer to this period of rebuilding under Zhengying and Zhichang from the Hongwu to Yongle periods, the Early Ming Restoration.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Risha Lee at Columbia University is currently writing a dissertation on Indian contact with Quanzhou as evidenced in the sculptural remains at Quanzhou. She may have a more definitive theory.

¹⁶⁶ A Tamil language inscription indicates the presence of a temple dedicated to Shiva; it is not known if these sculptures would have been from the same temple or not, but it is a distinct possibility (Guy 2001).

¹⁶⁷ *Bamin Tongzhi* 77:1160.

¹⁶⁸ It may be more precise to call it the Hongwu-Yongle restoration, but I have opted for "Early Ming" in hopes of making the period more immediately intelligible to non-Sinologists. It also provides a convenient pair with the Wanli period restoration which I refer to as the Late Ming Restoration.

Whatever the merits of Zhengying and Zhichang and other monks of that period, there appears to have been a lack of momentum which may be attributed in part to insufficiently developed institutional mechanisms for the training of monks. Zhichang's series of largely aesthetic improvements to Kaiyuan's physical plant continues the theme we saw emerge at the end of the Yuan dynasty, a shift in emphasis to accommodating non-monastic visitors. I refer to such improvements as directed at monastic "hardware" during the contemporary era. Just as "improvements" made at the end of the Yuan in the form of the bounding walls suggested hints of decadence, so do the additions made by Zhichang suggest a shift in focus away from monastic training and practice to the accommodation of visitors and lay Buddhists. All of Zhichang's additions can be seen to enhance the experience of visitors to Kaiyuan—covered walkways helped keep visitors shaded and dry; the extended platform outside the main hall accommodated greater numbers of incense-burning worshippers; the ponds would have provided a place for visitors to earn merit by releasing fish into them¹⁶⁹ and the rows of stupas in the main courtyard served to enhance the aesthetic and religious experience of visitors. It is not being denied that these developments would have also enhanced the monastery for its monks, but it remains nonetheless true, that they would contribute more to the experience of visitors and lay Buddhists than to the training of monastics.

As the Ming dynasty wore on conditions at Kaiyuan degenerated precipitously. The morale of the monks declined and most of Kaiyuan's land and buildings were ultimately lost to non-monastics. Kaiyuan's problems, however, were much bigger than

¹⁶⁹ Lay societies that practiced vegetarianism and the "release of life" (freeing of animals being sold for food) were popular throughout the Ming and they often raised money to build such ponds as a place to release fish, ducks and turtles. For background on these societies See Yu 1981:75-81.

Kaiyuan or Quanzhou; there was a general decline in discipline and learning at Buddhist monasteries throughout China after the Yongle period.

Chün-fang Yü's study of Ming dynasty Buddhism notes two broad categories of causes for the degeneration of the Sangha during the Ming.¹⁷⁰ First were external causes in the form of government intervention such as restrictions in the building of monasteries and the ordination of monks. Secondly were internal causes of decline that came in three dimensions according to Yü: 1. the degeneration of Chan practice, 2. neglect of discipline and 3. secularization.¹⁷¹ Under founding emperor Taizu, regulations sought to limit the number of monks and improve the quality of the Sangha. During the Jingtai period (1450-1456), however, the government began the practice of selling ordination certificates as a means of generating revenue. This was a turning point that accelerated the decline of the Chinese Sangha. While the need to generate revenue for famine relief in Sichuan in the early 1450's was the initial reason for the emergency selling of ordination certificates, as time wore on the sell of certificates became wantonly routine.¹⁷² By the 1550's one simply needed to pay five ounces of silver in person or by proxy to Ministry of Revenue and then go to the Ministry of Rites to apply for the ordination certificate. Any pretensions of Buddhist qualifications for those seeking ordination, such as the exams required in the early Ming, were non-existent.¹⁷³ Having tens of thousands of individuals "ordained" as monks in name but not in deed surely contributed to a devaluation of the Chinese Sangha.

¹⁷⁰ Yü Chün-fang. 1981. *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-hung and the Late Ming Synthesis*. New York: Columbia University Press.

¹⁷¹ Yu 1981: 144.

¹⁷² In 1484, for example, 10,000 blank certificates were issued for purchase by anyone who could bring ten *shi* 石 (piculs, about 1330 lbs.) of grain to areas suffering famine; another 60,000 ordination certificates were sold at twelve ounces of silver apiece. "As the years passed, the price went up and the procedure was made simpler." Yu 1981: 160-161. See also Ch'en 1964: 435.

¹⁷³ Yü 1981:161-162.

Further damage to the Chinese Sangha occurred under the forty-five year reign of the Jiajing 嘉靖 Emperor Shizong 世宗 (r. 1522-1567). His cruelty and ruthlessness wedded to his devotion to Daoism brought about the destruction of scores of Buddhist monasteries and statues.¹⁷⁴ In 1527 Shizong destroyed more than six hundred Buddhist monasteries and nunneries in Beijing.¹⁷⁵ Three years later he began to order the destruction of Buddhist monasteries beyond the capital.¹⁷⁶ In 1536, in one infamous episode, Shizong had 169 gold and silver statues as well as 13,000 *jin* of relics destroyed.¹⁷⁷ Not only was it forbidden to repair monasteries or to ordain any new monks during his reign, but in 1541 the emperor decreed that all monks and nuns must return to lay life and marry or be punished.¹⁷⁸ It is not clear how thoroughly such an order was or could be enforced but Kaiyuan's income producing lands were lost, its monks were dispersed and its buildings, fell into neglect and were occupied by non-monastics.

Kaiyuan's misfortunes during this period were shared by the Chinese Sangha at large. Zhuhong 株宏 (1535-1615, Chu-hung),¹⁷⁹ a prominent monk of the late Ming, noted the general decay of the Chinese Sangha: "From the Hongwu period [1368-1398]

¹⁷⁴For more on Min Shizong's patronage of Taoism see 程志强 Cheng Zhiqiang's 明世宗崇道研究 ("A Study of Emperor Shizong's Worshipping Taoism in Ming Dynasty") in 南京晓庄学院学报 *Journal of Nanjing Xiaozhuang College* . 2002:01.

¹⁷⁵ Huo Tao 霍韬. Ming dynasty. *Shitolu* 石头录. vol. 3. He Xiaorong 2000: 21. For more on the destructive reign of the Jiajing Emperor see He Xiaorong 2000: 20-24. The emperor received enthusiastic assistance from Huo Tao 霍韬, Minister of the Board of Rites (*libu shangshu* 礼部尚书). After Huo Tao won a debate against the powerful supporters of Buddhism who argued for the importance of Buddhism as a source of protection for the country, the program of laicization, confiscation and destruction of monastic property became more widespread. See He Xiaorong 2000: 120-129.

¹⁷⁶ *Mingshi zong shilu* 明世宗实录 vol. 118. He Xiaorong 2000: 21.

¹⁷⁷ *Mingshi zong shilu* 明世宗实录 vol. 187. He Xiaorong 2000: 20. Yü 1981:154 states that 1,300 ounces of gold were scraped off of Buddhist statues and 2,000 catties of Buddhist relics were burned.

¹⁷⁸ *Mingshi zong shilu* 明世宗实录 vol. 276. He Xiaorong 2000: 22. Shizong also ordered foreign monks to leave (*ibid*).

¹⁷⁹ See Ch'en 1964: 443-446 for Kenneth Ch'en's brief synopsis of Zhuhong. Otherwise see Chun-fang Yu's study of Zhuhong entitled *The Renewal of Buddhism in China: Chu-Hung and the Late Ming Synthesis*. (Columbia University Press, 1981).

until now, very few great masters have appeared in this dynasty.”¹⁸⁰ Zhuhong clarifies, "Since the great Master Ch'u-shih Chi [Chushi Fanqi 楚石梵琦, 1296-1370], no one else has achieved renown in the Ch'an sects."¹⁸¹ Our Ming dynasty chronicler, Yuanxian, confirms that Kaiyuan's situation was no exception: "Since the *Yongle* period [1403-1424] there has long been a void in leadership. The Chan ethos has gradually washed away (*min* 泯) and the venerable old monks have dispersed like clouds to the four directions."¹⁸² Yuanxian elsewhere elaborates:

During the *Chenghua* and *Hongzhi* (1488-1505) periods the temple again split apart like clouds. ...From the *Longqin* to *Wanli* periods (1567-1573) the older structures had fallen into ruins and more than half of the shrine rooms and monk's dormitories had been occupied by non-monastics.¹⁸³

Not only had the long-lived emperor Shizong issued orders leading to the destruction of monasteries and the laicization of monks, but the socio-economic fabric of Southern Fujian was in disarray. Raiders known as *wukou* 倭寇 pirates¹⁸⁴ destroyed property throughout the area while mountain brigands terrorized inhabitants from mountain hideaways. After the most devastating *wukou* pirate raids between 1555 and 1564 the local government was pitifully weak and ineffectual for the remainder of the Ming dynasty. On top of this were heavy taxes, labor conscription and food shortages leading to famines. With a weak government, much power lay with Southern Fujian's lineage collectives which fought to increase their land and power.¹⁸⁵ Kaiyuan suffered as

¹⁸⁰ *Yunqi fahui*. 1897: 24.30a. Translated in Yu 1981: 140.

¹⁸¹ Yu 1981: 35.

¹⁸² *Sizhi* 19b.

¹⁸³ *Sizhi* 2a-b.

¹⁸⁴ Japanese pirates were referred to as *wukou* 倭寇, literally "dwarf bandits" but during this period the term was also applied to groups of Chinese colluding with Japanese in illegal trade, piracy and brigandage.

¹⁸⁵ Lamley 1990: 263-265. For more on mid and late Ming disorder in Fujian see two articles by Ng Chin-keong "The Fukienese Maritime Trade in the Second Half of the Ming Period—Government Policy and

its land and buildings became sold, mortgaged or occupied by non-monastics in rapid succession. In the process Kaiyuan lost most of its income producing lands. By the end of the Ming dynasty more than eighty-five percent of Kaiyuan's land holdings had been sold off or seized by others. Kaiyuan's land holdings fell from the Song dynasty high of more than 4,500 acres (273.5 *qing*) to just over 2 acres (36.5 *qing*) by the end of the Ming!¹⁸⁶

In 1558 the Temple of Water and Land (*Shuilusi* 水陆寺) was occupied by the rich and powerful (*hao you* 豪右) and its monks were left with no place to live.¹⁸⁷ They were allowed to live in Kaiyuan's Chan Hall and the Cloister of Bliss was given to them as a place to offer incense and conduct rituals. While the *Monastery Record* does not make it clear, I consider Chan practice to have fallen into a largely dormant state as early as the Yuan dynasty. The giving of the Chan Hall as a dormitory for displaced monks from a temple dedicated to rites for the dead is a clear suggestion that the Chan hall had lost its association as a preserve of meditators. The fact that there are no eminent monks or Chan masters discussed for the Ming other than Zhengying and Benyuan 本源, who lived during the Yongle period, further adds to the picture of a dramatic decline in the quality of the Sangha after the early Ming.

Perhaps the most degrading incursion of the period was the occupation of the Hall of the Ordination Platform by gunpowder manufacturers which lasted for some thirty

Elite Groups' Attitudes," *Nanyang University Journal* 5 (1971):81-100 and "A Study of the Peasant Society of South Fukien, 1506-1644," *Nanyang University Journal* 6 (1972):189-212. T'ien Ju-K'ang 1990: 92-95 discusses the depredations of Fujian monasteries during this period.

¹⁸⁶ *Sizhi* II.35a-37b. Jinjiang was left with 11qing 6mu 8fen; Nan'an was left with 9qing 1mu; Hui'an was left with 9qing 85mu 6fen; Tong'an didn't loose any. leaving 44mu 4li 1hao; Anxi was left with none; Yongchun was left with 2qing 52mu; Xianyou was left with 4qing 27mu 4fen 3li; in Putian, Longxi and Changtai all holdings were sold.

¹⁸⁷ The Temple of Land and Water was located outside the grounds of Kaiyuan monastery. During the Qing dynasty, it would be rebuilt on Kaiyuan's property.

years. In 1576, some of the gunpowder stored here exploded killing four munitions supply officers (*caiguan* 材官). I consider this ignominious event the nadir of Kaiyuan's decline. Many treasures were lost or perished during these years of occupations. Conditions would not begin to improve until 1594 when a member of the "Purple Cloud" Huang ancestral clan set in motion the wheels of restoration some 900 years after the founding of Kaiyuan on Mr. Huang's mulberry orchard.¹⁸⁸

The desperate state reached by Kaiyuan in this period was mirrored at monasteries throughout Ming China. In 1571 the prominent monk Zhuhong arrived at Mount Yunqi 云栖山 in Hangzhou where he found a ruined temple which he restored and headed called Yunqi Monastery. He stayed there as abbot until his death in 1615.¹⁸⁹ He agreed that "Chan practice in the late Ming was in a deplorable state" and considered the terrible state of the Sangha a reflection of the age of degenerate dharma.¹⁹⁰ Yü Chun-fang has argued that the emergence of four masters during the late Ming was part of a late Ming renewal of Buddhism after two hundred years of stagnancy. Those four masters were Zhuhong, Zibo Zhenke 紫柏真可(1543-1604),¹⁹¹ Hanshan Deqing 憨山德清(1546-1623) and Ouyi Zhixu 藕益智旭(1599-1655).¹⁹² All of these masters were active during the Wanli period 万历 (1573-1619) of emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1563-1620).¹⁹³ Shenzong

¹⁸⁸ *Sizhi* 2b.

¹⁸⁹ Yu 1981:18-28.

¹⁹⁰ Yu 1981: 35.

¹⁹¹ J.C. Cleary has translated primary materials reflecting the life and thought of Yibo in *Yibo: The Last Great Zen Master of China* (Asian Humanities Press, 1989).

¹⁹² Yu 1981: 2-3. Of these masters, Yu writes: "Their influence permeated the monastic and lay Buddhist communities of their times and charted the course for the development of Buddhism in later generations. Both monastic and lay Buddhism of the Ch'ing and Republican periods derived their doctrinal formulations and practical methods of cultivation from Ming precedents."

¹⁹³ Yu 1981: 3. Of these masters, Yu writes: "Their influence permeated the monastic and lay Buddhist communities of their times and charted the course for the development of Buddhism in later generations."

was a great patron of Buddhism and the Wanli period was a time of Buddhist restoration throughout China after the devastation wrought by the long and punitive reign of Shizong. Monasteries were built on a more lavish scale than had been seen in centuries and Buddhist scriptures were printed and distributed throughout China.¹⁹⁴ It was during this period of Buddhist renewal under imperial support that Kaiyuan entered a much needed period of restoration which I call the Late Ming Restoration. It was this period of restoration that I compared to the current era in the introduction. Both periods may be seen as times of a dramatic rebuilding of monastic hardware after a period of devastating decline. It is too early to tell what else will develop in the decades to come.

The first indication of a change in Kaiyuan's fortunes was the building of the Purple Cloud Screen or reflecting wall (*zhaoqiang* 照牆)¹⁹⁵ across from the main gate by the vice-mayor (*juncheng* 郡丞) Mr. Ding Yizhong 丁一中 in 1570. This was a physical change, external to the monastery proper which will mirror developments in the contemporary revival.

True restoration of the monastery proper began in 1594 when the vice censor-in-chief¹⁹⁶ Mr. Huang Wenbin 黄文炳, a descendent of Huang Shougong, reported the temple's dire situation to the Emperor.¹⁹⁷ With Shenzong's approval, intruders were expelled from monastic properties and repairs were undertaken with funding and leadership from laypersons. Ruyou 如祐 was not only involved in the recovery and repair of Kaiyuan's buildings, he also saw to the restoration of Kaiyuan's long neglected and

Both monastic and lay Buddhism of the Ch'ing and Republican periods derived their doctrinal formulations and practical methods of cultivation from Ming precedents."

¹⁹⁴ Yu 1981, 154 etc. Ascending the throne at the tender age of nine, Shenzong was first guided by his able minister Zhang Juzheng 張居正 (1525 - 1582).

¹⁹⁵ At other temples this structure is referred to as a "spirit wall" (*ying bi* 影壁). See Prip Møller 1937: 7.

¹⁹⁶ *xianfu* 宪副 i.e. *fu du yushi* 副都御史

¹⁹⁷ *Sizhi* I.2b.

incomplete Tripitika with his fellow monk Guanglun 广轮 in 1628.¹⁹⁸ It is likely that Kaiyuan acquired master Ouyi's annotated copy of the *Huayan Sutra* at this time as well.¹⁹⁹ Guanglun also repaired the corridors and the platform in front of the main hall. In addition to his accomplishments in restoration, he also held the distinction of completing a three year solo meditation retreat.²⁰⁰

In 1596 Huang Wenbin led the Huang family in the rebuilding of the Donor's Ancestral Shrine which served, as it does today, as a memorial hall for Huang Shougong who had donated Kaiyuan's original plot of land.²⁰¹ The leading role played by the Huang clan in the late Ming rebuilding of Kaiyuan is also a reflection of the growing power held by lineage collectives during this period.²⁰² In the wake of the monastery's steps towards revival, Mr. Chen Zhizhi 陈止止 wrote the first record (*zhi* 志) of the temple in 1596.²⁰³ This earlier monastic record is no longer extant, but was derided by Yuanxian in his 1643 preface to the *Monastery Record* as being poorly researched.²⁰⁴

In 1604 a great earthquake struck Quanzhou, leveling buildings throughout the city. Impressively, Kaiyuan's east and west pagodas did not collapse. The Late Ming Restoration continued under the powerful backing of Quanzhou native Zheng Zhilong 郑芝龙 (郑芝龍 1604-1661)²⁰⁵ who led the reconstruction of the main hall (*Daxiong*

¹⁹⁸ *Sizhi* I.4a.

¹⁹⁹ This is still held in Kaiyuan's Sutra Library.

²⁰⁰ He died at the age of fifty-nine. *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1396.

²⁰¹ Huang Wenbin's inscription records Huang Shougong had four sons and these four sons moved to the "four Ans" thus establishing the Huang clan throughout southern Fujian. The "Four Ans" are Anxi 安溪, Huian 惠安, Nanan 南安, Tongan 同安. See *Fujian Fojiao*, 1999 vol. 4, p.37.

²⁰² See Wang 2008:195-208 for a discussion of the Huang lineage's relationship to Kaiyuan's Donor Ancestral Hall.

²⁰³ Yuanxian notes, however, that Chen's *Record* was considered inadequate.

²⁰⁴ *Sizhi* p.2a

²⁰⁵ Zheng Zhilong was a pirate, merchant, naval commander for Ming and later for the Qing. Born in Fujian, he was baptized a Catholic in Macau. He married a Japanese woman named Tagawa Matsu and

baodian 大雄宝殿) in 1637 with Mr. Zeng Ying 曾樱; it is their hall which visitors see today [Figures 2, 40, 72, 80]. All of the wooden columns were replaced with ones of stone. It was at this time that two exquisite sixteen-sided columns from Quanzhou's long defunct Hindu temple were transferred to Kaiyuan monastery and incorporated into the back porch of the main hall. Made of green limestone, each column has twelve carvings depicting Hindu deities (Shiva, Krishna etc.) and motifs [Figures 8-10]. These columns remain *in situ* at the back of the main hall and stand as a reminder of both the religious diversity and tolerance that once flourished in Quanzhou as well as the loss of that diversity which accompanied the collapse of the Yuan.²⁰⁶

Zheng Zhilong installed a large iron incense burner in front of the main hall and repaired the main gate.²⁰⁷ It is this late Ming reconstruction which serves as the basis for the gate that stands today. It has been rebuilt or restored several times over the years, but it is thought that its present style has not significantly diverged from that of the late Ming reconstruction and that the stone columns used today date from the late Ming construction or earlier [Figures 2, 72, 80].²⁰⁸

lived in Japan, Taiwan and China. Famous now as the father of Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624-1662) who as a Ming loyalist attacked Nanjing from 1658 to 1659 after it had been taken by the Qing. In retreat, he took Taiwan from the Dutch in 1662 where his successors remained until it was captured by the Qing in 1683 and made part of Fujian. The Dutch had been in Taiwan since 1624 when they founded a naval and trading post. (See Qing dynasty below)

²⁰⁶ For more on these and other Yuan dynasty artifacts in Quanzhou see Guy 2010.

²⁰⁷ Zheng Zhilong's iron incense burner is alluded to in the poem "Ode to Quanzhou" *Yong Quanzhou* 咏泉州 by the famous twentieth century poet Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892-1978). It is now located in Kaiyuan's Buddhist Museum.

²⁰⁸ Some of its large stone columns may date from the Tang or Northern Song dynasty; these columns exhibit entasis (swelling) such as one finds in Greek architecture. Columns with tapering at the top and base are known in Chinese architecture as shuttle (*suo* 梭) columns and are known to be from Tang times. I am not aware of how rare such columns exhibiting entasis are in East Asia. Tracy Miller has identified such columns dating from the eleventh century at the Sage Mother Hall 聖母殿 of the Jin Memorial Shrines (Jinci 晋祠) in Shanxi (Miller 2007:110-111). Such columns may also be found at the eighth century main hall or *kondo* of Japan's Toshodaiji Buddhist monastery 唐招提寺 in Nara. This monastery was founded by

Towards the end of the Late Ming Restoration Kaiyuan had recovered, repaired and rebuilt enough of its monastic structures and land to accommodate the needs of its monastic population. Beyond this, efforts to bring masters to Kaiyuan to give teachings had begun as well. Interestingly it was the local gentry, rather than Kaiyuan's monks, which extended the invitation to Yuanxian (1578-1657), a monk from Fuzhou's Mount Drum monastery, to give teachings at Kaiyuan in the winter of 1635. Yuanxian accepted their invitation and would go on to acquiesce to their requests that he write a record (*zhi* 志) of Kaiyuan monastery. Yuanxian provides the following account of how he came to write his *Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery*:

In my free time there I looked into the monastery's past and acquired two books, the *Biographies of Bodhisattvas* and the *Collected Works of Mengguan* (梦观集). Upon reading them I began to realize how many venerable masters there had been at the "Purple Cloud" and was stirred with great admiration. At that time, Mr. Huang Jitao 黄季弢 asked me several times about writing a record book, but I was then occupied with teaching the *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* (*Lengyan jing* 楞严经) at the request of Mr. Zeng Eryun 曾二云, so I wouldn't dare make any promises.

In spring of 1642, when I returned to Fujian (*Min*) from Zhejiang, I was again requested to preside at the summer retreat (*jiezhi* 结制).²⁰⁹ I was again asked by Mr. Fu Youxin 傅幼心 about writing a record, so I told him I would do it when I had returned to Mount Drum (Gushan 鼓山).²¹⁰ Venturing forth in spite of my incompetence, I recklessly took up my brush.²¹¹

Yuanxian completed the *Monastery Record* in 1643. In it he mused that the time seemed like one of renewal and hoped it would in fact blossom into a time of growth of the

the Chinese monk Jianzhen 鑿真 or 鑑真 (J. Ganjin, 688–763) in the eighth century who traveled to Japan to construct an ordination platform and establish a valid ordination lineage.

²⁰⁹ The summer retreat or Jiezhi traditionally begins April 13 or 15 of the lunar calendar and continues until July 15th (oral interviews with Da Zhuo and Jianying 2007).

²¹⁰ The monastery on Mount Drum (*Gushan*) lies just outside Fuzhou. Lewis Hodous writing in 1923 describes a trip to Mount Drum in *Buddhism and Buddhists in China*, pp. 15-16.

²¹¹ *Sizhi* P.2a-b.

dharma at Kaiyuan monastery. His thoughts on the Late Ming Restoration provide insight into a congruent situation facing Kaiyuan today.

Recent years have seen the restoration of the ordination platform and the dharma hall. Fortunately, the main hall has also been renovated. It seems like a time of renewal (*qiri laifu* 七日来复).²¹² We should respond to this opportunity with our best even though we don't know whether this recovery will be only partial or more complete (*weilin weitai* 为临为泰).²¹³ If we are only concerned about old property not being returned rather than practicing virtue, then, even if all the buildings and property were recovered, what would be the point of living here!²¹⁴

Yuanxian exhorts Kaiyuan's late Ming dynasty monks to be less concerned about recovering lost properties and focus, rather, on the cultivation of virtue and the practice of meditation. If monks will tend to their own discipline and cultivation, Yuanxian goes on to counsel, their virtue will give rise to benefits, such as the support of laypersons. Just as Huang Shougong rewarded the virtue of the monk Kuanghu, suggests Yuanxian, so may patrons today be impressed with the virtue of monks if only they will exert themselves. What Yuanxian perceived at the end of the Ming dynasty remains relevant with respect to Kaiyuan's current restoration; we will return to this in the chapters to follow. Below we will see how the promise of the Late Ming Restoration was in fact fulfilled during the early Qing dynasty.

²¹² *qi ri lai fu* 七日来复 lit. "returning in seven days" is taken from the 24th hexagram in the *Yi Jing* (Book of Changes) and indicates the return of *yang* after a cycle of *yin*. In this case a return of vitality to the temple after a period of decline. See Huang 2001:204-211.

²¹³ Yuanxian refers to hexagrams 19 (*lin* 临 "overseeing") and 11 (*tai* 泰 "tranquility") to express different ways the renewal may proceed.

²¹⁴ *Sizhi* I.19b-20a.

THE QING DYNASTY²¹⁵

Tiger Head, Snake Tail 虎头蛇尾

The dynastic change from the Ming to the Qing (1644-1911) brought a good deal of disorder to a region that was already suffering. Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (Koxinga, 1624-1662), whose father, Zheng Zhilong, had rebuilt Kaiyuan's main hall and main gate at the end of the Ming, had lived in Quanzhou from the age of seven. Better known in the West as Koxinga, he remained a Ming loyalist and waged a spirited battle against the Manchus, attacking Nanjing with loyalist support from Yunnan from 1658 to 1659. Driven back by Qing forces, Zheng Chenggong fled to Taiwan where he confronted and defeated the Dutch in 1662 (the Dutch had established a trading post there in 1624). His followers and fellow Ming loyalists kept up the battle against the Qing after his death for another twenty years in which control of Quanzhou and Zhangzhou repeatedly changed hands from Ming to Qing during the Revolt of the Three Feudatories (*san fan zhiluan* 三藩之乱).²¹⁶ The back and forth finally ended when the Qing captured Taiwan in 1683 and made it part of Fujian.²¹⁷

From 1662 to 1681, during the two decades of battle between Ming loyalists and the Qing Manchus over control of Fujian, the Qing ordered the forced evacuation of the

²¹⁵ Yuanxian's *Monastery Record* of 1634 has been the primary source for the preceding reconstruction of Quanzhou Kaiyuan's history. Since it ends with the Ming dynasty, I have had to rely on information from the [Daoyuan] *Jinjiang County Gazetteer* and several Qing dynasty inscriptions. These sources provide the material for the following sketch of Kaiyuan monastery under the Qing.

²¹⁶ The three feudatories that revolted were Yunnan, Guangdong and Fujian. The revolt was led by Wu Sangui 吳三桂 of Yunnan, Geng Jingzhong 耿精忠 of Fujian and Shang Kexi 尚可喜 and Shang Zhixin 尚之信 of Guangdong. On the revolt see Peter Lorge's *War, Politics and Society in Early Modern China, 900-1795* (Routledge, 2005) pp.154-156; David Graff and Robin Higham's *A Military History of China* (Westview Press, 2002) pp.119-121. On Zheng family rule in Taiwan see Gary Davidson's *A Short History of Taiwan* (Praeger Publishers, 2003) pp. 16-21.

²¹⁷ Morton & Lewis 2005: 141. See also Ralph C. Croizier's *Koxinga and Chinese Nationalism: History, Myth, and the Hero* (Harvard University Asia Center, 1968). Due to its support for Ming loyalists and Taiwan's role as a haven for rebels, Fujian endured a strong military presence during the Qing. By 1767 it supported a larger Green Standard force than any other province in China. (Naquin and Rawski 1987:171)

entire coastal region from Shandong all the way to Guangdong. Enforcement of the evacuation was most severe in Fujian and Eastern Guangdong where millions of people suffered untold hardships.²¹⁸ When settlers returned to their homes in Quanzhou and Zhangzhou there was intense competition for land and powerful lineage collectives battled with one another for control of land and resources throughout the Yongzheng period (1723-1735). The newly opened port at Amoy exacerbated the competitive atmosphere, with all powerful lineages wanting to get a piece of the action.²¹⁹ Lineage collectives had become an increasingly important feature of Quanzhou social organization from the sixteenth century onward as hardships increased during the Ming. Quanzhou was home to some of the most powerful lineages in Fujian and it was also, along with Zhangzhou, the source of infamous armed feuds among lineages.²²⁰

The full extent of the damage to Kaiyuan during these forty years of resistance to Manchu rule in Fujian is not clear, but it is known that the Donor's Ancestral Hall was damaged during the turmoil and was likely related to the armed feuds between lineages in Quanzhou. It was soon rebuilt by members of the Huang family from Nan'an and Huian.²²¹ Kaiyuan's monks were apparently spared the forced evacuation and major construction and renovations continued throughout the period. Most notable in this regard is the reconstruction of the Ordination Hall. Reconstruction was initiated in 1662 and completed in 1666.²²² Although it has been renovated at various times over the centuries,

²¹⁸ Lamley 1990: 265, nt. 26.

²¹⁹ Lamley 1990: 165-266.

²²⁰ Lamley 1990: 256-257. Lamley 1990 provides an overview of the phenomena of armed feuds in Quanzhou and Eastern Guangzhou during the Qing dynasty.

²²¹ *Kaiyuan si huangshi citang beiji* 开元寺黄氏祠堂碑记 ("Stele Record of the Ancestral Hall of the Kaiyuan Monastery Huang Clan") collected in Dean and Zheng 2003: 242-243, inscription #250.

²²² Nian Bensheng 粘本盛. 1666. *Chongjie ganlu jietan beiji* 重建甘露戒坛碑记 ("Stele Record of the reconstruction of the *Ganlu jietan*" *In situ* in the hall of the Ordination Platform and also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: inscription #216. Wang Chen-shan's 2008 dissertation incorrectly provides 1400 as the

this is this basic structure which stands today. In 1688 seven relics were brought from Mt. Drum's Yongquan monastery to the Ordination Hall; they were stored in a small relic stupa and remain in the hall today. Kaiyuan, as a central and venerable institution of Quanzhou attracted the attention of patrons in times of struggle as well as times of prosperity. In 1671, for instance, in the midst of the forced evacuation and the struggle between Ming loyalists and the Qing, the provincial military commander Wang Minzhai 提帅王敏斋 noted the damage suffered by the kitchen and the corridors that run along the main courtyard and had them repaired.²²³

During the decades of turmoil from the end of the Ming through the Revolt of the Three Feudatories in the early Qing what became of the Late Ming Restoration of Kaiyuan that Yuanxian had hoped would continue? The Late Ming Restoration was, in fact, strong enough to endure the decades of instability in Fujian that preceded and followed the founding of the Qing dynasty. Not only were buildings repaired and rebuilt during the decades of instability but monks were trained in the Chan and Pure Land traditions with such consistency that a streak of noteworthy masters were produced over the first century of the Qing dynasty. These masters added several chapels and shrines to Kaiyuan which, like the pre-Yuan cloisters, served as residences and places of practice for masters and their disciples. I propose that the instability of the times actually contributed to the vitality of Buddhism at Kaiyuan, and in Fujian more generally, by creating a hostile environment from which literati and other men of talent left for the tranquil and contemplative setting of the monastery. The turmoil also created conditions

"date" for the current hall (Wang 2008: 135). Weilin also compiled the 泉州开元寺话录 *Quanzhou Kaiyuansi hualu* ("A Record of Utterances of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery").

²²³ The 1671 reconstruction was recorded in an inscription by Zhan Yunjie 詹允捷 collected in the *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1651.

in which Buddhist masters from Fujian undertook the perilous journey to Japan; in so doing a new school of Zen was created in Japan, the Obaku or Huangbo 黄檗 school.²²⁴

Three Kaiyuan masters of the Qing dynasty traveled to Japan to lead the Obaku school of Zen while others left their mark on Buddhism in Fujian.

It was during this period that Chan master Ruhuan Chaohong 如幻超宏 (b. 1604) founded the Duqin chapel 度亲庵 at Kaiyuan out of a wish to benefit his parents and the parents of others. He built it with the support of two members of the Huang family and several monks and agreed to serve as its leader.²²⁵ During his tenure as leader of the Duqin chapel, Ruhuan engaged in Pure Land practice and the release of life with his colleague Chan master Weishen 惟深. Weishen had the ambition to build a temple to Cundī Bodhisattva (*Zhunti pusa* 准提菩萨) out of faith in the power of reciting the *Cundīdevī-dhāraṇī* (大准提陀羅尼經),²²⁶ the dharani of Cundī Bodhisattva, one of six incarnations of Guanyin in the esoteric tradition. Construction began in 1662 with the assistance of the layman Daochong 道冲 and was completed in 1664. The finished temple was in fact a scaled down replica of Kaiyuan's principal buildings—the main hall, ordination hall, dharma hall and corridors—and enshrined a statue of Cundī Bodhisattva.²²⁷ The temple was located in the northeast corner of Kaiyuan monastery

²²⁴ For more on the Obaku school, the “third sect of Zen” in Japan, see work by Helen Baroni (e.g. Baroni 2000).

²²⁵ Ruhuan 如幻. *Kaiyuansi Duqin'an yuanqi guiyue ji*. 开元寺度亲庵缘起规约记 (“Record of How Kaiyuan's Duqin Hermitage was Founded and its Rules”), inscription collected in Dean and Zheng 2003: 239-240, inscription #247. Henceforth *Kaiyuansi Duqin'an ji*.

²²⁶ This dharani is still recited during morning and evening services at Chinese Buddhist monasteries such as Quanzhou Kaiyuan.

²²⁷ Iconographically this incarnation of Guanyin typically has eighteen arms and three eyes and philosophically is one who saves humans; its three eyes represent saving (*jiu* 救) humans from three principle obstacles, delusion, karma and suffering (*huo* 惑, *ye* 业, *ku* 苦), a.k.a. Dorje Tsundi.

and formally named the Cundī Chan Forest 准提禅林.²²⁸ The Cundī Chan Temple was repaired in 1861 and has been rebuilt over the centuries including quite recently; today it is commonly referred to as Small Kaiyuan Temple (小开元寺). Ruhuan, the most eminent Chan master of Fujian at that time, served as abbot of the Cundī Chan forest for a time.

Ruhuan had become a monk in 1646 at the age of forty-three at Pingshan monastery 平山寺 in his home district of Hui'an. He was a respected Confucian scholar in the service of the Ming who refused to serve the Qing and was especially opposed to shaving his forehead in the Manchu style. In his opposition to Manchu rule, he determined to leave public life and become a monk. He studied under master Genxin 亘信 (a disciple of Huangbo Zhudasha 黄檗诸大刹) at Nanshan monastery 南山寺 in Zhangzhou. During his years of travel to various monasteries he spent time at Kaiyuan where he established the Duqin Chapel. When he was asked to lead the Cundī Chan Forest he left instructions that the abbot of Duqin Chapel was to be elected by laypersons.²²⁹ Soon after taking charge of Cundī Chan Forest, he left to take his position as abbot of Nan'an Xuefeng monastery which he held for some thirteen years. Ruhuan was a great luminary of post-Ming Buddhism in Fujian; his writings have been collected in the *Shousongji* 瘦松集 (“The Collected Works of Frail Pine”).

Another most eminent monk of seventeenth century Fujian is Chan master Muan 木庵 (J. Mokuan, 1611-1684) who was a disciple and dharma heir of Yinyuan Longqi 隐

²²⁸ Ruhuan 如幻. 1664. *Kaiyuansi xingjian zhunti chanlin* 开元寺新建准提禅林记 (*Record of the Founding of the Cundī Chan Forest at Kaiyuan monastery*). It is likely that the replica of the Ordination Hall that was part of the Cundī Chan Forest served as a model for the rebuilding of the actual Ordination Hall two years later.

²²⁹ *Kaiyuansi Duqin' an ji*. This indicates the importance lay Buddhists had assumed in the late Ming and early Qing.

元隆琦(J. Ingen Ryuki,1592-1673). Yiyuan was himself a disciple of Huangbo Zhudasha who was thus the grand-master of both Muan and Ruhuan. Yinyuan, in fleeing the turmoil that followed the collapse of the Ming in Fujian, traveled to Japan where he founded the Obaku school of Zen. The Obaku (C. Huangbo) school became the third largest school of Zen in Japan, after Rinzai and Soto, and today has some 460 branch temples in Japan.²³⁰

Muan became a novice at Kaiyuan monastery when he was sixteen and took the tonsure at the age of nineteen.²³¹ He traveled for a short period and returned to Kaiyuan at the age of twenty-two and founded the Amitabha Chapel (*mituo an* 弥陀庵) at Kaiyuan. He became fully ordained at the age of twenty-four and dedicated himself to the pursuit of Chan. He was elected Kaiyuan's general manager (*jianyuan*) at the age of twenty-five, but soon left to study with several different Chan masters in Zhejiang. In 1642 he again returned to Kaiyuan at which time he wrote poems for Kaiyuan's "Eight Auspicious Phenomena" and "Six Unique Sites."²³² In 1644 he became Yinyuan's disciple and received dharma transmission from him in 1651, thus becoming the thirty-third patriarch of the Linji Chan lineage. Muan traveled to Japan in 1655, one year after Yinyuan had made the journey. In 1664, he became the abbot of the Wanfu monastery 万福寺(J. Mampuku-ji), the headquarters of the Obaku school in Japan which Yinyuan had founded in 1659 on land bestowed by the emperor of Japan; it is located in Uji 宇治,

²³⁰ See Dougill, John. 2006. *Kyoto: A Cultural History*. Oxford University Press. p. 78.

²³¹ Biographical information on Muan comes from Shen Yushui 沈玉水. 1990. *Muan chanshi xingji xinian* 木庵禅师行迹系年 ("Year-by-year Account of Chan Master Muan's Activities").

²³² These poems are preserved in Shen Yushui 沈玉水 1990: 73-75. The groupings of Kaiyuan's eight phenomena and six sites are at least as old as the Yuan dynasty.

outside Kyoto.²³³ In receiving dharma transmission from Yinyuan (first patriarch of the Obaku school) and succeeding Yinyuan as abbot of the head Obaku monastery, Muan became the second patriarch of the Obaku school in Japan (in addition to being the thirty-third patriarch of the Linji lineage). Muan, along with Yinyuan and Jifei 即非, was a renowned calligrapher; together they are known as the "Three Brushes" of the Obaku school. Of the three, however, only Muan is noted for his poetry as well as his painting.²³⁴

Two other monks from Kaiyuan traveled to Japan and became abbots of Mampuku-ji and patriarchs of the Obaku school, they were Shengchui Fangbing 圣垂方炳(1656-1725) and Dapeng Zhengkun 大鹏正鯤 (1691-1774). Fangbing was a native of Anxi in the mountains outside of Quanzhou city and first went to Japan in 1693 and served as the abbot of Fuji monastery 福济寺(a.k.a. Quanzhou temple) which had been founded at the end of the Ming dynasty in 1628 by master Juehai 觉海, a monk from Quanzhou and had been led by several monks from Quanzhou since then. He later served as the eleventh abbot of Uji's Mampuku-ji from 1719 to 1725 and was a noted calligrapher. Dapeng was a native of Quanzhou's district of Jinjiang and first went to Japan in 1722. After serving as abbot of Fuji monastery he became the fifteenth abbot of Mampuku-ji (1745 to 1748) and then the eighteenth abbot from 1758 to 1765. He was especially noted for his painting of bamboo and for his seal carving.²³⁵ Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery thus produced three patriarchs of Japan's Obaku or Huangbo school

²³³ Yinyuan had first traveled to Nagasaki where he founded monasteries before being asked to establish the head monastery outside Kyoto on imperially bestowed land.

²³⁴ Shen Yushui 1990: 3. For more on the art of these early patriarchs of the Obaku school see Weidner, Marsha Smith and Patricia Ann Berger. 1994. *Latter Days of the Law: Images of Chinese Buddhism, 850-1850*. University of Hawai'i Press. pp. 80-82.

²³⁵ Shen Yushui 1990: 84-86.

of Zen from the middle of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century. This was a most impressive accomplishment during this period and demonstrates a lingering vitality in both Quanzhou and Kaiyuan's ability to nurture eminent monks during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries of the Qing dynasty.

The Late Ming Restoration laid the groundwork for a revival of Buddhism which the instability of the early Qing appears to have fostered in its own way. The vitality of the first decades of the Qing persisted beyond the initial decades of turmoil and well into the next century. Other Kaiyuan monks of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century went on to become leaders of other monasteries in the region. One master which serves as a link between the Late Ming Restoration and the early Qing is Chan master Daopei 道霈 (1614-1702) of Mt. Drum. Daopei had received dharma transmission from Yuanxian, the late-Ming author of the *Monastery Record*. Like Yuanxian, Daopei was invited to teach at Kaiyuan. Daopei also presided over ordinations at Kaiyuan. Taiji 太积 was tonsured at Kaiyuan and later received full ordained at Kaiyuan under Daopei. Taiji built the One Leaf Chapel (*yiye an* 一叶庵) at Kaiyuan where he spent the remainder of his days teaching and practicing; his manuscripts were collected in the *Yiye'an yigao* 一叶庵遗稿 (The Left Papers of One Leaf Chapel).²³⁶ Haiyin 海印 became a monk at Kaiyuan and was also ordained under Daopei. When the abbot of Nan'an Xuefeng monastery, Zhaozhuo 照拙 was ill, Haiyin took over management responsibilities and oversaw much of the reconstruction and renovations at Xuefeng.²³⁷

²³⁶ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1396.

²³⁷ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1397. He is the author many books including the *Record of Xuefeng Monastery* (*Xuefengzhi* 雪峰志).

Another monk who was a grand-disciple of Yuanxian and a disciple of Daopei is the monk Decui 德萃. After entering the monastic community at Kaiyuan, Decui followed Daopei back to Mt. Drum where he studied under him for eight years. Decui returned to Kaiyuan in 1738 and became the head monk of the Ordination Hall.²³⁸ Jirui 机锐 became a monk at Kaiyuan and later served as abbot of Chongfu monastery where he built the Ten-thousand Buddha Hall (*wanfo daochang* 万佛道场).²³⁹ Zongbiao 宗标 was a novice at Kaiyuan from the age of seventeen and received full ordination under master Guangchao 广超 at Huangbo monastery. When he returned to Kaiyuan he lived at the Pure Living Hut (*Qingju liao* 清居寮).²⁴⁰ Mingguang 明光 became a monk at Kaiyuan's Yongzhuang Chapel 涌幢庵 and was noted for his poetry and calligraphy.²⁴¹

The record of these masters attest to the strength of the Late Ming Restoration and Kaiyuan's ability to ordain and train monks who would become leaders of other important monasteries such as Nan'an Xuefeng, Quanzhou's Chogfu and Japan's Mampuku-ji throughout the first century of the Qing. Another sign of vitality during this period was the establishment of several chapels and shrines which functioned much like Kaiyuan's pre-Yuan cloisters. The structures established between the Late Ming Restoration and the first hundred years of the Qing include the Cundī Chan Temple, the Duqin Chapel, the Amitabha Chapel, the Yongzhuang Chapel, the One Leaf Chapel and the Pure Living Hut. Of all these early Qing dynasty structures only the Cundī Chan

²³⁸ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1397.

²³⁹ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1396.

²⁴⁰ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1397.

²⁴¹ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:1397.

Temple remains. Today it is referred to as Small Kaiyuan Temple and dominates the northeastern corner of the monastic grounds; its fate will be discussed in later chapters.

Contributing to the success of Kaiyuan during the first part of the Qing dynasty was the generally favorable attitude of Qing emperors to Buddhism. The eighteenth century at Kaiyuan saw regular works of maintenance at Kaiyuan, reflecting public support for the monastery made possible, in part, by the Qing government's favorable attitude.²⁴² In 1727 some forty years after its last rebuilding the Donor's Ancestral Shrine was again in need of repair; repairs were carried out by members of the Nan'an Huang family.²⁴³ The dharma hall was destroyed (*hui* 毁) in 1755 and was later rebuilt.²⁴⁴ In 1781, the golden pinnacle fell from the top of the East pagoda; it was repaired by the prefect Zhang Jiayan 张嘉炎.²⁴⁵ Two bronze bells were cast for use at Kaiyuan during the Qing dynasty²⁴⁶

The early Qing vitality did not last and Kaiyuan's decline began in tandem with the social chaos that had begun to engulf South China as pirate raids grew increasingly more frequent and devastating from 1795 to 1810. During this period of turmoil along the

²⁴² In 1701 six chains at the top of the West pagoda were replaced each weighing 170 *jin*. Lin Zhaochang 林肇昌. 1701. *Kaiyuansi xita tike* 开元寺西塔题刻 ("Inscription on the west pagoda of Kaiyuan Monastery"). The inscription is found on the central column of the west pagoda and is also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: 227, inscription #231. In 1719, twenty-one Buddha statues in the East and West pagodas were remade by the military envoy Ya Huiqi 雅讳奇. Anon. 1719. *Kaiyuansi xita tike* 开元寺西塔题刻 ("Inscription on the west pagoda of Kaiyuan Monastery") by an unnamed monk. The inscription is located on the center column of the west pagoda and is also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: 237, inscription #243.

²⁴³ Huang Zigong Yi 黄子公议. 1729. *Kaiyuansi huangshi citang beiji* 开元寺黄氏祠堂碑记 ("Stele record of the Huang surname ancestral hall within Kaiyuan Monastery") located in Kaiyuan's Tanyueci and collected in Dean and Zheng 2003: 242-243, inscription #250.

²⁴⁴ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1651.

²⁴⁵ *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1652.

²⁴⁶ The first was cast in 1670 using Yuan dynasty bronze and housed in the Hall of the Ordination Platform and the second bronze bell was cast in 1723 and both bells are currently held in Kaiyuan's museum. Fujiansheng Wenguanhui gongzuozu 福建省文管会工作组. 1962. *Fujian Quanzhou Kaiyuansi 1962 diaocha baogao* 福建泉州开元寺一九六二年调查报告. p. 27. By the Republican period this bell had been moved to the main hall. It now sits in Kaiyuan's Buddhist Museum.

coast, Bai Yude 白玉德, the commander general (*zongdu* 总督) of Fujian and Zhejiang provinces was dispatched to Quanzhou in pursuit of pirates (“Western bandits”, *yangfei* 洋匪). On top of social and economic troubles, Quanzhou was then suffering a draught and the people were desperate for rain. It is recorded that Yude earnestly prayed for rain at Kaiyuan monastery and that very night rain began to pour and continued the following day thus ending a potentially devastating draught. Crops were rescued, and the good harvest that followed saved the lives and livelihoods of thousands. Yude, having noticed that Kaiyuan’s main hall was damaged and that many walls were crumbling, was moved to donate his own salary towards repairs and solicited others to contribute to the renovation project. Quanzhou's prefect and the people of Quanzhou contributed according to their means; renovations began in the spring of 1805 and were complete by the end of the summer. The major and minor halls as well as the worshipping pavilion and the corridors were all repaired and made to look new again. Yude made an inscription to commemorate this comprehensive restoration of Kaiyuan's physical plant in the winter of 1805.²⁴⁷ It is a testament to Kaiyuan’s most impressive resilience and enduring reputation as a place of spiritual efficacy or *ling* that during these dark and desperate days before the eruption of the Taiping Rebellion it found a patron who orchestrated a comprehensive program of renovations.

Even though the monastery had been fully renovated in 1805, maintenance in the wet climate of Southern Fujian is a full time job and by the summer of 1813 the main gate was in shambles and the statues of the two guardian kings were exposed and badly

²⁴⁷ *Chongjian Kaiyuansi beiji* 重建开元寺碑记 (“Stele Record of the Reconstruction of Kaiyuan Monastery”). *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1651-1652. This inscription is also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: 314-315, inscription #324.

deteriorating. The monks and neighboring residents tried to repair the hall with tiles and wood but their results were makeshift. A year later the prefect Sheng Benchang 盛本倡 donated funds and led the effort for full repair of the main gate and the guardian kings. Officials, gentry and lay persons all contributed to the project which was supervised by the monk Dazhong 达衷 and began in October and was finished in the winter of 1815.²⁴⁸

In 1837 an iron bell cast for use at Kaiyuan was sponsored by forty-six Taiwan-based businesses whose names are inscribed on the bell. This bell offers evidence of the ties that existed between Kaiyuan monastery and Quanzhou citizens who had relocated to Taiwan and established businesses there. This bell may be read as a document reflecting a shift in patronage from local gentry to overseas merchants, a precursor of developments to come at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Throughout this period Kaiyuan not only continued to be a central institution of Quanzhou that received protection and support but also a refuge for the destitute. A story is told by those versed in the history of the monastery that a young girl from Nan'an, who was orphaned at the age of eight, was sent to Kaiyuan monastery to live. She became a nun who received the name Miaoxiang 妙香 (cr. 1803-1888).²⁴⁹ As conditions throughout the Qing empire worsened, confrontations with European powers resulted in two Opium Wars (1839-1842 and 1856-60) and discontent in South China exploded in the Taiping Rebellion (1851-1865). It is said that Kaiyuan monastery was effectively abandoned by monks during this period of turmoil and that in 1851 the nun Miaoxiang assumed

²⁴⁸ Yang Binhai 杨滨海. 1815. *Chongxiu kaiyuansi qianjin ji xiangji [tang] lang ji* 重修开元寺前进及香积[堂]廊记 ("Record of Repairs to the Main Courtyard (*qianjin* 前进) and Kitchen Corridor of Kaiyuan Monastery"). Inscription is recorded in the *Jinjiang xianzhi* 69:1652. The inscription is also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: 317, inscription #328.

²⁴⁹ Dates for Miaoxiang are from Huang Yushan, oral interview 2009.

managerial control of the monastery as head monastic (*zhuchi* 住持) and held power until her death in 1888.²⁵⁰

All that is known of Miaoxiang's thirty-seven years of leadership at Kaiyuan are renovations of the Water and Land Temple and the Ordination Hall which were carried out in her name. From 1869 to 1870 Kaiyuan's Water and Land temple was rebuilt. It should be recalled that Quanzhou's Water and Land temple had been seized during the Ming dynasty and its monks given shelter at Kaiyuan's Cloister of Bliss which subsequently became known as the Water and Land Temple.²⁵¹ In 1870 the Ordination Hall was renovated by Miaoxiang and her disciple Huilian 慧莲. It must have been during this renovation that phoenixes were installed at the top of the ceiling above the statue of Lossana [Figure 14]. It is more customary to have dragons in a temple and it seems that the use of phoenixes may have been an influence stemming from Empress Dowager Cixi 慈禧太后 who was then ruling behind the scenes in Beijing.²⁵²

The fortunes of Buddhism throughout China took had taken a drastic turn for the worse with the rise of the Christian-inspired Taiping Rebellion led by Hong Xiuquan 洪秀全 (1823-1901). Described by Frederic Wakeman as "the world's most disastrous civil war," the Taiping Rebellion claimed between ten and twenty million lives.²⁵³ The turmoil wrought untold destruction upon Buddhist monasteries and their works of art and libraries. Devastation of monasteries was particularly widespread in South China which

²⁵⁰Other than the oral tradition that exists in Quanzhou, I have been unable to find any conclusive evidence to support this. One reason that Miaoxiang is said to be a nun (rather than a monk) is because the canopy above the central bodhisattva on the ordination platform is decorated with phoenixes rather than dragons [Figure 14]. Many locals are embarrassed about this story and are not reluctant to discuss it.

²⁵¹ The Land and Water Temple still stands in a state of good repair in the eastern part of the Kaiyuan complex.

²⁵² The statues arrayed on and around the ordination platform including the Lossana statue will be described in chapter four.

²⁵³ Wakeman 1966: 3.

had long been a stronghold of Buddhism. Quanzhou Kaiyuan's monks were dispersed, but its halls, pagodas and library survived under the management of Miaoxiang. As chaos raged, Kaiyuan once again remained above the fray.

Beyond the destructiveness of the Taiping Rebellion, Holmes Welch described the end of the Qing dynasty as marking the "end of an epoch for Chinese Buddhism."²⁵⁴ Welch was referring to the seizure of Buddhist monasteries for use as schools which was carried out with limited enforcement after the 1898 edict of emperor Guangxu 光绪 which was reiterated by a 1904 government order to use available temple properties for the establishment of schools.²⁵⁵ This was a shift from the general Qing policy of offering Buddhist monasteries protection; by the end of the Qing, the emperors had finally come under the influence of the literati who had been calling for such re-outfitting to occur since the early Qing, some two hundred and fifty years earlier.²⁵⁶ We will see how Kaiyuan responded to these pressures in the early twentieth century as we continue to unravel Kaiyuan's story in the following chapter. Before moving to Republican period Kaiyuan, a survey of themes in Kaiyuan's imperial history will provides points of comparison with the contemporary scene.

Historic Patterns in Review

This chapter has taken us through more than one thousand and two hundred years of Quanzhou Kaiyuan's long and distinguished history in imperial China. We have surveyed the stream of eminent monks who have graced its halls. We have witnessed an energetic building program that has continually maintained the core buildings of the

²⁵⁴ Welch 1968: 11.

²⁵⁵ Welch discusses sources for this information in Welch 1968: 296-297, nt. 28.

²⁵⁶ The seizure of monasteries for education uses was proposed by the Qing intellectual Huang Zongxi as early as 1662 (Welch 1968: 10-11).

monastery and has added stronger and taller structures over the centuries. We have noted the expansion of the monastery to a sprawling campus of 120 neighboring cloisters and the contraction of the monastery to its central axis and a handful of other structures. We have seen the monastery destroyed by fire, occupied by commoners and abandoned by monks. But we have witnessed that destruction, occupation or abandonment has never lasted, that Quanzhou Kaiyuan has always recovered, rebuilt and restored a measure of its past greatness. Such longevity is common enough in China, but it is not the norm. Many monasteries, especially smaller temples, have perished at one historical juncture or another, never to recover as a living place of religious practice. I have counted the religious structures enumerated in the fifteenth century *Annals of Fujian (Bamin tongzhi 八闽通志)* and found there to be more than 5,000 temples, monasteries, cloisters, convents and shrines accounted for throughout Fujian. Included among those more than 5,000 sites, are 1,928 Buddhist monasteries (*si 寺*).²⁵⁷ Today there only a fraction of this many in Fujian, but they include the most famous monasteries.

Examining the contours of Quanzhou Kaiyuan's imperial history, we note patterns of rise and fall in which the state and elites play an important role. More specifically we may note three interrelated patterns that operate throughout Kaiyuan's imperial history: 1) patronage by elites, 2) the regulatory and interventionist state and 3) continual modulation to changing conditions. These three patterns are common to every important monastery in China; how they have been manifest at Quanzhou Kaiyuan provides a local and detailed account that may be used by other scholars in a comparative

²⁵⁷ *Bamin tongzhi* 75-79.

manner with other sites to improve our understanding of Chinese monasticism. Let's review each pattern as it applies to imperial period Kaiyuan.

1. Patronage from Elites and the Huang Family

From its founding to the present Kaiyuan has benefited from patronage by members of the local, regional and national elite. Patronage by the Huang family began with the founding of Kaiyuan monastery on land donated by Huang Shougong and has continued with Huang family descendents down to the present; noteworthy is the participation of the Huang family in the late Ming, Qing and, to be discussed in the next chapter, Republican Period restorations. Patronage by the local elite, especially the prefects of Quanzhou became especially prominent during the post-Tang interregnum under Wang family rule and continued through the Song dynasty resulting in the construction of more than one hundred cloisters built through the patronage of local elites. The support of local elites continued under the late Ming luminary Zheng Zhilong and military commanders Wang Minzhai and Bai Yude during the Qing. A theme of elite support that can be detected from the legend of Huang Shougong to the restoration led by Bai Yude is the perception of Kaiyuan's efficacy (*ling*) as a motivating factor.

Kaiyuan has enjoyed the support of emperors and member of the national elite throughout imperial China's history. It has been known by imperially bestowed names since its founding — being named in turn by Empress Wu, Emperors Zhongzong, Xuanzong and Shizu 世祖 (i.e. Kublai Khan). Tang Yizong named the East pagoda, Song Huizong named the West pagoda and Song Gaozong named the ordination platform. Tang Xuanzong donated Kaiyuan's central Buddha statue while Ming Taizu sent master

Zhengying to lead the early Ming restoration and Ming Shenzong supported the restoration of the late Ming.

Related to the support of elites is the relationship that exists between the health of the local economy and the wealth of the monastery. It is not merely coincidence that Kaiyuan's most impressive structures, the twin pagodas, date from an era accustomed to opulence; nor that Kaiyuan supported the largest numbers of monastics during Quanzhou's most prosperous periods, the Song and Yuan dynasties. The preceding survey of history suggests a direct correlation between Quanzhou's loss of its port, its loss of status as a crossroads of luxury goods, its loss of role as an important point for the transshipment of goods from across the known world to points throughout China and the decimation of Kaiyuan's monastic population during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The health of the local economy and the corresponding economic health of local elites have had a direct bearing on Kaiyuan's ability to provide material support for its monks. The correlation between local economic performance, the income of elites and the health of Kaiyuan's monastic population has operated throughout Kaiyuan's long history and continues to do so into the present.

2. The Regulatory and Interventionist State

Just as the state and political elites could be a source of support and patronage of Kaiyuan, they were also entities that could restrict, control and even dismantle the Sangha and its monastic properties. A look at Chinese history suggests that state regulation of and interference in religious matters has been a constant characteristic of church-state relations in China. It is certainly the case that state involvement in the affairs of Kaiyuan monastery has remained a constant from its founding in 686 up to the present.

We have reviewed the state's supportive role as a patron, but the pendulum swings both ways and the state has also been, at times, a force of discipline, contraction and suppression. History has demonstrated, however, that Kaiyuan as Quanzhou's largest and most prominent monastery has been spared during the most severe periods of state-orchestrated suppression such as the Tang Huichang Persecution of 845 and the prohibitions of the Ming dynasty. Kaiyuan experienced its first severe state-orchestrated contraction under the Yuan dynasty with the abolition of 117 cloisters. Ming policies led to two periods of restoration, but between these periods Kaiyuan dipped to a miserable condition in which it lost most of its income-producing lands (most of which were never recovered), and its population of monks teetered on the verge of collapse. This mid-Ming dynasty collapse offers parallels to the situations faced by Kaiyuan during the Republican and Maoist periods in terms of loss of lands, wide-spread laicization and, during the Cultural Revolution, occupation of monastic property.

As we turn to Kaiyuan's recent history in the following chapters, state involvement will come to the fore in what was surely the largest suppression of Buddhism since the Huichang Persecution, the Cultural Revolution. We will see how Kaiyuan was again spared the worst of this most recent round of state suppression in the following chapter. The present chapter has provided what I consider crucial contextualization of both the Cultural Revolution and the present restoration. In short, neither are unprecedented in China's history and it is important to recognize the type of church-state relationships that have operated throughout Kaiyuan's history and throughout Chinese history. The People's Republic of China has consistently reaffirmed its commitment to state regulation of religious affairs. Such commitment is directly at

odds with the principle of separation between Church and State that we living in societies that have passed through the scientific revolution and the European Enlightenment take for granted as part of modernity. The separation between Church and State is a pillar of modern secular states and the value of such separation is regarded as a given by those states. Although the Chinese position may not agree with liberal democratic principles, it must be understood if we are to understand Kaiyuan's path of survival in the twenty-first century.

3. Continual Modulation

Over the course of centuries, the monastic population of a given monastery inevitably passes through periods of efflorescence and times of degeneration. John Kieschnick suggests that the general neglect that regularly leads to the wholesale rebuilding of monasteries over and over again is related to the notion that greater merit is attached to fully founding, rebuilding or restoring a monastery than in contributing to its maintenance on a more meager scale.²⁵⁸ Welch, connected the regular destruction and rebuilding of monasteries in China to cycles of physical and moral decline and renewal which he termed the "monastic cycle" suggesting an analogy with the rise and fall of dynasties known as the "dynastic cycle." Kaiyuan monastery, like other monasteries of a comparable age and venerability has been destroyed and rebuilt many times. More to the point, however, it has seen times of efflorescence and times of decay, periods of expansive growth and periods of dramatic decline, days of new coats of paint and freshly gilded statues and days of buildings in ruin, seasons of brilliant and disciplined monks and seasons of a poorly disciplined skeleton crew. Kaiyuan has experienced periods of

²⁵⁸ Kieschnick writes, "[T]he value accorded to the wholesale reconstruction of a monastery contributed to the general pattern of Buddhist monasteries in China of neglect or destruction followed by rebuilding." (Kieschnick 2003:193.)

contraction and periods of decline which have always been followed by periods of restoration and renewal. Some periods of renewal have been relatively short-lived, but Kaiyuan has always managed to comeback from any disaster and restore a core group of buildings tended by a growing number of monks.

On the whole, Kaiyuan enjoyed an astounding stretch of more than 400 years of continual development from the end of the seventh century to the end of the twelfth century. These years represent Kaiyuan's golden age, when it was a Buddhist Kingdom unto itself teeming with masters of diverse schools. With the fall of the Song dynasty, Kaiyuan whose growth had tapered off during the thirteenth century began a downward spiral that it has been unable to reverse with any convincing momentum apart from a one hundred year stretch from the late Ming to the early Qing. Kaiyuan has experienced damage, destruction or loss of land associated with changes in regime ever since the overthrow of the Southern Song by the Yuan in 1280 when the monastery lost of 117 of its 120 cloisters. Losses often occurred in struggles surrounding the dynastic change itself as was the case at the end of the Yuan and Ming dynasties. At other times contraction or suppression occurred shortly after the founding of a new regime as was seen in the founding of the Yuan and to a less extent in the founding of the Ming. Over the centuries, Kaiyuan has lost cloisters and land that it has never recovered, but it has succeeded in maintaining a solid core of buildings and monastic property. The restoration of a dynamic and talented community of monks, on the other hand, has been a more elusive goal (not simply for Kaiyuan, but for all of China).

In addition to patterns of growth and decline, Kaiyuan, like other successful monasteries, exhibits continual modulation of its cultural and political capital as it adapts

to changing circumstances (social, political, economic and ideological). Developments in cultural capital are exemplified by changes in material culture, which are linked to modifications in ritual and doctrinal foci as well as institutional shifts. Material culture includes all physical structures (buildings, statues, pagodas, stupas, courtyards, ponds etc.) and material objects (scriptures, relics, ritual implements, food, clothing etc.) as well as landscaping and deployment of space.

The earliest manifestation of the monastery (main hall, main gate, venerated site cloister) is a material expression of the most basic elements of a Buddhist monastic institution. Most central is the Buddha hall, which soon had a Buddha image bestowed by the emperor. To properly orient the main hall along a central axis in conformity with Chinese notions of sacred geomancy requires another building to share the axis. Furthermore, a properly demarcated sacred space requires a formal entrance; Kaiyuan's main gate serves both purposes. In addition, as a site for the cultivation of monks, in conformity with settled monastic traditions, a dormitory for monks is required. This was one of the functions of the Venerated Site Cloister. Thus we can gather from Kaiyuan's material culture at this early stage the minimalist, yet formal nature of the monastery's origins.

From these humble beginnings, Kaiyuan developed into a huge complex of one hundred and twenty independently managed cloisters. This material development manifests the changing political and economic circumstances of Quanzhou under Wang family patronage and subsequent local elites and the economic growth that fueled Quanzhou prosperity and funded Kaiyuan's expansion. The Wang family's support of Buddhism is not simply manifest in the growth of Kaiyuan's physical plant, but in the

manner of that growth. Kaiyuan's cloisters enabled it to foster excellence and diversity among its monks. The proliferation of cloisters is indicative of patronage of monastic excellence and this excellence is manifest in a greater number of eminent monks recorded for posterity. The *Monastery Record* lists forty-six eminent monks associated with Kaiyuan from the time of its founding to the end of the Ming. 41% of them are from the interregnum period, 35% date to the Northern Song, 11% to the Southern Song, 9% to the Yuan and 4% to the Ming (where the *Monastery Record* ends). These numbers of eminent monks correspond with the rise and decline of Kaiyuan's one hundred and twenty cloisters. The active period of building cloisters, which spanned the interregnum and Northern Song periods, accounts for 76% (35) of the eminent monks in the *Monastery Record*. With financial problems that evolved during the Southern Song, patronage slowed, building of cloisters slowed down or ceased and so did the number of eminent monks (from sixteen in the Northern Song to five in the Southern). After the Yuan dynasty consolidation, the number of eminent monks drops to four or 9%. The evolution of Kaiyuan as a site of branch cloisters corresponds with a period of vibrant diversity in the talents of its monastic community, which corresponded to economic prosperity and a spike in local patronage. The cloister system and the financial support enabled monks to pursue their callings more successfully—this suggests a link between monastic success and material culture.

Material culture is also reflected in institutional shifts and attendant doctrinal shifts. Good examples are the two stages in Kaiyuan's evolution as a Chan monastery. During the first stage which began at the end of the eleventh century we witness several cloisters becoming affiliated with the Chan school. After the Yuan consolidation we have

the second stage of Kaiyuan's evolution as a Chan monastery with the ascension of Miao'en and the construction of the two most tell-tale structures of a functioning Chan monastery. These structures are a Chan hall and a Hall of Patriarchs, which express in material culture what are arguably the two most salient features of the Chan school—meditation and lineage.

Other elements of material culture express historical trends such as the building of the revolving sutra cabinet during the Song dynasty when such items became popular merit-making machines. It is an item that suggests a desire to attract more devotees. The rebuilding of the ordination platform according to the specifications of the Nanshan vinaya in the twelfth century evinces a trend within the vinaya school at that time as well as a concern with getting ordinations right—ensuring their efficacy. More and deeper analysis could be performed for Kaiyuan's cultural properties. These examples suggest the potential value of tending to material culture as a key conveyer and enabler of religious meaning and significance.

Continual modulation includes responses to, victimization by and adaptations to larger trends. The Great Fire of 1357 destroyed every major structure that was not built in stone and left Kaiyuan in ruins at the onset of the Ming dynasty. Rebuilding and renewal began under the leadership of master Zhengying in 1398 during the Early Ming Restoration. By the middle of the sixteenth century the monastery and its monks had reached a pitiful state marked by the occupation of buildings by non-monastics and the loss of lands; this was reversed in the Late Ming Restoration initiated by Huang Wenbin and, a restoration that culminated in the building efforts of Zheng Zhilong in the 1630s—the main hall he built continues to greet visitors and worshippers to this day. The

momentum generated in the Late Ming Restoration persisted through the first hundred years of the Qing dynasty when Kaiyuan produced a handful of eminent masters and sent three of them to lead the Obaku school in Japan. The development of transnational ties during the Qing is analogous to the lines of exchange and communication established between Kaiyuan and Southeast Asia during the first half of twentieth century.

This chapter has identified broad patterns of decline and renewal in Kaiyuan's imperial history and the role played by elites, the state and material culture. The following chapter carries the story of Kaiyuan into the post-imperial period. Like China at large, Quanzhou Kaiyuan experienced a tumultuous twentieth century requiring many accommodations to an ongoing project of modernity. The following chapter describes how Kaiyuan adapted to and survived a destructive and revolutionary century.

CHAPTER THREE

The Twentieth Century: From Promise to Chaos

Over the course of the twentieth century, Kaiyuan enjoyed a promising but short-lived Republican period restoration, suffered the repressions and hardships of war with Japan, the Civil War and the Cultural Revolution only to set about a full scale recovery in post-Mao China, a recovery that continues to play out at Kaiyuan and monasteries and temples throughout China. This chapter examines developments at Kaiyuan over the first three-quarters of this tumultuous century and sheds lights on three trends in modern Chinese Buddhism: greater social engagement, globalization and a new curatorial consciousness. While the latter is particularly evident in mainland China today, the promotion of socially-engaged forms of Buddhism and the building of transnational contacts around the globe are distinctive features of Buddhism in contemporary Taiwan.¹

During the first half of the twentieth century, Kaiyuan monastery was restored under the leadership of two prominent monks of the era Yuanying 圆瑛 (1878–1953) and Zhuandao 转道(1872-1943). Both of these monks are among the most important monks of modern Chinese Buddhism, but they have scarcely been mentioned by Western-language scholarship and publications.² These monks were instrumental in developing a

¹ For the development of engaged Buddhism in Taiwan see Madsen, Richard. 2007. *Democracy's Dharma: Religious Renaissance and Political Development in Taiwan*. Berkeley: University of California Press. On the globalization of Taiwanese Buddhism see the chapters by Stuart Chandler and Julia Huang in Linda Learma's *Buddhist Missionaries in the Era of Globalization* (Honolulu, 2005) on Foguang Shan and Tzu-chi respectively.

² As far as I know, Holmes Welch is the only Western scholar to provide a sketch of Yuanying (Welch 1968:40-50; Welch 1967: 172-173). The information I provide in this chapter (including footnotes) expands on Welch's basic portrayal with the help of primary and secondary sources in Chinese such as the 1954. *Yuanying fashi jinian kan* 圆瑛法師紀念刊 (Master Yuanying Memorial Booklet). As for

public charity at Kaiyuan that will be discussed in detail below. This charity may be seen as a precursor to forms of socially-engaged Buddhism that have developed in Taiwan over the past couple of decades. These monks were also pioneers in the development of contacts between mainland monks and overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia; a precursor of trends that are now spoken of as the globalization of Chinese Buddhism.³ In addition, this chapter recounts the activities of master Hongyi at Quanzhou Kaiyuan, a piece of Hongyi's biography that is made available in English for the first time. The promising revival was not to last, however, as policies changed from suppression to eradication during the Maoist period.

The trends evident at Kaiyuan over the course of this period may best be understood in the context of what Talal Asad (2003) has alerted us to perceive as a *project* of modernity intimately connected to sub-projects of secularisms. Mayfair Yang (2008) and Yoshiko Ashiwa and David Wank (2009) have followed Asad's call to unravel the intertwined discourses of modernity, nationalism, religion and secularism in order to understand how they mutually inform one another and, in particular, the ways in which the project of modernity has articulated and continues to articulate a shifting space for religion in modern and contemporary China. Modernity is a slippery concept that has been critiqued as not naming a definite or fixed object or essence. But, as Asad has maintained, modernity can be thought of as a "project" that individuals and states aim to accomplish and impose upon others.⁴ These projects of modernity entail forms of secularization; in other words, in the language of modernizers, efforts to liberate

Zhuandao, I only know of a brief reference to him in Ashiwa and Wank 2005: 226. In Chinese there is Yu Lingbo (2005, 1997).

³ Wank and Ashiwa (2005).

⁴ Asad 2003:12-13.

populations from the tyranny of religious authority and superstition by spreading the light of reason, science and material progress. This project has entailed the imagining of nation-states composed of citizens with “direct access” to political power, “unmediated” by religion.⁵ My use of “modernity” and “secularism” below refer to these related projects, projects that China undertook with zeal in the periods related by this chapter. It is within the context of these projects of modernity that Kaiyuan’s monks were cut off from *traditional* sources of income and turned to overseas Chinese for funding, that Buddhist monasteries began to open schools in effort to stem the seizing of monasteries and the government, eventually, began to donate funds to preserve items of national heritage. Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s confrontation with modernity began with promise and ended in chaos.

THE REPUBLICAN PERIOD

By the early twentieth century, although Kaiyuan monastery remained standing, its halls were empty and quiet. Reflecting on the state of the monastery during the late Qing, the Republican Period (1911-1949) preface to the *Monastery Record* laments:

It is regrettable that since the time of Qianlong and Jiaqing 嘉庆(1735-1820), sages and worthies (*sheng xian* 圣贤) have not appeared and the monastic rules have loosened every day. Up to the current Republican Period things have severely deteriorated (*boluo* 剥落) but an opportunity has arrived for the dharma to be revived.⁶

Kaiyuan’s structures had survived the destructive force of the Taiping Rebellion, but the monastery fell into a state of neglect that left it effectively deserted at the beginning of the twentieth century when the Qing dynasty finally collapsed. The desolate

⁵ Asad 2003:13.

⁶ From the 1927 preface by Wu Hengchun 吴亨春 (*Sizhi* p2.2b).

scene at Kaiyuan at the beginning of the twentieth century was repeated at monasteries throughout the region. After the dust of the Taiping Rebellion had settled, however, a generation of leaders emerged in post-imperial China to rebuild monasteries and restock Buddhist libraries. The efforts of these leaders were largely focused in Southeast China.⁷ A central figure of these early efforts was the lay Buddhist Yang Wenhui 杨文会 (a.k.a. Yang Renshan 杨仁山, 1837-1911) who is sometimes referred to as the father of the Republican Period revival. He retrieved sutras that had been lost or were hard to find in China after the Taiping Rebellion and began printing copies of them at his newly created Jinling Sutra Publishing House 金陵刻經處 in Nanjing.⁸ The press was located on the grounds of his private home where Yang also opened a school for laypersons and monks known as the Jetavana Hermitage (*Zhihuan jingshe* 祇垣精舍). The efforts of these leaders had to contend not only with weakened religious institutions and untrained monastic populations but also an intelligentsia hostile to traditional religious pursuits.

The Republican Period was a period of continual political, social and economic upheaval accompanied by intellectual and religious foment. China had broken with its imperial past and had set out on an uneven course of modernization and development that continues to unfold. The intellectual climate of the Republican period was favorable to Western learning while it was hostile to tradition, especially popular religion, but also

⁷ Birnbaum 2003, 124-125. See also Ch'en 1964: 448.

⁸ For more on Yang Wenhui see: Chan, Sin-wai, *Buddhism in Late Ch'ing Political Thought*, pp. 20-21; Chen Bing and Deng Zimei (2002) *Ershi shiji zhongguo fojiao*, pp.103-107; Chen Jidong (2004) *Sei mo bukkyo no kenkyu*, pp. 77-94, 119-203, 551-584; Goldfuss, Gabrielle (1996) 'Binding Sutras and Modernities: The Life and Times of the Chinese Layman Yang Wenhui (1837-1911)', in *Studies in Central and East Asian Religions*, v.9, pp.54-74; Goldfuss, Gabrielle (2001) *Vers un Buddhisme du XXe siècle. Yang Wenhui (1837-1911), réformateur, laïque et imprimeur*; Pittman, Don (2001) *Towards a Modern Chinese Buddhism*, pp.41-50; Welch, Holmes (1968) *The Buddhist Revival in China*, pp.2-22, 98-100. Also: Lou, Yulie 樓宇烈, ed. (1996) *Yang Wenhui, Ouyang Jian, Lü Cheng juan* 楊文會、歐陽漸、呂澂卷, Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu. Thanks to Stefania Travagnin for bibliographic suggestions.

Buddhism. The early years of the Republican period (cr. 1915-25) witnessed the May Fourth Movement of 1919 and the “New Culture Movement” (*xinwenhua yundong* 新文化运动), a movement labeled the “Chinese Renaissance” (*zhongguo wenyi fuxing* 中国文艺复兴) by Hu Shi 胡适 (1891-1962). In general these intellectuals devalued traditional religions as “feudal” and “backward” and lauded secularization as the path to progress. In this climate temples and monasteries were targeted for confiscation for use as schools, barracks and police stations while others were simply destroyed.

Two Hegelian-inspired “end of history” movements were launched in the early years of the Republican period.⁹ The idea was to break with the backward and feudal past in order to embrace the scientifically informed future. The names of the movements are self-explanatory: the Smashing Superstition Movement (*mixin dapo yundong*) and the Covert Temples to Schools Movement (*miaochan xingxue yundong*).¹⁰ The effect of these movements, apart from decimating much of China’s religious heritage (over half of China’s temples had been “seized, destroyed, or diverted from their religious uses” by the 1940s),¹¹ was to galvanized Buddhist resistance.

The movement to convert monastic space into school space had been building since the end of the Qing dynasty. The most innovative monasteries met the threat of seizure by converting themselves into educational institutions.¹² Taixu 太虚 (1889-1947),

⁹ See Duara 1995:85-113 for an account of the Chinese intelligentsia’s drives to effect the “end of history” awoken a new self-consciousness and eliminate religion.

¹⁰ For accounts of these iconoclastic movements see Yang 2009:19-26; Duara 1995:85-111 and Ashiwa 2009:49-55.

¹¹ Yang 2008: 20.

¹² This strategy is thought to have been initiated by two Japanese monks, Mizuno Baigyo and Ito Kendo who set up the first of such schools in 1904 in Hunan, the Hunan Sangha School. Mizuno urged temples to place themselves under the protection of Kyoto’s Higashi Honganji in doing so they would be able to appeal to the Japanese consulate for protection. By the end of 1904, thirty-five monasteries in Zhejiang had become affiliated with the Kyoto temple, thirteen of them in Hangzhou (Welch 1968:12).

who had studied at the Jetavana Hermitage, emerged at this time as a powerful voice in the modernization of Buddhism as well as a promoter of Buddhist education.¹³

Another leader of China's early twentieth century revival of Buddhism and tireless rebuilders of monasteries in South China was Yuanying. Yuanying was born in Fujian near Fuzhou¹⁴ and was tonsured and ordained at Fuzhou's Yongquan monastery (on Mount Drum, *Gushan*) by the venerable abbot Miaolian 妙蓮(1824-1907)¹⁵ in 1897. Miaolian is the earliest known pioneer in the building of connections between mainland monastics and overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. Miaolian traveled to Penang in Malaysia in 1885 and by 1904 had established the Jile Temple (Chi-le ssu 極樂寺, lit. Temple of Paradise/Bliss), a sub-temple of Fuzhou's *Gushan* and what was then the largest and most impressive Chinese temple in Malaysia.¹⁶ This early exposure to the

¹³ For more on Taixu see Welch 1968: 15-18, 51-71 and Don Pittman's study of Taixu entitled *Toward a Modern Chinese Buddhism* (Hawai'i, 2001). In 1922 he founded the Wuchang Buddhist Institute (*Wuchang foxue yuan* 武昌佛学院) and in 1927 became the leader of the Minnan Buddhist Institute (*Minnan foxue yuan* 闽南佛学院) which had been established in 1925 in Xiamen 厦门 (about 100 km. from Quanzhou). In 1931, Taixu founded the Tianning Buddhist Institute (*tianming foxueyuan* 天宁佛学院) in Zhangzhou, Jiangsu province which went on to become the largest, most modern Buddhist seminary of the Republican period. The modern monk Chen-hua studied there for a year in 1947. He writes about the experience in his memoirs. See Chen-hua 1992: 93-108.

¹⁴ He was born in Gutian 古田, this Gutian is not to be confused with another Fujian Gutian 古田 located on the road to Mount Wuyi (oral interview with Venerable Guangpu 廣普/广普, 3/2009). Yuanying was Taixu's senior by eleven years. As time went on he broke with Taixu who advocated more radical reform than Yuanying was willing to accept. Yuanying came to lead a conservative faction of the Chinese Buddhist Association in opposition to the more radical Taixu. See Welch 1968:40-50.

¹⁵ This Miaolian should not be confused with the later Miaolian 妙蓮 of Shanghai who served as master Hongyi's attendant and later as abbot of Quanzhou Kaiyuan. *Gushan's* Miaolian is known for founding Jile temple in Penang, Malaysia, a branch temple of *Gushan*. There were rumors that developed that he was involved in sexual orgies as the rumors failed to abate he chopped off his genitals with a knife. He was treated by a well known doctor, but he died within the year at the age of 83 (Welch 1967: 117). Welch actually writes that he was 63 in 1907 and therefore says he was born in 1844; other sources include Yu Lingbo's *Zhongguo fojiao haiwai hongfa renwu zhi* (Yu 1997:17). See also C.S. Wong's *Kek Lok Si, Temple of Paradise* (Singapore, 1963).

¹⁶ Miaolian is the earliest known Buddhist monk to migrate to Southeast Asia and develop such connections between diasporic Chinese and the mainland. He received imperial recognition for the establishment of Jile Temple by the Qing state; he received name boards from Emperor Guangxu and his Empress Dowager as well as 7,000 volumes of Buddhist scriptures. See Yu 1997:17-23; Welch 1969: 192-193; Ashiwa and Wank 2005:224; DeBernardi 2002:310-311.

potential of building connections with overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia was formative for Yuanying, who would go on to build his own broad network of overseas connections.

Yuanying served as the abbot of many famous monasteries including Ningbo's Tiantong monastery 寧波天童寺 (abbot 1930-1936) and Fuzhou's Yongquan, better known simply as Gushan (literally "Mt. Drum"). As not only a monk, but an abbot, Yuanying was especially sensitive to the threat of modernist reforms calling for the seizure of monastic property.¹⁷ In 1928, a national education conference was held in Nanjing at which a proposal was adopted calling for the appropriation of monastic properties to fund education. Yuanying acted quickly to counter this threat by establishing the Jiangsu-Zhejiang Buddhist Federation (*jiang-zhe fojiao lianhehui* 江浙佛教聯合會) to lobby against the proposal. The proposal was shelved and Yuanying immediately set about organizing the Chinese Buddhist Association (*zhonghua fojiao hui* 中華佛教會) in order to have a national organization to counter such threats.¹⁸ The Association was established in Shanghai in 1929 and was a means to organize and strengthen the Chinese Sangha in the face of pressures towards modernization and

¹⁷ From 1928 to 1930 Yuanying concurrently served as the head of four temples; in addition to his small temple in Shanghai, he was abbot of Fuzhou's Chongsheng 崇聖寺, Fuzhou's Fahai 法海寺 which he restored and Ningbo's Qita 七塔寺 (Welch 1967: 172). From 1930 to 1935 he served as abbot of Ningbo's Tiantong monastery 寧波天童寺/宁波天童寺; when he arrived it had about 300 monks and when he left it had more than 400 (Welch 1968: 288) at the same time he was abbot of Fuzhou's Linyang temple 林陽寺. In 1935 he was then asked by six monasteries to serve as their leader (Welch 1967: 172-173). He settled on his home monastery, Mount Drum (Gushan) where he resided as abbot until 1948 (ibid). He passed away in 1953 at Ningbo's Tiantong monastery. Perhaps his most eminent direct disciple was Master Mingyang (1916-2002) from Fuzhou who traveled with Yuanying for more than ten years and who served as the abbot of several important temples in the post-Mao era.

¹⁸ Welch 1968: 41. The full reasons it was shelved are not clear, but it was shelved and Yuanying's organization certainly didn't hurt the cause.

secularization. Yuanying was elected as its first president, serving seven terms between 1929 and 1949.¹⁹

In 1922, seven years before the Chinese Buddhist Association had been established, master Yuanying was invited to teach at Singapore's newly established Pujue Temple by master Zhuandao 轉道(1872-1943). This meeting proved fateful because it set in motion plans to restore Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery and found an orphanage and school there. But who was Zhuandao, why was he in Singapore and why was he interested in these projects?

Zhuandao was born in Southern Fujian (Minnan) and became a monk in 1890 at the age of 19 at Zhangzhou's Nanchan Monastery.²⁰ At the age of 24 he went to Yangzhou Gaomin Monastery 高旻寺 and practiced with master Xuyun 虛云 (Hsu Yun, 1840-1959) for two years. Zhuandao then spent seven years at Ningbo's Tiantong Monastery where he studied under master Tongzhi 通智 with Yuanying and Huiquan 會泉.²¹ In 1913, Zhuandao was asked to help Xiamen's Nanputuo Monastery to raise funds for the building the Sangha Academy (*sengqie xueyuan* 僧加學院).²² Zhuandao, accompanied by his dharma brother Zhuanwu 轉物(fl. 1920-40), left China and traveled

¹⁹ Shortly after the founding of the CBA in 1929, Taixu began to argue with the conservatives led by Yuanying. This eventuated into a break between the two in 1931 after Taixu had attempted to take control from the conservatives led by Yuanying. Taixu continued to work to create an organization of Chinese Buddhist with himself as head; he succeeded in creating an organization but died before he could lead it (March 17, 1947). Welch 1968: 43-47. For more on Yuanying's relief efforts during war with Japan see Yu, Xue. 2005. *Buddhism, War, and Nationalism: Chinese Monks in the Struggle against Japanese Aggressions, 1931-1945*. New York: Routledge, p.158.

²⁰ Yu 1997:25.

²¹ Yu 1997:25. See also Ashiwa and Wank 2005: 226. He also studied Tiantai with Master Dixian 諦閑 at Tiantong Monastery. Yu 1997:25.

²² Nanputuo's abbot Xican had invited Zhuandao to Xiamen. According to Yu Lingbo master Xican needed eight respected masters to attend the ordination ceremony at Nanputuo (Yu 1997:26), but the Singapore Lay Society says that Xican wanted to go into retreat and requested Zhuandao to look after Nanputuo as temporary abbot (新加坡居士林简介[A Brief Introduction to the Buddhist Lay Society of Singapore], p. 21). Whatever the precise reason, Zhuandao remained in Xiamen and Zhangzhou for a period of time and oversaw the construction of the large pond for releasing life that one now finds in front of Nanputuo (ibid).

to Singapore. Soon after arriving, Zhuandao received a donation of land upon which he established Putuo Temple (PohToh Si, 普陀寺) where he resided as abbot. In 1921 he built Pujue Temple 普覺寺 in Singapore which, some years later, would develop into the largest Chinese monastery in Southeast Asia.²³ Zhuandao and Zhuanwu both hailed from Southern Fujian (Minnan) and are the first known monks from mainland China to establish themselves in Singapore.²⁴

Zhuandao invited Yuanying, his colleague from his days in Ningbo, to lecture at Pujue Temple. When they met in Singapore they discussed the restoration of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple.²⁵ Zhuandao whose secular name was Huang is said to have been a member of the “Purple Cloud” Huang family whose ancestor Huang Shougong had donated land for the establishment of Kaiyuan monastery during the Tang Dynasty; Zhuandao had long harbored the wish to restore Quanzhou Kaiyuan.²⁶ Yuanying and Zhuandao vowed to restore Quanzhou Kaiyuan, but Yuanying wanted to do more than revive a home for monks and a place for laypersons to burn incense. Foremost in their discussions of restoration was the establishment at Kaiyuan of an orphanage (*guer yuan* 孤兒院) to serve as a home and school for orphans and abandoned children.²⁷

²³ Yu 1997:27.

²⁴ Yu 1997:25.

²⁵ Yu 1997:27.

²⁶ *Sizhi*, second preface, 2a.

²⁷ Details about Kaiyuan’s Republican era orphanage are taken from two rare documents, the first is written by Wu Zexu 伍泽旭 in 1979, *Quanzhou Kaiyuan Ertong Jiaoyang Yuan Jianshi* 泉州開元兒童教養院簡史 泉州开元儿童教养院简史 (“A Simple History of Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s Children’s School and Foster Care”). This is a typed report hand signed by the author (property of Huang Yushan 黄玉山). The second is Ye Qingyan ed. ca. 1929. *Quanzhou Kaiyuan cieryuan diyijie baogaoshu* 泉州開元慈兒院第一屆報告書/泉州开元慈儿院第一屆报告书 (Report on the first class of students from Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s Compassion for Children School). Quanzhou Kaiyuan: Quanzhou. I was provided a copy of this report by a monk who had lived at Quanzhou Kaiyuan in the 1980s. A recent article of relevance is Wang Rongguo 王荣国 2008. “Master Yuanying and the Kaiyuan Compassion for Children School” (*Yuanying fashi yu Quanzhou Kaiyuan si cieryuan*, 圓瑛法師與泉州開元慈兒院 圆瑛法师与泉州开元慈儿院 In *Zhongguo fojiao shilun* 中國佛教史論 中国佛教史论 by Rongguo Wang. Religion and Culture Press: Beijing. Pp. 254-270.

The Kaiyuan Compassion for Children School and Orphanage

Yuanying had been inspired to travel overseas by his experience at Fuzhou's Gushan and had been inspired to establish an orphanage and school by his successful experience in Ningbo in Zhejiang province. In 1918, Yuanying had established the Ningbo Buddhist Orphanage where students were taught literary arts and practical arts in order to make them educated and productive members of society. Yuanying seized this opportunity to establish a second orphanage, this one in his home province of Fujian.²⁸ Yuanying invited Zhuandao and Zhuanwu to Ningbo to study the orphanage and school that had been established there.²⁹ In the fall of 1924, Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu met in Quanzhou to make preparations for the orphanage.³⁰ Tradition holds that three days after these monks had arrived at Kaiyuan in lunar September of 1924 Kaiyuan's peach trees bloomed red lotus blossoms.³¹ This event has been memorialized by four large characters that now appear on the wall to the west of the main gate: *Taolian yingrui* 桃蓮映瑞 (“Lotus-Blooming Peach Tree Reflects the Auspicious”). Offices and dormitories were constructed and the opening ceremony of the Kaiyuan school and orphanage was held on the day of the Mid-Autumn Festival, August 15th of the lunar calendar, in 1925.

The school and orphanage was established out of a wish to benefit less fortunate children and was called the Compassion for Children School (*cieryuan* 慈兒院).

²⁸ *Yuanying fashi jinian kan*: 12.

²⁹ A third monk, Zhuanzhang 转章, is mentioned in the sources, but nothing else is known about him.

³⁰ Wang 2008: 254. Zhuandao served as abbot of Kaiyuan, Yuanying served as the provost (*dujian* 都監) and Zhuanwu served as the general manager (*jianyuan*). Zhuandao, it seems, quickly returned to Singapore in an effort to raise funds.

³¹ *Sizhi*, second preface, 2a.

Yuanying identified compassion as the central principle of Buddhism as well as his overriding motivation in opening the orphanage:

As a religion Buddhism has compassion (*cibei*) as its principal tenet and skillful means (*upaya*) as its method. The character “ci” indicates the wish for all sentient being to have happiness whereas “bei” is the wish for them to be free of suffering. ... Although today we are far from the Buddha’s time, we are the Buddha’s disciples and should have Buddha’s thoughts and perform Buddha’s deeds, abandon the selfish mind of Hinayana and a raise the Mahayana wish to benefit others. Even though we cannot save all sentient beings as well as the Tatagatha who is endowed with unimaginable abilities, if we do not raise a thought of *bodhicitta* for the poor, suffering orphans in the human realm and think about how to save them this would be completely contrary to the aim of Buddhism.

In the world there are four types of unsupported people (*wugao zhi min* 無告之民): widowers, widows, orphans and childless elders. Even if their misery results from past karmic causes, the suffering of orphans is still the most moving. They are young, or merely infants, they have no knowledge, they have lost their fathers and mothers, they are without clothing or food. If they do not receive the compassion of kind and humane people they will be left to beg. While they might not freeze or starve to death, they would grow weak without resources to support life; without the ability to take care of or improve themselves, turning to crime, they will waste their lives. They will add to the number of antisocial miscreants and increase the number of prisoners and legal cases; a great amount of public money will be spent on security and villages will suffer more and more dangers. Therefore, reflecting on all of this, we must not delay another second in building this orphanage for the national public good.³²

Yuanying presented this well reasoned and persuasive argument, blending Buddhist compassion with concern for the national public good, not only in Fujian, but

³² 佛之為教也，以慈悲為宗旨，方便為究竟。慈者與一切眾生之樂，悲者拔一切眾生之苦。... 今雖去佛時遙，我等既為佛子，應體佛懷，當作佛事，勿存小乘自利之心，當發大乘利他行願。雖不能同如來有不思議用普度一切眾生，而於人道中一般貧苦孤兒不發起一念慈悲之心而思所以救濟之法，未免與佛宗旨大相背也。夫天下無告之民有四曰：鰥寡孤獨。雖夙因所感苦果自招，而貧苦孤兒尤屬苦中之苦，年齡幼稚，智識未開，無怙無恃，無衣無食。若不得慈善仁人而救濟之，勢必流為乞丐，縱不凍餒而死，及其壯也無資身之生活，無自利之能力，為竊為盜，靡所不至。豈非社會多一分惡人，官廳多幾許案牘，人民費許多防范，村落受許多危險。爰鑒及此對於社會國家建設孤兒院勢所不容緩也。Ye ca. 1929: 1.

elsewhere in China and Southeast Asia and Chinese people at home and abroad supported this cause on behalf of those who are most helpless.³³

In its first year of operation, the home and school had forty-three residents; the first headmaster (*yuanzhang* 院長) was Zhuandao and the co-vice-headmasters were Yuanying and Zhuanwu. Kaiyuan's Compassion for Children School (*Cier yuan*) served as a foster home and residential school for orphans and abandoned children. Orphaned boys between the ages of 7 and 13 were accepted on the condition that their relatives were not able to take care of them and that they were in good health.³⁴ Throughout the history of the orphanage it was always home to a greater number of residents than there were monks at the monastery.³⁵ In 1927, just two years after opening, the number of residents nearly doubled to eighty-five.³⁶ As a central feature of Kaiyuan's identity during the Republican period the Kaiyuan school and orphanage will be examined here at some length.

Located in the western part of the monastery between the west pagoda and the ancient mulberry tree, the school offered a regular elementary school curriculum (literary arts and math) as well as instruction in applied arts such as sewing, carpentry, bamboo crafts and gardening. Soon after the opening of the school the three masters were all

³³ A theme that emerges here, and a thread that connects the Republican period restoration with the end of the Qing dynasty, is the theme of the orphan. The last known Qing dynasty leader of Kaiyuan is said to have been the seven year old orphan girl, who, having been taken in by Kaiyuan, went on to become the abbess. Kaiyuan took on a new role which spans the late Qing and Republican periods, periods of turmoil, loss of life and the orphaning of children—that of a home for the orphaned.

³⁴ Wang 2008: 257.

³⁵ The ratio of orphans to monks could be a reflection of any number of factors from the era's drive towards secularization to the turmoil of the times and the attendant demand for able-bodied soldiers, trends which both reduced the number of men becoming monks.

³⁶ Headmaster Ye left to collect funds from the trustees abroad. When he did so his duties were assumed by Wu Liangcai 伍亮采 伍亮采, who served as acting headmaster until Mr. Ye's return. Mr. Ye remained headmaster until he left for Shanghai to collect funds in 1946 (Wu Zexu 1979:4.).

abroad to collect funds for the school's ongoing expenses.³⁷ Ye Qingyan 葉青眼 was hired to serve as headmaster and held this position from 1928 to 1946;³⁸ from this time on, the acting school principal was always a layperson rather than a monk. The monks, it seems, served as the inspiration for the founding and goals of the charity, the providers of land on which to build dorms, classrooms and offices, and the fundraisers while the day to day operations of the charity were handled by laypersons.

Transnational Funding Networks

A constant concern and reality for the charity was the need for funding. While money was raised locally and in Zhejiang, most money came from overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia. When master Yuanying returned to Southeast Asia to raise funds, the overseas Chinese communities offered to establish boards of trustees (*dongshihui* 董事會) to organize fundraising efforts for the charity; they insisted that master Yuanying focus his efforts on teaching the dharma rather than fundraising.³⁹ In this way boards of trustees were established in Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Burma in addition to the local board of directors in Quanzhou. There were also boards of honorary trustees (*mingyu dongshi* 名譽董事) in Singapore, Malaysia, Shanghai, Ningbo and Xiamen.

³⁷ In 1928, Zhuandao left for Singapore with Li Juncheng 李俊承 where they established the Buddhist Layperson's Society (*fojiao jushilin* 佛教居士林) and the Chinese Buddhist Association of Singapore (*zhonghua fojiaohui* 中華佛教會 中华佛教会) which Zhuandao led for two terms. Zhuandao later moved to Penang where he established the Mysterious Fragrance Forest Dizang Temple (*miaoxianglin dizang si* 妙香林地藏寺) and spent the rest of his life traveling throughout Singapore and Malaysia working to spread the dharma. (Information from the Quanzhou Buddhist Museum at Kaiyuan monastery.)

³⁸ Mr. Ye went abroad to collect additional funds in 1927; at that time his duties were assumed by Wu Liangcai 伍亮采, who served as acting headmaster until Mr. Ye's return. Mr. Ye remained headmaster until he left for Shanghai to collect funds in 1946 (ibid).

³⁹ Ye ca.1929:2.

Southeast Asia serves as the home of many overseas Chinese who trace their roots to Fujian. Zhuandao and Yuanying established relationships with fellow Fujian expatriates in Singapore, the Philippines and Melaka and Penang in Malaysia which helped support the activities of the Kaiyuan orphanage and school. Singapore's board of trustees had twenty-two members and Melaka had sixteen trustees on their board while Penang had a twenty-six member association dedicated to encouraging donations for Kaiyuan's charity (*quanjuan weiyuanhui* 勸捐委員會); all of these boards were composed of monks and laypersons.⁴⁰ The money that was collected in Melaka was invested in a rubber tree plantation (*shujiaoyuan* 樹膠園) of 51 acres (*yingmu* 英畝). Funds were also raised domestically from local sources as well as in Shanghai and Ningbo through specially established travel associations.⁴¹ With some of the funds collected income-generating farms and houses were purchased at three locations in the Quanzhou area.⁴²

The school and orphanage enjoyed about ten years of relative stability before disruptions brought on by war with Japan. During the second Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945) the school was forced to continually relocate due to disruptions and the threat of danger⁴³ and in 1941 the name was changed to the School and Foster Care Center (*Jiaoyang yuan* 教養院). When the Japanese reached Southeast Asia, the Melaka rubber

⁴⁰ The names of the members of these boards both in Quanzhou and abroad are recorded in the report by Wu Zexu, see Wu Zexu 1979:2-3.

⁴¹ The associations were named the Travel to Shanghai to Raise Funds Association *lūhu mujuan weiyuanhui* 旅滬募捐委員會/旅滬募捐委员会 and the Travel to Ningbo To Raise Funds Association *lüyong mujuan weiyuanhui* 旅甬募捐委員會/旅甬募捐委员会

⁴² Wu Zexu 1979:4. Income-generating property had long been the primary source of income for Kaiyuan as it had for other Chinese monasteries throughout much of Chinese history.

⁴³ During the Japanese war the school (and the orphans) were first moved in succession to Jinjiang River city 晉江市/晋江市, Xiajin village 霞井村, Gaotian 高田, Shikeng 石坑 and Xiao Xuefeng 小雪峰 in Nan'an before hostilities ended and they could then be moved back to Kaiyuan where it has remained until the 1990s. During the war classes were still held, but not in the applied arts. Wu Zexu 1979: 4-5.

plantation was lost as a source of income for the orphanage. With the conclusion of war with Japan, travel between Quanzhou and Southeast Asia resumed and, in 1948, headmaster Gong Nianping 龔念平 traveled to the Philippines to collect funds for the Kaiyuan orphanage and school.⁴⁴

Kaiyuan's Republican Period Restoration

While the establishment of the orphanage and school was the most prominent action of the trio of monks at the head of the Republican period revival, it was only part of the overall project of restoration that they undertook. After the establishment of the school for orphans, Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu turned to Huang family ancestors to seek support for the restoration of the temple buildings. It is an ancient custom in China to restore monasteries established by one's ancestors⁴⁵ and Kaiyuan had often benefited from the assistance of members of the Huang family—the Republican period proved no different. Yuanying and Huang Sunzhe 黄孙哲 asked Senior Huang Zhutang 黄祝堂 to write them a letter of introduction with which they traveled to the islet of Gulangyu 鼓浪屿 which lies off the island of Xiamen to meet three members of Huang family, Huang Zhongxun 黄仲训, Huang Yizhu 黄奕註 and Huang Xiulang 黄秀烺 to urge them to contribute to the restoration of Kaiyuan monastery which had been founded on land donated by their eminent ancestor Huang Shougong. As the preface to the 1927 edition of the *Monastery Record* relates:

Mr. Zhongxun, with a penchant for poetry and literature, already had a literary relationship with master Yuanying so he took the lead in offering to rebuild the Dharma Hall (*fa tang*) with his brother Zhongzan 仲讚 ...

⁴⁴ Upon his departure, Wu Zuxu became headmaster remained so until 1966 when the Cultural Revolution disrupted the school's activities

⁴⁵ See Gernet 1995: 283.

Mr. Yizhu offered to renovate the east pagoda, and Mr. Xiulang, the west pagoda. These three lay patrons resolutely shouldered the burden of these three special projects. Master Yuanying contentedly returned and hired the engineer Fu Weizao 傅维早 to be the specialist in charge."⁴⁶

Thus, Yuanying's trip to Gulangyu secured funding for the rebuilding of the Dharma Hall as well as for renovations to the east and west pagodas by members of the Huang family. All projects began in 1925 under the supervision of the engineer Fu Weizao and by 1927 all had been completed.⁴⁷

The Dharma Hall, which had last been repaired during the Ming Dynasties and was in need of replacement, was rebuilt as a concrete two story building with a second floor Sutra Library (*zangjing ge* 藏经阁). The Hall of Merit (*gongde tang*, 功德堂) was built at the same time as the Dharma Hall to which it practically adjoins. It was built to house the spirit tablets of the temple's past masters and lay patrons. Amidst all of this activity in 1925, Kaiyuan's ancient mulberry tree was struck by lightning and split into three. A rock was placed under one section to support it; on this rock was carved "This tree bloomed lotus blossoms in the second year of *Chuigong* (686); this support, allied with the will of heaven, prevents damage."⁴⁸

With the construction of the Compassion for Children School, the Dharma Hall and the Hall of Merit as well as the renovation of the two pagodas, Kaiyuan monastery was officially restored and again one of the premier Buddhist monasteries in Fujian with

⁴⁶ *Sizhi* p2.2a-b.

⁴⁷ It was during this two year period, 1925 to 1927 that the Kaiyuan monastery was visited by Gustav Ecke and the great scholar of Buddhism Paul Demiéville. The two first learned about Kaiyuan, and in particular its Song Dynasty pagodas when they were living at Xiamen University which had been founded in 1921 on land that had once belonged to Nanputuo Monastery on the island of Xiamen. Huang Yizhu 黄奕柱, a Huang family descendent assisted the scholars by funding the erection of scaffolding around the pagodas which enabled photographs to be taken of the sculptures on the upper stories. The abbot of Nanputuo Xingyuan 性愿 provided them with identities for the sculptures on the pagodas that Demiéville used as his base for research (Ecke and Demiéville 1935: viii). Through the publication of their book in 1935 detailed information about Kaiyuan's pagodas became available to the world for the first time.

⁴⁸ *Cishu shenglian chuigong ernian; Zhiling wuhuai yiquan qitian* 此处生莲垂拱二年，支令勿坏以全其天

Yuanying serving as abbot. To mark this restoration the Huang family, which had generously contributed to the effort, donated additional funds for the re-carving of woodblocks of the Ming dynasty *Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery*. Huang Zhongxun initiated and funded this project, providing his personal copy of the Ming dynasty text. Mr. Wu Hengchun 吴亨春 of Fujian's Gutian 古田 was asked to write a preface to this new edition which appears just after the 1643 preface by Yuanxian. Other than this brief preface, which outlines the restoration work led by Yuanying, the Ming Dynasty record was left unaltered in the new carving, which was completed in lunar August of 1927; it was the same year that Nationalist forces led by Chiang Kai-shek 蒋介石 (1887-1975) unified China after fighting warlords in the North and making an alliance with the Communist Party. The following year, responding to complaints by Buddhists and others about the seizure of temple property, Nationalists issued the "Standards for Preserving and Abandoning Gods and Shrines."⁴⁹ These "Standards" sought to distinguish religion from superstition, protecting the former and calling for the abolition of the latter. The shrines and temples that were to be respected were the established religions of Buddha and Laozi and of apotheosized historical figures considered beneficial to humanity such as Confucius and Guandi (heroic general of the Three Kingdoms Period and a popular deity). Two categories of deities were to be abandoned: 1. the old [pre-scientific] deities (*gushen*) who were now obsolete such as gods of the sun and moon and 2. the lesser spirits and goblins (*yinci*) such as animal spirits.⁵⁰ These efforts were in line with China's project of modernity to promote scientific understanding and eliminate superstitious beliefs while maintaining a space for private religious belief.

⁴⁹ Duara 1995:108-109; Ashiwa 2009: 51.

⁵⁰ Ashiwa 2009:51; Duara 1995:109.

Yoshiko Ashiwa writes, however, that the standards “were interpreted locally as justifying the destruction of all religion.”⁵¹ Kaiyuan was positioned to benefit from the standards, nonetheless, because the main criteria for protection were “historical importance and scientific significance”⁵²—Kaiyuan had both and was left unmolested.

In 1933, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu invited Nanputuo abbot Zhuanfeng 转峰 (1879-1952) to serve as Kaiyuan’s abbot. Zhuanfeng, who had established the Minnan Buddhist Seminary at Nanputuo in Xiamen where he then served as principal, accepted the offer. He is said to have reinforced the monastic rules (重整清规) and inculcated more reverent sutra recitation (梵诵肃然) at Kaiyuan.⁵³ Monks at Kaiyuan during this period would have followed the monastic precepts much as they do today, rising at four, engaging in daily morning and evening services, the core religious practice at monasteries like Kaiyuan with no communal Chan practice. The religious practice of such monks is Pure Land recitation. A monk at Kaiyuan today described it as being “Chan in name, Pure Land in practice.”

In addition to sutra recitation, monks would take communal vegetarian meals and live a generally spartan life, wearing robes and maintain a shaved head. Zhuanfeng led large ordination ceremonies at both Quanzhou Kaiyuan and Chengtian Monasteries in 1931 and 1936.⁵⁴ One may imagine how these grand affairs were carried out by reading a detailed account provided by Prip-Møller in his seminal study of Chinese Buddhist monasteries of a three-platform ordination ceremony held during this period at Jiangsu’s

⁵¹ Ashiwa 2009:51.

⁵² Ashiwa 2009:51.

⁵³ 新加坡居士林简介, p. 27

⁵⁴ Yu 2005: 197. I read Yu as saying that ordination ceremonies were held twice in each year at both locations (他曾兩度在泉州開元寺和承天寺開壇傳戒).

Longchang Temple 隆昌寺.⁵⁵ The vitality expressed in these developments (holding ordinations, supporting a school and orphanage, renovating the complex, restoring monastic life) helped to put Kaiyuan back on the map as a place of Buddhist practice in the South. In the 1930's it attracted master Hongyi (弘一, 1880-1942), one of the most prominent Buddhist monks of the twentieth century. Known as a master of vinaya, he may have been attracted to Quanzhou Kaiyuan in part by its Nanshan vinaya ordination platform and its reputation as a Buddhist country (*foguo*), the epithet attributed to Zhuxi, which hangs in Kaiyuan's main gate and main hall written in the hand of Hongyi.

Master Hongyi and Kaiyuan Monastery

Hongyi was steeped in art and culture and a accomplished composer, painter, actor, writer, calligrapher, painter and seal carver. His secular name, under which he had become famous before becoming a monk, was Li Shutong 李叔同. He was one of the first Chinese to study Western painting in Japan and one of the founders of Western-style theater in China. He was responsible for helping spread Western music in China as well as an advocate of Western-style print making and the use of nude models in art instruction. Songs he wrote such as *songbie* 送别 ("Farewell") remain popular in China to this day. Although he did not write many poems, his style of calligraphy is uniquely his own and widely respected. Many of the oil paintings he painted before becoming a monk were donated to the Beijing Academy of Art (now called Central Academy of Fine Art *zhongyang meishu xueyuan* 中央美术学院) and many of his seal carvings are stored at the Xiling Seal Carving Society (*xiling yinshe* 西泠印社) in Hangzhou. He stopped

⁵⁵ Prip-Møller 1937: 298-339. Prip-Møller's account includes descriptions of the ceremonies taken from the diary of a participant, an account of the ritual procedures and the three types of precepts (novice, monk or bhikkhu, and bodhisattva); also included are images of the ceremony as well as reproductions of ordination certificates.

painting after becoming a monk but continued to write calligraphy. He was a man of many talents and virtues, a true Renaissance man of the twentieth century.⁵⁶

Master Hongyi was invited to stay at Kaiyuan by Zhuandao in 1933. It was at this time that Zhuandao and Zhuanwu had invited master Zhuanfeng, then abbot of Nanputuo, to serve as the abbot of Kaiyuan.⁵⁷ This initial two month visit was the first of many by master Hongyi. Hongyi, as a master of the vinaya school, would have been pleased to find Quanzhou Kaiyuan's Nanshan vinaya ordination platform (the Amrita Ordination Platform) in an excellent state of preservation. Perhaps it was this that inspired him to establish a School of the Nanshan Vinaya (*nanshanlu xueyuan* 南山律学苑) at Kaiyuan in May of 1933.⁵⁸ The school was established in the rooms of the Venerated Site Cloister (*zunsheng yuan*) which stood behind Kaiyuan's ancient mulberry and to the left of the Dharma Hall. Hongyi gathered students and scholars and lectured on the Nanshan vinaya using copies of the vinaya he had brought from Japan.⁵⁹ These studies were published by master Hongyi, who was a prolific writer of texts elucidating Buddhist teachings. Hongyi's focus on the Nanshan vinaya and the establishment of this study institute at Kaiyuan were remarkable developments in Chinese Buddhism which hadn't seen such sustained interest in the vinaya for centuries.

⁵⁶ A fine essay on Master Hongyi has been written by Raoul Birnbaum entitled "Master Hongyi looks back: a 'modern man' becomes a monk in twentieth-century China." It may be found in Steven Heine and Charles Prebish (eds.) 2003. *Buddhism in the Modern World*. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁵⁷ 新加坡居士林简介, p. 27; See also Yu 2005: 197.

⁵⁸ He Mianshan 何绵山. 2000. "Jindai sida gaoseng yu fujian fojiao 近代四大高僧与福建佛教"(Four Contemporary Eminent Monks of Fujian Buddhism"). *Fayin* vol. 1, p.11.

⁵⁹ Wang Hanfeng. 2001a. "Sanzong rongguan yi lu weizhong 三宗融贯以律为重." *Fujian fojiao* 福建佛教 vol. 1, p. 20.

When Hongyi returned to Quanzhou in 1937 he was accompanied by master Miaolian 妙莲 (1913-1999),⁶⁰ a native of Shanghai, who traveled with Hongyi as his personal attendant and never left his side. Miaolian began his study of Buddhism at Shanghai's World Buddhist Academy for Laity (*shijie fojiao jushi lin*, 世界佛教居士林) at the age of 18. He took refuge under master Riguan 日观 and between 1933 and 1935 he became a fully ordained monk at Guoqing Temple 国清寺 on Mount Tiantai, Zhejiang Province. In 1935 he went to Lingyan Temple 灵岩寺 in Suzhou to be closer to Pure Land master Yinguang 印光 (1860-1940). In 1937 he left Zhanshan Temple 湛山寺 in Qingdao, Shandong to be near master Hongyi and came to be his personal attendant and remained as such until master Hongyi's death in 1942. In Quanzhou Hongyi divided much of his time between Kaiyuan and Chengtian monasteries. Hongyi's time in Quanzhou has left its mark on Fujian Buddhism and left a powerful impression on those who personally met him. He also left behind many pieces of calligraphy in his distinctive hand, the most celebrated at Kaiyuan being the couplet of Zhu Xi describing Quanzhou as a Buddhist kingdom. Miaolian became Hongyi's close friend and confidant and at the end of his life Hongyi would leave all of his belongings to Miaolian's care. Master Hongyi wrote: "At the time of my death and afterwards my person and effects, I leave in the hands of Miaolian. No one else is to interfere [with Miaolian's charge of this responsibility]."⁶¹ On lunar September 1st, 1942, three days before his death, Hongyi wrote his final four characters, *beixin jiaoji* 悲欣交集 ("sorrow and joy mixed") and

⁶⁰ This Miaolian is not to be confused with the Miaolian mentioned earlier, abbot of Fuzhou's Gushan and the earliest monk known to travel from China to Southeast Asia in modern times.

⁶¹ 余予未命终前, 临命终时, 既命终后, 皆托妙莲师一人负责, 他人无论何人, 皆不能干预. Sealed with Hongyi's chop, dated October 7th, lunar August 28th. Miaolian (ed.), *Quanzhou Kaiyuansi*.

handed them to Miaolian. Hongyi passed away at the Quanzhou Wenling Old Folks Home (*quanzhou wenling yanglao yuan* 泉州温陵养老院) on September 4, 1942 at the age of 63, leaving all of his belongings to his attendant Miaolian. Hongyi's remains were cremated at Chengtian monastery and distributed among two major relic stupas in Quanzhou.⁶² Miaolian remained at Kaiyuan where he eventually became abbot and established a Master Hongyi Memorial Hall to display Hongyi's personal effects, calligraphy and so on. Through his efforts to preserve and display the artifacts and memorabilia bequeathed to him by Hongyi, Miaolian was a precursor of efforts to preserve and display Kaiyuan's cultural treasures during the Maoist period.

The Disruptions of War

Had the times been different perhaps a dramatic revival of Kaiyuan may have developed under the influence of the charismatic Renaissance man and Buddhist master Hongyi as well as the inspired leadership of masters Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanfeng. As it was, however, decades of turmoil lay ahead and any lasting revival would be postponed indefinitely. From 1934-1935, while Hongyi was at Kaiyuan monastery, Mao Zedong (1893-1976) and his followers retreated from the then superior forces of Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi 蒋介石) on what would later be called the Long March and considered a defining moment in the development of the Communist Party that would go on to rule China. July 7, 1937 brought the Marco Polo Bridge Incident, which marked beginning of war with Japan. Nanjing was taken and ravaged in December, and a provisional Japanese government established in Beijing. While victory

⁶² The first relic pagoda was built where Hongyi passed away in Xiaoshan congzhu 小山丛竹 (formerly the site of one of Neo-Confucian master Zhuxi's schools) in 1943; it was lost during the Cultural Revolution. A second relic pagoda was built for him at Quanzhou's Mount Qingyuan in 1952 and rebuilt in 1962 (Luo Shazhou 骆沙舟 2001: 67-68.).

was quick, the Japanese were plagued by guerilla attacks from 1939 to 1941. The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941 and surrendered in 1945 after the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by atomic bombs. With the Japanese surrender and the defeat of the Guomindang, Mao Zedong established the People's Republic of China on Oct. 1st, 1949.

My sources indicate that there were about thirty monks at Kaiyuan during the war with Japan. I have been told that three bombs were dropped on the monastery at the time, but that only one exploded, spreading shrapnel that caused one of the columns of the Dharma Hall to shift from its base and left several pock marks in three of the columns—whatever damage was sustained it was repaired in the early 1950s and doesn't appear to have been particularly serious.⁶³ Graffiti inside the west pagoda indicates the presence of soldiers at Kaiyuan. Life at the monastery was disturbed, but it was never abandoned.

Master Guangjing 广净(d. 1998) was a native of Xianyou in Fujian and spent time at Xuefeng monastery in the 1930s.⁶⁴ After the war with Japan he served as the general manager (*jianyuan*) of Kaiyuan from 1950-54. Guangyi 广义 served as Kaiyuan's general manager for eight years. According to my informants, after communist victory, these two monks, Guangjing and Guangyi, fled to Southeast Asia after being advised to do so by venerable Xuyun; the two dharma brothers fled to Hong Kong and then to Singapore.⁶⁵ One of their dharma brothers, Guang'an 广安 (d. 1992)

⁶³ One of the undetonated missiles used to be kept at Kaiyuan but it was moved at some unspecified time (oral interviews). I told the monks that they could put it on display as evidence of a kind of miracle similar to a missile I had seen at the famous Cathedral of San Lorenzo in downtown Genoa, Italy but they saw no sense in displaying artillery at a monastery.

⁶⁴ His remains are marked by a stone stupa behind the Patriarch's Hall at Kaiyuan and his photo is enshrined in the Hall of Patriarchs.

⁶⁵ Interview with Daoxing 2009.

did not flee to Southeast Asia with the others and remained at Kaiyuan throughout the Maoist period.

THE MAOIST PERIOD

With Communist victory and the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, atheism became the state-sponsored ideology and policies were implemented to restrict religious practice and especially religious propagation. In 1951 the Bureau of Religious Affairs (*zongjiao shiwu ju* 宗教事务局) was established in Beijing with the job of enforcing State religious policy which effectively meant monitoring and controlling religious groups—no religious group could be formed, no religious text published, no religious figure appointed to office without their permission.⁶⁶ The China Buddhist Association (*zhongguo fojiao xiehui* 中国佛教协会, CBA) was established in 1953 to work as an intermediary between the Bureau of Religious Affairs and Buddhists and assist in the implementation of State religious policy. It must be stressed that this Buddhist association was different in purpose from the early associations established during the Republican Period, which were established by monks to protect the interest of monks and monasteries. The Communist period CBA, on the other hand, was established by the State to promote the State's socialist agenda.⁶⁷ The same year that the CBA was formed in Beijing, a branch office was established at Quanzhou Kaiyuan temple, the Jinjiang Buddhist Association (*Jinjiang fojiao xiehui*).⁶⁸

In 1956, the CBA established the Chinese Buddhist Institute (*Zhongguo foxueyuan* 中国佛学院) at Beijing's Fayuan Temple 法源寺 which became the only

⁶⁶ See Welch 1972: 30-35 for more on the founding and early directives of the Bureau of Religious Affairs.

⁶⁷ See Welch 1961:5-9 for more details on the formation and duties of the CBA.

⁶⁸ Interview with Daoxing at Qingyuan shan (July 2009)

place in China during the early period of the PRC dedicated to Buddhist-oriented education.⁶⁹ Attendees received political indoctrination before admittance and in addition to whatever Buddhist work they may have done upon graduation were expected to serve the interests of the Party.⁷⁰ It was these monks, who had been sufficiently indoctrinated, that staffed offices of the CBA⁷¹ and showed visitors around Buddhist sites during the early years of the People's Republic.

The effect of the new policies on religion during the 1950s was nothing short of the decimation of the Chinese Sangha.⁷² The major sources of income for monasteries had been income from the properties they owned, donations from the wealthy and income from the performance of rituals. By 1960 all of these sources of income had effectively disappeared through state-orchestrated action. The Land Reform Act of 1950 called for the confiscation of lands held by Buddhist monasteries as well as Daoist and Confucian temples.⁷³ The government took over the farms and their associated houses that Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu had purchased and were being used to fund the operation of the Kaiyuan's orphanage and school. Kaiyuan was allowed, however, to continue to earn interest from these properties, a concession that was lost with the start of the Cultural Revolution in 1966.⁷⁴ Kaiyuan had already lost revenue from its Melaka rubber plantation during Japan's invasion of Southeast Asia; with the loss of income-generating farmland in Quanzhou after 1949, Kaiyuan relied even more exclusively on its

⁶⁹ It had graduated 361 students as of 1965 (Yu 1971:55) and expenses were paid by the CBA (Welch 1961:4).

⁷⁰ Yu 1971:55.

⁷¹ Yu 1971:56.

⁷² For more details on Communist policies and their effects on the Sangha during this period see Welch 1972: 42-81.

⁷³ Welch 1961: 2. At the same time, monks were allotted the same amount of land provided peasants but they could they must cultivate it themselves and not managed it, as they had in the past, as landlords. For this reason many monks simply returned to lay life.

⁷⁴ Wu Zexu 1979:4.

fundraisers in Southeast Asia to meet operating expenses. The loss of lands parallels the dramatic loss of land during the sixteenth century and the development of transnational networks and the loss of monks to overseas communities parallels the early Qing development of the Obaku school in Japan.⁷⁵

The Orphanage under Mao

In 1956, in an effort to separate educational institutions from religious influence, the orphanage and school was removed from monastic administration and placed under the oversight of two new bureaus—the school operated under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Education (*jiaoyuju* 教育局) while the foster home was placed under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Domestic Affairs (*minzhengju* 民政局).⁷⁶ While monastics were removed from administrative responsibility and control, the same lay persons remained involved and committed to the success of the charity as they had throughout war with Japan.

From its founding in 1925 up to 1966 the number of residents of the orphanage increased every year.⁷⁷ At the start of the Cultural Revolution there were more than 1000 students being educated at the Kaiyuan school.⁷⁸ In 1966, the Cultural Revolution was unleashed and religious edifices across China were targeted for vandalism, destruction and occupation. The name board of the orphanage was smashed and in 1969 the Kaiyuan orphanage was officially dissolved and the orphans were moved to the Quanzhou Prosperity Home (*Quanzhou furen yuan* 泉州福人院). The Kaiyuan School and Foster Care Center became the Quanzhou East Wind Elementary School (*Quanzhou dongfeng*

⁷⁵ See chapter two.

⁷⁶ Wu Zexu 1979:4.

⁷⁷ Wu Zexu 1979:5.

⁷⁸ Wu Zexu 1979:5.

xiaoxue 泉州東風小學), a typically “red” name as demanded by the times. Various individuals including Wang Xianbin 王贤彬 and Lai Hanxing 赖汉兴 served as keepers (*zhuchi* 主持) of the boarding school while no one was allowed, formally, to serve as principal.

Although the Kaiyuan orphanage had officially ceased to function, the residential school system remained in place, though removed from monastic affiliation. In 1977, following the death of Mao, Kaiyuan’s school began to function again and Huang Boxian 黄伯贤 became the first post-Mao principal.⁷⁹ By 1979 there were 486 resident students distributed among eleven grades with a total of nineteen teachers. In December of 1979 the Board of Directors was reconvened and the school was renamed the Quanzhou Kaiyuan School and Foster Home. The name change was approved by the Bureau of Education and went into effect on January 1st of 1980. Thus the orphanage and school that had been established fifty-five years before but had been officially converted to an elementary school during the Cultural Revolution was reconstituted in post-Mao China as a foster home and school. Under PRC law, however, religious institutions are not allowed to operate schools for general education and so what was once the school and orphanage established by Yuanying and Zhuandao in the 1920s had become a school administered by the state since the 1950s.⁸⁰

As the above developments suggest, Kaiyuan’s monks met with a set of pressures that caused their already small numbers to fall as did the number of monks throughout the country. Monks in China were forced to participate in productive labor and many

⁷⁹ In 1979 Wu Zexu was asked to serve as honorary principal.

⁸⁰ According to one informant, the school became known as a home for handicapped children (*Kaizhi xiaoxue* 开智小学) during the eighties; but I was not able to confirm this.

attended political study sessions. With the loss of traditional sources of income and other pressures monks returned to lay life *en masse* throughout the 1950s and vacant monasteries were converted to schools, factories or other uses just as they had been during the Republican Period.⁸¹ Kaiyuan's monks dwindled in number, but it was never fully abandoned and Miaolian was named abbot in 1953.⁸² During the fifties and early sixties crops were grown in small plots around the monastery. Perhaps as many as twenty to thirty monks tended the monastic plots which were separate from the plots of the school and orphanage.⁸³ These developments reflected the policy requiring monks to be engaged in forms of productive labor and prohibited them from performing income-generating ceremonies. The requirement that monks be involved in productive labor was a one of the factors that encouraged monks throughout China to return to lay life.⁸⁴ Apart from tending their own plots monks were also sent to work outside the monastery; Guang'an was sent to feed pigs at Chengtian Monastery, others collected firewood or went to the coast to collect and dry salt.⁸⁵

The Curatorial Turn

While Kaiyuan's identity as a home of monks and a place of religious practice and devotion was radically undermined by Communist policies in the 1950s and early 1960s another identity was systematically encouraged, that of a site of historical and cultural relics. I call this the Maoist period curatorial turn. Traditional sources of monastic income were severely restricted or eliminated by Communist policy, but the

⁸¹ Yu 1971: 53. See also Welch 1972: 51.

⁸² Rong 1999:43. A former student/resident of Kaiyuan's school has told me that there remained monks at Kaiyuan throughout the fifties and early sixties. He was too young then to have a clear memory of that time, but suggested there may have been about thirty monks during that period. I also received other information which suggests this to be quite plausible.

⁸³ Interview with former student, 2009.

⁸⁴ Welch 1961: 2.

⁸⁵ *Guang'an zhanglao yongsu jinian ji* 廣安長老永思紀念集 2003: 3 (property of Huang Yushan).

state-sponsored preservation and restoration of monasteries, pagodas and Buddhist caves of historic and cultural value was undertaken with a zeal not seen for generations. Between 1951 and 1958 dozens of monasteries and pagodas, including Kaiyuan, were repaired with state funds.⁸⁶ Welch reports, “In all over a hundred odd monasteries and pagodas in China were repaired, mostly between 1951 and 1958.” The temples restored included the Lama Temple (*yonghe gong* 雍和宫) in Beijing, Lingyin Temple in Hangzhou (restored for US\$200,000), Xuanzhong Temple in Shanxi (home of Japanese Pure Land, restored for \$110,000 from 1954-56), Xuanzang’s Dayan pagoda in Xi’an (restored for \$20,000) and Mount Wutai temples (\$400,000 spent between 1951-59).⁸⁷ These monasteries were allowed to retain a small population of monks who had been politically educated and were well-informed about state religious policy; in addition, they typically housed branch offices of the CBA, such as the case with Quanzhou Kaiyuan.⁸⁸

Why did the government take such an interest in Buddhist historical monuments and allow some of them to retain small groups of monks? Reports of the day described the protection and restoration of Buddhist sites as an effort to protect the “people’s art.”⁸⁹ Created by human toil, they deserved preservation as a display of national and cultural pride and evidence of the feudal past through which China had passed on its way to the enlightened future.⁹⁰ In the 1950s, this development may be seen as part of a movement to create museums to memorialize artifacts and events of national pride and document the

⁸⁶ Welch 1972: 150. This figure is also maintained by Yu 1971:54.

⁸⁷ Figures on restoration and preservation work collected by Welch from Chinese and Japanese reports of the day (Welch 1972: 147-149)

⁸⁸ The national office of the CBA was and still remains at Beijing’s Guangji monastery 广济寺.

⁸⁹ Yu 1971: 55.

⁹⁰ Welch also notes that as material historical artifacts Chinese Marxists thought they should be analyzed to understand the stage of history to which they belong (Welch 1972: 145).

progress of the revolution. It was part of the project of nation-building which included circumscribing religion in a particular way, namely, as a phenomenon of the past.

Related to building a national identity, the preservation of religious sites was also linked to China's inter-Asian diplomatic relations. The curatorial turn, unlike "museumification" proper, was directed at the preservation of religious sites tended by clerics for diplomatic purposes. Museumification, which is connected to economic motives, will be dealt with in greater detail in chapter seven. The diplomatic deployment of Buddhist sites to entertain foreign visitors was an effort, not only to display Chinese history and culture, but also to demonstrate to visiting dignitaries from other Asian countries, especially those sharing a tradition of Buddhism, that China maintained a long tradition of Buddhism and provided a place for it in the new China. During the first decade of the People's Republic of China, delegations traveled to and from China and the countries of India, Japan, Burma, Thailand, North Vietnam, Sri Lanka and Nepal. Delegations traveling to China were inevitably taken to tour restored or preserved Buddhist sites and often made to believe that religion enjoyed the protection of the State. Buddhist visitors to Beijing, for example, would be shown the Lama Temple, Guangji Temple 广济寺(home office of the CBA) and Fayuan Temple (home of the Buddhist Seminary) and leave with an impression that Buddhism in China was flourishing when in fact it was moribund.⁹¹

Why was Beijing eager to project an image of protecting Buddhism to its Asian neighbors? It should be recalled that religion as a concern of the Party falls under the jurisdiction of the United Front Work Department (*zhongyang tongzhan bu* 中央统战部).

⁹¹Welch reports on the reaction of Amritananda the Nepalese vice-president of the World Fellowship of Buddhists who visited China in the summer of 1959 and brought on tours to many Buddhist monasteries. He reported that he was impressed to discover 'genuine freedom of religious belief' (Welch 1961: 11).

In short, the idea of a united front is the bringing together of disparate groups such as religious groups and artists under the banner and goals of Communism. Using Buddhism as a bridge between China and other countries with Buddhist history is, in a sense, the notion of a united front extended beyond the borders of China to Asia at large. In other words, it is a form of international diplomacy designed to build relations between Communist China and her Asian neighbors.⁹²

After the founding of the People's Republic of China it quickly became evident that Buddhism had a past that the State was willing to protect, but that as a living religion with a future Buddhism's prospects were in doubt. Quanzhou Kaiyuan is a typical example of the forced curatorial turn in Maoist Era Chinese Buddhism. In 1952, Kaiyuan received 30,000 RMB of state funds for restoration and preservation work (Xiamen's Nanputuo monastery 南普陀寺, by comparison, received 1,000 RMB the same year).⁹³ Kaiyuan had suffered neglect during war with Japan and its major halls were restored with this money. Part of these funds was used to carry out minor repairs on the east and west pagodas and the building of low stone fencing around them. A stele was erected near the east pagoda commemorating the history and repair of the pagodas in the summer of 1952; a project that was supervised by the Quanzhou Municipal Construction Department (泉州市建设局). The receipt of these funds, the restoration work managed by the state rather than the monastery and the establishment of the Quanzhou Heritage Management Committee (*wenwu guanli weiyuan hui* 文物管理委员会) in the early

⁹² For more analysis of the diplomatic uses of Buddhism in this period see Welch 1972: 169-230 and for accounts of some of the diplomatic uses of Buddhism in this period see Bush 1970:314-317; 335-338.

⁹³ Welch 1972: 425.

1950s officially marked Kaiyuan's curatorial turn.⁹⁴ The heritage management committee was charged with the study and protection of Kaiyuan's cultural relics. Members of the institute produced minor studies and reports on the temple's history in their effort to catalogue its historical relics. Between 1958 and 1960 the heritage management committee oversaw the painting of the main hall and main gate, the rebuilding of Kaiyuan's worshipping pavilion (*baiting*) adjoining the main gate, repaired the corridors stretching along the main courtyard and improved landscaping around the pagodas.⁹⁵ These efforts are reminiscent of developments during the Yuan and Ming dynasties to glorify Kaiyuan's past and improve the monastic grounds for visitors.

In 1961, Kaiyuan was designated a Provincial Level Protected Heritage Site (*shengji wenwu baohu danwei* 省级文物保护单位) by the Fujian Provincial government. This designation was made in response to a directive issued by the State Council in 1961 entitled "On Working to Strengthen Cultural Heritage Protection Management" 关于进一步加强文物保护单位管理工作. In 1962, the Quanzhou Heritage Management Committee published a detailed report on the temple's many properties of cultural heritage entitled *Fujian's Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple* (福建泉州开元寺), reflecting research that was undertaken by the Fujian Provincial Cultural Management Association Work Group (*fujiansheng wenguan hui gongzuo zu* 福建省文管会工作组) and supported by the Quanzhou Heritage Management Committee, the Jinjiang Special Commission Bureau of Culture (*jinjiang zhuan shu wenhua ju* 晋江专署文化局) and the Quanzhou Maritime

⁹⁴ Holmes Welch noted the Communist period trend towards preservation. See Welch 1972:145-168. See also Bush 1970:326-329.

⁹⁵ Fujiansheng wenguanhui gongzuo zu 1962: 2-3.

Museum (*haijiao guan* 海交馆).⁹⁶ The book was designed to provide information about the cultural artifacts of the temple such as when buildings were first established and most recently restored. In other words, it functioned as a report on the history and cultural relics of the monastery and contained no material about the living religious traditions; thus reflecting the state's interest in cultural preservation and material history.

It was during this period that Kaiyuan took on a new role as a preserve of not only its own cultural properties, but of the cultural heritage of the city of Quanzhou. In 1953 a dharani pillar dating from 854 was moved to Kaiyuan from where it had been found under the draw bridge of Quanzhou's old western gate.⁹⁷ This is the first known modern instance of an off-site relic being moved to Kaiyuan in order to protect it, display it and, at the same time, enhance the property of Kaiyuan monastery as a preserve of cultural heritage. These instances would continue and multiply as the years passed and Kaiyuan became established as a trove of historic artifacts from the city of Quanzhou. The Quanzhou heritage management committee, located on the premises of Kaiyuan, had jurisdiction over such items and facilitated their transfer to the monastic grounds where they could protect and study them. Daoxing has said that innumerable cultural properties from other temples in Quanzhou were moved to Kaiyuan during this period. Most of these items were placed in the two story building near the back of the central axis of the monastery, directly behind the hall of the ordination platform. Smaller and more valuable artifacts from Quanzhou and Kaiyuan were stored in the sutra library (second floor) and

⁹⁶ Fujiansheng wenguanhui gongzuo zu 1962:2.

⁹⁷ Lin Zhao 1959: 45.

larger items such as bronze or iron bells and stone statuary were stored in the dharma hall, on the first floor.⁹⁸

A prominent Qing dynasty artifact that one finds in the main courtyard of the monastery today is a stele inscribed with a poem in the Kangxi Emperor's calligraphy. This stele was recently moved from behind the Dharma Hall where it was located in the 1950s to the front of Kaiyuan's courtyard where it sits today. This stele provides no historical information; it is merely a copy of a poem by Mi Fu 米芾 of the Northern Song made in 1702. The stele makes no mention of Kaiyuan monastery and it appears to be one of the artifacts moved to Kaiyuan in the 1950s along with many other steles from other locations in Quanzhou in order to preserve it. Another object that remains at Kaiyuan is a stone statue of Guanyin bodhisattva dating to 909; it was found during a construction project and moved to Kaiyuan in 1964.⁹⁹ Many other historical artifacts would be moved in the early seventies, including a huge Song dynasty boat and a decorative screen from the temple to the city god.

Concentrating the cultural properties of the city in this one location was a way to centralize management of what began to be valued as items of cultural heritage. Large temples, whether Buddhist, Confucian or otherwise, were centers of such cultural properties and were naturally selected as the venues to collect, study and display China's imperial heritage. The old Confucian temple of Xi'an, for example, had begun to collect stone stele inscriptions during the Song dynasty and today has added buildings for the display of statuary and other antiquities so that it is now one of the important museums in Xi'an known as the forest of steles (*beilin* 碑林). Another example of a temple which

⁹⁸ Interview with Daoxing 2009, Quanzhou.

⁹⁹ Today this statue remains inside the hall of the land and water temple (*shuilv si*) behind the new guest hall. Information on dates are taken from a small sign posted above the statue.

began to accumulate treasures from the surrounding city during the Maoist period is Shijiazhuang's 石家庄 Longxing Temple 隆兴寺 in Hebei.¹⁰⁰ Dozens of stone and metal statues and dozens of stone steles were collected there during the communist period; they are now on display for visitors.

The development of temples as cultural showcases was an early part of Communist China's diplomatic strategy. As Welch noted, "By 1958 there was at least one monastic showplace in every major city on the tourist route; and monasteries elsewhere were repaired if they had significance abroad."¹⁰¹ Quanzhou wasn't on the standard tourist route, but it possessed a remarkable pair of stone pagodas and was connected to foreign communities in Southeast Asia (through the Republican Period efforts of Zhuandao and Yuanying), Japan (through Kaiyuan's Qing Dynasty patriarchs of the Obaku school) and even South India (through the Hindu sculptures incorporated into the back of the main hall). Kaiyuan monastery, just as it had survived previous campaigns to limit, restrict or scale back the Sangha, survived the early years of the PRC that devastated countless smaller monasteries throughout China. Chengtian, Quanzhou's next most prominent monastery, by contrast, became a huge pigsty where more than five hundred pigs were raised from 1961 to 1964.¹⁰² The support that Kaiyuan received during the first decade of the Maoist period was directly connected to the value it possessed as a site of historic and cultural treasures—this value will be further explored in chapter six.

While it received state funds to restore, catalogue and study its cultural properties, it also remained the home of a handful of Buddhist monks who served in the office of the

¹⁰⁰ For more on Longxing Temple see Zhang Xiusheng 張秀生. 2000. Zhengding Longxing si 正定隆興寺. Beijing : Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社: Xinhua shudian jingxia 新華書店經銷.

¹⁰¹ Welch 1972: 147.

¹⁰² *Guang'an zhanglao yongsu jinian ji* 廣安長老永思紀念集 2003: 3 (property of Huang Yushan).

municipal branch of the CBA and who tended the halls. There are indications, however, that the handful of monks who remained at Kaiyuan were more involved in maintaining and improving the grounds and buildings than in other forms of religious cultivation. Among the monks who remained at Kaiyuan during the Maoist period, there were Guang'an and master Hongyi's attendant, Miaolian. In 1955, Guang'an, who stayed at Kaiyuan when his dharma brothers fled to Southeast Asia, planted two bodhi trees at Kaiyuan.¹⁰³ They were planted between the main hall and the hall of the ordination platform and have grown into two huge trees.¹⁰⁴

In 1963, venerable Yuanzhou 圆拙 (1909-1997), who split his time between Putian's Guanghua monastery, Chengtian monastery and Kaiyuan, was invited to assist Miaolian with the organizing of the Master Hongyi Memorial Hall.¹⁰⁵ Under the Maoist Period curatorial turn, Kaiyuan was not allowed to develop its potential as a training ground for monks, but it was allowed to improve the grounds and buildings, open a museum to display artifacts associated with master Hongyi and serve as a showpiece for the history of Southern Fujian. This is a role that Kaiyuan has maintained down to the present and it was a status that helped it to survive the Cultural Revolution.

At the end of the 1950s, observers of China had begun to question the future viability of Buddhism. Arthur Wright, in *Buddhism in Chinese History* (1959) wrote: "We are seeing, I believe, the last twilight of Chinese Buddhism as an organized religion. The dispersed fragments of its cults and beliefs are beings systematically extirpated

¹⁰³ Some have said the trees were from Xiamen's Nanputuo Monastery, but I haven't been able to confirm this.

¹⁰⁴ Zhang Zhenhao 2003:20-21. They are already many times larger than their mother tree so it is possible that they are being fed by the "amrita well" beneath the ordination platform.

¹⁰⁵ Puti 菩提 2000: 21. The article by Puti contains a biography of Yuanzhuo and an overview of his accomplishments.

throughout the whole of society...If, in the years to come, we look for the legacy of Buddhism in China, we shall perhaps find it still in literature and language, in drama and the arts.”¹⁰⁶ When the Cultural Revolution was launched, Wright’s predictions seemed prescient.

The Cultural Revolution

The curatorial turn was effectively reversed with launching of the Cultural Revolution in August of 1966. Most of Quanzhou’s monasteries were severely damaged or destroyed during the Cultural Revolution; Kaiyuan was the only major monastery to have survived with its physical structures relatively unscathed. In local literature and popular opinion, Kaiyuan, Chengtian and Chongfu are Quanzhou’s three most important Buddhist monasteries (*san da fosi* 三大佛寺). Of these three only Kaiyuan retains a full array of monastic buildings which survived the Cultural Revolution—their survival, however, was not guaranteed. Kaiyuan, like other places of worship in Fujian and throughout China, was threatened by a mob of Red Guards as the Cultural Revolution swept across China in the fall of 1966. A crowd of youths gathered at Kaiyuan monastery, as Red Guards did at monasteries and cultural sites throughout China, with the intention of destroying representations of feudal or bourgeois values. Miaolian barred the doors to Kaiyuan’s dharma hall and sutra library which held innumerable cultural treasures. When Red Guards approached the hall concerned residents in the neighborhood alerted Quanzhou’s mayor Wang Jinsheng 王今生 to the menacing threat.

In a story that is known throughout Quanzhou, Mayor Wang rushed to the scene and confronted the growing mob of Red Guards. Standing between the mob of youths

¹⁰⁶ Wright 1959.

and Kaiyuan monastery, Mayor Wang explained that the monastery was a legally protected site of important historic value. He produced a document indicating the designation of Kaiyuan as a site of protected cultural heritage issued in 1961 and offered to phone Zhou Enlai if necessary.¹⁰⁷ Beyond this legal appeal, he reached out to the civic pride of the youths declaring, “Without the east and west pagodas, there is no Quanzhou.”¹⁰⁸ The mayor succeeded so thoroughly in convincing the mob to abandon their stake on the monastery that several Red Guards who had heard mayor Wang's plea turned to other youths as they arrived and explained to them Kaiyuan's protected status. In the end, the mob was turned away and Kaiyuan's many historic properties were left unharmed. Kaiyuan's defense under Mayor Wang succeeded through a combination of legal authority, personal charisma, revolutionary credibility (he had participated in the long march) and an effective appeal to civic and cultural pride on the part of the mayor and a willingness to listen on the part of the youths.

The monastery was largely spared physical vandalism during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution, but it is said that gold was removed from the gilded statues. Although, apart from this, the pagodas, statues and major buildings remained unharmed during the "Ten Year Disaster" from 1966 to 1976, Kaiyuan ceased to exist as a functioning monastery. Chongfu monastery was made into a factory to produce Chinese medicine and Chengtian monastery was made into a cloth factory. As for Kaiyuan, religious activities were prohibited, monks laicized, statues covered and Kaiyuan monastery was re-dubbed the "People's Market" (*renmin shangchang* 人民商场). The [Kaiyuan] People's Market was the busiest place in the city—devotional activity ceased

¹⁰⁷ Local legend has it that Mayor Wang actually phoned Zhou Enlai, but the mayor told me that he did not need to phone Zhou, he only needed to offer to do so if they did not take his word for it.

¹⁰⁸ From an interview with Wang Jinsheng, October 25, 2006 at his home in Quanzhou.

and commercial exchanges ensued. Food, clothes, and all necessities were on sale throughout the grounds, corridors and halls. The ways of the monk were replaced by the ways of the butcher, the tailor, the barber and the vegetable hawker. The pagodas, halls and images remained but none of them were allowed to function as they had before. There was no incense, only smoke from cigarettes. No prostrations, no chanting, no prayers; only the banter of buying and selling. Instead of the ritual release of life, there was the butchering of life.¹⁰⁹

Most of the people old enough to remember the Cultural Revolution are not eager to talk about Kaiyuan during that period. Those who identify themselves as Buddhists look back at the period as one of heartbreak. A prominent vegetarian sister (*caigu* 菜姑)¹¹⁰ who was a disciple of Hongyi said she refused to visit Kaiyuan when it was a market; she couldn't bear to see it desecrated much less contribute to its desecration. Some who were less emotional or guarded about the period have described their visits to Kaiyuan during the Cultural Revolution: "I went there to shop, eat, get my hair cut and buy clothes and shoes. There were many shops, you were given a small slip of paper and paid for goods or services at a central office."¹¹¹ Based on the recollections of my informants, the statues in the main hall were covered with cloths and shoes, clothing and fabrics were for sale where worshippers now chant and circumambulate. Along the two corridors that flank the main courtyard and main hall one could purchase farming

¹⁰⁹ "Release of life" is a common Buddhist practice in which captive animals such as birds, turtles or fish are purchased and released.

¹¹⁰ A vegetarian sister (*caigu*) is a woman who, as the name suggests, does not eat meat and in addition do not marry (or have such relations as marriage implies) and are devoted to Buddhism. They live together, but unlike nuns however, they do not shave their heads. They are a widespread phenomenon in Southern Fujian. Originally many of them were orphaned girls sent to live with *caigu*. Master Hongyi respected this tradition and gave them teachings.

¹¹¹ Interview in Quanzhou, 2007.

implements, dried foods, prepared foods such as noodles and dumplings or get a haircut. Goods and services were paid for with vouchers that one purchased from a central kiosk.

A Coterie of Monks

Although the monastery had ceased to function as such, its physical plant remained largely intact and its abbot, venerable Miaolian, remained living on the grounds along with a coterie of nine other “laicized” monks. Miaolian, like other monks in China, was forced to renounce monastic life, grow out his hair and take a wife. Together with a laicized nun named Yuanying 元英, he lived in the sutra library, which is completely surrounded by a large balcony, where he is said to have raised chickens to keep from starving.¹¹² Apart from Miaolian, there were ten other monks said to have remained living discretely at Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery throughout the Cultural Revolution.¹¹³ We have already mentioned master Guang’an, in addition there were Yuanzhuo 圆拙, , Shanjie 善戒 (-2007), Chuanxi 传锡 (-2005), Daoyang 道养 (-1983?), Daojing 道敬 (-2008), Miaodian 妙典 (-1984), Chuanzhong 传种(-1989) and Shanyuan 善源 (-1983).¹¹⁴

Altogether there were ten monks and one laicized nun who remained at Kaiyuan through the Cultural Revolution. There was also a layperson named Wen Meng 文孟 who is said to have assisted the monks by preparing meals for them and helping when needed. According to my informants, these monks were supported during this period a deposit of money from Singapore laypersons that had been deposited in China during the

¹¹² Interview in Quanzhou, 2006.

¹¹³ In the *Guang’an zhanglao yongsi jinianji* (2003) Chuanxi wrote that there was a group of thirteen living at Kaiyuan during the Cultural Revolution; I have gathered the names of ten monks plus the nun and the layperson, which makes a total of twelve.

¹¹⁴ I am indebted to Daoxing for the names and dates for these monks (interview 2009).

Republican Period to serve as “ten thousand years of food to support the way”(*wannian daoliang* 万年代粮).¹¹⁵

While Miaolian and his wife lived in the sutra library, the other clergy and Wen Bing lived in the five rooms of the Venerated Site Cloister (*zunsheng yuan*) and in the six rooms of the old guest hall (*lao ketang* 老客堂), which stood immediately to the west of the hall of the ordination platform and just in front of the hall of merit (*gongde tang*). The Venerated Site Cloister had been maintained in one form or another since the founding of the temple in the Tang dynasty when it served as the living quarters for Kuanghu, Kaiyuan’s founding “abbot.” Its most recent incarnation was a two story building that was demolished by the current abbot in the 90s—there are currently no plans to rebuild it. There was something befitting and promising that in the darkest hours of the Cultural Revolution, when some were surmising the end of Chinese religion, monks inhabited Kaiyuan’s Venerated Site Cloister, waiting for the chaos to end.

I was quite surprised to discover that a coterie of monks remained in residence in the halls of Kaiyuan during the Cultural Revolution and even more surprised that they continued to remain vegetarian and, at least according to one source, live off of interest from a Republican period deposit of Singaporean origins. One of my informants, a Quanzhou local and devout lay Buddhist, often told me that Quanzhou Buddhists continued to worship in secret during the Cultural Revolution. “Could you find incense?” I asked. “Yes,” was the answer I received to this and other similar questions about worship such as the presentation of offerings or the making of prostrations. As I

¹¹⁵ Interview with Daoxing, 2009. Daoxing spoke of the monks as using the interest (*lixī*) earned by this deposit, but Huang Yushan says the money was kept in the sutra library and deposited in a local bank in the 1980s; he added that there was not much left.

doggedly pursued this line of questioning, it emerged that, at least in Quanzhou, a tradition of religious devotion had survived, in secret, not only in the hearts, but also in the day to day lives, of at least a few devout individuals and families throughout the Maoist era including monks remaining on the grounds of Kaiyuan monastery.

I later determined that Holmes Welch had also learned of Kaiyuan's band of monks from an overseas informant in 1969. In a 1969 article Welch carefully wrote the following:

In one large city on the south-east coast a famous old monastery continues to operate. There are 14 monks left (compared to 19 before the Cultural Revolution). They wear lay clothes and work on a nearby commune, but they eat vegetarian food. The great shrine-hall is locked and no one can enter to burn incense, but the other buildings are open. The monastery as a community of monks is still in being.¹¹⁶

This "famous old monastery" is none other than our Quanzhou Kaiyuan. This identification can be affirmed by cross-referencing an appendix in Welch's 1972 account of Buddhism under Mao which lists the names of thirty-one temples and their population of monks over time. For 1969 there is only one temple with any monastics listed and that is Quanzhou Kaiyuan with fourteen monks; those fourteen must be the same as those he mentioned in his 1969 article. The appendix further suggests that Quanzhou Kaiyuan was an, if not *the*, exception to the rule, among famous urban monasteries. The appendix lists the names of temples, cities and holy mountains along with the number of monastics said to have been in residence in a given year from the 1930s onward. Of all the temples (31 in number), mountains and cities listed, only one records a monastic population of

¹¹⁶ Welch 1969: 135.

any size after 1965, and that is Quanzhou Kaiyuan's fourteen.¹¹⁷ While there is a discrepancy between the eleven monastics and one lay person I have counted and the fourteen provided by Welch's informants, I consider it most important where there is agreement, namely that a small number (between twelve and fourteen) of monastics (and a dedicated lay person) remained in residence three years into the Cultural Revolution. More fieldwork is needed to determine if there were monks who remained on site at other monasteries in urban areas or in mountains during the Cultural Revolution, but my research, supported by Welch, has determined this to be the case at Quanzhou Kaiyuan.¹¹⁸

Life for Kaiyuan's small band of determined monks was not without added hardships during the ten year disaster. During the Cultural Revolution not only were monks not allowed to wear their robes, shave their heads, chant, burn incense or prostrate, but they were regularly taken out and forced to kneel in public wearing humiliating placards or paraded around wearing pointed dunce caps. They would have to work during the day and study Chairman Mao's thought in the evening in the presence of a cadre. All the land of Kaiyuan was said to have been planted with different vegetables and fruit including, winter melon, sweet potato, longan (dragon eye), bananas and green vegetables. These monks maintained a religiously-defined existence in the face of immense pressures, threats and humiliation. History has not yet recorded their courage and commitment—this dissertation is a first step towards rectifying the narrative of Chinese Buddhist history during the Maoist period. The conventional narrative of modern

¹¹⁷ Welch 1972: 418-424. It would now be possible to corroborate some of these numbers through fieldwork such as I have done in Quanzhou. Unfortunately, I have not been able to adequately investigate the presence of monastics or lack thereof in other parts of China during this period.

¹¹⁸ This was also the case at Tibet's largest monastery of Drepung where monks continued to live (discreetly) throughout the Cultural Revolution (Goldstein 1998: 25).

Chinese Buddhist history that one finds in most any textbook shifts, after 1949, from the mainland to Taiwan or Hong Kong.¹¹⁹ When I began to discover that temples and clerics and traditions had not only been revived in mainland China but had survived from the 1950s into the 90s and beyond, I was surprised. Glimpses that this was the case were among the impetuses goading me to carry out the investigations constituting this dissertation.

I have received a detailed account about one of Kaiyuan's monks from this period from one of his personal acquaintances. The monk in question is Guang'an. He was from a small village outside of Quanzhou and was abducted at a young age by soldiers to fight in the civil war. Being the only boy in his family, his parents sold his sister in order to buy him back. He went on to become a monk and remained a dedicated monk who loved Buddhism for the remainder of his life. When his dharma brothers left for Southeast Asia, he remained behind at Kaiyuan and became a victim of the Cultural Revolution. He was labeled a bad element (*huai fenzi* 坏分子)¹²⁰ and occasionally paraded around by Red Guards wearing a dunce hat on his head or a humiliating placard around his neck. He was required to stay at Kaiyuan where he made a living by raising sheep and small birds which he could exchange or sell for necessities. When the Cultural Revolution ended he

¹¹⁹ See for example, Birnbaum 2003; Mitchell 2008: 234; Hanh 1989; Thompson 1996:134-1434; Robinson et. al. 2005:215-218; Fowler and Fowler 2008: 250-253 and MacInnis 1989. Holmes Welch (Welch 1972) and Richard Bush (Bush 1970: 297-347) provide relatively balanced accounts of Buddhism under communism from the 1950s to the Cultural Revolution, leaving the future open to question. The only exception of which I am aware, that is, a text which provides a continuous narrative of continuous monastic presence from the Republican period, throughout the Cultural Revolution and into the current revival is study of the Tiexiang nunnery in Chengdu by Esther Bianchi (Bianchi, Ester. 2001. *The Iron Statue Monastery [Tiexiangsi]: A Buddhist Nunnery of Tibetan Tradition in Contemporary China*. Florence: Instituto Venezia E L'Oriente).

¹²⁰ A catch all category of the four bad elements (*silei fenzi* 四类分子); the others are landlords, anti-revolutionaries and wealthy peasants.

“took off his [dunce] cap” and was put to work in a shop selling tea.¹²¹ His story spans several periods and the denouement awaits our account of the post-Mao revival Kaiyuan which follows.

Religious practice was suppressed, but Kaiyuan as a cultural preserve remained an identifying rubric. In 1974 a Song Dynasty boat was discovered in Quanzhou's Houzhu harbor 后渚港.¹²² An important historical find, the boat was excavated and brought to a piece of land in the northeastern quarter of Kaiyuan monastery. After the boat was in place, a museum was built around it. The main gallery of the museum displays the huge wooden hull of the boat as well as large ropes and anchors. Steps lead to a second floor where one can view the boat and visit two rooms of display cases containing small remains of products, coins, mechanical parts, fragments of bamboo sails and so on. The boat museum is a branch of Quanzhou's Museum of Maritime Trade (*haijiao guan* 海交馆). Although it is accessed from Kaiyuan and on land that once belonged to Kaiyuan or a cloister of Kaiyuan, it is separated from the grounds of Kaiyuan by fencing. Locals say that it is built on the land where Dongbi Temple 东壁寺 once stood, home of the famous Dongbi longyan 东壁龙眼 fruit trees of Quanzhou.

The same year that the Song Dynasty boat was transferred to Kaiyuan two other large historic objects were also moved from other parts of the city. The first was an elaborately decorated wall known as the Qilin Wall 麒麟壁 that was moved from its place in front of the old City God Temple to Kaiyuan Monastery by the [Quanzhou City] Heritage Management Committee. It features a depiction of the Qilin 麒麟 or Kylin (J.

¹²¹ Huang Yushan, interview, 2009.

¹²² Huang 2005: 32-33. See also Pearson, Richard, Li Min and Li Guo, 2002. "Quanzhou Archaeology: A Brief Review." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 6:1, pp. 23-59.

Kirin), a mythological being sometime referred to as a Chinese unicorn. The screen was built in 1795 and depicts the Qilin in a Qing dynasty style as having the head of a dragon, scales of a fish, hooves of an ox and tail of a lion.¹²³ The other object was a gate known as the *ling* star gate (*lingxing men*, 棂星门) from Quanzhou's Confucian temple (*wen miao*, 文庙) which was transferred to the front of Small Kaiyuan temple along with four dragon columns from the Xuanmiao Daoist temple 玄妙观.

Eight cannon from the Ming and Qing dynasties were placed outside Kaiyuan's front gate; among them was one from 1624 (Ming dynasty) and another from 1842 (Qing dynasty).¹²⁴ Perhaps the most unusual item that was transferred to Kaiyuan during the Maoist period was an unusual stone originally located at Chengtian Monastery which contained an image strongly resembling a Chinese style painting of a branch of plum blossoms. During the Cultural Revolution it was broken into two pieces in an attempt to reveal that the auspicious image was merely a dye fabrication; the strange coloration, however, was found to exist into the depths of the stone. Devotees brought the broken stone to Kaiyuan and, putting it back together, placed it below the ancient mulberry tree for protection [Figure 19].¹²⁵

During the Cultural Revolution, Kaiyuan was not merely a market, it remained a place where cultural artifacts had survived and was the place for other cultural properties to be protected. The municipal Heritage Management Association remained operational with offices and dorms on the grounds of Kaiyuan and continued to collect and oversee the protection of Kaiyuan and the other properties brought there from locations around

¹²³ Huang 2005: 34-35.

¹²⁴ Sometime during the post-Mao period they were moved to the main location of the Maritime Museum.

¹²⁵ Oral history from neighborhood resident Huang Yushan 黄玉山. In 2007 or 2008 the stone was returned to its original location at Chengtian monastery.

Quanzhou. Guang'an worked in the shop operated by the Heritage Management Committee; this shop sold rubbings made from the many steles collected. Like Longxing Temple, which similarly collected all the steles, statues and other artifacts that had escaped the first waves of destruction, Quanzhou Kaiyuan became a site where any historic items might be placed for protection. The curatorial turn then, was a consistent Maoist period development spanning the early years of the People's Republic and continuing through the death of Mao and beyond.

Kaiyuan's Response to the Project of Modernity

The early twentieth century was a time of growth and innovation within Chinese Buddhism that developed in response to modernist threats and pressures. The Kaiyuan orphanage and school established by Yuanying and Zhuandao was a form of social engagement that emerged just as reformers had begun to demand that religions provide social benefits rather than be a drain on resources.¹²⁶ Although such developments were cut short by Communist victory and the Cultural Revolution, they helped lay the groundwork for the development of a more socially engaged form of Buddhism that has been advanced by organizations in Taiwan.

Another important development during the first decades of the twentieth century at Kaiyuan was the establishment of transnational networks stretching from southern Fujian to points throughout Southeast Asia organized by Buddhist monks such as Quanzhou's Zhuandao and Fuzhou's Yuanying. When restrictions against religious worship were loosened in post-Mao China, Fujian was one of the first provinces to see the restoration of monastic Buddhism—it was aided in its earliest phases by funding from the same networks of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia that funded the Kaiyuan

¹²⁶ Ashiwa 2009:54.

orphanage. These transnational networks developed in response to the loss of traditional sources of income during the first half of the twentieth century, when modernist reformers seized land holdings and prohibited other forms of generating funds. These Fujian monks took to the sea and opened new sources of patronage by connecting with communities of overseas Chinese from Fujian.

Communist victory saw the implementation of policies that devastated the Chinese sangha while singling out select religious sites to serve as historical and cultural preserves. I have termed this the curatorial turn, a turn that led to the accumulation of cultural properties at Kaiyuan from throughout the city of Quanzhou as well as the formation of the heritage management committee at Kaiyuan in the early 1950s in order to oversee state funds spent on preservation. It was Kaiyuan's status as a Provincial Level Protected Heritage Site that empowered Mayor Wang to fight for its protection during the Cultural Revolution. The curatorial turn was part of China's effort to articulate a national heritage while at the same time framing religious phenomena as part of China's past. Both moves were part of China's modernizing project which sought to contain religion and, if possible, fix it as a relic of the past. With the death of Mao political and revolutionary motives are replaced by economic ones and the will to preserve heritage expands dramatically as part of a strategy to develop tourism and attract foreign investment, but that is a story that must wait for later chapters. Subsequent chapters will explore how cultural properties contribute to the identity and success of Kaiyuan.

This chapter purposefully covered three-quarters of China's tortuous twentieth century as a unit in order to highlight the continuities that are obscured in other accounts of twentieth century Chinese Buddhism. Those accounts cover the promising

developments of the early twentieth century then decry the intrusions by the state in the 1950s, leading to the decimation of the sangha and destruction of temples during the Cultural Revolution. If this is not the end of the story in those accounts, the story is continued in overseas Chinese communities, especially Taiwan, where many mainland monks fled after communist victory. My research has revealed a continuous narrative in the life of Quanzhou Kaiyuan from the Republican period through the end of the 1990s. Although Kaiyuan's activities were radically interrupted during the Cultural Revolution, monks such as Guang'an and Miaolian remained on site, protecting property and maintaining a monastic presence. Meanwhile others monks, such as Guangjing, remained active abroad and would come to Kaiyuan's aid in the late 1980s using the same funding networks that had been established during the 20s and 30s. The story of the tenacity of these monks is continued in the following chapter, which chronicles Kaiyuan's post-Mao recovery.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Post-Mao Revival: Stages of Recovery

This chapter narrates Kaiyuan's post-Mao recovery—it provides a window on the first three decades of the unprecedented revival of Buddhism in post-Mao China. It is a narrative that has only begun to be revealed in book chapters and articles, none of which reconstruct the chronology of revival with the kind of ethnographic detail found here. The restoration, which began soon after the death of Mao in 1976, received its initial spark from the small coterie of monks who had remained at the monastery throughout the Cultural Revolution. Further restoration was facilitated by contact with Fujian monks who had migrated to Southeast Asia before the Cultural Revolution along paths blazed by monks such as Zhuandao.

This chapter examines Kaiyuan's post-Mao recovery in three stages: I. 1976 to 1988 (laying the groundwork), II. 1989 to 1999 (full renovation) and III. 2000-2010 (the Daoyuan era). The first stage saw the return of public worship at Kaiyuan after a decade-long hiatus and an important visit by Zhao Puchu, the president of the Chinese Buddhist Association, who helped lay the groundwork for Kaiyuan's recovery. The second stage saw the full scale renovation of Kaiyuan's buildings with Singapore funds capped by a visit by Jiang Zemin, which unequivocally affirmed Kaiyuan's revival as a site of cultural heritage and religious practice. The third stage spans the first decade of Daoyuan's tenure as abbot, increasing prosperity, the recovery of property and continual physical enhancements. During the first two stages of recovery, 1976 to 1999, the revival of transnational networks linking Quanzhou with Southeast Asia and funding by overseas

Chinese was an important factor. The data presented here supports similar observations made by scholars regarding the funding of the religious revival in Southeast China (e.g. Dean 1993, 1998; Ashiwa 2000; Ashiwa and Wank 2006). The material presented here, taken with that provided by Ashiwa (Ashiwa 2000), provides a fuller picture of the clerical networks operating to and from Minnan in contemporary China.¹

My research suggests, furthermore, that during Kaiyuan's third stage of recovery, funding from overseas sources has become increasingly insignificant as the local community has grown more prosperous. This growing prosperity has enabled the current abbot Daoyuan to reclaim monastic property from other entities and engage in continual restoration, rebuilding and new enhancements to the property. In general, Kaiyuan's recovery has focused more on developing the "hardware" required to pursue the monastic enterprise (the physical plant, number of monks, steady sources of income, recovery of ritual forms) at the expense of cultivating the "software" which includes study, discipline and meditation. While study, discipline and meditation are normative for the project of Buddhism and Yuanxian describes them as the three legs of the tripod of old Kaiyuan (*Sizhi p.1a*), they are less fundamental to a Buddhist monastery as a brick and mortar institution serving a community with other values. What kind of an institution this monastery is, what kind of community it serves and what are their values will become more clear in the following chapters. The current chapter aims to trace Kaiyuan's trajectory of revival in order to highlight the processes that have shaped and led to Kaiyuan's current state of restoration. The revival of religious activities will only be mentioned in passing in order to focus on the institutional developments, which have

¹ Ashiwa and Wank focuses on clerics associated with Nanputuo, but do not look at Quanzhou (Ashiwa 2000; Ashiwa and Wank 2005).

dominated executive decisions throughout all three stages of recovery (Kaiyuan's contemporary religion life will be explored in the following chapter.).

Chairman Mao died in September of 1976 and the arrest of the Gang of Four the following month marked the end of the Cultural Revolution.² There was no new direction in policy, religious, economic or otherwise, until the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Party Congress in December of 1978 when Deng Xiaoping set out on a course now referred to as reform and opening (*gaige kaifang* 改革开放). The reforms set in motion became articulated as policy in the constitution adopted in 1982 that guaranteed freedom to believe or not believe in religion and engage in “normal religious activities” (*zhengchang de zongjiao huodong* 正常的宗教活动).³ Since then the officially recognized five religions (Buddhism, Islam, Daoism, Christianity and Catholicism) have officially been on a path of recovery, each with their own trajectories. Quanzhou Kaiyuan began to recover in stages soon after the death of Mao in 1976. The following sketch of the early stages of Kaiyuan's recovery is based on oral accounts I have collected from individuals who resided at Kaiyuan during the 1980s and 1990s or residents and local officials with particular knowledge about Kaiyuan. Getting this story has not been as easy as one might think—most people are not interested in Kaiyuan's stages of recovery and they don't have a clear memory of how it proceeded. What I outline below is the most reliable portrait I have been able to develop from hours of interviews with dozens of individuals positioned to know about this period as well as reports or notices of relevance.

² The Gang of Four was blamed for the inciting the worst excesses of the Cultural Revolution. The leader was Mao Zedong's last wife, Jiang Qing 江青, and included her associates Zhang Chunqiao 张春桥, Yao Wenyuan 姚文元, and Wang Hongwen 王洪文.

³ Pas 1989: 6-7.

One of my principal sources for the earliest years of Kaiyuan's restoration is the local monk Daoxing 道兴. Daoxing became a novice at Zhangzhou's Nanchan monastery in 1980, although he didn't receive full ordination until 1988 at Guangdong's Nanhua Temple 南华寺. From 1980 to 1984 he served as Kaiyuan's guest prefect and serves as an eye witness to Kaiyuan's earliest years of recovery.⁴ Under normal circumstances a novice would never be allowed to serve in the position of guest prefect, or hold any other rank. But due to the lack of able-bodied monks in the earliest years of recovery, many young monks and novices were allowed to take positions in the monastic hierarchy that were traditionally reserved for more senior monastics. Daoxing returned to Kaiyuan after three years in Guangdong and again lived at Kaiyuan from 1987 to 1999, a period during which he held various clerical positions. He and his friend Chuanjian 传建 of Xiamen's Puguang Temple 普光寺 provided me with much of the framework and content of Kaiyuan's developments during the 1980s and 90s.⁵

Quanzhou residents have claimed that people began to burn incense and bow to Buddhas at Kaiyuan as early as 1976. These minor stirrings of devotional Buddhism reached a crescendo on the fourth day of the fourth lunar month of 1980. According to my informants, this day marks the official recovery of religious practice at Quanzhou

⁴ In 1984 he shaved his head and went to Nanchan Monastery to live for three years.

⁵ Daoxing is currently abbot of both Ci'en Temple 慈恩寺 and Amitabha Temple 弥陀寺 on Mount Qingyuan in Quanzhou. He and Chuanjian both left Kaiyuan when Daoyuan became abbot to avoid a conflict in seniority that would have been natural between them. Within the monastic order, seniority is determined by years as a monk and both Daoxing and Chuanjian were ordained before Daoyuan, making them his seniors. It would not have been proper for them to serve under Daoyuan as abbot, so, after what has been vaguely described as a struggle (*douzheng* 斗争), the senior monks Daoxing and Chuanjian left Kaiyuan ahead of Daoyuan's succession as abbot in 2000. Daoxing first went to Chengtian monastery where he served as the general manager (*jianyuan*) and then in 1999 or so he went to Mount Qingyuan and began to recover the properties associated with the two temples there. Chuanjian is from Xiamen. He became a monk at Xiamen's Nanputuo Monastery in 1984; he went to Zhangzhou Nanchan Monastery where he met Daoxing.

Kaiyuan monastery. It was then that a ceremony was held in memory of the one hundredth birthday anniversary of former abbot Zhuanfeng (*zhuanfeng heshang yibai zhounian jinian* 转峰和尚一百周年纪念). This memorial service included seven days of *nianfo* and is said to have attracted 10,000 people over its duration. It was the first time crowds of this size had been seen at a religious function in the city for more than two decades and signaled in a very concrete manner that open religious expression was again permissible. Before this time there had very seldom been any sign of devotional activity at Kaiyuan, but after this Kaiyuan began a slow and steady recovery. April fourth of the lunar calendar in 1980 was the Qingming Festival (*qingming jie*) sometimes referred to as Ancestors Day or Tomb-Sweeping Day because it is a day traditionally marked by sweeping the graves of ancestors and making offerings to them. In 1980 this festival was still not publically permitted so this memorial celebration at Kaiyuan was a way for Quanzhou citizens to celebrate under the guise of a temple-specific ceremony.

At the head of fundraising efforts during the first years of recovery was the monk Guang'an who was finally able to follow his dharma brothers to Southeast Asia after suffering ten years of humiliation as a "bad element." Under China's new policy of opening under Deng Xiaoping, travel restrictions were lifted and Guang'an was able to travel to the Philippines. Following the example of Kaiyuan's Republican Period monks, Guang'an looked to overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia for financial support. He succeeded in collecting ¥2,700 in 1980 and another ¥2,400 in 1982 which he brought back to Quanzhou to be used towards Kaiyuan's recovery expenses. He served as

the general manager of Kaiyuan for a short period before passing away, highly regarded by those who knew him, at the age of 72 or 73 in 1992.⁶

In March of 1982, Kaiyuan was recognized as an important national heritage protected site in the second batch (*guojiaji dierpi zhongdian wenwu baohu danwei* 国家级第二批重点文物保护单位) by the State Council and in the following year, it was named an important national Han Buddhist temple (*quanguo hanzu diqu fojiao zhongdian siyuan* 全国汉族地区佛教重点寺院) by the State Council.⁷ Quanzhou Kaiyuan's relatively complete set of buildings from the Ming and Qing dynasties and two exceptional monumental pagodas from the Song dynasty were instrumental in attracting recognition at these national levels (its 1961 designation was at the provincial level, though nationally recognized). This is an important designation to receive for any site hoping to attract tourists at a national or international level. These designations are part of the state's effort to not only promote economic development, but also to influence, frame and, ultimately, control sites of religious activity or significance. Mechanisms of control come in various forms, but the most obvious is the temple administrative commission, an entity that will be explored in chapter eight. These designations are not innocent; they are connected to the power of the state and reflect the continued working out of the statist enterprise informed by a project of modernity. As part of China's national heritage, the monastery falls under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Culture; as a site of "normal religious activities," it falls under the jurisdiction of the Religious Affairs Bureau; as a Buddhist monastery it falls under the jurisdiction of the China Buddhist Association

⁶ Interview with Huang Yushan, 2009.

⁷ Huang 2005: 18-19. In 1983 the same status was bestowed on Xiamen's Nanputuo, Fuzhou's Gushan and Zhangzhou's Nanshan Temples.

(CBA). The monks and their monastery are not now, nor have they ever been, fully autonomous; their relationship with the state is filtered through two ideological constructs, “normal religion” and “cultural heritage.” Kaiyuan’s monks have been required to master these two discursive fields (normal religion and cultural heritage) in order to work with state officials.

While 1980 marked the beginning of recovery and the resumption of openly holding religious ceremonies, from 1983 to 1984 Kaiyuan underwent a series of real signs of achievement that marked the recovery as one that was more than a phantom. Physical recovery proceeded with the re-gilding (*tiejin*) of Kaiyuan’s major statues using 2.5kg. of gold at a cost of ¥160,000, ¥32,000 of which is said to have come from Singapore.⁸ As Kaiyuan began to return to life as a cultural attraction that also welcomed religious devotees, it began to receive a stream of high level visits which, on the one hand, pushed municipal authorities to ensure that it was well maintained and, on the other, let the public know that the temple was once again open for business.

Zhao Puchu at Kaiyuan

One of the first and most important high-level visits was by the widely respected president of the Chinese Buddhist Association Zhao Puchu 赵朴初 (1907-2000) in 1983 to celebrate the Yuanxiao festival, which traditionally marks the end of Chinese new year celebrations and occurs on the fifteenth day of the first month of the lunar calendar. Zhao Puchu was without peer as a Buddhist leader in mainland China during the 80s and 90s. His position enabled him to perceive and solve at least three problems that helped set

⁸ Interview with Wu Songbai, 2009.

Kaiyuan on the path to monastic revival and greater autonomy; the three problems related to management, income and communal meals.⁹

At the time of Zhao Puchu's visit Kaiyuan's main hall and ordination hall were both still under the management of the heritage management committee and, according to monks who were there at the time, not fully open for worship, but more museum-like. Members of the heritage management committee staffed tables inside halls and even slept in the halls. This was done, in the eyes of the heritage management committee, to ensure the protection of the valuable properties inside the halls, which remained under their jurisdiction. The monks and lay Buddhists resented the encroachment on spaces they considered places of worship. This undesirable situation was corrected through the influence of Zhao Puchu who arranged for oversight of Kaiyuan's halls to be transferred to Kaiyuan's monks.¹⁰ The heritage management committee maintained offices on the grounds of Kaiyuan, but these too, as will be shown in chapter eight, would not last.

The second issue which Zhao Puchu is credited with solving concerned the livelihood of the monks. Since the end of the Cultural Revolution, Kaiyuan's monks had supported themselves by selling souvenirs and other goods in small shops. This was not only undesirable from the point of view of the monks, but it was also a poor means of fund raising. Zhao Puchu was able to help the monks negotiate their way out of working in these shops and enabled them to support themselves through receipt of donations. To encourage donations, a local tradition was revived which is sometimes referred to as Buddha recitation time (*nianfo qi* 念佛期). It was decided that they would institute a Buddha recitation or *nianfo* day on lunar twenty-six of every month, in order to

⁹ What I mean by "religious revival" will become more clear in chapter six; I use this phrase to contrast with what could be described as physical or secular restoration as a tourist site of cultural treasures.

¹⁰ Wu Songbai, interview 2009.

encourage visitors and attract donations. At first, very few people attended these gatherings which included a session of Buddha-recitation (*nianfo*) in the Hall of the Ordination Platform. In the mid-eighties there may have been as many as 500 people coming to the Buddha-recitation day and by 1994 the numbers of lay participants had increased so that the Buddha-recitation was moved to the main hall to accommodate the crowd.¹¹ This important tradition will be discussed in detail when examining the religious life of the monastery in the following chapter.

An additional situation that Zhao Puchu is credited with reforming is the sharing of rice. Before his visit, Kaiyuan's monks maintained their own supplies of rice, which they would individually provide to the lay person Wen Meng who would then prepare the rice in one large pot which was then shared by all the monks. If someone contributed less, problems could arise. After Zhao Puchu's visit, this system was reformed and all of the rice was combined to form a common store from which meals were prepared. This may sound like a trivial matter, but it served as an important step in developing the kind of communal atmosphere that is essential for a monastery to function.

As income was generated from increasing donations and more monks were ordained, Kaiyuan built a large dining hall (*wuguan tang*) from 1986 to 1987 that can accommodate more than 200 individuals. The population of residents at Kaiyuan, including active and retired monks and novices, had increased from around two dozen in the early eighties to as many as sixty at the end of the eighties.¹² The construction of a large dining hall marks the end of Kaiyuan's first stage of recovery which witnessed steady progress toward the reestablishment of a sangha—one self-sufficient and one

¹¹ Interview with Daoxing, 2009.

¹² Interview with Daoxing, 2009. A different source (non-monastic) claimed there were more between ten and twenty monks in 1995.

exercising authority over the halls—and a body of devotees attending monthly *nianfo* (and free noodles) days. The dining hall was not only a milestone in Kaiyuan’s recovery, it was an investment in the future of the monastery as a place for the cultivation of a religious community engaged in forms of communal practice. Zhao Puchu was instrumental in setting Kaiyuan on this particular trajectory of recovery, one with a future for monastics.

After assisting Quanzhou Kaiyuan, Zhao Puchu went to Nan’an Xuefeng Monastery to help them negotiate their path to revival.¹³ Zhao Puchu was an instrumental figure in helping Buddhism transition into forms acceptable to the regime through the Communist period. His brief visit to Kaiyuan at this early period was a crucial step in Kaiyuan’s return to functioning as a home of monastics. At the time of his visit there was only one other Buddhist monastery that had been revived in the city of Quanzhou, Chongfu Monastery. Chongfu temple had been rebuilt and discussions were underway to rebuild Quanzhou’s other important monastery, Chengtian, but its restoration would not be complete until 1990.¹⁴ There may have been one or two small temples, but no more at this early period. Kaiyuan had been the first to revive and paved the way for other temples, both large and small, to follow its lead.

In addition to developing into a site for the sangha, Kaiyuan continued to develop as a site for tourists as it had during the early years of the Maoist period. In 1983, Kaiyuan monastery was visited by the former King of Cambodia, Norodom Sihanouk (1922-) and his wife. In preparation for this visit the west pagoda was washed. A photo

¹³ The main hall of Xuefeng Monastery had been preserve during the Cultural Revolution by placing images of Chairman Mao on it.

¹⁴ Chengtian Monastery was restored from 1984 to 1990 with 10,000,000 RMB in funds collected by master Hongchuan from Singapore (interview with Wu Songbai, 2009).

of his visit is on display today in Kaiyuan's Buddhist museum. A local resident recalled that it was after this highly publicized visit, by an international figure, that people began to return to worship in greater numbers and more regularly. In addition to a high profile visit from a former king, Kaiyuan also began to receive visits by international delegations of Buddhists. From 1979 to 1989 five delegations of clerics from Japan's Obaku school of Zen visited Kaiyuan monastery. One of these delegations came to Kaiyuan bearing a statue of Kaiyuan's master Mu'an who is venerated in Japan as one of the early and most talented patriarchs of the Obaku school. The small statue was once enshrined in Kaiyuan's Hall of Patriarchs.¹⁵ A final elite visitor during this first stage of recovery was the Chinese-designated Panchen Lama who visited Kaiyuan in 1986. Each high profile visit served to legitimate Kaiyuan as cultural and religious institution and encouraged other Chinese, both local and non-local to visit as tourists and in worship.

In 1984, the central name board in the center of the main gate which reads "Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Temple," the title given by Kublai Khan during the Yuan dynasty, was repaired and the characters gilded.¹⁶ With the addition of a name in gold characters and a growing reputation as a place of history, culture and beauty, in 1986, Kaiyuan temple was voted one of the ten most scenic spots in Fujian province.¹⁷ It was developing as a home for monks and site of cultural heritage that welcomed visitors and worshipers.

¹⁵ It is no longer in the Hall of Patriarchs and no one seems to know where it is. If this statue has indeed been lost, it is no small cultural loss.

¹⁶ Interview with Benzhi, 2006.

¹⁷ Huang 2005: 18-19.

The Restoration of Kaiyuan's Central Axis

Kaiyuan's Buddha's and Bodhisattvas were once again covered in gold and once again open to streams of believers bearing incense and offerings, but the large wooden halls showed the wear of time, the elements and termites. A second stage of recovery was inaugurated in the summer of 1989, when a group of monks from Southern Fujian (Minnan) who had settled in Southeast Asia before the Cultural Revolution returned to Kaiyuan and determined to have its buildings restored. These monks were Hongchuan 宏船, Guangqia 广洽, Guangjing, Guangchun 广纯 and Qinghui 晴晖. Hongchuan, Guangchun and Qinghui were all associated with Singapore's Putuo Temple which had been founded by Zhuandao; Guangjing and Guangqia were disciples of Kaiyuan's former abbot Zhuanfeng.¹⁸ They received government approval and had the former mayor Wang Jinsheng serve as the chairman of the restoration committee (泉州开元寺修建委员会). Work began in July of 1989 and was completed five years later in the summer of 1993. The main hall, the main gate, the hall of the ordination platform and the sutra library were all restored to look like new. A stele was erected in the main courtyard of the monastery in 1993 to commemorate this most recent of Kaiyuan's many restorations. As detailed on the stele, Singapore's Putuo Temple funded work on the main hall, ordination hall, Hongyi museum and sutra hall, while Singapore's Longshan Temple 龙山寺 helped fund the restoration of the Main Gate.¹⁹ Wu Songbai also says that Singapore's Pujue Temple, which had been founded by Zhuandao, contributed 5,500,000 RMB in funds to Kaiyuan.

¹⁸ Yoshiko Ashiwa explores the relations that several of these monks have with Xiamen's Nanputuo temple where Zhaunfeng had served as abbot (Ashiwa 2000).

¹⁹ 1993 stele recording the restoration of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Chan Monastery. According to Wu Songbai, Kaiyuan Monastery was renovated during this period with most funds coming from domestic sources,

The restoration work was carried out with support from Singaporean Buddhists, especially those associated with Putuo Temple which had been established by Zhuandao.²⁰ This work was officially declared complete during the celebration of Chinese New Year in 1993 well in time for a visit by President Jiang Zemin on June 24, 1994. Jiang Zemin visited Kaiyuan and was guided by Zhang Zhenhao 张真好 the head guide of the guest reception branch of the Temple Administrative Commission.²¹ This visit was trumpeted throughout the city and region and photos of the president touring Kaiyuan are displayed in the Kaiyuan Buddhist museum. There is no higher level visitor in China than the president and his expression of interest and approval sealed Kaiyuan as an officially recognized place of cultural value and, in the eyes of the Buddhist community, as an officially sanctioned place for religious practice. While international visitors had begun to arrive as early as 1983, throughout the 80s Kaiyuan's recovery was steady but modest; it was the full restoration of the early 90s and the visit by Jiang Zemin which made it clear that Kaiyuan had "arrived." It was a place of value, a place to see, a place to be.

Visits by Zhao Puchu and Jiang Zemin have both been an important boost to Kaiyuan's recovery efforts and calligraphy by each of them is kept by the monastery to commemorate their visits. This calligraphy was reproduced in Kaiyuan's 2005 commemorative volume and photos taken during their visits hang in the museum of

4,600,000. Wu Songbai, interview, 2009. This, however, was not mentioned in the 1993 stele inscription which named the Singapore temples and monks as contributors.

²⁰ Yoshiko Ashiwa connects the revival of Xiamen Nanputuo Monastery to its overseas connections with Southeast Asia as well. Those networks are very similar to those of Quanzhou Kaiyuan since Zhuanfeng was associated with both monasteries (Ashiwa 2009: 60-62).

²¹ One of the functions of the Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple Administrative Commission is to serve as guides to political elites who wish to visit. More on this office and its place at Kaiyuan will be explored in chapter eight.

Buddhist history. While this is not financial patronage, it is a form of patronage by recognition and legitimation—it provides Kaiyuan with political capital.

While support from overseas Chinese in Singapore and the Philippines was an important ingredient in Kaiyuan's first decade of recovery, since the end of the 90s formal contact between Kaiyuan and the overseas Chinese communities in Southeast Asia has been broken. One informant who had participated in fundraising activities in Southeast Asia, claims that a contributing factor is a Singaporean policy regulating such fundraising activities in Singapore.²² While this may be one factor, I agree with others that the most important reason for the decline in financial support coming in from Southeast Asia is the growing prosperity of mainland China in general and in Fujian in particular which has been increasingly evident since the nineties. Kaiyuan's monks simply had no compelling reason to go abroad in search of funds with so much wealth being generated within their community. This is the situation which has prevailed since I began my research in 2005.

Miaolian, master Hongyi's former attendant, served as abbot and oversaw the first two decades of Kaiyuan's post-Mao recovery. Miaolian was in poor and declining health throughout the eighties and nineties and he passed away at the monastery on November 5, 1999 at the age of 87. His funeral was held at Kaiyuan on November 11 and attended by over 2000 people including government leaders, clerics from other temples and disciples.²³ Miaolian provided a tenuous link between Kaiyuan's current restoration and

²² Interview with Chuanjian, 2009.

²³ The funeral was conducted by master Benxing 本性 a vice-president and secretary general of the Fujian Buddhism Association. Benxing now serves as the abbot of Fuzhou Kaiyuan Monastery, in Fuzhou. Master Xuecheng (学诚) the vice secretary-general of the Chinese Buddhist Association who is also the president of the Fujian Buddhism Association was the director of the Committee for Master Miaolian's Funeral. Chen Tianshuang (陈田爽) Vice-director of the Fujian United Front Work Department and Yu Xianfeng

the revival of the 1930s. When Hongyi died he left his possessions to Miaolian. Miaolian kept them and displayed them in one of the halls to the west of the central axis. The collection of Hongyi's artifacts is part of Miaolian's legacy to Kaiyuan; the collection would come to be displayed in a new hall built by the succeeding abbot, Daoyuan.

The Daoyuan Era

At the time of Miaolian's death, Daoyuan, then in his sixties, was general manager of Kaiyuan Monastery and vice-president of the Fujian Buddhism Association. Daoyuan was installed as the new abbot on July 20, 2000. He had become a monk late in life, circumstances seemed to have favored him in his rise to power at Kaiyuan. While Miaolian was quiet, passive and contemplative, Daoyuan is bold, aggressive and worldly. A biographical sketch will be followed by an account of his tenure at Kaiyuan which has been marked by two major themes: 1. The recovery of monastic property and 2. Physical enhancements to the monastery. His actions most clearly demonstrate the overriding concern with "hardware" over "software."

Daoyuan was born in a small village named Chidian 池店, outside the city of Quanzhou; he was the second child in a family of seven (four brothers and two sisters). In 1969, during the Cultural Revolution, he was sent down (*chadui* 插队) to the rural district of Qingniu 青牛县 ("Blue-Green Cow") and he lived there until he became a monk in 1986 at a temple in Shishi 石狮 ("Stone Lion").²⁴ He took refuge under Chuanjing 传净, an older monk at Kaiyuan Temple, so he considers himself a monk from Kaiyuan even

(余险峰), then vice-director (*fu ju zhang*) of the Fujian Bureau of Religious Affairs served as vice-directors for the funeral committee. Miaolian's remains were cremated at Xuefeng Temple at Mount Yangmei 杨梅山 in Nan'an on November 12.

²⁴ It is possible that changing his official residence (*hukou*) from the village of Qingniu to the city of Quanzhou may have been among his motivations in becoming a monk. He mentions that he was able to do this by becoming a monk.

though he didn't live there until 1992. In 1994, he was chosen by officials in the Chinese Buddhist Association, with agreement from the Fujian Provincial Bureau of Religion, to go to Brazil to serve as the head monk (*zhuchi*) at Guanyin Temple in Sao Paulo where a monk speaking the local Minnan dialect was needed.²⁵ After two years in Brazil, which Daoyuan recalls with great fondness, he returned to Kaiyuan, citing that his services were needed there.

The Recovery on Properties

When he returned to Quanzhou in February of 1996, the former abbot, Miaolian, was ill, and Daoyuan, who had served in a leadership position at Guanyin Temple in Sao Paulo, took over management of Kaiyuan's affairs, first serving as the head guest prefect (*da zhike*) and then, in July of 1996, as general manager. Daoyuan's first task was the recovery of properties immediately bounding the central axis of the monastery that had come to be occupied by non-monastic residents and organizations. The loss of some of these properties can be traced back to the end of the Qing dynasty, while others had become occupied over the past thirty years. What Daoyuan accomplished over the next ten years was no small feat and one that has won greater autonomy for Kaiyuan.

His first task was to reclaim the property known as small Kaiyuan Temple, the scaled down replica of Kaiyuan's main buildings first built during the Qing dynasty in the northeast corner of the monastery. In July 1997, he successfully negotiated with the individuals living there to move out, offering a total of one million RMB to compensate them. While the officially recognized religions are allowed to reclaim property that

²⁵ I know that he was visited by the then vice-president of the Fujian Bureau of Religion, Mr. Yu Tingzhang; both of them speak fondly of their time together in Brazil. Having good relations with this high-ranking official who has jurisdiction over Kaiyuan has certainly been in Daoyuan's favor, though I cannot offer specifics in this regard.

belonged to them before 1949; it is clear that they must provide financial compensation to those evicted.²⁶ In the northwest corner was a Department of Landscape and Gardening (*yuānlín guǎnlǐ chū* 园林管理处) that had become established over the past several decades. In 1998, Daoyuan succeeded in negotiating their removal.²⁷ In 2002, Daoyuan succeeding in clearing away private homes and a bank, which had encroached upon the main entrance. Just behind the guest hall is the old Land and Water Temple (*shuǐlú sì*), during the Maoist period it had been occupied by a troupe of puppeteers (*mùer tuān*). This group was evicted and the temple returned to use as a shine hall. In 2004, property in the far northeastern part of the temple that had been lost at the end of the Ming and early Qing Dynasties was recovered. This land became used to build a two story building that serves as the residence of the abbot, two high-ranking monks, two helper monks and a monk who works in the office of the Quanzhou CBA located on the grounds of the monastery. Daoyuan worked hard to clear Kaiyuan's property of non-monastic entities and enjoyed remarkable success in reclaiming all the property lying within Kaiyuan's fencing.

Unceasing Enhancements to Kaiyuan's Physical Plant

In 1997, while Daoyuan served as Kaiyuan's general manager, a renovation committee was established with former mayor Wang Jinsheng serving as the director and Daoyuan as vice director. A total of six million RMB (750,000 USD)²⁸ were spent on renovations including a re-gilding of the statues for 1,200,000 RMB and 1,000,000 RMB (125,000 USD) spent to organize and repair scriptures in the sutra library with the help of

²⁶ Ashiwa recounts how, in the early 90s Xiamen's Bialudong temple compensated the army with 485,000 RMB to recover property it had lost (Ashiwa 2000:25).

²⁷ They relocated to another part of the city and are now a successful landscape and gardening business.

²⁸ Amounts given in USD are approximate and the exchange rate used to calculate varies from the late 90s (8 RMB to one USD) to 2009 (less than 7 RMB to one USD).

professional provincial archivists. This was an archival move carried out to enhance Kaiyuan position as a trove of cultural treasures. It was not, that is, part of plan to revive scholarship, but rather part of a project of cultural preservation which fit in to the discourse of cultural heritage necessary to gain the favor of local officials.

In 2000, Daoyuan established the Anyang Cloister (*anyang yuan*, 安养院) at a cost of nine million RMB (1,125,000 USD). The Anyang Yuan is an underground mausoleum for the ashes of patrons willing to pay the required fees. Special sections are set aside for the remains of overseas Chinese and these form a significant portion of the community served—overseas disciples are provided an opportunity to return home for their final resting place, as they say in Chinese, “falling leaves return to the roots” (*luoye guigen* 落叶归根). The mausoleum generates approximately four to five million RMB (about 700,000 USD) per year and when it is full it will have generated approximately one hundred million RMB (more than 14 million USD). Price to inter the ashes of one person and have a spirit tablet is 4,200 RMB (600 USD). Ashes are kept in individual vaults and spirit tablets are housed in large hall above ground which came to displace the Hall of Merit where spirit tablets had been kept.

Daoyuan’s first major act as abbot was the hosting of a great three platform ordination ceremony in January, 2001. It had been seventy years since the last one was held in 1925 and, according to some reports, the third time since the founding of Kaiyuan Temple 1,300 years ago.²⁹ Desheng felt it was comical that a platform had to be constructed for use next to the ordination hall because the actual ordination platform is

²⁹ Daoyuan et. al. 2005:72.

covered with Ming dynasty statues that are designated cultural treasures and therefore cannot be moved.

The second major act of Daoyuan's tenure as abbot was the opening of the Quanzhou Museum of Buddhism at small Kaiyuan Temple on April 22, 2001. The project had begun in 1999 when Daoyuan convened the Quanzhou Buddhism Museum Preparation Committee, chaired by himself with Chen Pengpeng from the Quanzhou Heritage Management Association serving as advisor. Mr. Zhao Puchu participated in the grand opening and wrote the name board for the museum. The renovated small Kaiyuan Temple was transformed into a museum of 3,200 square meters, consisting of five halls connected by corridors, landscaped with flowers and plants. The antiquities on display span 1,400 years of Buddhism in Quanzhou and panels summarize developments in Quanzhou Buddhism throughout the imperial and Republican periods. There are halls of stone sculptures, temple bells and metal objects and sculptures and other items taken from Kaiyuan and from sites in the Quanzhou region. Some notable items include three stone sculptures from the Tang dynasty, including a Guanyin with moustache that was once set in a niche of the pagodas, a purple sandalwood sculpture of Dizang bodhisattva from the Ming, an excellent stone sculpture of Bodhidharma from the Ming, gilded bronze statues from the Ming and Qing, a large steel tripod caste by Zheng Zhilong in 1637 (one of five), large bronze bells from 1132 (Southern Song) and 1325 (Yuan) as well as bronze and iron bells from the Ming and Qing dynasty.

This museum included items from all over the region that had been collected at Kaiyuan from the 1950 onward under the supervision of the Heritage Management Association. The museum was a means of displaying the artifacts to the public; it was in

the interest of the Heritage Management Association and it was approved by Daoyuan as a means of enhancing the property of the monastery. Establishing such enhancements is, next to recovering property occupied by non-monastics, the most important theme of Daoyuan's tenure of leadership.

Two million RMB was spent in planning, designing and expanding the Master Hongyi museum and garden in the northeast part of the monastic grounds. A courtyard garden was created, which now stands before the Hall of the Buddha's Life (*bensheng yuan* 本生院), outlining this courtyard and surrounding the small Kaiyuan temple there are more than four hundred new granite sculptures each costing 7,600 RMB. The sculptures are based on a book of paintings by Hongyi's disciple Feng Zikai 丰子恺 (1898-1975) accompanied by the calligraphy of Hongyi. Called *Paintings to Protect Life* (*Husheng huaji*), the book was first published in 1929 and the paintings depict the content of classical poems and Buddhist tales dealing with the protection of all forms of life from insects to cows; Hongyi wrote out verses to accompany the illustrations.³⁰ They are expressions of art as well as expression of a Buddhist moral injunction to protect life. Daoyuan says he was drawn to this project because of both the Hongyi connection and the environmentalist (*huanbao* 环保) theme.

Daoyuan had a new two-story building constructed next to and in the same style as the building at the back of small Kaiyuan that serves as the Hongyi Memorial Hall. The new building is called the *Bensheng yuan* and was completed in 2007; it enshrines two gilded statues of Sakyamuni Buddha portraying his birth and his performance of

³⁰ Tarocco 2007:32, 71-73. The book was first published by Kaiming Books in 1929. For more on Feng Zikai see Tarocco, Francesca. 2007. *The Cultural Practices of Modern Chinese Buddhism: Attuning the Dharma*. London: Routledge.

austerities as well as fifty-eight granite sculptures depicting scenes from the life of the Buddha Sakyamuni. Due to the nature of the building, I translate *Bensheng yuan* as the Hall of the Buddha's Life. The sculptures in this hall were created at an expense of over four hundred thousand RMB.

In 2002, along the sides of the main gate, Daoyuan erected two large bounding walls reading "Dharma World of the Lotus-Blooming Mulberry Tree" and "Auspicious Lotus Blooming Peach Tree" referencing auspicious stories associated with the monastery [Figures 49-50]. The new walls adjoining the main gate were a symbolic statement indicating the return of Kaiyuan as a sacred space, as a spiritually efficacious place with an auspicious past. Kaiyuan like other temples and sites in China is full of inscriptions, steles and plaques; these texts in stone and wood are not as dormant as they may seem. They actively contribute to the experience of visitors, be they literate or not. For the illiterate their calligraphy, their age or sheer literary presence suggests a mysterious power. For those who can read them, they impress with their literary allusions, their antiquity and their artistry. To capture this active function of inscriptions at temples, Chau proposes the term "text act."³¹ As text acts inscriptions are endowed with the power to influence the perceptions of visitors, enhance the reputation of the monastery and ward off those who may wish to harm the monastery.

Daoyuan has not been particularly concerned with preservation in the mode of the Maoist- era heritage management association. His recovery, renovation and building has been directed at infrastructural improvements or institution building, rather than cultural preservation. This orientation may be expressed as revivalist (interest in renewing) rather than curatorial. He has expressed this orientation by not hesitating to destroy buildings

³¹ See Chau 2006:95-98.

such as the Venerate Site Cloister which he cleared to make an open space in front of the An Yang Yuan. In addition he has not been reluctant to replace cultural properties that have been damaged. He had the eight vajra protectors on the ordination platform replaced in 2006, for example, after one of them was damaged. He also had the Dharma Hall and Sutra Library demolished and reconstructed in 2008 (the contents and other salvageable ornaments were all preserved in storage), for reported structural weakness associated with damage from the Sino-Japanese War. Most recently, he ordered the restoration of all five Buddhas in the main hall when one of their heads fell off due to termite damage in 2009. I have not been privy to all of the details of these decisions, but some observers have debated the necessity of some of these actions.³²

The Fate of the Orphanage under Daoyuan

As Kaiyuan's recovery continued through the 80's and 90's the orphanage and school remained on the eastern edge of the monastic complex. After the death of Mao, the school was reconstituted and classes resumed, but no monks were involved in its operation or administration. Under Chinese law, religious institutes are not allowed to operate schools for general education and so what was once the school and orphanage established by Yuanying and the Republican Period trio of monks became a school operated by the state. I have been told that in 2003 a Hong Kong business person wanted to replace the school with a large building and make it a charity center in Quanzhou. When Daoyuan heard this he was angry and rushed back from a meeting he was attending in Shanghai. The temple had just gotten a computer and one of Kaiyuan's monks was asked to compose a letter to local officials in response. The monk typed for four hours to report to the government why this should not be done, why a tall building

³² Particularly with respect to replacing the eight vajra protectors (Interviews in Quanzhou, 2006, 2009).

should not be built so close to the monastery. The city officials joked that if Daoyuan cared so much that he should buy the school back. But Daoyuan didn't take it as a joke and asked how much it would cost. The official said that he might be able to help him deal with the situation for 10 to 20,000 RMB; Daoyuan immediately offered two million RMB which the man didn't hesitate to accept. This anecdote reveals something about the personality of Daoyuan that has enabled him to fight on behalf of the monastery to recover properties and remove entities that had encroached upon the monastery. Many abbots would not be able to deal with such situations as effectively as Daoyuan has and this is how the abbot has made his mark.

The students were immediately moved to a special school (*teshu xuexiao* 特殊學校) and the buildings that had been used as classrooms and offices became converted to other, somewhat peripheral, uses while others were demolished. The Hubao Building 虎豹樓, for example, is a two story structure which had been used by teachers, including offices and possibly living quarters; it now houses the offices of the Quanzhou Buddhist Association. The school auditorium (*litang*), a large room with many chairs and a large TV, is now used by a group of lay Buddhists who regularly hold *nianfo* meetings there.³³ Just west of this building is a two story structure which in the 1980's had served as an art school. The art school personnel were evicted and that building has become used as the guest reception area or guest hall (*ketang*); it also contains apartments for a few higher-ranking monks on the second floor. Lying in front of the guest hall is now a landscaped area which includes the Western gate. Through these measures the elementary school and orphanage has been wiped away from the landscape of Quanzhou Kaiyuan. The charity

³³ This group independently meets without the participation of monks; they previously met in a building behind the abbot's quarters and were moved to this space in 2007 or 2008.

established by Yuanying and Zhuandao had survived war with Japan, civil war and the Cultural Revolution, but, ironically, was unable to survive the revival that is underway in contemporary China. Losing the school and orphanage, while disappointing from the point of view of Zhuandao and Yuanying's goals and legacy, has been part of Kaiyuan's quest for greater autonomy. While the Republican period orphanage has been a prominent part of Kaiyuan's recent history, it seems that an attempt is being made to wipe it away from Kaiyuan's past. An article was published in 2000 in the national Buddhist periodical *Fayin* to mark the completion of renovations by Daoyuan. This two page article provided a sketch of Kaiyuan's history, specifically mentioning details of the Republican period restoration under Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu (dharma hall, pagodas...) and specifically omitting any mention of the orphanage and school.³⁴ I'm sure the omission was no accident; including it would have simply raised questions about its recent removal, which the Kaiyuan leadership would rather avoid.

Since the time of his becoming a monk in 1986, Daoyuan has become a politically well-connected leader of one of the largest and most important monasteries in contemporary China. Due to the nature of government oversight of religious groups, it is important, if not necessary, to cultivate good relationships with relevant officials. In addition to being a trustee in the Chinese Buddhist Association, the vice-president of the Fujian Buddhist Association and the president of the Quanzhou Buddhist Association, Daoyuan is also a member of the ninth Fujian Political Harmony Consultation Committee (*zhengxie* 政协) and a permanent member of the Quanzhou People's Congress. Daoyuan reads the *People's Daily* every afternoon and watches news programs and Chinese operas

³⁴ Wen Lan 文澜 2000.

on TV at night, sometimes after 11P.M. When I first met him in 2006 he had an image of chairman Mao on the screen of his cell phone. By 2009 he had upgraded to an I-phone and had lost the chairman Mao image. He is required to regularly attend political meetings, as are other high-ranking monks, so as to remain briefed on the state's views and policy on religion and the management of religious sites. He is responsible for managing Kaiyuan's income and deciding how to invest and donate large amounts of monastic funds (e.g. millions of RMB donated to charities every year) as well as what improvement to make on the monastery. One of Kaiyuan's monks has expressed that it is a lot of responsibility and a lot of pressure that most monks would find onerous and bewildering; it seems to be a job made for Daoyuan, who appears to relish the challenge of dealing with such entities and managing finances.

Daoyuan may neither be a learned expounder of Buddhist doctrine, nor a soft-spoken and gentle monk, but he has been the right person to fight to recover authority over the temple and its lost properties. In the 1980s, the monastery was occupied, not only by the two management committees, but by various non-monastic entities including private homes, an elementary school, an art school, a puppet troupe and a landscaping and gardening work group. The new abbot set about recovering full control of all of these properties by asserting his right as abbot to recover properties that previously belonged to the monastery. The prosperity of the times enabled the abbot to financially compensate the individuals that were required to move, thus facilitating his recovery of monastic properties and relocation of dozens of individuals—he spent millions of RMB in this fashion. Small Buddhist temples in urban areas are often surrounded by buildings; many of them occupy land formerly held by the temple, but, unlike Daoyuan, they have no

means of recovering that property. Daoyuan possessed the right combination of personality, energy, connections and access to money that enabled him to reclaim Kaiyuan's property for the Sangha.

Over a course of ten years, Daoyuan had recovered all the properties within Kaiyuan's walls and, in some cases, had properties cleared or recovered adjoining the walls. He has not only refurbished Kaiyuan's halls, but has built new walls and buildings (e.g. the Hall of the Buddha's Life, the abbot's quarters) and organized two museums (one for Quanzhou Buddhism, the other for master Hongyi). In addition to maintaining good relations with the various state agencies that have some level of jurisdiction over Kaiyuan, Daoyuan's focus has been on the recovery, restoration, maintenance and enhancement of Kaiyuan's physical plant, in short the "hardware" of the monastery. Put in terms of one of the frameworks of this dissertation, Daoyuan's tenure as abbot has focused on the revival of Kaiyuan in its institutional aspects. While this is a theme at religious sites throughout China there are also examples, close to home for Kaiyuan, of leadership that has successfully invested in educating and training the Sangha along with rebuilding. Here I have in mind Xiamen's Nanputuo Monastery which reestablished the Minnan Buddhist Seminary in 1984 and has become one of the most important training grounds for monks in all of China with hundreds of clerics in residence.³⁵ This happened, not because of the state, the CBA or lay activists (although their support was important); what was instrumental was the leadership of the abbot Miao-zhan 妙湛 (1910-1995) who perceived the importance and value of training clergy.³⁶ Daoyuan's leadership has influenced the present character of Quanzhou Kaiyuan; his successor will influence its

³⁵ Ashiwa and Wank have written the most detailed studies of the revival of Nanputuo. See Ashiwa and Wank 2006; Ashiwa 2000; Wank 2009.

³⁶ Ashiwa and Wank 2006:342-343.

future—just what that future will be remains unknown, but that there can be progress as a ground for training monastics is certain.

“Branch” Temples

As the largest monastery in the region, the earliest to revive, the one with the most impressive cultural treasures and the one with the largest gatherings of worshippers, Kaiyuan has been a base for ambitious monks to collect funds for the building or rebuilding of smaller temples in the region. Monks engaged in these activities of restoring temples are enhancing their status, to be sure, but they are also acting in line with a venerable and highly meritorious Buddhist tradition of spreading the Dharma (*hongfa*) by building temples. This phenomenon can be traced back as far as the ninth century at Kaiyuan when private cloisters for masters began to be built by the dozens. During the Republican period (1930s) the practice re-appeared as Kaiyuan monks collected funds from Southeast Asia that enabled them to establish small temples in Quanzhou such as Same-Lotus Temple (*tonglian si* 同蓮寺) and Muxi Temple 幕西寺, which, according to Daoyuan, was originally founded by Zhuanfeng for his vegetarian auntie (*caigu* 菜姑) disciples in the 1930s or 1940s.

The Republican Period phenomenon has re-emerged over the past fifteen years. I have learned of more than fifty small temples being rebuilt by monks associated with Quanzhou Kaiyuan since the mid-1990's; in each case they have installed themselves as the head monk (*zhuchi* 住持) or abbot of these temples. To date, the most energetic builder of temples in Southern Fujian has been Guangjing, the former general manager of Kaiyuan who having become a respect monk in Singapore, returned to Quanzhou with funds from Singapore to restore Kaiyuan and dozens of other temples. He is credited with

helping to rebuild 48 to 49 temples, the largest project being Nanshan Xuefeng. He rebuilt Muxi temple with funds from Singapore's Longshan Temple.³⁷ He had Same-Lotus Temple rebuilt and enlarged as a home for vegetarian aunties (*caigu*). When he died in 1998, leadership of this temple passed to his disciple Chuanjian 传建, who had served as Kaiyuan's guest prefect (*zhike*). Chuanjian now lives in Xiamen where he serves as abbot of Puguang Temple 普光寺, a temple he rebuilt. As for the current abbot, Daoyuan, he has raised funds and established himself as the abbot of Qingjing Temple 清淨寺 which is said to have about eight resident monks. Kaiyuan's general manager Fayi has funded the rebuilding of two small temples where he now serves as head monk, Shiting ("Stone Pavilion") temple 石亭寺 in Quanzhou and Lianhu ("Lotus Lake") temple 莲湖寺 near his birthplace in Hui'an. Daoxing found patrons to fund the restoration of two small temples on Mt. Qingyuan, which he now leads, Ci'en ("Compassion-Kindness") Temple 慈恩 and Amitabha Temple. If not for the prestige and visibility of being at a venerable monastery it is unlikely that Kaiyuan's monks and former monks would have enjoyed the success they have had in collecting alms for such ambitious projects. Monks that hail from smaller temples do not have the same ability, generally speaking, to attract such donations. Head monks at smaller temples typically attract enough patronage to maintain their small temple and the handful of monks or novices that live there, but nothing near the kind of funds necessary to build or rebuild a temple.

³⁷ When I visited in 2009, I was told that seven or eight monks lived there and that Chuanjian was the head monk. We sat and had tea with two young monks. This neighborhood temple was attractively appointed with a small garden and pond in front where children come to play. There are drum and bell towers, a main hall and a hall enshrining a 100-armed Guanyin at the back of the small, well-tended complex.

With the early restoration of Kaiyuan and its ability to attract funding from lay Buddhists abroad and at home, it became a conduit for restoring temples throughout the region. In 1978 there were less than half a dozen temples, in 2009 there were more than 420 registered Buddhist temples and as many as 100 non-registered ones.³⁸ Quanzhou Kaiyuan, the great fruit, has helped re-plant the seeds of Dharma in post-Mao China.

³⁸ Interview with Wu Songbai, 2009.

CHAPTER FIVE

Religious Life at Kaiyuan Monastery Today

In his 2006 study of the temple of the Black Dragon King (*heilong dawang*) in contemporary North China Adam Chau develops a notion of “doing” religion to capture what his fieldwork revealed as the nature of religion at his field site—the subtitle of his book is “Doing Popular Religion in Contemporary China.” In this chapter I adapt his notion of “doing” religion in order to best represent the religious life exhibited at Kaiyuan. While Chau’s object of study was a popular temple with no clerics (a “folk” or “little” tradition), he sought to develop a description of religious action that could be applied more broadly to Chinese religion; my adaption of it to examine the “elite” or “great” tradition associated with my study, monastic Buddhism, will serve as a test of its versatility.

Chau reviews the debate in anthropological scholarship that first emerged between Maurice Freedman (1974) and Arthur Wolf (1974) over whether Chinese religion is best considered as one unified tradition (the position of Freedman) or whether it is irreducibly multiple and we can only speak intelligibly about Chinese religions (in the plural).¹ Chau points out that this debate hinges on religious conceptions, rather than on religious behavior and proposes that focusing on practice rather than belief is a way to progress beyond this debate. He identifies a group of five modalities of “doing religion” in China

¹ Chau 2006:73-74. Scholars who have weighed in on the debate include Sangren 1987, Weller 1987 and Feuchtwang 1991.

which I have adopted with slight modifications to reflect the doings of Kaiyuan’s religious actors:²

Mode of Practice	Exemplified at Kaiyuan	In other contexts
1 Discursive/ scriptural	study, analysis or contemplation of Buddhist sutras or treatises etc.	Confucian or Daoist classics
2 Personal- cultivational	forms of personal cultivation such as meditation, personal sutra-chanting, <i>nianfo</i>	qigong, merit-demerit ledgers
3 Liturgical/ ritual	ritual practices such as <i>fang yankou</i> , feeding hungry ghosts, release of life etc. by monks	Rituals performed by other religious/ritual specialists; exorcism
4 Immediate- practical	aimed at immediate results but not requiring a religious specialist; Buddhist charms	divination, healing, talismans, use of spirit mediums
5 Relational	based on the relations between humans and Buddhas, bodhisattvas or deities/dharma protectors; includes making offerings, celebrating Guanyin’s ordination etc., building temples, pilgrimage	taking vows, celebrating deity birthdays, festivals

These five modes of doing religion offer a scheme for locating religious actors based on behavior rather than on distinguishing “elite and folk” or “great and little.” This focus on practice or “doing” is to be distinguished from the use of “orthopraxy” as a defining rubric of Chinese religiosity made prominent by James Watson (Watson 1985, 1988, 1993) who links orthopraxy to efforts of the state to “standardize the gods.” Although Watson’s notion of “orthopraxy” has been helpful in conceiving new ways of accounting for the diversity within unity that one finds in Chinese religion and it has also been helpful in drawing attention to the centrality of practice (over belief), what orthopraxy and standardization suggest is too strong to capture the flexibility and, in

² Chau 2006:75.

particular, the bottom-up nature of worship that I have observed among worshipers at my field site. Most importantly I am not dealing with a popular cult so there is less of a question of "standardization" along the lines investigated by Watson with respect to Mazu (Watson 1985) or by Michael Szonyi with respect to the Five Emperors (Szonyi 2007), Pomeranz with respects to the goddess Taishan (Pomeranz 2007) or von Glahn's study of the Wutong cult (von Glahn 2004).³ Here I explore the possibility of developing a more "bottom-up," "person-based" view of doing religion.

Scholars have used person-centered approaches, which focus on understanding the religiosity of individuals, to shed light on religious phenomena in China and India (Roberts, Chiao and Pandey 1975) and in Taiwan (Harrell 1974). This approach led to the recognition of what Roberts, Chiao and Pandey called a "personal pantheon" or "meaningful god set" which differed from individual to individual based on personal experiences.⁴ Other scholars have taken a person-centered approach to understanding sacred places (Roberts, Morita and Brown 1986). Chau combines these notions in developing his idea of a "religious habitus" which each individual may be said to have. The idea of "habitus" is derived from the notion developed by Pierre Bourdieu (1977); the religious habitus, which changes over time, is the sum of an individual's attitudes and behaviors concerning deities, sacred sites, religious specialists, rituals and the

³ In the case of Buddhism, there is generally less room for "standardizing" which Buddhas, Bodhisattvas or other members of the Buddhist pantheon are to be worshiped, at least in the contemporary period. The current state does, somewhat chaotically, enforce standards of acceptable practice in interpreting what constitutes "normal religious activities." Normal is understood to exclude the superstitious (*mixin*), and, after Falun Gong, [heterodox] cults (*xiejiao*). While the state's concern with superstition has impacted popular practices in contemporary China, it doesn't seem to have had any significant influence on religion at Kaiyuan. Xiamen's Nanputou Monastery, however, forbid the burning of gold paper inside temple grounds, the local CBA considered it a superstitious practice (Ashiwa and Wank 2006:353). This has not been a problem at Kaiyuan, hence my use of "chaotic" to describe the nature of the state's enforcement—interpretation and enforcement are far from uniform. Historically, of course, the state and clerics promoted members of the Buddhist pantheon in ways that could be perceived as promoting orthopraxy. See Chunfang Yü's study of Guanyin (Yü 2001).

⁴ Chau 2006:66.

supernatural in general based on his or her experiences with these items.⁵ Below I develop a group of profiles to describe different types of religious actors associated with Kaiyuan using a person-centered approach focusing on modes of religious behavior. The focus on practice is particularly important in China, where beliefs and notions of identity tend to be more fluid and less-committal. A groundbreaking survey of religious experience in contemporary China conducted by Xinzhong Yao and Paul Badham carried out from 2004 to 2006 found a striking disconnect between statements about religious identity (which we normally think of in terms of beliefs) and the behaviors and attitudes of interviewees. Regarding Buddhism their survey found that:

[O]nly 4.4 percent identify themselves as Buddhist and only 5.3 percent say ‘yes’ when asked bluntly whether they believe in reincarnation. Yet 27.4 percent pray to Buddhas or Bodhisattvas and over half think that their families and friends are the result of what they had done in a previous life. Even more surprising 77.9% tend to affirm the Buddhist concept of causal retribution and the doctrine of *karma*.⁶

Similar results were found for Christianity, folk religion and Confucianism—low rates of religious identification, high rates of behavioral and other forms of affirmation. While decades of anti-religious campaigns and propaganda must account for much of this reluctance to identify oneself as a believer in a particular faith, it is also the case that popular Chinese religiosity is not as susceptible to neat categorization in terms of doctrinally-based faiths.

Both Chau in his study of popular religion in China and Robert Buswell in his account of Zen monastic experience in Korea (Buswell 1992) explicitly raise the problem

⁵ Chau 2006:67.

⁶ Yao and Badham 2007:9. Their study was based on a survey of 3,196 Han Chinese (drawn evenly from ten provinces or municipalities, excluding Xinjiang and Tibet) consisting of structured (using 51 page questionnaires) interviews averaging 47.3 minutes conducted by 110 Chinese assistants in 2005. Three types of information were collected: personal and demographic data, and reports on religious experience and religious conceptions, beliefs and practices.

of belief in their studies of lived religion in East Asia; but they do so in different registers. Chau points out that the language of “belief,” so important to Christian religiosity, is simply absent from the discourse of the people in his study—“I seldom encountered any explicit talk of ‘belief in deities.’”⁷ While words for “believe” (*xiangxin*) and “belief” (*xinyang*) exist in Chinese people in Shanbei do not use them to describe their religious experiences.⁸ I found precisely the same phenomenon in my research in Quanzhou, people will say “I believe what you are saying,” but they do not say “I believe in hungry ghosts” nor do they speak about their beliefs (*xinyang*). The only time I’ve encountered the use of the nominal form “beliefs” is in conversations with more educated people, especially officials speaking about “folk beliefs” (*minjian xinyang*) or “freedom of religious belief” (*zongjiao xinyang ziyou*). This is the kind of language that Stig Thøgersen has referred to as “Ganbunese” (the language of *ganbu* or cadres), which he contrasts with “Baixingese” (the language of *laobaixing*, ordinary people) in order to highlight its politically constructed status.⁹ This way of talking about beliefs is the official and modern way of speaking about religion so that it may be categorized and thereby regulated. It thus belongs to the modern nation-state building enterprise of the CCP, not to the ordinary people who don’t even use those terms; it is not how they conceptualize the world. They have not brought critical distance between themselves and what “we” would call “beliefs.”

Buswell’s discussion of the problem of “belief” focuses on the importance of recognizing the “context of belief.” He points out that Zen beliefs cannot be adequately understood by reading canonical Zen literature such as the lamp anthologies (e.g. *jingde*

⁷ Chau 2006:60.

⁸ Chau 2006:60-61.

⁹ Thøgersen 2006:112 ff.

chuandenglu); hagiographies and other teaching materials offer idealized portraits of Zen experience, they expressly do not “provide an accurate account of how Zen monks of the pre-modern era pursued their religious vocations.”¹⁰ Buswell argues that non-canonical sources such as gazetteers and epigraphic sources are important for correcting the idealized views of Zen masters derived from Zen teaching stories and hagiographies, but goes further and insists that “much of the import of Zen beliefs and training may never be known, or at least may be prone to misinterpretation” without taking into account the lived experience of Zen monastics.¹¹ Buswell frames his concern by citing I. M. Lewis’ *Religion in Context* (1986):

As I. M. Lewis has convincingly argued, religious beliefs are ‘functions of situations and circumstances,’ and describing those beliefs is ‘meaningless unless accompanied by a minutely detailed exposition of their deployment in actual situations....The detachment of beliefs from their ambient circumstances produces gross distortion and misunderstanding.’”¹²

What Lewis says is relevant to understanding lived religion, religion as it is found in a living context. This discussion leaves us with much food for thought, for now I wish to emphasize two points. First, we must remain circumspect when treating the lived religiosity of Chinese people—it should not be expected to fully conform to expectations we may have developed based on normative accounts that are portrayed in elite corpuses of texts. We should not expect the monks and their patrons to exhibit the roles portrayed in the vinaya, Buddhist sutras and treatises, tales of eminent monks or Chan genealogies. They may sometimes think and behave in ways recognizable in Buddhist literature, but very often they do not. To give a simple example we may look at an account of the

¹⁰ Buswell 1992:5.

¹¹ Buswell 1992:5.

¹² Buswell 1992:5. See Lewis, I. M. 1986. *Religion in Context: Cults and Charisma*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 20-21.

monastic rule forbidding eating after the noon meal. Hackmann, taking normative oral accounts about Baohua Shan at face value, wrote in his *Buddhism as a Religion* that “the evening meal is forbidden...[the monks] are only allowed tea to drink.”¹³ Prip-Møller was able to clear up this confusion by spending several weeks at Baohua Shan and discovering that “drink tea” in this context was an euphemism for having an evening meal.¹⁴ This is now well known, but what a difference the corrected understanding makes for assessing the level of ascetic commitment of monks. What else, we should ask, do monks do or not do?

The second point to recall is that the Chinese do not express their religious identity in the neat and clear ways that are suggested by the labels Buddhist, Daoist or Confucian. Religious professionals may be meaningfully identified as Daoist priests, Buddhist monks, mediums or *yinyang* masters (geomancers), but non-professional religious observers are more difficult to categorize. With respect to my field site, monks who have formally accepted the monastic precepts (*shoujie*) may reliably be referred to as Buddhists or Buddhist monks, but the many visitors who offer incense and bow to Buddhas and bodhisattvas at Kaiyuan are another matter. Offering incense and bowing to a Buddha at Buddhist shrine does not make one a Buddhist—at least not in the usual sense of the term (which is more properly reserved for individual who have taken refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha). Scholars working on religion in contemporary China continually struggle to label such people. The unwary may refer to them as “believers” (e.g. Luo 1991:107). Xiaofei Kang “for convenience” has labeled them “lay Buddhists” (Kang 2009:236). Sangren has used “devotee” (Sangren 1983) and Chau uses

¹³ Hackmann 1910:241. Welch :482, n. 15.

¹⁴ Prip-Møller 1937:221.

“worshippers.” Individuals associated with Kaiyuan, both monastic and lay speak of two basic types of visitors to Kaiyuan: *youke* 游客 and *xiangke* 香客. The first of these terms is rather straightforward, it indicates a tourist (literally, “traveling guest”), the second term, which literally means “incense guest,” is slightly more problematic. It refers to visitors whose identifying rubric is their desire to prostrate to the Buddha and burn incense (*baifo shaoxiang*); I feel it is best rendered as “worshiper.” In terms of the modes of religious behavior listed above, these individuals are “doing” religion in the relational mode—they are maintaining good relations with the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. What other modes of religious behavior make up the religious life of Quanzhou Kaiyuan and what kind of individuals are engaged in the religious life there? We will first examine monks and their regime, then two types of non-monastic patrons and their activities followed by profiles of five monks and reflections on the contemporary Sangha.

RELIGIOUS ACTORS AND THEIR MODES OF PRACTICE

The Monks

First and foremost are the monks, their mode of religious behavior covers their gamut of the five possible orientations. The personal-cultivational mode includes *nianfo*, daily services and keeping the precepts; this mode of practice is the most important in shaping the communal identity of the sangha. It is represented at Kaiyuan and Buddhist temples large and small throughout China in the form of communal daily services which will be described below. It is also represented in the shaved heads, the robes, celibacy, sobriety and vegetarian diet of the monks; more than an external sign these five qualities reflect the precepts one has taken (*shoujie* 受戒) and is putting into practice (*shoujie* 守

戒). Though there are officially 108 precepts for monks, the five qualities just related are the only means I have heard monks or non-monastics use to distinguish the lifestyle and identity of monastics from non-monastics.¹⁵

Another communal mode of doing religion is performance of rituals on behalf of others (not directed at personal cultivation); this is the liturgical/ritual and some of these will be described below. All monks have entered into a formal relationship with the Buddha (relational mode) and thus generally respond to the presence of Buddha statues by prostrating. They also, especially if they join the daily services, regularly reaffirm their refuge in the three jewels (the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha).

The remaining two modes of religious behavior are represented in the lives of the individual monks, but there is no context in which they are formally enacted communally: these are the immediate/practical mode of religion (e.g. use of Buddhist charms) and the discursive/scriptural (reading/study of scripture). The study of scripture is, most likely, the least practiced form of religious behavior at Kaiyuan and most Buddhist temples in China. Most monk interaction with scripture is not in reading (*dujing*) or studying it (*xuejing*), but in chanting (*nianjing*) or reciting sutras (*songjing*) which are different modes of religious behavior (modes 2 and 3). Naturally there are monks who spend time reading and thinking about sutras, but they are simply in the minority, at least at Kaiyuan [Figure 79]. The only place I would expect this to be different would be at a Buddhist seminary, where one can expect most monks to be engaged in a more academic appreciation of Buddhist scripture. Thus, understanding the religious behavior of monks requires a person-centered approach which has been implied in the brief descriptions here;

¹⁵ See also Welch 1967.

some monks are more literate, others are not; some join the daily services, others do not; some participate in rituals, others do not. Their religious profile (or habitus) depends on their personal experiences and among the monks at any monastery, Kaiyuan included, one can expect to find a considerable degree of diversity in behavior, abilities, disposition and opinion.

The Monastic Schedules and Regular Rituals

The fundamental feature of life as a monk at Kaiyuan and most all monasteries is the regimented nature of it—being a monk requires following a certain regime. Monasteries vary in the strictness of their regimes; Kaiyuan is currently on the less rigid end of the regime spectrum. What that means will become clear as I discuss features of their daily life. I will first describe the daily schedule of monks at Kaiyuan, which conforms, more or less, to basic features of the daily schedule in Buddhist monastic contexts in China and beyond. I will also point out features of the weekly and monthly schedules and some high points of the monastic year, doing so will provide an opportunity to examine the various periodic ritual services that frame monastic life and provide opportunities for lay worship.

For monks the day officially begins at 4:00 A.M.; the basic features of the daily schedule are as follows:

Morning

3:30-4:00	Wake up board (<i>ban</i>)
4:00-4:15	Bell (<i>zhong</i>) - call to morning service – 108 times
4:15-4:30	Drum (<i>gu</i>) – 3 rolls to the beat of the Great Compassion mantra (<i>dabei zhou</i> 大悲咒)
4:30-5:40	Morning Service (<i>zaoke</i>)
6:15-7:30	Breakfast

10:40-Noon Lunch

Evening

3:50 Board to announce evening service
4:00-4:30 **Evening service** (*wanke*)
5:00-6:00 Dinner
7:00-7:15 Evening Bell– 108 times
7:15-7:30 Evening Drum- 3 rolls to the beat of the Great Compassion mantra
7:30-8:00 Evening Board

Morning at the Monastery

At 3:00 AM the monastery is dark and quiet, even the streets which run to the south and west of the monastery are quiet. The grounds are still and the shadowy silhouettes of the pagodas give an old world feeling that is lost once buses and motorcycles begin to buzz beyond the line of trees to the south and west. Just as one begins to feel that one is all alone in an abandoned temple, the silence is broken with the sharp sound of wood striking wood. It is very much like the sound of the bamboo knocker fountains found in Japanese gardens. Somewhat like the sound of a tile or small pebble striking hollow bamboo that aroused the mind of Zen master Xiangyan 香嚴(ninth century) to awaken.¹⁶ The striking of this wooden board is the duty of one monk who must arise before all the others, sometime before 4:00 A.M. and wake them up; traditionally, abbots would assign a habitually tardy monk to this task. This monk, who at Kaiyuan is heavy set, seems to waddle as he makes his rounds, striking the wooden board with a small wooden mallet.

The next individual to emerge is the monk who opens the hall of the ordination platform where the large bell and drum are located. I have never seen him enter the hall, he seems to sneak in and suddenly one hears the dramatic ringing of the bell—108 times,

¹⁶ Ferguson 2000:172-173.

followed by the dramatic and rhythmic beating of the large monastic drum. These sounds emanate from the slats in the hall of the ordination platform. The sounds seem to be amplified by the hall itself. The contrast between the bell and drum is quite striking. The one is sharp, piercing, ringing; the other, dull, droning and booming. This monk seems to be calling the day into being, raising yin and yang, using surprisingly lively *qi* on the bell and drum.

Slowly monks will begin to stir and emerge from their cells wearing their robes; typically they are adjusting their robes as they make their way toward the Dharma Hall in time for morning services at half-past four. The communal practice which may be considered the defining religious practice of modern Chinese monastics is the morning and evening service (*zao-wan ke*) [Figures 74, 76]. Pi-yen Chen describes the centrality of these services:

They [morning and evening services] denote the two periods of solemn liturgical practice held during early morning and evening, the practice of which is the primary duty of all monks and nuns in Chinese Buddhism. The daily service is the most important daily function in contemporary Buddhist monasteries. As the first and the last daily communal religious activities, morning and evening service has been designed for purifying the mind and promoting the religious sentiment of the sangha.¹⁷

The daily morning and evening services are based on the collection of *Various Sutras for Daily Recitation (Zhujiing risong)* published by Zhuhong in 1600. Young monks at Kaiyuan are expected to memorize these daily liturgies as soon as possible, if they haven't already done so as preparation for their ordination. The daily recitation helps, but one can generally see younger monks in the back rows mumbling along with the others or

¹⁷ Chen 2002:229

keeping silent, as they have yet to memorize what are to them the largely obscure passages of the daily liturgy.

The daily services are held at 4:30A.M. and around 4:00 P.M., before the evening meal.¹⁸ The daily services are the first thing monks do after rising and getting dressed and the last thing they are supposed to do before settling down for the evening; thus, it is meant to orient their lives towards communal religious cultivation. The morning service liturgy is centered around a concern with purifying the mind, thus establishing condition for a day of meritorious living. The evening service turns thoughts to the Pure Land of Amitabha, as one prepares to retire for the day.¹⁹

An important caveat is that monks with other specific duties (keepers of halls, office holders etc.) are exempt from participating in morning and evening services because it is thought to interfere with their other duties. The result of this “exemption” on religious cultivation is quite profound. Fewer than half of Kaiyuan’s monks attend daily services with any regularity. On the days I have counted the monks in attendance there have generally been about thirty monks, this number may increase to about forty on the first and fifteenth of the lunar month. This means that almost half of Kaiyuan’s monastic population does not participate in what is arguably the fundamental, if not only, form of communal religious cultivation at Kaiyuan and most other Buddhist monasteries in China. Exempting these monks from daily services would be more understandable if their other duties provided an opportunity for daily communal practice, but that is not the case.

¹⁸ The evening service was previously held after dinner around 5:30, but the time was changed to allow more monks to attend. It seems that too many of them disappeared after dinner.

¹⁹ Chen 2010; 8. Apart from the content, the form of the liturgy, including *dhāraṇi*, *sūtras*, *gāthās* (verses) and praises, serves to connect the sangha to the broader world of Buddhist scripture.

While it is unfortunate that more monks do not participate in the daily liturgical services, it may be comparable to the tradition of having an elite core of meditators who are supported by the rest of the monks. Buwself describes such an arrangement in the *Zen Monastic Experience*. The difference, which is no small affair, is that at the monastery where Buswell practiced, all monks were required to attend morning and evening services *except* the meditating monks. Thus all monks except a select number of administrative monks were engaged in regular communal practice, either meditation *or* the daily liturgies. The morning service that Buswell describes, however, is much less burdensome on the monk—it lasted about fifteen minutes, compared to the hour plus that the Kaiyuan service takes when fully performed.²⁰

The Components of the Morning Service²¹

Offering of Incense

Śuraṅgama Dhāraṇi (*lengyan zhou*)

Great Compassion Dhāraṇi (*dabei zhou*) – added lunar 1 and 15

Ten short *Dhāraṇis* – added lunar 1 and 15

Heart Sutra

Verses Praising the Buddha

Circumambulating Buddha recitation

Ten Great Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva – added lunar 1 and 15

Three Refuges

Praise for Weituo

Components of the Evening Service

Amitābha Sūtra

Mengshan's Rite for Feeding Hungry Ghosts

Gāthās Praising the Buddha

Circumambulating Buddha recitation

Three Refuges

Great Compassion Dhāraṇi

Praise for Qiellan

²⁰ Buswell 1992:38-39.

²¹ For a detailed account of the components of the daily service see Chen 2010:31-41.

As much as 80% of the morning service involves the recitation of dhāraṇis; the principal one being the Śūraṅgama Dhāraṇi which, according to tradition, was taught by the Buddha to Ananda to remove lustful thoughts from his mind; thus it is an important part of the traditional monk's training—lustful thoughts being a common distraction to the spiritual progress of men, young and old. It is considered a good way to begin the day. The Dhāraṇi may be said to have some meaning, but to most all monks it has no literal meaning, just sound. The chanting, driven forward by the rhythmic accompaniment of the inverted bell and wooden fish and punctuated by the chime and small hand cymbals, is meant to focus and purify the mind. The monks are arranged in rows of five on two sides of the hall separated by a central aisle leading to the statue of Shakyamuni Buddha. Over the course of the service, monks will stand facing front, then facing the other group across the aisle and perform prostrations.

Toward the end of the service the monks begin to chant “homage to Amitabha” while they are led out into the central aisle, around the back of the Buddha, and then zig-zag through the rows of cushions on both sides of the aisle. Three circuits are made before returning to their original cushions—this may be termed serpentine Buddha recitation. It is a kind of walking meditation combined with the fundamental practice of Pure Land Buddhism, thus it may be seen as an instance of the joint practice of Chan and Pure Land, which has marked Chinese Buddhism at least since the Ming Dynasty.

Pure Land practice centers around the recitation of the name Amitabha Buddha, the Buddha who has vowed to bring those who call him into his Pure Land. The practice was promoted in sixth century China as an appropriate form of practice for the age of

degenerate dharma.²² Practitioners believe that it is important to often *nianfo* so that it will become second nature and therefore easier to do at the moment of death when it is thought to be most important to make contact with the saving grace of Amitabha. *Nianfo* is also used as a form of meditation, chanting the name of Amitabha is thought to be an effective means of stopping the flow of thoughts and entering a state of *samadhi* or meditative absorption.²³ Amitabha's Pure Land is described in the Pure Land Sutras as a land of trees and ponds of precious jewels, stones and metals that is "pure and serene, resplendent and blissful."²⁴ Once born there one is destined to achieve liberation in the following birth. Birth in Amitabha's Pure Land has become the central goal of the average Chinese Buddhist. The goal is achieved by *nianfo*, but also by generating merit and raising the mind of compassion and enlightenment (*bodhicitta*).

Given the relatively low rate of participation in daily services, the dining hall, even more than the dharma hall where daily services are held, is a more important site of communal monastic practice for it is the place where almost all the monks take their meals on a daily basis ceremoniously and in silence, some using their own traditional begging bowls. Meals are called by striking the wooden board in the shape of a fish hanging outside the refectory. Once the monks have gathered in the dining hall the meal time dharani is recited and a monk makes a ritual offering of rice to hungry ghosts on a pedestal just outside the main entrance.

After feeding the hungry ghosts the meal may begin. Monastic discipline is on display during meals more so than at other times. When I have observed monks in the

²² East Asian Buddhism speaks of three ages of dharma of progressive degeneration: true dharma, the image of dharma and the latter or degenerate dharma.

²³ *Zhunan* or "stopping thoughts" using *nianfo* can bring about *nianfo sanmei* (Qin 2000:360-361).

²⁴The Sutra on the Buddha of Infinite Light a.k.a. The Larger Sutra on Amitāyus or *Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra* (T. 12 n.360); Hisao 2003:30-31.

dining hall they have been silent and focused as monastics are called to be during meals. I do not know if they are engaged in the five observances, but in their silence I'm sure some of them are. The dining hall is traditionally referred to as the hall of five observances: the observances or reflections deal with appreciating the labor that went into providing the meal, being fit to receive it and using the food to sustain practice. The proctor monitors to make sure that order is maintained in the hall; he strikes me as one of, if not the most, stern of the monks at Kaiyuan.

An unusual feature of meals in the dining hall at Kaiyuan is the absence of the abbot.²⁵ The abbot has a personal chef who prepares meals for him and his small staff of clerics. As a guest of the abbot I too dined with the abbot and members of his staff. The abbot's chefs (he has had three different ones from 2006 to 2009) are not professional and the food produced in his kitchen is not necessarily any better than that in the dining hall. At his evening meal, for example, he inevitably has a simple bowl of rice porridge or congee (*zhou*)—a Chinese comfort food, *par excellence*, but nothing fancy. The problem is the lack of communal solidarity that comes from not eating with the other members of the sangha; it serves to weaken the ties between common and elite monks. The latter frequently have the opportunity to take their meals elsewhere, with lay patrons, at banquets or meetings and the abbot and the three or four monks who live in his quarters never take meals in the dining hall. Meals with the abbot are typically times to discuss matters of monastic business, news or other mundane affairs and thus one less opportunity for contemplation, which monks dining silently in the hall of five observances are afforded three times a day.

²⁵ Presiding over meals is traditionally one of the duties of the abbot. I have seen the abbot of Balin Monastery eating with the monks. See also Welch 1967:148.

Meals are not prepared by monks, but by lay associates.²⁶ Upholding the tradition in Chinese Buddhism, all meals served are vegetarian. The food is simple, typically includes rice and three different dishes one of which is often Chinese cabbage, others may be tofu or some other vegetables or soup. Breakfast includes soy milk, vegetables and rice porridge. On special occasions they will have Chinese stuffed steamed buns (*baozi*)—a crowd pleaser. The evening meal is referred to at Kaiyuan as dinner of hidden [from ghosts] food (*tōushi wǎncān* 偷食晚餐). Apart from the rule of silence and ritualized dimension of the meals, the regular and communal nature is a powerful regulatory force in the lives of the monks. It provides a kind of regularity that promotes, in some sense, personal discipline and sets them up for success if they are motivated to practice forms of self-cultivation.

As the outline of the daily schedule indicates, the monks who are not responsible for monitoring halls or accompanying visitors or dealing with administrative matters have a good deal of free time. Monks use their free time in any number of different ways. Some may engage themselves in mundane pursuits (reading the newspaper, browsing the internet, playing computer games etc.). Others may be engaged in providing house calls; that is, performing rituals away from the monastery. Monks who do this can earn as much as 4,000 yuan a month, a high monthly salary in contemporary China. Others may be engaged in some form of personal enrichment (music, calligraphy) or study. There is one monk who is well disciplined and regularly circumambulates the courtyard of the Hall of the Buddha's Life and the Buddhist museum. Some monks can be heard reciting sutras in their rooms in the early morning. When I asked one of these monks what sutras he

²⁶ It is my understanding that they receive compensation for their service; in other words they are not volunteers, unlike the cooks for free-noodle day on lunar twenty-six.

enjoyed reciting he said the Diamond Sutra (*Jingangjing*) and the Dizang Sutra (*Dizangjing*). This same monk said he had previously read the *Lotus Sutra* and *Flower Ornament Sutra* (*Huayanjing*) as part of his self-education before coming to Kaiyuan. After coming to Kaiyuan there seems to be less time for self-study; monks assigned to the halls or other duties complained of having no time for such personal-cultivation.

Some may break their precepts (drinking, having sex/families, eating meat), but I have no confirmation of this beyond the complaints or concerns of certain monks. Across from the main entrance to the monastery is a sex shop and a few stores down is a place that sells home-made alcohol; I have asked both stores if the monks buy much, in each case the answer given was “not much” (*buduo*). This obviously doesn’t mean that all or even most monks do such things; but it suggest the possibility, if not likelihood, that some do drink and carnally experiment. Regardless of what some monks may do in their free time, I am confident that several monks at Kaiyuan are quite diligent, upright and sincere—models of discipline. We will return to the subject of monk discipline following the monk biographies provided below.

The same sounds of the bell ringing from the hall of the ordination platform, followed by the booming of the drum, which welcome the dawn, will end the monastic day from seven to seven-thirty in the evening. One day as I walked out after dinner, I encountered two monks walking together, circumambulating the hall of the ordination platform as they bell and drum were being sounded. It seemed to be part exercise, part socializing and part religious cultivation. Circumambulating statues, texts, relics and the like has long been considered a meritorious practice in Buddhism.

This concludes our account of the daily schedule and activities at the monastery. An element that is missing, which is essential to a functioning Chan monastery, is a schedule for meditation. From accounts of monastic life provided by Buswell (in Korea) and Welch (in Republican period China), not to mention Gushan in Fuzhou, Hebei's Bailin, Jiangsu's Gaomin and others in contemporary China, we know that traditions of Chan training have and do exist, they simply do not, at present, exist at Kaiyuan. Why not? The short answer is that there are not enough qualified teachers in China today and it is not a priority of the current abbot; as suggested in the previous chapter, his priorities have been tending to Kaiyuan's physical plant, raising money and maintaining good relations with state officials—the institutional side of Kaiyuan.

The Weekly Calendar

The larger Buddhist monasteries in Quanzhou all have weekly public *nianfo* or Buddha recitation days. At Kaiyuan these are held every Tuesday and Friday. The *nianfo* sessions are held in the main hall, which enshrines the five monumental meditating Buddhas of the five directions along with many other figures of the Chinese Buddhist pantheon (see chapter six). In addition, this hall is the site of all of Kaiyuan's major public ritual services such as the release of burning mouths (*fang yankou*) and various rituals to eliminate disasters and bring benefits. Most significantly, however, it is the site of the well attended twice-weekly Buddha recitation (*nianfo*) sessions and the monthly Buddha recitation which accompanies the offering of free noodles on lunar twenty-sixth. These gatherings of laypersons are significant because they are unusually large and attest to the relative vitality of Buddhist traditions in Southern Fujian. Approximately two hundred lay devotees donning the dark brown or black robes of a layperson attend the

twice-weekly *nianfo* meetings and the monthly lunar twenty-sixth meetings are attended by more than two thousand devotees, including more than three hundred who wear the robes of a layperson. The robes worn by laypersons are simply worn over their regular clothes; typically, they unceremoniously change into and out of these robes in front of the main hall. Approximately 95% of those wearing robes and regularly attending the twice-weekly services are older women (*lao taitai*). Monks lead the laypersons in chanting the Amitabha Sutra, which culminates in the recitation of “homage to Amitabha Buddha” (*namo amituo fo*) as all participants circumambulate the main hall in “serpentine” fashion. These services begin about 2:30 P.M. and last about an hour. When they are complete the monks quickly file out of the hall and back to their dorms to change from their ceremonial robes with bright yellow, to their regular robes of dull yellow or rust.

The Monthly Calendar

In Theravada countries the most important communal activities of the sangha is the fortnightly recitation of the Pratimoksa vows known as upsotha on the first and fifteenth of the lunar month (new and full moon days). This is a tradition that has not been important in China at least in modern times. Welch reports that he only knew of one monastery where vows were recited.²⁷ Kaiyuan does not have a tradition of reciting the Pratimoksa, but they do expand the liturgy used in the morning and evening recitations and more monks join the service at this time. On these days, monks file out of the dharma hall and burn incense and pay their respects in the hall of patriarchs. Lay persons and worshipers will also visit the temple, make donations, and burn gold paper in larger numbers on these days, considered days of greater auspiciousness.

²⁷ Welch 1967:110.

Lunar Twenty-Sixth Nianfo Day

Once a month the monastery is crowded with thousands of worshipers and lay Buddhists who come to participate in Kaiyuan's lunar twenty-sixth free noodles and Buddha recitation day [Figures 81-84]. Locals say that the tradition was initiated by Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu during the War against Japanese Aggression in the 1930s in order to alleviate the suffering of the locals.²⁸ At that time, noodles were offered daily, but now they are only prepared once a month, on lunar twenty-sixth. Regardless of its precise origins, the tradition of offering free noodles once a month has been institutionalized at Buddhist temples throughout the city of Quanzhou; each temple holds their free-noodle/*nianfo* day on different days of the lunar month. I visited a very small temple restored by one of Kaiyuan's monks in the mountains outside of Quanzhou; there were only two resident monks, but they had two huge woks and a gas burner set up expressly to make large batches of noodles each month.

Preparation of noodles begins in the days leading up to the twenty-sixth. Noodles are hand-made by lay volunteers and dried in the open air by laying them on plastic tarps which are strewn about the Shrine to Huang Shougong, the Hall of Patriarchs and elsewhere. Preparation of the soup begins the evening before the big day and volunteers involved in making the soup work all night preparing vast amounts of cabbage, bokchoy and beansprouts along with preparing the soup stock and eventually boiling vast amounts of noodles as dawn breaks. The noodles are prepared and cooked in a crude yet adequate kitchen area at the back of the monastery. The front gate of the monastery, including the

²⁸ Still others have vaguely claimed that it was a practice that began during the Qing dynasty; I have yet to materially substantiate either tradition. What is certain is that the local believe to be following a historical precedent in offering free noodles.

central doors which are normally closed, are opened at 4:00 A.M. By 8:00 A.M. the monastery is crowded with visitors, inside and out bearing offerings of flowers, fruit, vegetables, noodles, snacks, candy, incense, candles and gold paper. Four long tables are set up in two rows on the large platform that stretches before the main hall. Onto these tables visitors place plastic red tote bags of offerings.

Visitors light sticks of incense using candles that are set out and lit by monks in trays in the main courtyard in anticipation of the visitors. They bow to the four directions and toward the main hall before placing the sticks of incense in the incense burner in the main courtyard. The burner rapidly fills up and a monk is on duty to remove and extinguish incense sticks to make room for more. Some individuals hold their incense at their chest or foreheads, kneel on the stone pavement facing South, then North, absorbed in prayer. Parents and grandparents can be seen instructing young children how to hold incense, bow and sometimes kneel, socializing the next generation to these traditional forms of worship.

Essentially all visitors on this day will offer incense at the front (five Buddhas) and rear (Guanyin and Lohans) of the main hall and in front of the hall of the ordination platform (Lossana, Weituo etc.). Monks or lay volunteers are stationed at each of these locations to remove incense sticks from the incense burners to make room. Some visitors will continue to the Dharma Hall, but practically none make it all the way back to Hall of Patriarchs.²⁹ Space in front of the ordination hall is not very wide and it becomes extremely crowded on these days [Figure 83]. After offering incense and bowing to

²⁹ The hall of patriarchs only enshrines monks associated with the temple, there is no Bodhidharma or Huineng as one often finds; this may be one reason for its lack of appeal. Another reason, or perhaps cause, is the lack of upkeep to this hall; the shrine case is very dusty and there is no active upkeep or care taken in its presentation.

Lossana and the other figures in the ordination hall, many visitors will then burn gold paper in the furnace which lies immediately to the east. Worshipers will make cash donations at each of the halls, and, in addition, at special tables set up to the east of the main hall where their names and amount donated will be recorded. Donations at these special tables are associated with the noodle soup that is offered and considered auspicious; it is thought that one must donate according to one's means in order to receive the benefit from eating the noodles. Visitors generally make donations well in excess of the cost of the noodles and it is an important source of funds for the monastery. *Dāna* or charity is the first of the six "perfections" which Buddhist should strive to cultivate. While all forms of moral behavior produce merit, making donations to the sangha is the most commonly practiced merit-producing action of lay Buddhists. By donating to the sangha they are planting a seed in a "field of merit" and reaping great merit in return.

The noodle soup is prepared in huge pots which are transported by cart from the kitchen area to a largely open area between the main hall and the east pagoda. Ceramic bowls are provided, washed and reused; people may also bring their own bowls and many do. People stand in line waiting to be served noodle soup, which they take away to somewhere east of the central axis. Hundreds of individuals are spread out, sitting here and there, under trees, on steps and so on. Eating these noodles is thought to bring blessings and these monthly *nianfo* days now attract thousands of visitors each month and provide a regular flow of income to more than meet operating expenses.

At 10:30 A.M. a Pure Land recitation ceremony, like the one held every Tuesday and Friday, is held in the main hall. The only difference is the number of participants

increases from about two hundred to some two thousand. Two thousand people cannot fit inside the worshiping area of main hall, but about three hundred can. The major difference, however, is that when they begin to circumambulate around the main hall they will wind around the hall and then out the front doors. As they leave the main hall they are divided into two lines which go to the east and west pagodas respectively before meeting back in the main courtyard. Circumambulators will zig-zag around the courtyard three or four times before meeting in the middle and returning to the main hall, chanting all the while. After the initial group has left the main hall, the rest of the worshipers will file into the lines as they fan out to the east and west. In this way any number of visitors can join in the line of individuals led in reciting “homage to Amitabha Buddha” by Kaiyuan’s monks. Monks playing the wooden fish, inverted bell and chime remain in the main hall chanting, the sounds being broadcast over loudspeakers. The more than two thousand individuals chanting in unison as they completely fill Kaiyuan’s massive courtyard is a tremendous sight of living faith and devotion in a country that has only recently determined to allow such expressions to take place [Figures 81-82].

While the festive day usually begins at 4:00 A.M. on the twenty-sixth, in the lunar months of January and March, the central doors of the main gate are opened at 11:00 or 11:30 P.M. on lunar twenty-fifth. Hundreds of visitors crowd around the entrance and hundreds more gather in the streets out front. When the doors are opened the guests stream in by the thousands. It is considered especially auspicious to be amongst the first to visit and make offerings on these days. The scene on the street in front of the monastery and throughout the central axis is crowded, excited and carnival-like. Crowds of worshipers stretch up and down the length of the street that runs to the south of the

monastery. More vendors than ever are set up just in front of the main gate and along the sides of the street stretching beyond the entrance. Just inside the gate vendors at two tables sell bags of traditional Minnan offerings known as five fruits, six vegetables (*wuguo liucai*). People continue to pour in from the main gate from 11 P.M. until about 4 A.M. then, after a lull, visitors will begin to enter in large numbers from about 6 A.M. onward. The routine is the same as any lunar twenty-sixth at Kaiyuan, just longer, more people, more noodles, more volunteers, more donations, more offerings, more everything.

The level of energy on these nights, as well as on the morning of the first day of the lunar new year, is high inside and outside the monastery. I have been told that Quanzhou people like excitement and crowds (*renao* or in Minnan *lau-jiat*) and I witnessed the Quanzhou fever for such during the Lantern Festival (*yuanxiao jie*) in 2009. Near the Confucian Temple (*wenmiao*) in Quanzhou where a parade took place there were crushing crowds that reminded me of crowds at Mardi Gras in New Orleans. This love for excitement and crowds has been identified by Sangren (2000) as a feature of Minnan religiosity associated with the goddess Mazu in Taiwan. Chau also identifies this passion for excitement as one of the central features of popular religious life in Shanbei. In the local Shanbei dialect they say *honghuo* 红火, which he translates as “red-hot sociality” (Chau 2006); Chau identifies this quality as a fundamental mark of success in a religious festival, wedding or funeral, yes, red-hot social funerals (again reminds me of New Orleans). Not only does it mark an event as successful, generating face and prestige for the host, it contributes to the success of the event by forming an important component of the affective experience. Sangren (2000) has identified this quality of crowds and excitement or *lau-jiat* as an important dimension of Mazu festivals, which serves to

affirm the spiritual power of Mazu. Chau similarly argues that “Temple festivals are not simply expressions of people’s relationships with the deities; they at the same time construct and affirm such relationships.”³⁰

What these scholars have found with respect to the workings of popular religion, bears on the power and success of these lunar twenty-sixth events at Kaiyuan. Worshipers come because they seek blessings, Kaiyuan has a reputation as a place of spiritual efficacy and that efficacy is said to be enhanced on these days. A visitor with this mindset who arrives to an empty courtyard, would naturally question the efficacy of the deities/Buddhas/Bodhisattvas there; in matters of *ling* as in matters of secular products, people vote with their feet. If the same visitor finds a courtyard bustling with people and crowds jostling for positions in front of Lossana or Guanyin then the efficacy of those beings is instantly manifest—why else would so many people crowd around them?

The monthly Buddha recitation day is an important and unique institution in Quanzhou. It is the major source of income for monasteries and the major platform of interaction between temples and their communities. Kaiyuan’s lunar twenty-six *nianfo* day brings from 3,000 to more than 10,000 visitors and remains a cornerstone of Kaiyuan’s economic self-sufficiency bringing in some six million RMB annually (850,000 USD).³¹ Each Buddhist temple in Quanzhou, small or large, has its own designated Buddha recitation day, held on a different day of the lunar calendar—the third for Chengtian, the ninth for Southern Shaolin Monastery, the seventeenth for Same-Lotus (Tonglian), the eighteenth for Chongfu, lunar twenty-six for Kaiyuan etc. Given the

³⁰ Chau 2006:165.

³¹ Figure from interviews conducted in 2006 and 2009; income generated was certainly much less in the 80s and 90s.

number of temples, I am quite confident that it is possible for a zealous and resourceful layperson to attend these auspicious *nianfo* days every day of the year in Southern Fujian. Perhaps Southern Fujian remains a “Buddha country” after all.

The Yearly Calendar

The most important days in the annual calendar all follow the lunar-solar calendar which begins on the second new moon after the winter solstice. The annual events most important at Kaiyuan and providing the most carnival-like atmosphere are the three days marking Guanyin’s birth (2/19), ordination (9/19) and passing (6/19), the Ghost Festival (*moulian jie*, 7/15), and two Chinese (not especially Buddhist) festivals Qingming Festival (traditionally tomb-sweeping day, 4/4) and Spring Festival (Chinese New Year 1/1-1/15). All of these festivals are marked with additional sutra recitations that may span multiple days and a release of burning mouths ritual on the evening of the final day of the festival. The birthday of the Buddha (4/8) is also marked by the bathing of a small Buddha statue, but it is not a large event at Kaiyuan. Welch’s informants mentioned the same annual events with the exception of the Qingming festival; it may be that this festival is more popular in Quanzhou than other places.³²

Guanyin’s Birth, Ordination and Passing

Signs are prominently posted inside the main gate introducing upcoming ceremonies and the tremendous merit and benefits one will gain from participating, sponsoring or otherwise donating at these times. The day marking the ordination of Guanyin is celebrated over three days beginning on the nineteenth day of lunar

³² Welch 1967:108-109.

September (celebrated November 4-6 in 2009). To mark this occasion a grand three thousand Buddha recitation ceremony is held in the main hall over three days.

Worshippers are invited to sponsor this ceremony at levels of five thousand or two thousand RMB (700 to 300 USD) levels or participate at the fifty yuan (7 USD) level. Individuals may register their names with monks in the main hall from about five weeks preceding the ceremony. The names of the sponsors will be posted in the hall and they are said to gain tremendous merit for their support.

The ceremony involves the chanting of the three thousand names of the Buddhas using the *Sanqianfo gongming boachan* 三千佛洪名宝忏 over three days. A release of burning mouths ceremony is held on the evening of the final day. Regularly holding these multi-day ceremonies are said to generate tremendous (even limitless) amounts of merit which the monks have the ability to transfer to those individuals supporting these rituals. This merit can only be generated with a combination of ritual know-how and clerical manpower—Kaiyuan, unlike most smaller temples, has plenty of both and is therefore able to stage these ceremonies and bring in greater amounts of income while generating a lively calendar of religious events.

This ritual know-how, in addition to supporting the operations of the monastery, also translates into an opportunity to generate personal income for the monks involved in performing the rituals—monks receive modest amounts of money for their participation. Monks at Kaiyuan are all aware that ritual know-how is a profitable skill that one may learn at Kaiyuan. This is one of the reasons that monks are attracted to Kaiyuan; it is also the reason that other monks who prefer to cultivate knowledge or other forms of practice are not attracted to Kaiyuan, which is rightly seen as not providing a systematically

supportive base for such pursuits. I know of one young monk who sincerely wished to deepen his knowledge of Buddhism and meditation and was frustrated to find that such opportunities were lacking at Kaiyuan and therefore left. It has also been suggested to me that monks with less education from rural backgrounds are generally more eager to learn and participate in ritual services while more educated or urbane monks try to rise up through the clerical hierarchy.

Chinese New Year

Chinese New Year is marked with a 10,000 Buddha ceremony which involves the chanting of ten thousand names of the Buddha over the first fifteen days of the lunar new year (e.g. 2/18-3/4 in 2007) using the *Wanfo hongming baochan* 万佛洪名宝忏 (the first chapter of the *Sutra of Buddha Names* 佛说佛名经 T.14, No. 440). I was told that monasteries traditionally use ten days for this recitation, but Kaiyuan stretches it to fifteen. Buddhas, bodhisattvas and dharma protectors are invited to come and the chanting of the 10,000 names of the Buddha takes place in the main hall. There are three sessions of chanting in the morning and two sessions in the evening. The chanting is broadcast over loud speakers mounted on the main hall and a loud, somewhat noisy sound carries throughout much of the monastic complex, spreading a sonorous blessing of “Buddhaness.”

The ceremony is performed with the intention of bringing real and lasting peace and happiness to all beings. Lay Buddhists and worshipers are invited to make donations in order to be recognized as official patrons of this grand ceremony and thereby earn tremendous amounts of merit. Those donating at the appropriate level will have their

names and petitions (e.g. peace for the whole family) written on red slips of paper called tablets (*luwei* 禄位 or *paiwei* 牌位) placed in the main hall. An informational sign is posted at the gates and outside the main hall encouraging this form of patronage. The signs explain that the tablets will bring prosperity and eliminate troubles (*zhifu xioazai*). The signs detail all the benefits that will come to those who participate, most of which are worldly in nature (health, wealth, success in career, smooth work etc) followed by a statement of reasons more specifically Buddhist and religious in nature such as opening the Buddha gate and renewing the power of the Dharma. Patrons are invited to participate at different levels; one who sponsors the event with ten thousand, five thousand or two thousand yuan is said to gain tremendous amounts of merit. Other levels of participation are available for one hundred or five hundred yuan, but it is understood that the more one donates, the greater the benefit one will receive.

There were hundreds of these red slips of paper in the hall when I was there in 2009. At the bottom of the informational sign is written “Quanzhou Great Kaiyuan Monastery” and the contact names listed are all monks. This contrasts with other temples in China where ritualistic activities may be organized and money collected by non-monastics; such is not the case at Kaiyuan. Monks sit at a table just outside or inside the main hall where patrons may register their names and make their donations. This process begins about two months before the event takes place to enable patrons plenty of time to earn a place in the main hall to accrue the benefits associated with the grand ten thousand Buddha ceremony. On the ninth day a vegetarian offering ceremony (*gongtianzhai yi* 供天斋仪) is held at 7:00 A.M. and a release of life ceremony at 9:00 A.M.

The release of life ceremonies that I have witnessed have all involved the release of birds, most often small birds in long rectangular cages, but once doves were released and subsequently came to nest under the eaves of several buildings. The release of life ceremony is conducted with eleven monks, five standing at each side of a small square table set in the main courtyard and the lead monk standing at the head of the table, leading the liturgy [Figure 86]. One monk plays a kind of tambourine, while others play the wooden fish and cymbals. Monks wear yellow robes and chant; some follow along in small liturgy books. On the square table sits a small statue of Guanyin with flower offerings and a vase containing pure water and a willow branch. Behind the table is the cage of birds. All the monks chant common chants such as the *Great Compassion mantra* and the *Heart Sutra*; the lead monk sprinkles water on the animals using the willow branch, bestows the dharma upon them and the triple refuge. At the conclusion of the ceremony the cages are opened and the animals released. The first release of life ceremony I watched did not turn out so well for some of the birds. The old ladies in brown robes scrambled to tear open the cages, presumably to earn merit from being the one to release the animals. In their zeal, however, several birds were maimed, some seriously.

Sometime on the fifteenth day the tablets are all removed from the main hall in preparation for the release of burning mouths ceremony (*yuanman jixiang yankou* 圆满吉祥焰口), which is held on the evening of the final day of festivities. The release of burning mouths (*fang yankou*) ceremonies are the most striking of all; they are held in the evening and are more theatrical than any other [Figure 87]. The elaborate ritual begins

around sun down and last from two to four hours.³³ The leader of the ceremony sits in the middle of the hall, high above the other monks, wearing the ceremonial five-pointed Vairocana hat. All the monks chant the common sutras, mantras and verses (such as those used in the daily services) throughout the ceremony. In addition they use a text called the *Burning Mouths Yoga (yujia yankou)*; guided by this text the leader chants almost continually, and accents his chanting by forming mudras, sounding the dorje-topped bell and holding the dorje (or vajra) and other instruments. Below the lead monk is a large table at which sit six or ten monks, three or five on each side, facing one another. Each participant has a copy of the ceremony book which they use to follow along. Several monks ring dorje-tipped bells in unison. Another monk sits off to the side playing a large drum and a small temple bell. Lay persons kneel in attendance and offer incense when instructed to do so by the hall monitor monk. An additional monk is on hand to provide the monks with hot drinking water.

I have been told that the ceremony requires an odd number of monks; I take this to mean that there should be an odd number of monks involved in recitation, which is what I have observed. The instances of the ceremony that I have witnessed have had one leader, six or ten accompanying reciters, one drummer, one hall monk and one assistant, making a total of ten to fourteen monks. In 2006 I was told that a ceremony could be commissioned for ¥3,000 (375 USD), most of which goes to the temple's general coffers.

During the ceremony two altars are erected outside; one is set with offerings of fruit, incense and flowers for Guanyin, the other is set with offerings of food, oil, incense

³³ See Orzech 1989 for the Tang origin of the *fang yankou* ritual and Orzech 2002: 221-225 for a detailed description of the rite according to canonical sources.

and bags of paper money with gold leaf offered to a spirit tablet. The ceremony, held under the cover of dark, marked by melodious chanting, punctuated by bells and drums, makes quite an atmospheric feast for the senses. This tantric rite had been introduced during the Tang Dynasty and has remained an important feature of monasteries to the present day, in part for its ability to generate funds and in part by the demand for a ceremony which could benefit the deceased. As explained to me by one of Kaiyuan's more informed monks, the lead monk, through tantric ritual, embodies Guanyin bodhisattva and then descends to the realm of hungry ghosts, using mantras opens their mouths and offers them food, drink and instruction in the dharma, so that they may be released from their suffering. Thus the rite is called the "release [from suffering] of [hungry ghosts with] burning mouths" who can neither quench their thirst nor satisfy their hunger. It earns tremendous merit which those commissioning the rite typically transmit to benefit departed family members. Rites like this one and several others are performed regularly and add an unmistakable sense of living religiosity. Monks involved in these rituals engage in the liturgical/ritual mode of religious practice, a characteristic mode for monks anywhere.

Religious Activities Not Revived at Kaiyuan

Apart from the forms of religious activities that have been revived at Kaiyuan, there remain important forms of religious cultivation that would have been present at Kaiyuan as late as the Qing but have yet to be revived. One of the most obvious activities missing at a Chan monastery is a regular schedule of communal meditation. There is no formal Chan hall at Kaiyuan such as there is at Gaomin, Baolin and other monasteries in China today, nor is there a scheduled time for practice such as there is at the afore-

mentioned sites as well as at Fuzhou's Gushan.³⁴ One of the monks has described Kaiyuan as being Chan in name, but Pure Land in practice.

Another practice one finds revived at monasteries in China is the communal recitation of Mahayana sutras. Kaiyuan monks regularly chant the Amitabha Sutra on *nianfo* days and parts of sutras during the daily services, but they do not recite other classic Mahayana sutras. Other monasteries, such as Gaomin, have a hall arrayed with several rows of long tables, set with dozens of chairs and places to set sutras for group recitation. They will recite sutras such as the *Flower Ornament Sutra (Huayanjing)* and the *Diamond Sutra (Jingangjing)*. A final activity that I have neither seen nor heard of happening at Kaiyuan is the giving of a dharma talk by the abbot or any other monk, such as would have occurred during the Republican period. The activities that have been revived may be said to constitute the minimal form of communal practice required to constitute a contemporary Chinese Buddhist monastery (the morning and evening services).³⁵ In addition to these are twice-weekly *nianfo* services open to the public conducted by about a dozen monks and monthly *nianfo* services on lunar twenty-six. Apart from these regular opportunities for personal-cultivation in a group setting, there are merit-making opportunities in the form of providing ritual services to worshippers and laity and in the context of the annual festival calendar described above.

Non-Monastics

That monks rely on laypersons to support their vocation is a notion that is built into the understanding of the fourfold Sangha comprised of monks, nuns, laymen and

³⁴ I have participated in meditation in the halls of Baolin and Gaomin Monasteries (2009) and I have been told that weekly mediation takes place at Fuzhou Gushan by a monk who resides there.

³⁵ My understanding of this as the normative minimum is based on conversations with monastics.

laywomen. This is a case where canonical, disembodied understanding presents a certain kind of expectation that lived experience does not bear out, at least in the expected manner. Indeed, the monastics at Kaiyuan, are supported by donations, but it is difficult to say that the donations are provided primarily by Buddhist laypersons. Donations come from worshipers, some of whom are laypersons, but most of whom have not formally taken refuge and are not formally members of the Buddhist laity. As found in the survey by Yao and Badham they may offer incense to and bow before the Buddhas, but they are not Buddhists. The same individuals will go and exercise the same form of religious behavior at temples to Guanggong, Mazu or the Jade Emperor, depending on the makeup of their “personal pantheon.” These are Kaiyuan’s “incense guests” or worshipers; they form the majority of Kaiyuan’s visitors. Several of Kaiyuan’s monks decry the ignorance of these people about Buddhism; they say that the worshipers believe in gods that have nothing to do with Buddhism. One monk has said that as recently as the late 90s worshipers would bring ducks, chickens; he even saw a pig head being offered to the Buddhas. When he took the head away, a worshiper argued with him; he had to explain that non-vegetarian offerings were not appropriate in Buddhism. He says that people seem to have gotten the message. The first group of non-monastic patrons, then, are worshipers.

Worshipers

Among worshipers there can be distinguished three divisions, two of which are based on maintaining a proper relationship with the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. These are those who regularly come on lunar twenty-six and other major festivals, but who are not Buddhists. These individuals are locals who are drawn to the spiritual power of Kaiyuan

and the excitement and energy of the auspicious days celebrated by the monastery. I would estimate that at least eighty percent or more of these visitors are women aged forty and up.

A second type of worshiper, also maintaining good relations with deities are visitors and pilgrims who offer incense and bow to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. These individuals come because they have a concern or problem and they seek spiritual aid wherever it may be found, or they are travelers or pilgrims who stop by to have a look and pay their respects. The main difference between this category of worshiper and the first is the lack of frequency, which reflects a different kind of religious habitus or set of practical circumstances (they may not be local, they may be less pious etc.).

A third type of worshiper comes to Kaiyuan with a specific need requiring ritual action, either related to the death of a family member (*chaudu*) or a concern in one's immediate life, it could be for success in a business venture, concern about a legal issue or something else (*xiaozai*). Such rituals are most often commissioned by men, typically businessmen [Figures 88-89]. Although they are employing the monks in ritual/liturgical mode, I tend to think of these individuals themselves as operating on a much more immediate and simple level and therefore reflecting the immediate-practical mode of "doing" religion. They have a need and the monks will provide the service they request ("doing" religion in the ritual mode). Depending on the ritual requested, they may be present for the performance of the ritual. In such cases monks will instruct them how and when to kneel or stand and so forth.

These then are the three basic types of worshipers one finds at Kaiyuan and they are best identified along the lines of how they "do" religion at Kaiyuan. It may be

possible to elaborate further subdivisions, but these three groups are adequate to provide a picture of this dimension of Kaiyuan's religious life. This brings us to the final category of religious actor at Kaiyuan, the laity.

Laypersons

While the majority of Kaiyuan's visitors are not lay Buddhists, there are certainly Buddhists who are involved with Kaiyuan on various levels. I propose four types of lay-relationships. The first are those associated with the monastery in various capacities. There are non-monastics who work or volunteer at the monastery because they identify as Buddhists and wish to be close to the monastery, offering it support. I know a handful of individuals who fall into this category. These individuals give time and labor, more so than donations. Their mode of practice is best categorized as relational; their support for the monastery expresses a desire to support the three jewels.

A second group are those who regularly join the twice-weekly *nianfo* sessions, lunar twenty-sixth days and holidays. These are the older women, joined by the occasional man, who dress in dark gowns and regularly attend *nianfo* sessions whenever they are held at Kaiyuan [Figures 77, 80-81, 85]. They are engaged in personal-cultivation; they are preparing to enter the Pure Land. They may not show great sophistication in their understanding of doctrine, but they express dedication. Their reliable and strong presence at Kaiyuan's *nianfo* sessions provides a good deal of credibility to the public religious role of Kaiyuan monastery. As many as ten monks are regularly involved in leading these laypersons in the chanting of the Amitabha Sutra and circumambulation. Copies of the sutra are provided by the monastery and stored in the main hall for their use and there is no fee associated with joining these sessions. A

subgroup of this type is the layperson association that holds their own liturgical services and dharma talks. The monks have no relationship with these persons, the monastery simply provides them with a space in which to meet.³⁶

A third group of laypersons are those Buddhists who regularly visit the monastery on lunar twenty-six and other major festival days and on lunar first and fifteenth whenever they can. These individuals do not dress in brown robes as their primary interest is not *nianfo*. They are younger as a group and their mode of doing religion is relational, maintain a good relationship with their faith by regularly recharging their contact with the three jewel in a formal monastic setting. They regularly contribute to the monastery as part of their duty to support the three jewels.

A final type of layperson are those who have cultivated relationships with certain monks or the abbot and regularly visit with them; they may also take them to dinner. Every religious organization has people who get involved with it on a personal level. These Buddhists will have different ways of “doing” religion. Some are more interested in Buddhist thought and may do religion in the discursive mode and enter into discussions on various topics about Buddhist thought, practice, history or current events. Others are interested in personal cultivation and find it inspiring to be near monastics and enjoy cultivating a relationship with a member of the Sangha. Still others are more specifically directed at building a certain relationship with members of the Sangha (relational mode). Some of these lay Buddhists are invited to travel with the monks; invited to special events or ceremonies at other locations. These invitations may be based

³⁶ These laypersons used to meet in a building behind the monastery proper but began to meet in the old school auditorium in 2008.

on friendship, mutual needs to develop or maintain connections (*guanxi*), economic considerations or face; it enhances a monk's reputation to have lay disciples.

A subgroup of this final type are members of local and provincial offices of the China Buddhist Association who have relationships with the abbot and higher-ranking monks. They stop in to keep tabs on what is happening or to discuss an issue, meeting or plan. The relationship with these individuals, however, perhaps significantly, does not fit into any of the modes of doing religion; their relationships with the monks or abbot being based on a bureaucratic basis are not about reverence, patronage or keeping some kind of religiously-informed relationship.

Laypersons, Worshipers and Monastery Economics

The most common rituals that one may request at Kaiyuan and most other Buddhist temples are funerary rituals (*chaodu*) and rituals to eliminate disasters (*xiaozai*). Rituals to eliminate disasters are most typically requested by businessmen who have the means to order such ceremonies and live in a cultural context where it makes sense to seek help in one's ventures from the other world. Income from the performance of rituals, especially funeral rituals, rites to eliminate misfortune and the release of burning mouths ceremony were also said to bring in 4-5,000,000 RMB (500,000 to 650,000 USD) per year.³⁷ *Fang yankou* ceremonies are the most elaborate, they are performed between twelve and twenty times a year. Funeral services involve the burning of elaborate paper houses and other items to send to the dead; these ceremonies can cost up to 10,000 RMB (1,250 USD) for the most fancy paper house [Figures 88-89]. There was once a family that requested

³⁷ Interviews conducted in 2006.

three of these most fancy houses for a grand total of 30,000 yuan (almost 4,000 USD, more than a year's salary for an average working individual). Famous historic monasteries attract more of such business if, as they almost by definition are, considered to be extra spiritually efficacious.

In addition to donations offered at collection boxes on lunar twenty-sixth or made when commissioning ritual services, there is a steady flow of income from the burning of “gold paper” (paper embossed with a thin sheet of gold) in one of two special furnaces that stand next to the hall of the ordination platform. The paper burns and the gold falls to the bottom of a pit below the furnace where it can be collected by the monastery and resold. This is a common practice throughout Fujian and is said to be a significant source of income for temples be they Buddhist, Daoist or temples of folk deities.³⁸ Gold paper may be offered at anytime, even when a fire is not burning, in which case it will be burned later. Special holidays and lunar twenty-sixth at Kaiyuan see the burning of piles and piles of gold paper; it is also a common component of post-mortem rituals. The offering of gold paper is generally done in the immediate-practical mode of practice. In the process of burning the gold paper is thought to be transferred to gods, ghosts or ancestors and each of these beings is thought to have the power to bless the one making the offering. Gold paper frequently has a Chinese character on it such as “fortune” or “long-life” which is thought to be bestowed upon the one making the offering by the deity or bodhisattva.³⁹ The more educated monks frown on these practices as elements of

³⁸ According to one informant, Kaiyuan collects between 500 and 800 *jin* of gold per month (one *jin* is half a kilogram) is said to be collected or about 4,000 kilograms of gold per year. But I think there must be a mistake in here somewhere; it seems like an awful lot. Nevertheless, there is a significant amount of income generated, but I suspect it shouldn't be more than the amount generated by tickets or donations on lunar twenty-six which are each said to bring in about ¥6 million/yr (interviews, Quanzhou, 2006, 2009).

³⁹ On paper offerings of all kinds see Scott 2007.

folk belief and their prevalence at monasteries like Kaiyuan indicate the frequent intersection of folk modes of religion in “elite” contexts.

Profiles of Monks

We have examined the schedules and activities of the monks, but we have yet to meet any of them as individuals with a story. Brief profiles of five monks at Kaiyuan, three high-ranking and two low-ranking, will give a sense of the range of motivations and backgrounds one finds among a group of monastics in contemporary China. This will introduce the individuals behind the robes who, to an outsider, are too often a homogenous mass of monks. Names have been modified in the interest of maintaining a measure of confidentiality, although none of these monks requested such anonymity. The following accounts present portraits of monks largely in their own words.

Dali

Dali was born in 1976 in southern Fujian and visited Kaiyuan as a youth; he became a monk in 1996. His mother was a Buddhist nun, but during the Cultural Revolution she was forced into lay life; after the implementation of the new policy on religion she returned to life as a nun with her own small temple. Dali’s sister became a Buddhist vegetarian auntie (*caigu*); in short, Dali’s whole family has come to dedicate themselves in one way or another to Buddhism.

Since childhood Dali has had poor health which has limited his livelihood options to some extent. He tried his hand at business by opening a small retail store, but it was not successful. It was after this failure that he decided to try life as a monk. He originally thought he would try it for two or three years, but found that he enjoyed the life and has

remained a monk since. Dali has risen within Kaiyuan's hierarchy to hold a high position. He is young and not particularly educated in Buddhist doctrine or history, but he is handsome, thoughtful and good with people. He is so busy with administrative affairs that he has practically no time for advanced-cultivation or study and his health remains poor.

Farong

Farong was born around 1970; he is from Southwest China and does not speak the local dialect. After graduating from college he became a teacher of Chinese at a middle school in his home province. He didn't like it much, however, feeling that he was not good at it because his personality is too quiet. He likes to travel independently and every school holiday he traveled on his own. In China, tourist and travel destinations inevitably include many temples; visiting temples, he developed an interest in Buddhism.

He decided to become a monk somewhat abruptly during Chinese New Year holiday in 1997. At the time he was not happy about his work and he didn't like Chinese New Year celebrations; he always felt they were crowded and noisy. He went to travel in the mountains of Hunan. Staying in hotel, his roommate announced that he wanted to become a monk. This person told him a lot about how good life as a monk is: they don't need to worry about things such as food, money or clothes. His reasons were not about Buddhism in particular, but about the lifestyle. Farong decided to become a monk along with this other man. The two of them visited many large temples but none would take

them. It is more difficult to gain entry to large temples; they ask for proof of singleness, parent's permission and so on. It is much easier to become a monk at a small temple that has few monks, but they tried to go to big temples because his friend knew that life was easier at larger temples; smaller temples require more physical labor. One temple let them stay for a few days; it was there that Farong met a monk whose master was from his same province and suggested this master might accept him as a disciple. Farong traveled two hours to meet this master who did accept him as a disciple.

Before Farong became a monk he didn't know much about Buddhism; just had impressions from external rituals. His master was older, conservative and strict. He instructed Farong which texts to read. He was the only monk ordained at his ordination. Before ordination he had to take a test which required him to memorize large sections of the morning and evening service book; he passed after one week of study. He is the only son in his family (he has a younger sister) and his parents were not happy with his decision at first, but they have come to accept it since he is happy. Farong has also risen to a relatively high rank in the monastic hierarchy. He is one of the few monks with a university education; he has a beautiful chanting voice and in 2006 he regularly chanted sutras in the morning. He is well respected by laypersons and monks alike.

Deru

Deru is from Fujian. He had a job in which he earned 75 RMB (9 USD) per week; he switched to a job at a frozen meat factory where he could earn 1,500 RMB (200 USD) per month. Although he could earn much more money in this job, he never liked working with dead animals. One day his friend brought him to a temple where he learned

something about Buddhism for the first time and liked it. He went on to become a lay Buddhist and two years later he quit his job at the meat factory to become a monk. He recalls the day his head was shaved as one of momentous change. He was thirty years old and although he had had several girlfriends he was still single. He is now forty-five and has risen to a high position in the hierarchy of Kaiyuan. He is loud and energetic and receives many visitors.

When I first met Deru, he lived in his own room which included a private bathroom. Like other monks of rank, he has his own washing machine and furnishings that he has acquired, which include a wooden bed and matching tea table, made at a cost of 5,000 RMB (625 USD). On the small low table is a hot plate for boiling water for tea which includes a side for sterilizing cups. He has a computer with high speed internet connection which sits on a simple desk. His speakers continually play the sounds of instant messages being received on his QQ account which come in sets of three sharp raps on a wooden door. One also continually hears the sounds of the Amitabha mantra which plays over a small device which loops a recording of monks chanting to the rhythm of wooden fish and bells. This device sits on a shelf which is part of Deru's personal shrine which includes a golden Buddha, a photo of his master and an intricate white porcelain sculpture. Most monks at Kaiyuan live in relatively spartan conditions; I mention these more luxurious conditions because they are shared to some degree by most of the higher ranking monks at large monasteries, at Kaiyuan there are less than a dozen monks of this stature.

Anlu

Anlu is from Anhui and was a sickly child; he said nurses couldn't find a place to give him a shot in his rear or put an I.V. in his arm that hadn't already been poked. His principle complaint was a hardened part of his neck. The medicine prescribed for him cost 100 RMB (12 USD) per month which was too much for his family to afford. It was also said that for a person in his condition the best treatment would be to live as a monk in a temple, so he became a monk at the age of fifteen. He continued the medicine for one month then stopped taking it as his health improved and the hard area on his neck had cleared up.

He came to Kaiyuan because he hoped to learn more than he was learning at the small temple in the South which was how to play dharma instruments in ceremonies and not much else. He had practiced meditation from three months at another monastery and wished to continue his practice, but found the conditions unsuitable at Kaiyuan. He was disappointed with the lack of opportunities for study and meditation at Kaiyuan and he passed time practicing calligraphy before leaving for another temple after a year and half. He struck me as a young, earnest monk who wanted to practice and study Buddhism but was still seeking the best conditions to do so.

Bulin

He is the only son in his family and at the age of ten he decided he wanted to learn martial arts; his parents couldn't stop him from going to Shaolin Temple to study. He planned to stay half a year; it was harder than he expected and he thought about running away. Some older students had run away; he thought it was because they knew how to run away, at ten he was too young to figure out how to escape. He could have

asked his parents to get him out, but it would have been a loss of face. The first thing he did when he went back home was to take a bath with his Dad; when his Dad saw his legs bruised and his back with red marks all over it his Dad couldn't conceal his tears. When he went back home, his mom, sisters, aunt, everyone in the family who saw his bruises cried and tried to stop him from returning to Shaolin Temple. But feeling that after half a year he was just getting started, he didn't want to waste the pain he had endured; he also missed the friends he had made so he went back.

He first studied mastered the basics of elementary kungfu (*tongzi gong* 童子功); at the age of fourteen he began to study the use of weapons. Over the years he has traveled and performed all over China and Southeast Asia. When he turned seventeen he became a kungfu instructor but he didn't like the pressure, the workload or his boss who was tough on him and blamed him if anything went wrong. Some monks began to joke with him that his head was already shaved, why didn't he become a real monk where life was much easier? Bulin confessed, "To be honest that is the only reason I wanted to become a monk. I didn't know anything about Buddhism. I saw with my own eyes that a monk could receive a red envelope (*hongbao*) containing 2000 RMB (250 USD) just for burning a tall stick of incense for someone!" He couldn't believe it; the life of a monk was so easy, he decided to become a novice.

After a few years life was so easy that he got bored. He wanted to travel, try another place; a friend introduced him to Kaiyuan. In 2006, he, like other regular monks, was paid a stipend of a little over 900 RMB (115 USD) per month. He has no regrets about becoming a novice, but he feels that his life has been so easy and comfortable that he would not be able to handle secular life.

Patterns among Monastic Biographies

While the five profiles presented above constitute a small sample, together they present several patterns that are worth noting. Two of the five were sickly children; one of these became a monk because of his condition and the prohibitive cost of treatment. Four of the five were dissatisfied with the occupations in which they were engaged immediately before becoming a monk—one's business failed, the others were unhappy for various reasons. Two were partially influenced in their decisions to become monks by visiting Buddhist temples; a third by living at a temple when he was studying martial arts. Two were influenced by casual remarks made to them about becoming a monk. Only two of the five had much experience with Buddhism before becoming a monk, the others knew very little about the religion apart from superficial impressions. Two admit being attracted by the promise of a life of ease. This latter motivation is, I suspect, one that enters into the minds of the majority of Kaiyuan's monks and monks across China. It is not the only motivation, but it is a prominent one.

Welch gathered biographical information on thirty-nine Chinese monks from the first half of the twentieth century (twenty-eight from interviews and eleven from documentary sources).⁴⁰ Of these cases thirteen had some failure or disappointment and sought to escape the secular world, six had been ill as children, six had been orphaned, six liked monks and the atmosphere of monasteries, four were interested in Buddhist study and practice, two were persuaded by relatives who were monks, one wanted supernormal powers and one felt hated by his parents. The reasons provided are comparable to the reasons of the small sample from Kaiyuan. The most common reason

⁴⁰ Welch 1967: 258-269.

in both groups was disappointment in the secular world and a wish to escape. Two of Kaiyuan's monks had been ill and two were partially influenced by enjoying the atmosphere of monasteries and one was influenced by family members in the sangha. The only different reason of note provided by Kaiyuan's monks, not recorded by Welch was desire for an easy life. This reason is superficially similar to a desire to escape the secular world, but remains more solidly of the world—an easy material life, as opposed to a life of freedom from secular cares. Apart from this possible difference related to a more materialistic outlook, the other reasons suggest a good deal of consonance between early twentieth century motivations to join the sangha and late twentieth century.

Georges Dreyfus, who studied for fifteen years as a monk among the Tibetan community in Dharamsala, India, notes that “scholars (*dpe cha ba*) followed a strict schedule throughout their scholarly training,” while “most monks (*grwa mang*) lead a relatively easy life.”⁴¹ Thus in the Tibetan Gelukba tradition there is a split between the scholar-monk core and the rest of the monastic body. A similar split existed in pre-1950s Tibet as well. Goldstein describes two broad divisions among monks at Tibet's largest monastery, Drepung: those engaged in formal study of Buddhism, the “scholar monks,” and those who were not. The former accounted for about 10% of the monastic population.⁴² At Kaiyuan this would mean eight of the monks would be part of this elite group. Goldstein relates that the other monks were often illiterate and apart from some

⁴¹ Emphasis added. Dreyfus provides no details about the life of “most monks.” He trained as a scholar-monk and that is the life he describes in detail. Dreyfus 2003:65.

⁴² Goldstein 1998:21.

work obligations they were “free to do what they liked.”⁴³ This entailed earning a living because there were no communal meals nor a sufficient stipend provided by Drepung.⁴⁴

It is a split analogous to the Korean Zen tradition described by Buswell, in which the meditators were separated from the rest of the monastic body to focus on meditation. Dreyfus provides a detailed account of the training of the scholar monk, but almost no information about the lives of “most monks.” One thing common to monks in the Tibetan tradition is a trial period designed to instill self-discipline; Dreyfus describes the trial period as a kind of “boot camp,” which could last several years. I spoke to no monks in China who mentioned anything about a rigorous trial period; some were required to memorize most of the daily service, but that was to become ordained. Kaiyuan’s monks generally fit into the category of “most monks” described by Dreyfus as leading “an easy life.” What Kaiyuan and most other monasteries in China, are missing, however, is a core of monks receiving rigorous training. This lack of rigorous training is related to a lack of qualified, able-bodied and ambitious leaders, especially in the early years of recovery.

There is a kind of monk that was not included among these five who is a common type at temples across China. This monk is much like Bulin who was attracted to a life of ease, but unlike Bulin they are not masters of Kungfu, but they become, also unlike Bulin, masters of ritual, through which they supplement their monthly stipends. Some of these monks develop an interest in Buddhism, but others, if they are not kept in line through

⁴³ Goldstein 1998:21.

⁴⁴ Goldstein 1998:21.

oversight and discipline, may, as suggested above, disregard traditional forms of decorum and, even, the precepts.⁴⁵

Who are Kaiyuan's monks? Some are very serious, most are not; some are knowledgeable about Buddhism, most are not; many specialize in rituals, others in administrative tasks; some paint, write calligraphy or play the Chinese zither (*guqin* 古琴), others have no special abilities. The different profiles of monk that one finds at Kaiyuan and other monasteries reflect both the needs of monasteries and the vagaries of human ability and circumstance. A monastery must have administrative types and those who may serve in that capacity are often neither scholars nor contemplatives. If the monastery is to maintain a good reputation it must also have monks who are, or present themselves as, devout. If it is to meet the needs of a community that demands rituals it must also have monks with the ritual expertise and the willingness to serve them; such monks often have little or no time for self-cultivation. These few comments, applicable to any time or place, have already begun to bring monks down to a less idealized plane of existence. We now consider conditions particular to contemporary mainland China, which have brought on added pressures.

Unqualified Monks

Chinese temples are being rebuilt at a pace that many observers agree exceeds China's ability to train qualified monks to staff them. The narrative that I have heard from monks and laypersons alike runs as follows: Chinese Buddhism has suffered a

⁴⁵ Whatever disregard for precepts that monks at Kaiyuan may have is neither open nor wanton, so if they drink alcohol, eat meat or have sexual relations, which I surmise that some do, it is not done openly and I have not been privy to such errant behavior.

period of interruption (*zhongduan le yiduan shijian*).⁴⁶ This interruption lasted from liberation (1949) up to about 1979, some thirty years. Recovery began in the late 70s and was helped along with the recovery of the religion policy (*huifu zongjiao zhengce*).⁴⁷ During the period of religious suppression there were no active monks, without monks to serve as models and teachers, recovery began without sufficient guidance. When restrictions against religious practice were eased and temples began to be recovered for religious use, there were simply too few qualified monastics to tend these newly re-opened temples; as a result, there was a lowering of standards (*jiangdi biao zhun*) and many uneducated and marginally suitable individuals became ordained monks and moved into temples; many of these even assumed positions of leadership.⁴⁸ A good number of people ordained as monks did not have a firm belief in Buddhism or understanding of its principles making it easier for them to break precepts or make mistakes (*rongyi fanjie, rongyi fan cuowu*).⁴⁹

Why, one may wonder, would someone ignorant of Buddhism want to shave their head and enter the order? Some of the questionable reasons for entering a monastery include fleeing a marriage that has soured or a business that has failed. Others may be attracted to what they see as an easy life or even a path of socio-economic advancement,

⁴⁶ 中断了一段时间

⁴⁷ 恢复宗教政策

⁴⁸ The most scandalous result of this situation, if verified, would be the existence of clergy who are married (and have children). This has been the suggestion I have received from good authority, but not having been able to verify it or even corroborate with additional testimony, I leave it, for now, restricted to this note.

⁴⁹ 容易犯戒，容易犯错误。If monks are, in fact, wantonly breaking precepts, this would be a serious danger to the viability of their monastery. Maintenance of monastic discipline, in other words, keeping the precepts or at least the appearance of keeping the precepts, has long been the most important factor in maintaining the public's support of the monastic order. In her study of Ming dynasty Buddhism, Yü Chün-fang notes that "it was the monks' failure to keep discipline that always evoked the ire of the public, while their lack of doctrinal originality or intellectual brilliance was apparently a matter worthy of little comment." (Yu 1981: 143-144.) I concur that monastic discipline trumps doctrinal knowledge or meditational accomplishment in the eyes of the public.

a path that confers more status and/or income than other options. These have been presented and are assumed to be poor motivations for a religious life. But I will maintain that they are not, in themselves, damning. They are primarily damning to an idealized view of what monks should be. A natural counter to this might be, aren't monks supposed to conform to an ideal type! To such a concern, I would reply, yes, and add that in some minimal sense, Kaiyuan's monks do conform to the monastic ideal. If there are problems with monastic discipline they are not flagrant or public. Monks at Kaiyuan maintain shaved heads, they wear robes, monastic slippers, regularly eat vegetarian meals, live away from home and family and live in a devotional environment that inevitably rubs off on them to some degree. Monks conform to some measure of the ideal monk-type and in doing so they become different from non-monastics. Even if being a monk is perceived as a kind of job and if Kaiyuan is seen as service provider, as a purveyor of merit and spiritual efficacy, Kaiyuan's monks remain employed in a fundamentally religious role.

Michael Walsh has recently published a study of medieval Chinese monasteries, focused on Tiantong Monastery entitled "Sacred Economies." Without going into all the details of his multi-layered argument, he proceeds to argue that monasteries are sacred spaces as well as fundamentally economic institutions and concludes that monasteries represent "sacred economies." He begins by pointing out the economic nature of monasteries:

Throughout East Asia, and particularly in China, the sangha became, among other things, one of the most powerful economic forces in society. Those Buddhist monasteries in the Chinese empire that sought to accumulate wealth increased their chances of institutionalized longevity. A large Buddhist monastery was thoroughly institutional, that is, a social and physical structure that defined, imposed, and maintained sets of social values, and sought to acquire and distribute capital—economic, cultural,

or otherwise—in a competitive manner....Producing an income, and preferably owning property, was a necessity for early Christian monastic institutions; so too, it turns out, with Chinese Buddhist monasteries.⁵⁰

Monasteries saw survival as a paramount goal, the survival of Buddhism was seen to rest on the survival of the Sangha. This is understandable enough. The question that Walsh asks is how did Buddhists get land owners to donate their lands? In short, they offered a precious product in exchange, merit. They convinced the elites that being a good Buddhist meant donating land to the Sangha. We have seen how Kaiyuan, today, elicits donations during festival periods by promising tremendous amounts of merit to those donating significant amounts of money. In the medieval period there was a merit-land relationship; today it is a merit-cash relationship.

While the merit-cash exchange is a fundamental part of monastic-lay/worshiper relations and an important dimension of the institutional life of the monastery it is not the defining characteristic of intra-clergy relations. Intra-clergy relations are the normative *raison d'être* of the monastic sangha and should involve some communal form of religious cultivation or at least the opportunity for personal cultivation. These intra-clergy relations are the true core of the religious life of the monastery. This chapter has described the daily schedule of the monks marked by morning and evening periods of group practice (*zao wan ke*), framed by morning and evening bells and drums and interspersed with three communal meals in the dining hall. This constitutes the daily communal practice

⁵⁰ Walsh 2010:6.

of monks at Kaiyuan. Apart from this there are opportunities for personal cultivation such as reciting sutras in one's room, studying sutras on one's own, circumambulating halls, and meditating or chanting in one's room.

The previous chapter demonstrated the abbot's focus on the physical rebuilding and expansion of Kaiyuan; the present overview of religious life at Kaiyuan demonstrates an emphasis on Pure Land practice (*nianfo*) and merit-generating rituals. The following chapters will investigate further dimensions of the monastery so as to generate a more complete portrait of Chinese Buddhist monasticism at Kaiyuan; those important dimensions include material and cultural assets, its reputation for spiritual efficacy and relations with the state.

VOLUME II

**History, Material Culture and Auspicious Events at the Purple Cloud:
Buddhist Monasticism at Quanzhou Kaiyuan**

by

Brian J. Nichols

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CHAPTER SIX

Cultural Properties: Inspiring Reverence and Civic Pride

In the hall was a golden statue of the Buddha eighteen Chinese feet high, along with ten medium-sized images—three of sewn pearls, five of woven golden threads, and two of jade. The superb artistry was matchless, unparalleled in its day. ...The monastery had over one thousand cloisters for monks...decorated with carved beams and painted walls. The doors, painted in blue designs, had carved windows. The beauty of the cloisters was beyond description.¹

-Yang Xuanzhi 楊銜之 (547 C.E.)

Grass for a bed,
Blue sky for a quilt,
A stone for a pillow,
The world crumbles and changes.²

- Hanshan 寒山 (Tang dynasty)

Along the base [of Kaiyuan's east pagoda] are carved greenstones (*qing shi* 青石). Their magnificent beauty is effortless and sublime (*hua jing* 化境), fine and vigorous. It is supernatural work of divine chisels (*guigong shenfu* 鬼工神斧) that cannot be accomplished through human power.³

-Yuanxian (1643)

Buddhism teaches the impermanence of all compounded things, the inevitability of suffering that arises associated with attachment to such impermanent things and a path of “homelessness” and non-attachment leading to liberation from craving and suffering. In China, those treading this path in the most typical sense are individuals who have “left home and family” to pursue these lofty ideals in monastic settings. But monastic settings

¹ Yang Xuanzhi 楊銜之 *Luoyang qielan* 洛阳伽蓝记 translated by Wang Yi-T'ung 王伊同 in *Buddhist Monasteries in Lo-Yang*, p. 16.

²This is my translation of an excerpt from a famous poem attributed to Hanshan, a famous, possibly legendary, Tang dynasty monk. A bilingual Chinese-English record of the poem can be found in Porter, Bill (Red Pine). 2000. *The Collected Songs of Cold Mountain*. Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, pp. 52-53.

³ *Sizhi* 1.8a.

are often not what one might expect from individuals seeking liberation from worldly attachments. The imposing structures and relative opulence of Buddhist monasteries in China has attracted critics since the fifth century who have pointed out the incongruity between the accumulation of material wealth and the Buddhist path of renunciation.⁴

With two Song dynasty stone pagodas that soar above the surrounding neighborhood and a grand Ming Dynasty hall with five larger than life gilded Buddhas, Quanzhou Kaiyuan has an unusual share of both pomp and endurance. The grandeur of the painted and carved beams and the splendor of gilded statues at Kaiyuan and countless other Chinese monasteries make a not too subtle contrast with Buddhist ideals of simplicity and teachings on impermanence—they seem to say something other than “don’t be seduced by appearances; seek pleasure in them at your peril.”

If we take the forest monk or mountain ascetic as ideal monastics, then ornate Chinese monasteries like Kaiyuan suggest decadence. Similarly, if we approach the gilded images and the lofty pagodas covered with icons from a Protestant-informed bias against externals we too will reject them as spiritually inconsequential and unworthy of attention.⁵ A distinct lack of attention to material culture has, in fact, been common among scholars of religion who have tended to focus on creedal and doctrinal features of religion.⁶ This chapter joins the growing body of scholarship on religion and material

⁴ See Kieschnick 2003: 12-14 for discussion of Chinese critiques of monastic wealth. The *Guang hongming ji* 廣弘明集 for example contains the critique of Xun Ji (d. 547) who called for monks to beg according to the Buddha’s instruction rather than erect elaborate monasteries and store up wealth (*Guang hongming ji* 7.128c-131b; trans. in Chen 1964:187). In addition to critiques on moral grounds there were critics on socio-economic grounds as well. A memorial by Governor Xiao Muzhi of Danyang in 435 complained of the economic stress caused by the inordinate number of stupas, monasteries, paintings and statues (*Guang hongming ji* 6.127b) cited in Gernet 1995: 15, 321 nt. 75.

⁵ See Kieschnick 2003: 19-23 for a discussion of a Protestant bias against material objects in the study of religion.

⁶ Morgan 2010:xiv.

culture in seeking to appreciate the place of Kaiyuan's cultural properties in the religious and institutional life of the monastery.⁷

My decision to focus on Kaiyuan's cultural properties is a result of their prominence in the physical presence of the monastery, in modern (tour guides, Ecke and Demiéville 1935, Wang 1992, Wang 2008) and pre-modern (Yuanxian 1643) literature about the monastery and in local Quanzhou discourse. In addition, Buddhist monasteries and cultural properties are an exceptionally prominent feature of Asian heritage; one can hardly be a tourist in Asia without visiting a Buddhist site.⁸

Chapter five raised the problem of the traditional scholarly focus on "belief" in the study of religion and argued that practice or action served as a more revealing locus for discussing the religious life of the monastery. While the focus on belief and doctrine has also prevented scholarly engagement with the material dimensions of religion, David Morgan has attempted to shift the scholarly conversation: "Rather than marginalizing belief, we need a more capacious account of it, one that looks to the embodied, material features of lived religion."⁹ Morgan seeks to recognize the religious significance of material objects, not apart from belief, but as an expression and enabler of it. Kaiyuan's cultural properties will be found to exist in a variety of modes, one of which is a setting for ritual action which is predicated upon a body of belief.

⁷ The study of Buddhism has begun to redress this imbalance and several books have emerged with a focus on material culture; these include Gregory Schopen's work (1997, 2004), *Living Images* by Elizabeth Horton Sharf and Robert Sharf (2001), John Kieschnik's *The Impact of Buddhism on Chinese Material Culture* (2003), Germano and Trainor's *Embodying the Dharma* (2004), Fabio Rambelli's *Buddhist Materiality: A Cultural History of Objects in Japanese Buddhism* (2007) and Karen Gerhart's *Material Culture of Death in Medieval Japan* (2009).

⁸ Buddhist temples and art, especially in their grandeur, age or elegance, are featured attractions throughout Asia. Some of the more famous and grand sites are the stupa at Sanchi in India, the Potala and Jokhang in Tibet, Borobudur in Java, Angkor Wat and environs in Cambodia, Wat Phra Kaeo at the Royal Palace in Bangkok, the temples of Pagan in Burma, Heinsa in South Korea and many famous temples and gardens in Japan (especially in Kyoto, Nara and Kamakura).

⁹ Morgan 2010:7.

As a *setting* for ritual action, they provide context for and enable the possibility of ritual actions. My analysis seeks to understand the active role of cultural properties in arousing emotional responses and encouraging certain types of behavior. This approach may be contrasted with the perception of monasteries as “containers” for religious virtuosi, which ignores the physical structures, setting and discourses that form an important part of what a monastery is. James Robson notes the inadequacy of “a perduring tendency to discuss them [monasteries] as mere ‘containers’ for the actions of a religious community.”¹⁰ He points out that the “container model,” which is Aristotelian, has been critiqued by cultural geographers and philosophers of place and that productive studies of Medieval European monasticism have been based on a critique (explicit or implicit) of this model.¹¹ While the preceding chapter examined the religious actors inside the monastery, this chapter, as well as the following one, extends the examination of Kaiyuan beyond such a “container” approach. Before examining Kaiyuan’s cultural properties and their role in the life of the monastery, let’s review the broader context of Kaiyuan’s impressive array of cultural properties.

The Artistically Embellished Buddhist Monastery

The use of cultural properties to beautify Buddhist monasteries and attract visitors and patronage may be as old as the institution of the Buddhist monastery. The Jetavana monastery, near Savatthi in India, is held by tradition to be the first Buddhist monastery established. The historical Buddha is said to have retreated there during the rainy season and sutras designate it as the location of many of his sermons. It served as the model for

¹⁰ Robson 2010b:47.

¹¹ Robson 2010b:47. Studies on European monasticism from this perspective include R. A. Markus’ *The End of Ancient Christianity* (1998) and Am Remensnyder’s *Remembering the King’s Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (1995).

other monasteries and is, in short, the iconic Buddhist monastery.¹² Ancient texts speak not of austerity, however, but of its beauty, both natural as well as humanly wrought.¹³ The *Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya* (henceforth MS *Vinaya*)¹⁴ attributes at least a part of the Jetavana beautification plans to the Buddha himself. The text tells how the Buddha authorized Anāthapiṇḍada, the donor of the monastery, to have paintings made to beautify Jetavana and suggests how the artwork should be arranged. The text concludes the construction of this iconic Buddhist monastery with the following observations:

After the householder Anāthapiṇḍada had given the Jetavana Monastery to the Community of Monks from the Four Directions, and had had it finished both inside and out with various sorts of colors, and had had paintings done, then crowds of people who lived in Śrāvastī heard how the householder Anāthapiṇḍada had finished the Jetavana both inside and out with various sorts of colors and paintings and had made it remarkably fine, and many hundreds of thousands of people came then to see the Jetavana.¹⁵

This passage, celebrating the finishing of the Jetavana monastery, does not laud the completion of halls for meditation (*samadhi*), spartan cells for monks to keep their precepts (*śīla*) or didactic features to promote the dharma (*prajñā*). Instead it focuses on the “various sorts of colors and paintings” that made the monastery “remarkably fine” thus attracting “hundreds of thousands of people” who came to admire this new marvel. What the MS *Vinaya* indicates and what archeological discoveries in India have

¹² Puay-Peng Ho examines how the eminent Tang monk Daoxuan used the Jetavana monastery to create a template of the ideal Buddhist monastery (Ho 1995). His article also examines some of the doctrinal significances of the monastery buildings and their layout as conceived by Daoxuan.

¹³ The iconic nature of the Jetavana in China is evidenced by large numbers of inscriptions associated with the building or repair of monasteries that reference Anāthapiṇḍada’s gift of the Jetavana (Kieschnick 2003: 191).

¹⁴ While the *Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya* was likely redacted some centuries after the Buddha, it has been dated to at least the time of Kaniska (fl. 130 CE) and may be a century or more earlier. It records then, rules for how monasteries were to be operated in India before and during the time that Buddhism began to penetrate the Chinese cultural sphere. See Schopen 2004: 20-22.

¹⁵ *Kṣundrakavastu*, Derge Tha 262b.4 of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda vinaya*, trans. in Schopen 2004:35.

confirmed is that very early within the Buddhist tradition permanent monasteries were established and artistically embellished. Reflecting on the archeological record of Northern India Gregory Schopen asks:

[H]ow is it that groups of ascetics, celibate men who were supposed to have renounced all wealth and social ties, left such largesse in the archeological record; how is it that they, and sometimes they alone, lived in permanent, architecturally sophisticated quarters, that they, and they alone, lived in intimate association with what we call art? Something is clearly wrong with this picture, and there is a good chance that we have not yet understood the people in North India who handled the coins we study or the pots we classify.¹⁶

Schopen notes the wealth, durability and artistic sophistication of Indian Buddhist monasteries to which the archeological record attests and asks, “Why?” Indeed, what is going on here? What is behind this will to permanence and beauty? Buddhist monasteries in China (and all over Asia) offer a provocative parallel. The earliest and most impressive material artifacts that are valued as works of art in China and most other Asian countries are primarily found at Buddhist sites.¹⁷ The earliest of these finds are the sculptures of the Mogao Caves 莫高窟 of Dunhuang 敦煌 (from the fourth to the fourteenth centuries), the Yungang Grottoes 云冈石窟 in Shanxi 山西 (from the fifth century) and the Longmen Grottoes 龙门石窟 in Henan 河南 (fifth to seventh centuries).¹⁸ Among the most impressive and important remains of the Tang Dynasty are the clay sculptures found at Nanchan Monastery 南山寺 and Foguang Monastery 佛光寺 in Shanxi 山西, the Leshan

¹⁶ Schopen 2004: 19.

¹⁷ Of course tombs such those of the imperial houses of Qin and Han in Xi’an have produced important artefacts which predate the Buddhist relics. These items, however, were not intended for viewing and enjoyment by the living, but as part of Chinese burial practices. They make important tourist attractions today, but that was not their original intent, unlike the decorative elements of Buddhist monasteries.

¹⁸ For more on these sites see: Yungang Shiku wenwu baoguansuo. 1991. *Yungang Shiku* 云冈石窟. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe; Peng, Huashi. 1982. *Dunhuang mogao ku* 敦煌莫高窟. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe; Wang zhenguo. 2006. *Longmen shiku yu luoyang fojiao wenhua* 龙门石窟与洛阳佛教文化. Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe.

Big Buddha 乐山大佛 in Sichuan 四川(7th century) and the trove of exquisite ninth century treasures found at Xi'an's Famen Monastery 法门寺 in the 1980s.¹⁹ Examples may be multiplied throughout Asia: Borobudur in Indonesia, the Angkor complex in Cambodia, Heinsa Temple in South Korea, temples and gardens in Kyoto and Nara, the temples of Pagan in Myanmar and temples in Bangkok, Ayutthaya and elsewhere in Thailand. For ascetics who preach that all things are impermanent, in other words, Buddhist monasteries not only have an impressive ability to survive, but also exhibit a tremendous will to beautify.²⁰

The downright opulence of Buddhist monasteries in China was made explicit by Yang Xuanzhi, the author of the sixth century record of Luoyang's monasteries. He writes:

Princes, dukes, and ranking officials donated such valuable things as elephants and horses, as generously as if they were slipping shoes from their feet. The people and wealthy families parted with their treasures as easily as with forgotten rubbish. As a result, Buddhist temples were built side by side, and stūpas rose up in row after row. People competed among themselves in making or copying the Buddha's portraits. Golden stūpas matched the imperial observatory in height, and Buddhist lecture halls were as magnificent as the [ostentatiously wasteful] E-pang 阿房 [palaces of the Ch'in dynasty (221-207 B.C.)].²¹

In the case of Indian Buddhism, while archeology provides evidence of elaborate monasteries, the MS *Vinaya* suggests what functions such ornate structures may have had

¹⁹ For Foguan Monastery see Shanxi Sheng gujianzhu baohu yanjiusuo. 1984. *Foguang si* 佛光寺. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe. On Famen Temple's treasures see Shi Xingbang and Wei Han. 1988. *Famensi digong zhenbao* (Precious cultural relics in the crypt of Famen Temple). Xi'an: Shanxi renmin meishu chubanshe.

²⁰ There are lessons of impermanence tied to this will to beautify as well. A most dramatic example is the meticulous construction of sand mandalas by Tibetan monks only to "destroy" them soon after their completion (Thanks to Jianying for suggesting this contrast). Less dramatic is the constant maintenance required to keep a Japanese garden tended, the weeding, the pruning, the sweeping, the raking of pebbles and so on require continual attention due to the pressures of time on what we vainly seek as permanent.

²¹ From Yang Xuanzhi's preface to the *Luoyang qielan ji* 洛陽伽藍記. Translation by Yi-t'ung Wang in Yang 1984:5-6.

beyond any religious role they may have served. In short, passage after passage relates how the embellishment of monasteries allowed them to attract donors and inspire donations. The MS *Vinaya* does not explicitly state this as the main reason for beautification to be carried out, but there is, it seems, a regular enough association between accounts of captivatingly beautiful monasteries and the attraction of donors that such a message would not have been lost on the monks who learned this text.²² The passage cited earlier regarding the Jetavana demonstrates how beautiful monasteries could attract visitors. Schopen has collected several other references to the beautification of monasteries which include examples of the attendant riches such beautification could attract. In one passage traveling merchants passed by monasteries and marveled at their “high arched gateways...latticed windows, and railings” which were “like stairways to heaven.”²³ These merchants were “deeply moved” (*dad par ‘gyur te*) and made an “offering feast” (*mchod ston*) for the Sangha.²⁴ In another passage merchants are similarly impressed with beauty of an abandoned monastery and promptly set about endowing it with alms for sixty monks for three months with a promise to return and endow it for one hundred monks.²⁵ Citing these instances and alluding to others in the MS *Vinaya* Schopen writes: “Our Code refers to beautiful monasteries in beautiful settings, to paintings on monastery walls and on cloth...But in virtually every case these references refer as well—in one way or another—to the gifts and donations that such

²² The MS *Vinaya* was translated into Chinese around the year 700 by the Buddhist pilgrim Yijing 义净 (635-713); it was the fifth complete vinaya to be translated into Chinese and was never to receive as much attention as the Four-Part Vinaya (*sifen lu*) of the Dharmaguptaka (Yifa 2002: 6-7).

²³ *Vibhaṅga*, *Derge*:156b.4. Translation in Schopen 2004: 32.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ *Vibhaṅga*, *Derge*:184a.1. Translation and discussion in Schopen 2004:31-32.

things generate.”²⁶ Schopen’s conclusion is that art and all things that beautify a monastery also serve, in the eyes of the MS *Vinaya*, as a means to generate donations.²⁷

My study of Kaiyuan monastery supports the notion that cultural properties assist the monastery in raising funds, but I wish to penetrate more deeply into this phenomenon so that we may be able to determine a wider range of roles that cultural properties may in fact play at this site as well as *how* cultural properties inspire patronage. While Schopen’s inquiry is limited to the study of the archeological record, inscriptions and manuscripts, I am able to investigate the question of *how* by taking into account a further stratum of data, namely the ethnographic data gleaned from my fieldwork at Kaiyuan. Interviews and observations carried out over a five year period at Kaiyuan have provided me with insight into the importance of Kaiyuan’s cultural properties and how they are viewed by monks, laypersons, visitors and other members of the community. I have tried to determine what features of Kaiyuan are considered most important and why. I have asked questions such as “What makes Kaiyuan different from other monasteries?” or “In your opinion, what are Kaiyuan’s most important cultural properties (or heritage) and why are they so important?”

Kaiyuan’s pagodas, halls and trees were always included among Kaiyuan’s most valuable features by interviewees. Kaiyuan’s cultural properties contribute to the beauty as well as to the historic and cultural value of the monastery and play a crucial role in attracting tens of thousands of visitors per year, almost all of whom contribute in some fashion to the maintenance of the monastery. The very fact that visitors take such an interest in the monastery in turn provides authorities with a reason to seek its preservation

²⁶ Schopen 2004: 31.

²⁷ Schopen 2004: 36-37.

in the name of economic and tourist development; cultural properties that are several centuries old are not only objects of aesthetic enjoyment, they are cultural treasures that require preservation.

While many factors have contributed to Kaiyuan's relatively wholesale physical survival and its impressive restoration, its cultural properties have played a central role. Most noteworthy in this regard are Kaiyuan's Song dynasty stone pagodas. Not only do they serve as the markers of a Buddhist monastery, but they also contribute to its historic and cultural value which has brought it protection from the state.²⁸ Apart from the framework of economic and tourist development that one frequently encounters in discussions of cultural preservation in contemporary China, one hears about the importance of Kaiyuan's properties to the cultural heritage of Quanzhou and China.

In her study of Tanzhe Monastery, a large monastery that lies outside of Beijing, Susan Naquin notes that it survived the Cultural Revolution and asks, "What were the secrets of Tanzhesi's success? This essay has suggested we should look at the interconnected dynamics of antiquity, sanctity, and scenery, all of which played their part in shaping the physical structure, visual and written record, and personal memories of Tanzhesi."²⁹ In particular, she points out that representations of the monastery in literature from the Qing Dynasty onward focus on the physical and historic features of the temple such as its buildings, views and trees.³⁰ My study of Kaiyuan supports her general findings; it too has been promoted as a place of history and culture since the end of the Ming dynasty and it was this identity, predicated on material culture, that enabled its

²⁸ Similarly, Tracy Miller credits the survival of the Jin Memorial Shrine to the presence of the Northern Song dynasty Sage Mother Hall which was recognized an important heritage in 1961 (Miller 2007:103).

²⁹ Naquin 1998:205.

³⁰ Naquin 1998.

survival during the Cultural Revolution. What else have Kaiyuan's cultural properties enabled? We are now prepared to examine Kaiyuan's specific culture properties and reflect on the individual roles they play at the monastery today. This will be followed by a consideration of the collective impact of Kaiyuan's material culture on the life of the monastery. We begin with the most prominent and important properties, the Song dynasty pagodas.

Quanzhou Kaiyuan's Cultural Properties

The Purple Cloud Twin Pagodas

If one were to name the most distinctive architectural feature of a Buddhist monastery in East Asia, that feature would have to be the pagoda. Eugene Wang, historian of Asian art, has noted that Buddhist monasteries aspired to be utopias and suggested that “To this end, certain distinctive architectural features and signposts—in particular, the heavenward aspiring pagoda—imbue the precinct with religious overtones to make the enclave nothing short of a monastery. There is hardly a Buddhist monastery without a pagoda.”³¹ I agree that Kaiyuan's pagodas are distinctively Buddhist and religious—their primary religious function is to identify the compound as Buddhist. They do not guarantee, however, the existence of a functioning monastery. That requires a revived sangha.

As discussed in chapter two, Kaiyuan's east pagoda was first constructed in 865 while the west pagoda was first built in the year 916. Having been destroyed and rebuilt several times, the current east and west pagodas were completed in 1250 and 1237 respectively and rise to a magnificent height of some one hundred and fifty feet [Figures

³¹ Wang 2010:65.

28-31].³² The pagodas are constructed entirely in local granite in a local style which imitates monumental construction in wood.³³ A contemporary example of such monumental construction in wood may be found in Japan at the Great South Gate (*Nandaimon*) of Nara's Todaiji.³⁴ Due to their similar height and appearance, Kaiyuan's east and west pagodas are often called the twin towers (*shuang ta* 双塔), or the Purple Cloud Twin Pagodas (*ziyun shuang ta* 紫云双塔). The reference to purple clouds alludes back to the founding of the monastery in the seventh century when an auspicious purple cloud covered the ground during the construction of the main hall; since then, the monastery has been nicknamed the "Purple Cloud."³⁵

Each five-story pagoda is decorated with eighty life-size sculptures in middle relief depicting figures from Buddhist history and lore such as arhats, patriarchs, bodhisattvas, eminent monks and guardians. Among the more noteworthy figures are sculptures of the monkey king, Sun Wukong 孙悟空 [see figure 32], and Guanyin (Avalokiteśvara) bodhisattva depicted as a male with a moustache on the west Pagoda and, on the east Pagoda, a potbellied Xuanzang accompanied by a small monkey figure [Figures 32-33].³⁶ The greenstone reliefs along the base of the East Pagoda are especially

³² Dates of construction for the pagodas is found in Yuanxian 1643:I.6b-9a.

³³ For more on the pagodas see Ecke and Demiéville 1935 and Wang Hanfeng 王寒枫. 1992. *Quanzhou's East and West Pagodas, Quanzhou Dong Xi Ta* 泉州东西塔. Fuzhou: Fujian Renmin chubanshe 福建人民出版社. Also see chapter two, pp. 94-96.

³⁴ See Ecke and Demiéville 1935: 9. In Chinese see Wang Hanfeng 王寒枫. 1992. *Quanzhou's East and West Pagodas, Quanzhou Dong Xi Ta* 泉州东西塔. Fuzhou: Fujian Renmin chubanshe 福建人民出版社.

³⁵ See chapter two.

³⁶ The suggestion, quite naturally, is that the artisans responsible for building the east and west pagodas in the thirteenth century were familiar with an oral version of the extraordinarily popular Chinese epic *Journey to the West* (*Xiyouji* 西游记) which features the monkey king, Sun Wukong and Chinese the Buddhist pilgrim Xuanzang and was not written down until the Ming Dynasty several centuries later. Sun Wukong is modeled after the monkey king of the important Hindu epic the Ramayana and Quanzhou was most certainly a place where this legend would have entered China (the port of Guangzhou would be another) and was likely narrated by members of Quanzhou's Indian community. Another researcher may wish to look into the history of wooden puppet making in Quanzhou, which is a celebrated local craft, to

noteworthy for both their artistic beauty as well as the knowledge of Indian Buddhist scripture they disclose. Writing about these sculptures in 1935, the eminent Buddhologist Paul Demiéville practically gushed, "Such a vivid and comprehensive 'Bible de pierre' [Bible of stone] is hardly to be found elsewhere in the Far East."³⁷

The West pagoda received its name after an auspicious green and yellow light is said to have emanated from its top and turned into five colored lights that remained throughout the night. Local officials reported this event of October 10, 1114 to emperor Huizong 徽宗 who then renamed the pagoda "Benevolence and Longevity" (*renshou* 仁寿),³⁸ a name it has retained down to the present. It is this name which is engraved in stone on the south face of the west pagoda while "Pagoda which Stabilizes the Country" (*zhenguo ta*) is engraved on the south face of the east pagoda. The twin pagodas stand today as solemn and graceful reminders of Kaiyuan's glorious past and of Quanzhou's golden age.

Surviving massive earthquakes that have leveled buildings in Quanzhou, especially the earthquake of 1604 with a magnitude of about 8.08,³⁹ the east and west pagodas of Kaiyuan have held their ground, dominating the skyline of central Quanzhou for more than seven hundred and fifty years. After seeing scores of mutilated sculptures in China with missing heads, I continually marvel at the ability of the sculptures at the base of the east pagoda to survive complete with heads, made all the more remarkable

see if it is possible to determine how early puppets were made of the monkey king in Quanzhou. As for Guanyin, she is most commonly depicted in Chinese art as a woman, "she" appears as male twice at Kaiyuan, a Tang dynasty stone sculpture in the round and the relief on the west pagoda. Again, this suggests the influence of India where Guanyin was a male (Avalokiteśvara).

³⁷Ecke and Demiéville 1935:81.

³⁸*Sizhi* 1.8b.

³⁹"A Seismic History of the Twin Pagodas of Quanzhou" - stone inscription on site at Kaiyuan monastery.

given that their location is easily accessible to young and old alike with no barrier or guards to protect them.

Today, Kaiyuan's pagodas are the most common symbols of Quanzhou and appear on countless tourist publications, advertisements and web pages [Figures 23-27]. While there is a single stone pagoda similar in design to Kaiyuan's, which served as a lighthouse on the coast during the Song and Yuan dynasties, there is nothing comparable in all of China to Quanzhou Kaiyuan's pair of pagodas in their combination of age, artistry and stateliness.⁴⁰ The role they have assumed as valuable cultural symbols for the people of Quanzhou has assisted the maintenance and protection necessary for their survival as well as that of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery.⁴¹

They have assisted the maintenance and protection of Kaiyuan by creating an affective bond with the people of Quanzhou. Yi-fu Tuan developed a notion of "topophilia" to describe "the affective bond between people and place or setting."⁴² Tuan represents an early, if not the first, attempt to bring to the attention of geographers the importance of human emotion and attachment in the significance of geographic environments, place, both natural and built environments.⁴³ My research has found an

⁴⁰This other pagoda is a stone Song Dynasty lighthouse known Shihu Pagoda 石湖塔 ("Stone Lake Pagoda") which welcomed ships to the first and southernmost port of Quanzhou at the mouth of the Jinjiang River as early as the Northern Song Dynasty. It was built around 1113 thus predating Kaiyuan's twin pagodas by over a century. Quanzhou's second port is located in Houzhu Bay 后渚 at the mouth of the Luoyang River.

⁴¹ Pagodas traditionally represent the Buddha by marking the enshrinement of relics of the Buddha or his disciples. The when the east pagoda was first built in the ninth century, Buddha relics were installed. No records indicate what may be installed below the west pagoda, but relics and/or other items may be presumed to exist. While Kaiyuan's pagodas thus possess these Buddhist significances, these concerns did not emerge as important factors in my interviews. For this reason, this traditional doctrinal significance is not included in the discussion here.

⁴² Tuan 1974:4.

⁴³ This is a discussion which relates a field of inquiry known as human geography.

affective bond of two varieties, civic pride and reverence, which will be explored below after reviewing Kaiyuan's other cultural properties.⁴⁴

The Amrita Ordination Platform (Ganlu jietan 甘露戒坛)

The *Monastery Record* relates the early history of Kaiyuan's Amrita Ordination Platform as follows:

In 1019 (third year of the *Tianxi* period of the Song), the government promulgated the *pudu* 普度,⁴⁵ a call for universal ordination, and monks began to construct the ordination platform. In 1128 (the second year of *Jianyan*), because the platform structure was not in line with ancient tradition, the monk Dunzhao 敦炤 rebuilt it according to an ancient [Nanshan Ordination Platform] illustrated sutra (*gu tujing* 古图经).⁴⁶

The earliest date for the construction of an ordination platform at Kaiyuan is thus 1019 of the Northern Song.⁴⁷ About a century later, Dunzhao, determining that this platform was not built according to the great vinaya master Daoxuan's 道宣 (596-667) specifications, set out to rebuild it in 1128 in accordance with Daoxuan's *Nanshan Ordination Platform Illustrated Sutra (Nanshan jietan tujing* 南山戒坛图经). The platform supported an array of statues and had five levels representing the five bodies of the Buddha (the five-

⁴⁴ The environment of my focus is a human build one and the phenomenon that I examine is different from the related category of "geopiety," which is a term first used by J. K. Wright in 1947 to describe the "thoughtful piety aroused by human awareness of the natural world and geographical space" (Johnson et al. 1994: 308).

⁴⁵ *Pudu* would appear to refer to a *pudu sengni* 普度僧尼 which was a periodic call for "universal tonsure and ordination" that the government might use for celebratory reasons in which restrictions on ordinations were lifted for a period of time. The 1019 *pudu* was ordered by emperor Shenzong. For a comparative description between the Daoist *pudu* to the Buddhist *fang yankou* see Orzech 2002:213-234.

⁴⁶ *Sizhi* I.3b. The text used was the *Nanshan Jietan Tujing* 南山戒坛图经

⁴⁷ Yuanxian apparently had no reliable record of the construction of an ordination platform at Kaiyuan before the one of 1019 or he would have mentioned it; nevertheless, the *Monastery Record* records that the monk Hongze was invited to administer monastic precepts by prefect Wang Shengui in 894 and that Wang Yanbin built the Establishing Dharma Cloister (*Jianfa* 建法) for him in 905 at Kaiyuan, thus suggesting that some structure was used for ordinations at that earlier period, unfortunately no additional record has been found for it. *Sizhi* I.21b.

part *dharmakaya*).⁴⁸ According to the *Monastery Record*, the emperor Gaozong 高宗 bestowed Dunzhao's platform with the name “Amrita Ordination Platform,” the name by which it remains known today. While “amrita” (*ganlu* 甘露), a metaphor for nirvana, is a traditional name for ordination platforms in China,⁴⁹ local tradition holds that the name is also derived from a Tang dynasty well known as the Amrita Well (*ganlu jing* 甘露井) which sits below the platform.

In 1327, the ordination platform was memorialized as one of Kaiyuan monastery's "Six Unique Sites."⁵⁰ It was destroyed in the fire of 1357 and rebuilt under the direction of master Zhengying in 1400 and again in 1666.⁵¹ The relics that were brought to the hall from Fuzhou's Gushan (Mt. Drum) in 1688 are said to remain in the hall today, inside a reliquary stupa. Although it has been renovated at various times over the centuries, it is thought that the early Qing dynasty structure is basis for the structure which stands today [Figure 13].⁵²

Its complex octagonal roof culminates in the *ruyi dougong* 如意斗拱 style which resembles a spider web. Twenty-four apsaras (*feitian* 飞天) holding musical instruments of the Nanyin 南音 tradition are carved into the brackets supporting the ceiling [Figures 15-16]. Nanyin music is native to Quanzhou and Minnan; study of the instruments held by the apsaras at Kaiyuan is said to have helped the revival of the ancient Nanyin musical

⁴⁸See discussion of Daoxuan's platform in McRae 2005.

⁴⁹Wang 2008:118.

⁵⁰See chapter five for the full list of sights.

⁵¹ According to Chen-shan Wang the 1400 building is the basis of the current one, but she makes no mention of the 1666 rebuilding in her chronology. Wang 2008:135. It is my understanding that the building dates from 1666 but the stone platform may date back to 1400. It is possible that the stone ordination platform was not rebuilt at this time, but only the wooden hall that stands above it.

⁵²"1666 Stele Record of the reconstruction of the *Ganlu jietan*" *In situ* in the hall of the Ordination Platform and also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: inscription #216.

tradition of Quanzhou since the 1980s. One can now attend performances of this musical heritage at teahouses and other venues. In 2009, Nanyin music was awarded intangible cultural heritage of humanity status by UNESCO, further enhancing the status of Kaiyuan's unique sculptures. The principal difference between these figures and the kalaviṅka in the main hall is that these figures do not have wings while those in the main hall do. This suggests that the ordination hall figures from the Qing dynasty are more nativistic in style since Chinese angels are traditionally depicted without wings.

The 1666 rebuilding of the ordination hall uncovered a secret passage that runs below the ordination platform. The opening to the passage was discovered below the base of the Lossana statue in the center of the ordination platform. The opening leads to a small tunnel that runs due north below the ordination platform; it leads to the Tang dynasty amrita well which itself lay just behind the ordination platform underneath a statue of Maitreya Buddha (*Mile*). The base upon which the statue sits was excavated and found to open onto the well. This secret entrance is now blocked off by a stone slab which serves as a base for the statue of pot-bellied Maitreya [Figure 22]. An inscription was made at the time by another monk from Mt. Drum named Dajing 大靖 which remains in place on the outer wall of the well but is currently blocked by a table for offerings.⁵³

Today, Kaiyuan's Nanshan-style ordination platform is commonly touted as one of only three such ordination platforms remaining in China, the others being at Zhaoqing Monastery in Hangzhou and Jietai Monastery outside Beijing. Visitors to the hall today are struck by the array of Ming dynasty statues that crowd the platform. On the highest

⁵³Dajing's 大靖. 1666-67. *Jietan chongjun ganlu jing ji* 戒坛重浚甘露井记 (Record of the Re-digging of the Amrita Well at the Ordination Platform); the inscription remains *in situ* behind the ordination hall but is also included in Dean and Zheng 2003: inscription #245. See also *Ziyun kaishi zhuan* 12b.

level of the stone ordination platform sits a wooden statue of Lossana (alt. Chinese Vairocana) Buddha 卢舍那佛 which sits atop an elaborate array of lotus petals said to number 1000—each wooden petal has a small six centimeter Buddha figure carved on it [Figures 17-18]. On four sides of the Lossana Buddha are the four bodhisattvas of the vajra realm (*vajradhātu*) of the hook, chain, bell and lock.⁵⁴ Altogether the platform has more than two dozen statues including Sakyamuni, Amitabha, 1000-armed Guanyin, Mile, Hanshan 寒山 and Shide 拾得 and Weituo, along with eight vajra guardians (*jingang* 金刚). Along the base of the platform in niches are sixty-four wooden tablets bearing the names of protector deities which preside over monastic precepts and the three refuges.

On special days such as lunar twenty-sixth the hall is crowded with individuals inside and out bowing and prostrating to the figures enshrined. Smoking incense is not allowed inside the hall in order to protect the antiquities, but an incense pot sits in front of the hall where sticks are placed. Worshipers will also place offerings around the figures on the platform, especially the eight vajra guardians, who are the most accessible being placed on the outer corners. Offerings made in this manner include peanuts, candies and fruits. This hall houses the large bell and drum used to start and end the day and some worshipers and laypersons may be found circumambulating the platform, especially on the twenty-sixth. In addition to these religious activities, it serves as a site of interest to tourists given its striking array of statues, the apsaras overhead and its reputation as a rare example of a Nanshan vinaya ordination platform. If Kaiyuan only possessed the ordination platform and the twin pagodas these structures would be enough to attract the

⁵⁴ These are four of thirty-seven Vajra Bodhisattvas; these four represent the four all-embracing bodhisattva virtues: giving, affectionate speech, purposeful action and co-operation.

ardor of heritage enthusiasts, but it is also home to a unique and well-preserved main hall that dates from the Ming Dynasty.

The Main Hall (daxiong baodian 大雄宝殿)

As mentioned in the previous chapter the main hall, which enshrines Buddha(s), is traditionally the center of the monastery. Its physical presence at Kaiyuan is striking, but apart from the name-board or plaque hanging above the doorway and the glimpse one may see of golden Buddhas inside, there is nothing particularly Buddhist about the structure and appearance of the hall itself, just as there was nothing especially Buddhist about the south-facing, rectilinear courtyard arrangement. As Eugene Wang has noted, there is “nothing distinctively Buddhist about the architectural design of the Buddha hall, for it shares basic features with secular architecture; its distinction stems more from its ceremonial character.”⁵⁵ Its ceremonial character includes its plaque, its statuary and, of course, the presence of monks and laypersons, especially those engaged in devotional activities.

The main hall is also called the Purple Cloud Hall 紫云大殿. Above the central entrance hangs a large plaque in striking calligraphy reading “Dharma World of the Lotus-Blooming Mulberry” (*sanglian fajie* 桑莲法界)[Figures 2, 48].⁵⁶ The hall has been destroyed and rebuilt several times since its founding in 686 and the current building dates from the 1637 Ming Dynasty reconstruction undertaken by Zheng Zhilong.⁵⁷ The hall is built in a Tang Dynasty style and enshrines the Buddhas of the five directions made from unfired clay during the Ming or Qing dynasty. The five Buddhas

⁵⁵ Wang 2010:65.

⁵⁶It is said to be composed in the style of inscription calligraphy from the Wei dynasty.

⁵⁷ See footnote 311 in chapter two for more information on Zheng Zhilong, the Quanzhou native, pirate and father of Zheng Chenggong.

are: Vairocana in the center, Akṣobhya in the east, Ratnasambhava of the south, Amitābha in the west and Amoghasiddhi of the north [Figures 3-4].⁵⁸ The figures are gilded and identical in appearance save for their mudras (*shouyin* 手印) which are teaching mudra (*shuo fa* 说法), giving/charity mudra (*shiyu* 施与), leading mudra (*jiaying* 接引), meditation mudra (*chanding* 禅定) and fearlessness mudra (*wuwei* 无畏). They were refurbished and re-gilded in 1998 at a cost of 1,200,000 RMB (150,000 USD) and restored (wood frames removed and replaced) and re-gilded in 2009. Wang Hanfeng suggests that Kaiyuan's array of five Buddhas preserves a Tang dynasty arrangement that has largely been lost in China and suggest the lingering influence of esoteric Buddhism which is reflected in elements of Kaiyuan's heritage.⁵⁹ It should be noted that an array of five Buddhas in one hall is not particularly common in China—I know of only four other halls enshrining five Buddhas, Huayan Temple 华严寺 and Shanhua Temple 善化寺 both in Shanxi 山西 have older statues while Hebei's Bailin Monastery and Xi'an's Famen Monastery both have recently built halls enshrined with five Buddhas.⁶⁰ Set between and around the five Buddhas are large gilded statues of Ānanda, Mahākāśyapa, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, Avalokiteśvara, Mahāsthāma (*Shizhi* 势至),⁶¹ Weituo 韦驮 and Guanyu

⁵⁸ See Wang 2008: 41-46 for more detailed discussion of the main hall's style, features and size using Fang Yong's 方雍 *Quanzhou gu jianzhu yanjiu* 泉州古建筑研究 (“Researches into Quanzhou Ancient Architecture”) in Du Xianzhou (ed.) *Quanzhou gu jianzhu* 泉州古建筑. Tianjin: Science Press, 1991, 43-139 and other sources. See Interregnum section of chapter 2 for more on the identities of the other five Buddhas.

⁵⁹ For a discussion of Quanzhou Kaiyuan's esoteric characteristics see Wang Hanfeng's 2001 article. Those elements are said to include a main gate with only two guardian figures rather than a hall of four guardian kings which is more standard, dharani pillars and the five Buddhas.

⁶⁰ Wang Hanfeng (2001:5-6) only mentions the two groups of five Buddhas in Shanxi.

⁶¹ A bodhisattva said to represent the Buddha wisdom of Amitabha. A common figure in Chinese iconography, he forms part of the three holy ones of the Western regions- from left to right, Avalokitesvara, Amitabha, Mahāsthāma or Mahāsthāmaprāpta (Soothill 1937: 85)

关羽 (as Qielan Bodhisattva 伽蓝菩萨).⁶² In the back of the hall is a statue of Sheng Guanyin 圣观音⁶³ accompanied by eighteen gilded lacquer arhats (*lohan*) at its sides [Figure 5].

The main hall is also nicknamed the “Hall of One-Hundred Columns” because the hall's plan calls for 100 columns (in actuality, fourteen were removed to make room for the statues and worshippers leaving 86 columns). Its basic structure and most of its columns date from 1637 when Zeng Ying and Zheng Zhilong rebuilt the main hall and replaced the wooden columns with columns of stone. At the middle of the back porch of the hall are two exquisite Yuan Dynasty sixteen-sided columns made of green limestone that were transferred to Kaiyuan from a ruined Hindu temple during the Ming rebuilding. Each of these columns has twelve carvings depicting Hindu deities and motifs [Figures 8-10]. At the base of the platform in front of the main hall are seventy-two stone carvings of sphinx figures (human face, lion body) taken from the same Hindu temple which was destroyed at the end of the Yuan dynasty and moved to Kaiyuan temple during the Ming when improvements were made by Zhichang in 1408 [Figure 12].⁶⁴ Needless to say, Hindu sculptures from a Yuan Dynasty Temple are an unusual and provocative presence at a Buddhist monastery. While they evoke an unmistakable sense of inclusiveness and religious openness, their placement outside, at the “foot” and at the rear of the hall, is not incidental; it not only keeps them from upstaging the dozens of Buddhist figures that

⁶² A variation of Guangong 关公 or Guandi 关帝 serving as guardian of the Sangha 伽蓝菩萨.

⁶³ Sheng Guanyin is the most representative representation of the six Tantric Guanyin and is iconographically depicted wearing a crown with a small Amitabha in its center (iconographical attributes not depicted in this Sheng Guanyin are holding a lotus in the right hand with the left hand in the no fear mudra (*dabei shi wuwei* 大悲无畏)). The division of six Guanyins in Chinese Buddhism is made according to the six paths or six types of beings (hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, demi-gods and gods); Sheng Guanyin is the bodhisattva who saves hungry ghosts.

⁶⁴ This is my independent assessment based on information from the *Sizhi* and observations of the sculptures and it is shared by Fang Yong (Fang 1991: 49 in Wang 2008:44). For more on Yuan dynasty sculptures from Quanzhou see Guy 2010.

dominate the interior of the hall, but reinforces their subordination to the Buddhas, bodhisattvas and arhats inside.⁶⁵

Atop twenty-four columns just in front of the five Buddha statues sit lines of painted wooden musical bird-fairies or *kalavinka* (*pinqie* 频伽); they support the ceiling akin to caryatids in Greek architecture [Figures 6-7].⁶⁶ There are twelve larger ones and twelve smaller ones making a total of twenty-four, representing divisions of the traditional Chinese calendar, just as they do in the hall of the ordination platform. It is not known if these figures were an earlier feature of Kaiyuan's architecture, but such winged figures do appear on sculptures at the base of the east pagoda dating from the end of the Song dynasty. They are thought to date back to the 1389 reconstruction under the monk Huiming and their design may date as far back as the Song dynasty.⁶⁷ These *kalavinka* and the *apsaras* of the ordination hall are special features of Kaiyuan that along with the east and west pagodas are common emblems of Quanzhou's culture. To take a prominent example from central Quanzhou, there is a monumental column decorated by four *kalavinka* that sits in the middle of a major traffic circle; all visitors who enter or leave Quanzhou by the central bus station pass by this nearby monument [Figure 20]. In short,

⁶⁵ We naturally wonder why Hindu sculptures would be installed at a Buddhist monastery. After speaking with many Quanzhou locals and thinking it over I feel the most reasonable explanation is that they were brought to Kaiyuan during the Ming, after the Hindu temple had been abandoned, by the people of Quanzhou. To this day people bring broken or discarded statues of deities to temples so that they may be respectfully and safely disposed lest the spirits they represent become angered. During my stay at Kaiyuan I once witnessed monks looking over a broken statue of Guanyin that a visitor had left; one monk, admiring its artistry, took the bodiless head back to his room and mounted on a base. I surmise that monks, engineers, artistic feeling and popular sentiment collaborated to have the fantastic Hindu sculptures incorporated into the main hall. Two analogous Hindu columns may also be found incorporated into the Quanzhou Temple to Mazu, the Tianhou Gong 天后宫.

⁶⁶ Sutras speak of these winged figures as having beautiful voices. *Kalavinkas* are also found in paintings at Dunhuang. For more on the use of *Kalavinkas* in Chinese Buddhism see the 1998 Huafan University masters thesis by Chang Shuei-tsai 张水财 entitled *Fojiao jialingpinqieniao zhi yanjiu* 佛教迦陵频伽鸟之研究 (*A Study of Buddhist Kavalinka*). The supporting brackets are known as *dougong* 斗拱.

⁶⁷ Fang Yong has examined the brackets and columns and argues that they date way back to the early Ming Dynasty 1389 rebuilding under Huiyuan 惠远 (Fang 1991: 38-39; see also Wang 2008:43, nt. 152).

Kaiyuan's main hall has an array of iconic features including the Hindu sculptural pieces, twenty four kalavinka, five Buddhas and "one hundred" stone columns. These features along with its Ming dynasty pedigree and association with Zheng Zhilong make it a valuable cultural treasure among treasures.

The main hall regularly receives tour groups and independent travelers who gaze up at the kalavinka and listen to guides explain some of elements just reviewed. Monks on duty prevent them from taking pictures inside the hall; photography is prohibited inside all the halls of Kaiyuan. It is a policy said to have been handed down from the Bureau of Religion; related to cultural preservation, it may relate to control over representation of China's national cultural heritage. From the point of view of some of the monks it is a means to maintain a more respectful atmosphere in the halls. After all, apart from being open to tourists, the main hall is the center of Kaiyuan's public religious activities as described in the previous chapter (twice-weekly *nianfo*, monthly grand *nianfo*, annual ceremonies etc.).

The Ancient Mulberry and Other Trees

Just to the west of the main hall is one of the ancient mulberry trees said to have bloomed lotus blossoms during the Tang dynasty [Figures 54-55]. As early as the Tang dynasty, Quanzhou was a place involved in the production of silk and Huang Shougong had an orchard of mulberry trees which would have been used in the cultivation of silk worms. Kaiyuan's remaining mulberry tree is today one of the most famous sights at the monastery and is designated in tourist materials as an important "historical sight" (*guji* 古迹). Along with the Song dynasty pagodas, it is one of the most famous sights at Kaiyuan and for our purposes it is classified as a cultural property.

In addition to Kaiyuan's most famous tree, the monastery is home to several very old banyan trees that line the main courtyard; these range in age from 200 to 800 years old [Figure 40]. The two oldest (800 years old), stand at the very front of the courtyard just behind the main gate. They would have been alive at the time of the building of the Song dynasty pagodas and they, along with the other towering banyans, evoke something of old Quanzhou in the mind of the visitor. In 2007, a forestry agency placed stone markers at the base of all of Kaiyuan's old trees, the marker for the ancient mulberry reads 1,200 years, but all the locals I have consulted believe it is a mistake, claiming it is closer to 1,300 years old. What is unmistakable is the value accorded the tree which has dimensions that are historical, cultural and spiritual.⁶⁸ Trees have been revered in connection with spirits and graves from the earliest of times in China and many temples have large old trees.⁶⁹ Beijing's Tanzhe Monastery was also famous for its mulberry tree(s), but attempts to grow one have been unsuccessful; it later became the site of a prized Ginko tree.⁷⁰

Buddhist Scriptures

Behind the ordination platform is the dharma hall with the scripture library (*zang jingge* 藏经阁) on the second floor [Figure 36]. It is nicknamed the One Hundred Treasures Building (*baibao lou* 百宝楼) and, while the building itself is of little historic value (it was built during the Republican Period), it indeed holds many rare and one-of-a-

⁶⁸ The spiritual value of the tree will be explored in chapter five.

⁶⁹ On trees and their connections with spirits and graves in early China see Lewis 2006:157-158.

⁷⁰ Naquin 1998:197.

kind texts.⁷¹ I will first review the several versions of the Tripitika held (some complete, some in fragments) followed by individual texts.

The oldest scriptures held are eighteen leaves (or pages) of scriptures written in gold by Yiying 义英 at the request of Wang Shenzhi during the early tenth century; these are referred to as the “five dynasties gold and silver Tripitika” (*wudai jinyin zang* 五代金银藏)[Figure 39]. These pages are all that is left of a group of four sets of the Tripitika that were ordered by the king of Min Wang Shenzhi to commemorate his enthronement. The texts were written by master Yiying, two sets in gold and two sets in silver.⁷² Another eighteen pages are held of the original Fuzhou Kaiyuan Vairocana Tripitika (*Pilu zang* 毗卢藏) from 1151 of the Song dynasty; these pages are said to be the only original copies left in Fujian.⁷³ Also held are many books of the Ming dynasty Chongzhen Tripitika 崇祯藏 in addition to complete copies of the Hongjiao Tripitika 弘教藏,⁷⁴ the Pinjie Tripitika 频伽藏, the Jisha Tripitika 磧砂藏,⁷⁵ the Dunhuang Tripitika

⁷¹The dharma hall was first built in 1285 and repaired during the Yuan and Ming Dynasties. It was rebuilt in 1925 under the direction of master Yuanying as a concrete two story building. This building was partially damaged during the war of resistance against Japan. In 2007, Yuanying’s Republican period building was torn down and the current building erected with the contents of the Sutra Library returned in 2008. The reason stated for its replacement was that it was unstable. The bottom floor remains used for daily morning and evening services while the second floor holds Kaiyuan’s excellent collection of Buddhist scriptures.

⁷² This holding is known as the “Five Dynasties Gold and Silver Tripitika” 五代金银藏. Wang Shenzhi made a wish before his enthronement at Kaiyuan Temple and after becoming king he returned to Kaiyuan Temple, took refuge and donated money to rebuild the main hall. Yiying became a monk at Kaiyuan’s Yubao Cloister 浴宝院 (*Jinjiang xianzhi* 60:人物志仙释).

⁷³ It is said that Fuzhou Kaiyuan Temple retrieved a copy of the Tripitika from Japan.

⁷⁴According to Kaiyuan monk and librarian Huifeng this may have been acquired by Hongyi, but this needs to be confirmed.

⁷⁵ This edition was made from photo-copies (*yingyin* 影印) of Song dynasty originals in Japan and brought to Kaiyuan during the Republican Period.

敦煌藏 and a copy of the Japanese Swastika Tripitika (*Wanzi zamg*, 卍字藏) acquired by master Hongyi [Figure 38].⁷⁶

In addition to several complete and incomplete sets of the Tripitika, Kaiyuan also holds several individual texts some of which were written by or annotated by masters associated with Kaiyuan. The oldest of these is the Yuan Dynasty Lotus Sutra written by master Ruzhao 如照 with his own blood [Figure 37].⁷⁷ From the Ming Dynasty is a copy of the *Brahma Net Sutra* (*Brahmajāla-sūtra*, *Fanwang jing* 梵网经, Taishō 1484) with the eminent monk Ouyi 's 藕益 handwritten commentary; the *Brahma Net Sutra* is cited as the source for the practice of writing sutras in blood as an offering of one's body to the Buddha.⁷⁸ There is a Ming dynasty wood-block print of the *Huayan Sutra* and a palm leaf text from Sri Lanka in an Indian script from the Yuan dynasty. From the Republican Period is a set of *Lengyan* or *Sūraṅgama Sutra* teaching materials that belonged to master Yuanying and the *Sifenlu* (Four Part Vinaya) annotated by master Hongyi as well as a collection of Master Hongyi's written notes with illustrations. This exceptionally valuable collection of texts from the tenth to the twentieth centuries contains several rare and unique pieces that reflect diverse layers of Kaiyuan's rich history. Today, access to the sutra library and its holdings is guarded by a monk who is the custodian of the library; visitors must obtain special permission to enter and it receives very few visitors. Its

⁷⁶ Sources on these various editions of the Chinese Tripitika include: Li, Fuhua, and Mei He. 2003. *Hanwen fojiao dazangjing yanjiu* 汉文佛教大藏经研究 [Research on the Chinese Tripitaka]. Beijing: Zongjiao wenhua chubanshe; Xu Lingzhi. 2004. *Zhongguo lidai cangshu shi* 中国历代藏书史. Nanchang: Jiangxi renmin chubanshe; Li Jining. 2002. *Fojing banben* 佛经版本. Nanjing: Jiangsu guji chubanshe.

⁷⁷ Writing sutras in blood is a means of offering one's body to the Buddha. It is said to have been inspired by a reference to such offerings in the *Brahma Net Sutra* (*fanwang jing*). See Welch 1967:323 for a brief account. It remained a popular practice in the Republican Period.

⁷⁸ See Welch 1967:323 for a brief account. It remained a popular practice in the Republican Period.

impact on the life of Kaiyuan today is primarily as a “talking point” that has helped the monastery strengthen its reputation as a trove of cultural treasures.

The Main Gate

It was first built in 687 and was part of the original nucleus of the monastery. Properly called the threefold gate it is nowadays commonly (and incorrectly) referred to as the Hall of Heavenly Kings (*Tianwang dian* 天王殿). In the gate are enshrined two monumental Hum Ha generals who serve as guardians of the monastery.⁷⁹ The current structure would seem to be based on the structure built after the fire of 1357 which has been continually restored over the centuries. Of the halls lying along Kaiyuan’s central axis, the main gate is least dedicated to specifically religious functions, not simply because it serves as an entrance to casual tourists and devotees alike, but because it also houses a ticket booth tended by members of the administrative commission as well as turnstiles through which visitors must pass. Monks and local devotees are allowed to enter through the “exit” side of this gate, thus bypassing the turnstile. A distinction is thus made between local laypersons and monks on the one hand and tourists and other visitors who are not card-carrying Buddhists on the other.⁸⁰ In this way the main gate sets in motion a process of distinguishing the experience of Buddhist visitors from that of non-Buddhists; one is required to purchase a ticket and enter through a turnstile on the right, the other may bypass the theme-park feel of the turnstile and enter on the left where there is no turnstile. While some visitors offer incense to the towering Hum Ha guardian figures to the right and left, most simply pass through this hall. This hall contributes to

⁷⁹ See Prip-Møller 1937: 14-20.

⁸⁰ Lay Buddhists may obtain a lay Buddhist I.D. card (*guiyi zheng*) announcing their dharma name. These can be used to gain free admission to Buddhist sites, much like senior citizen cards can be used to gain discounted admission.

both the religious and touristic identity of Kaiyuan (a role that will be further explored in chapter nine).

The Purple Cloud Screen

Across the street from and facing the main gate is a large wall known as a reflecting screen or spirit wall—a common feature of temples in China. The wall is plain except for a large stone inscription from the original wall of 1570 that has been inserted into it reading, “Purple Cloud Screen” 紫云屏 in calligraphy by Chen Yuwang 陈于王 the famous Ming dynasty calligrapher [Figures 51, 53]. The screen provides Kaiyuan with an architectural element that is required for a complete and geomantically sound north-south axis. The features and significance of the north-south axis will be explored below.

The Stones of the Main Courtyard

The main courtyard of Kaiyuan is paved in granite stones that may have been laid during the Yuan, if not the Song dynasty. In addition to the courtyard itself are more than a dozen other stone structures that range in date from the Tang to the Ming. In 1145, almost one hundred years before the completion of the east and west pagodas, Liu Sanniang and her husband Liang An erected two Indian style stone stupas decorated with scenes from the previous lives of the Buddha. They stand just in front of the main hall where they have stood for the past 850 years [Figure 44].⁸¹ In addition to these unique stupas are eight smaller stupas erected in the early Ming dynasty known as five-wheel pagodas (*wulun ta* 五轮塔) [Figures 40, 47].⁸²

⁸¹ A similar stupa is found on the Luoyang bridge 洛阳桥 just outside the city of Quanzhou.

⁸² See Wang 2008: 31-32 for more on the meaning of these.

There are three dhāraṇī pillars in the main courtyard of Kaiyuan standing in the shade of the towering banyan trees. The earliest of these dates from 854 and, as mentioned earlier, it was moved to Kaiyuan in 1953 [Figure 43]. The next earliest pillar was erected by Wang Jixun in 946. It was originally located inside one of the stone stupas built by the laywoman Liu Sanniang and her husband in 1145 [Figure 41]. It was discovered along with a gilt silver statue of Guanyin when a typhoon damaged the left stupa in 1982.⁸³ Dating from 1008, a third pillar is thought to have been moved to Kaiyuan at the end of the Ming or the early Qing dynasty [Figure 42].⁸⁴ Lastly, standing near the middle of the courtyard is a stone structure known as the silk-burning furnace (*fenbo lu* 焚帛炉) said to date from the Song Dynasty and previously used to burn silk offerings during special ceremonies [Figure 46]. The stones of Kaiyuan's courtyard present another layer of survivals from the Tang, Song and Ming dynasties all shaded by towering banyans, reflecting contact across the seas with India and providing objects of aesthetic, historic, doctrinal and religious interest.

Cultural Properties and the Visitor

Entering by the main gate one enters Kaiyuan's main courtyard. Upon doing so the cultural properties of the monastery just discussed, the main hall, the courtyard, the trees and the pagodas, collectively make an impact on the visitor. We will profit by exploring the somatic nature of this experience. Nicole Boivin has criticized the over-emphasis on linguistically-derived analyses of material culture in which, "Material culture often became reduced to a mere sign, little different from a linguistic sign, its

⁸³Wang 2008: 33.

⁸⁴These Song dynasty pillars were discussed in the Song Dynasty section of Chapter 2.

physical properties devoid of all but highly abstracted meaning.”⁸⁵ She emphasizes the non-linguistic nature of material culture as one of its important features: “By doing away with language partly or perhaps even entirely, at certain points in time, both material culture and certain more experientially oriented types of ritual activity are able to alter human thought and understanding by relating it directly to experience of the material world, the environment, the body and the emotions.”⁸⁶ One’s immediate encounter with the collective presence of Kaiyuan’s material culture, will, I maintain, affect a non-linguistic somatic response.

We are embodied actors and material culture affects our somatic experience in immediate and mediated ways. One’s feet feel the stone pavement of Kaiyuan’s main courtyard, one’s body feels the shade of the trees, one’s eyes are filled with the spectacle of the main hall lying ahead, the scent of burning incense invades one’s nostrils, the relative quiet brings relief to one’s ears. If one happens to arrive on Tuesday or Friday afternoon the sounds of Buddha recitation broadcast from the main hall will arrest one’s attention. In short, upon entering the physical space of the monastery one is made somatically aware that one is in an environment qualitatively different from the environment one has just left. This difference is guaranteed by the collective presence of the monastery’s material features.

A dimension of the monastery’s material presence, which is common to other Chinese sites be they temples or even entire cities, is a south-facing arrangement of buildings situated along a north-south axis enclosed in a wall in accord with ancient

⁸⁵Boivin 2009:271-272.

⁸⁶ Boivin 2009:283.

Chinese cosmological thinking.⁸⁷ In the typical Buddhist temple or monastery, gates and halls are arrayed along the north-south axis; at the southernmost point is the main gate or *shanmen*, across from which is classically a spirit screen, to prevent the entry of malevolent spirits. After the *shanmen* (if the *shanmen* is present) is typically found the hall of four heavenly kings (which Kaiyuan does not have), beyond this is the main hall, which enshrines Buddha(s). Beyond the Buddha hall lie other buildings which vary from site to site, these include the sutra library and dharma hall and a hall for Guanyin (which Kaiyuan does not have).⁸⁸ Additional buildings which need not be on the central axis are the Chan hall, the hall of the ordination platform or other shrine halls such as to monastery protectors or the five hundred arhats. To the east and west of the central axis, one may find pagodas, bell and drum towers, administrative buildings, living quarters and other shrine rooms or practice halls. While there is variation among the precise halls represented from temple to temple, the rectilinear arrangement of halls arrayed along a north-south axis, fronted with courtyards of various sizes is followed at the vast majority of China's thousands of temples. At Buddhist monasteries, the Buddha hall should be located in the middle of this axis and, indeed, Kaiyuan's main hall of five Buddhas is located at the geographic center (north-south and east-west) of the complex.⁸⁹ It is this regularity that causes exasperated visitors to claim that all temples look alike.

⁸⁷ For the cosmological layout of cities see Wheatley 1975. For the cosmological ideas applied to Buddhist monasteries in China see Meyer 1992. More on the history of the application of these cosmological paradigm see Ledderhose 2000:113-117.

⁸⁸ Prip-Møller's study remains the most complete account of the general layout of Chinese Buddhist monasteries (Prip-Møller 1937).

⁸⁹ I have examined a scale map of the monastery and determined that a portion of the main hall falls at the midpoint where the north-south central axis meets the east-west axis when measured from various possible points (the north and east boundaries are not as regular as those of the south and west). Walsh points out the ideal configuration of Buddhist monasteries calls for the Buddha hall to be centrally located (Walsh 2005:48).

It is also this regularity which somatically communicates that one has entered a space of traditional culture, of history, of religion—all of which transcend everyday egoistic existence. This doesn't mean that one who enters such a space also transcends the everyday; one brings that into the complex and the two worlds intersect. The physical presence of cultural properties and the physical deployment of buildings and space produce an experience that, depending on the disposition of the individual or their religious "habitus," may be interpreted religiously or secularly. Regardless of how one understands one's experience, it has been affected, if not effected, in important ways by the concatenation of varied objects of material culture.

The visceral experience of entering a space that is unlike the everyday world beyond the monastery walls—communicating this, is a role the properties play in concert. The immediate apprehension of one's surroundings elicits somatic awareness that one has entered a different world. That Kaiyuan and other monasteries do this is no accident. The act of entering the monastery is meant to be an act of leaving samsara (the round of suffering) for the Pure Land or nirvana.⁹⁰ As Walsh, who has "spent considerable periods of time visiting Buddhist monasteries and examining historical texts in an effort to better understand what makes Buddhist space a religious space,"⁹¹ has said, monasteries "are soteriological by design," representing a journey from samsara to nirvana.⁹² This is viscerally communicated at Kaiyuan by leaving behind the bright, bustling, and noisy street and entering a shaded courtyard that is dramatically quieter than the street one has just left. The crowded street, the tacky signs, the tables of goods, the hangers of clothes, the motorcycles and buses disappear to be replaced by an expansive courtyard, towering

⁹⁰ Walsh 2010

⁹¹ Walsh 2010:8.

⁹² Walsh 2010:37.

banyans, a Ming dynasty hall, stone stupas all in muted shades. The material culture of the monastery asserts its difference with the world one has just left behind.

While monasteries may seek to communicate a soteriological message with their buildings, courtyards, walls and Buddhas, the message is broadcast in different frequencies. Several scholars have noted the variability in meaning of material objects. Writing about the development of early Buddhist visual culture, Klemens Karlsson writes:

There is no such thing as a fixed, predetermined or unified meaning in individual visual objects. Meaning is always context dependent and it resides in the mind of artists, sponsors, beholders, etc.—and the beholder's view many not always correspond to the artist's intention.⁹³

The different meanings of the assembly of Kaiyuan's cultural properties may be thought to come in three major frequencies; visitors, depending on their dispositions will tune in to one or the other. The three frequencies are Buddha-religion, history-culture and park-leisure. Those tuning in to the Buddha dharma channel are predisposed to look for the religious character of the monastery or are else sensitive to the religious message of the cultural properties. Generally speaking these are the worshipers, laypersons and clerics. Other visitors who enter the monastery with different sets of expectations and different kinds of dispositions will tune in to the other frequencies. They will experience the monastery as a place of history and culture or as a park. These are some of the roles that monasteries in China have played for centuries.⁹⁴ The monastery's material culture is designed, I maintain, to communicate these different messages. It is possible that multi-layers of meaning have always been encoded in Buddhist visual culture. This is the suggestion of Vidya Dehejia who argues that if Buddhist writers such as Aśvaghōṣa or

⁹³ Karlsson 2006:70.

⁹⁴ Brook 2005.

Āryaśūra could intentionally use words with multiple meanings then we can expect the Buddhist artists to also intend multiple layers of meaning in early Buddhist visual culture.⁹⁵ I would like to extend this notion to the physical presence of the monastery as a whole. In the contemporary period, the leading monks at Kaiyuan are aware of its different values (monastery, tourist attraction, park) and actively work to accommodate each of these interests. Their motives may be construed in many ways, all of which have some measure of truth. They have an economic motive (money), they have a political motive (protection/stability) and they have a *dharmic* motive (spread Buddhism); all of these, alas, can be subsumed under an over-arching concern with protecting, preserving and promoting Buddhism. It is in this sense that they are understandable as actions of the sangha.

It is also likely that from the earliest of times, Buddhists have built and embellished monasteries in order to pay homage to and glorify the Buddha and the Dharma and the Sangha, as well as to draw the attention and support of laypersons. As the influential monk Daoxuan wrote in the seventh century:

Therefore a monastery and other living quarters were established [on earth] that were totally unlike ordinary human habitations, and images were created so strange as to stir the common heart to see the [Buddha truth]—so much that when ordinary folk were made to hear of it, they would be shaken into knowing the words and the paths of the faith; when they were made to see, they would understand the form [of the monastery] and discern the extraordinary path [of deliverance].⁹⁶

Daoxuan's motivations here are salvic and compassionate; at the same time, one can expect that “stirring the human heart” and so forth would also lend itself to drawing

⁹⁵ Dehijia 1991:45.

⁹⁶ Daoxuan's *Zhong tianzhu sheweiguo qihuansi tujing* 中天竺舍衛國祇洹寺圖經 (Illustrated Scripture of Jetavana Vihara of Sravati in Central India) T.45.890 a28-b2, translated by Ho 1995:18; Robson 2010a:15.

support for the monastery as was suggested earlier by the MS *Vinaya*. In addition to inspiring faith and arousing support, the cultural properties of monasteries can also elicit protection. Protection of the monastery is also protection of the Buddha (represented by the statues, pagodas) and the Dharma (the holding of the sutra library) necessary for the survival of Buddhism. In discussing the myriad functions and goals of the monastery, Michael Walsh sounds a similar note: “protecting the sangha was paramount, for without the sangha there could be no perpetuation of the Dharma. Promoting the stability and growth of a Buddhist monastery was tantamount to ensuring the survival of Buddhism.”⁹⁷ Kaiyuan’s physical survival through the Cultural Revolution provides an opportunity to examine Kaiyuan’s trajectory of survival and sort out the role played by its material culture. The analysis will focus on the role played by the east and west pagodas and their dual religious and secular values.

Survival

When Kaiyuan entered the Maoist period it was in possession of the array of cultural treasures just reviewed—the Song dynasty pagodas, the Ming halls, the collection of rare scriptures and commentaries, the stupas, sculptures, trees and so on—and when it exited the Maoist period after the ten year disaster known as the Cultural Revolution it remained in possession of these same properties and had acquired additional ones along the way. It is a survival to be celebrated by scholars, aesthetes, religionists and all who value human heritage. China now has thousands of temples, but most of them have been built, rebuilt or radically restored over the past ten or fifteen years; relatively few possess buildings that date to the Ming or earlier, and even fewer possess a group of buildings and

⁹⁷ Walsh 2010:7.

artifacts as impressive as those of Quanzhou Kaiyuan.⁹⁸ It was Kaiyuan's impressive survival that first attracted my interest and provoked my initial research question—what made Kaiyuan's survival possible? More precisely, what did Kaiyuan possess that enabled it to survive in such a complete manner?

Kaiyuan's imperial history, sketched in chapter two, exhibits a pattern of support by elites and the state. The beginning of the Maoist period demonstrated, yet again, that Kaiyuan, unlike most other temples, would receive the protection and even financial support of the state. But, as the state turned against traditional culture and all religious institutions were threatened with annihilation, what enabled Kaiyuan to dodge the hammers of the Red Guards? What motivated Mayor Wang to come to Kaiyuan's defense at a crucial moment? While the factors contributing to Kaiyuan's survival are multiple and complex, Kaiyuan's cultural properties played a crucial a role at a critical moment. Just as monasteries in ancient India found it serviceable to possess impressive cultural properties, so has Quanzhou Kaiyuan found, in its cultural properties, an invaluable asset in its will to survive.

As discussed in the introduction, Yuanxian used a phrase from the twenty-third hexagram of the *Yijing* to describe a fundamental condition of the late Ming restoration of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery: "The great fruit has not been eaten." In addition to the poetic metaphor of the monastery re-emerging from the seeds of its own fruit, the great fruit also suggests, on my reading, Kaiyuan's stone pagodas, the ancient mulberry and other cultural properties. They had survived the turmoil of the times, and the pagodas, in

⁹⁸ I have visited only one other monastery with an equally impressive array of original buildings and cultural artifacts, Zhengding's Longxing Temple 正定隆兴寺 in Hebei (a.k.a Big Buddha Temple 大佛寺.) This temple is preserved essentially as a museum and currently has no monastic population, an important difference that will be explored in chapter eight.

particular, stood as enduring symbols of strength, solemnity and the "Buddhist kingdom" that once was. They were a "great fruit" that had not been picked or eaten and their commanding presence would help frame the scene of Kaiyuan's late-Ming revival.

A Tang dynasty commentary on this line of the *Yijing* suggests that if a noble man (*junzi* 君子) picks the fruit it would bring good luck and if a petty person (*xiao ren* 小人) steals the fruit it would be a harbinger of misfortune.⁹⁹ The petty thus avoid harming this "fruit" out of fear while the noble man, by his nature, desists in bringing it harm. In this way, the great fruit is allowed to bring forth new life. With respect to Kaiyuan monastery, the phrase suggests that the gentry and other persons of means respect the monastery due to its venerable status and wish to see it prosper, while commoners are afraid to steal from or destroy it. While many of Kaiyuan's buildings were in fact occupied by people of means and others were left to fall into states of disrepair, the twin pagodas were indeed sufficiently respected by the gentry and commoners alike. It is with this in mind that I suggest that the "great fruit" may in part be thought to refer to Kaiyuan's surviving cultural properties, above all, the twin pagodas.

Just as the pagodas survived the turmoil at the end of the Yuan and the depravations of the mid-Ming and a powerful earthquake, they also survived the wars that ravaged China from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As China careened toward the ten year war on traditional culture known as the Cultural Revolution, the pagodas and Kaiyuan's other cultural properties were once again great fruits that were not to be eaten.

⁹⁹ This explanation is from the *Zhouyi jijie* 周易集解, a Tang dynasty collection of commentaries from Han to Tang on the *Yijing*, cited in Huang Shouqi 黄寿祺 and Zhang Shanwen 张善文. 2001. *Zhouyi yizhu* 周易译注 ("The *Yijing*, Translation and Commentary"). Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishing House, p. 202.

Two Views of Kaiyuan's Cultural Properties

When I interviewed former Mayor Wang in 2006 I was escorted by a layperson from Kaiyuan monastery [Figure 64]; he helped jump start the interview by pointedly asking his friend Mr. Wang, “Why, as a member of the Communist Party, a mayor and a non-believer, why did you protect Kaiyuan monastery? What was the reason? What was your motive (*dongji* 动机)?” The ninety-one year old Mr. Wang took some time to make his reply, but when he did it was clear—what he sought to protect was culture not religion:

Kaiyuan temple is not simply a religious issue. Kaiyuan temple is a carrier of all kinds of culture (各种文化的载体). ... [most of all] the two pagodas and their architectural artistry. ... One finds the culture of the whole Quanzhou region inside Kaiyuan temple. When you visit Kaiyuan temple what do you first see? Culture, right? This is the issue [not religion]. ... If there were no Kaiyuan temple the culture of Quanzhou would not be what it is, it would be superficial. Kaiyuan temple elegantly displays this culture. This is not a political point of view. This is national culture. I am a member of the Communist Party and I do not believe in religion, this is culture, the culture of a people (of a nation). This was the issue. How could I not protect it?¹⁰⁰

The mayor's professed motivations were strictly secular; he frames the issue as one of culture and explicitly distances his actions from any concern with religion. His actions, he asserts, were carried out in the name of cultural preservation. While his response is in line with a form of new orthodoxy in China, which values China's cultural heritage and seeks to preserve it and promote it for economic development in the form of tourism and socio-political solidarity in the form of nationalism, his response also suggests the genuine importance of Kaiyuan's cultural properties in motivating his

¹⁰⁰ From an interview with Wang Jinsheng, October 25, 2006 at his home in Quanzhou.

“开元寺不只是一个单单宗教的问题。开元寺是泉州的各种文化的载体，。。。两个塔，那个建筑的艺术。。。泉州一带有的文化开元寺里就有。到开元寺先看什么呢？看文化是不是。这是一个问题。。。离了开元寺，泉州的文化就不是这样地。就浅薄了。开元寺就展示了这个文化的厚重，厚重。这个不是从政治上来看的[repeated]这是一个民族的文化。我是共产党员，我也不信教，这是文化，一个民族的文化。是这个问题。怎么能不保护”

actions to protect it. More importantly, the coherence and plausibility of his state reason speaks to the multivalent power of Kaiyuan's cultural properties. Mr. Wang speaks both of the local and trans-local value of Kaiyuan's cultural properties—he speaks of them as making Quanzhou's culture what it is and as belonging to the Chinese people (*minzu de wenhua*) as a whole. As the mayor of Quanzhou, Mr. Wang asks, how could he not protect a site of such important cultural value for the city and the people of China? It would be a betrayal of his city and of the nation. In addition, Kaiyuan monastery had been designated an Important Provincial Cultural Heritage Protected Site in 1961;¹⁰¹ it was this expressly secular designation, “protected cultural heritage,” that provided the mayor with his legal justification for protecting Kaiyuan.

As Mr. Wang recounted the day he stopped Red Guards from vandalizing Kaiyuan temple, he explained what he considered the three elements most critical to the protection of Kaiyuan temple: 1. he had the document indicating its protected status 2. the students (Red Guards) understood its cultural value and 3. he was there to protect it. Of these, I take the second to be most interesting and, perhaps, most crucial. As he explained what happened on that day in 1966, it became clear that the Red Guards, at least according to his account, understood the cultural value of Kaiyuan temple. They understood this value and its protected status and, as other youths arrived to join in the destruction of the four olds, the students who had already heard the mayor turned to them and explained that Kaiyuan was not to be harmed; thus the message was conveyed, youth to youth. They understood that harming Kaiyuan temple would be harming the culture of their city and their nation.

¹⁰¹ This is recorded on a stone inscription in Kaiyuan's main courtyard.

Mayor Wang appealed to them not only on an intellectual level (this place is legally protected), but on an emotional one (this place represents your history, your culture, your city, regard it as you would yourself). Mr. Wang was successful because he was able to tap into emotionally charged psychological markers such as city, nation and heritage by invoking the cultural value of the pagodas. I do not know if it was predominantly a feeling of “civic pride” that he aroused in the Red Guards, but this is the emotion that comes out when he speaks about that day and when others speak about Kaiyuan’s cultural properties. It is therefore the terminology upon which I have settled to capture an essentially “non-religious” feeling that played a role in Kaiyuan’s protection during the Cultural Revolution and continues to play a role in the promotion of Kaiyuan as a tourist site. Mayor Wang’s argument was not based on religious concerns; it goes without saying that Mayor Wang would not have succeeded had he insisted on the inviolability of Kaiyuan and asked the Red Guards to bow to the Buddhas in the main hall.

Cultural properties played a key role in both motivating mayor Wang’s protection of the monastery and, according to the mayor, understanding the value of these cultural properties played a crucial role in convincing the Red Guards to abandon their vandalistic intentions. My research suggests that the mayor's professed motivation to protect cultural properties is shared by practically all of Kaiyuan's secular supporters. While this is likely related to the politically correct nature of such a position, I do not take this position to be merely one of rhetoric. Over the course of my fieldwork I have spent time with Buddhists, non-religious people who are nonetheless sympathetic to religious practice and individuals who are non-religious and non-sympathetic to religious practice. Of

these three groups, both the latter two have been found to express the wholly secular view of Kaiyuan's cultural properties, while religious people and Buddhists have expressed esteem for Kaiyuan's cultural properties as part of a religious complex. Thus, over the course of my fieldwork, onsite at Kaiyuan and in the community of Quanzhou, I have found that among the monastery's advocates and enthusiasts there are individuals who are "religious"¹⁰² and others who are "secular." The secular supporters act only in the name of culture and history and they inevitably possess distinct pride in the city of Quanzhou and its history, which I hope to express with "civic pride." These supporters may explicitly deny any affiliation with Buddhism (as does Mr. Wang) or they may simply emphasize the cultural and historical value of Kaiyuan and its cultural properties and the importance of their protection without suggesting any need to protect or restore Buddhist practice at the site. The supporters speak of culture (*wenhua*), history (*lishi*) and art (*yishu*). These individuals are most characteristically represented by officials who have been educated to think about religious property in such a way; their interests are not simply secular, they are agents of secularization. The discourse of Mayor Wang exemplifies this secularly-based motivation. Regardless of the rhetorical or politically correct nature of the "secular" stance, Kaiyuan's material culture is sufficiently multivalent to accommodate those attracted to culture and history as well as those attuned to its religious significance.

When Kaiyuan's cultural properties are approached with the dispositional attitude of civic pride they appear as cultural treasures of artistic, technical or historical value which should be preserved. This dispositional attitude finds its paradigmatic fulfillment in various actions that fall under the rubric of "tourism," which I expand to include not

¹⁰² "Religious" rather than "Buddhist" to indicate worshipers as well as monks and laity.

only sight-seeing and photography but also study and discussion. These actions are the fruition of the dispositional motivation marked by interest and pride in local history and culture that I intend to suggest with the phrase “civic pride.” These visitors consider it ludicrous to offer incense to the east pagoda, but they will examine the sign nearby explaining its architectural value proven through its survival of the great earthquake of 1604.

Civic Pride

The first question is: Why “pride”? And secondly, why “Civic” Pride? “Pride” is not a word that my interviews have use to describe their feelings about Kaiyuan’s cultural properties, but it is a word I have selected as the best fit to a range of emotions they have expressed (verbal as well as non-verbal) with respect to Kaiyuan’s special features. Pride has been evident on the faces and in the voices of all of Kaiyuan’s secular enthusiasts, from the studied pomposity of officials to the unaffected passion of the antiquarian and all the marginally-interested people in between who, nonetheless, know about Kaiyuan and value its historic properties. This broad group of individuals characteristically speaks of Kaiyuan and its cultural properties with an air of pride. Their enthusiasm for Kaiyuan and its properties betrays their own sense of pride which is not pride in themselves, but in themselves as residents of the great medieval city that has been the home of Kaiyuan for more than a thousand years.

Those I have spoken of as the “marginally-interested” constitute the Quanzhou general public. I have met them at the monastery or run into them on the busy streets near it; I have sat next to them on buses in Quanzhou or visited with them in homes or cafés. Members of the general public do not know much about Kaiyuan, but they know it is old,

famous and important and have a general idea why, namely because it is home to important historical properties, above all, the twin pagodas and an ancient mulberry tree. The further one is from the epicenter of Kaiyuan, the less interested and informed is the general public about Kaiyuan; nevertheless, at any distance, one can detect a tinge of pride in the cultural properties that are possessed by Kaiyuan. Kaiyuan's twin pagodas are universally recognized as symbols of Quanzhou. Such a view is encouraged through visual cues on billboards, logos, magazine and book covers and other media where the pagodas represent Quanzhou as a city that welcomes the world. People view Kaiyuan's twin pagodas as well as the kalavinka and apsaras as symbols, not only of the city of Quanzhou, but also of Quanzhou as a starting point on the maritime silk route, a fabulous cosmopolitan entrepot of the Song and Yuan dynasties.¹⁰³ The feeling of pride is not personal, it is pride to be part of something more, not a venerable old monastery, but a famous old city open to the world. Tuan noted that the affective bond between people and places is strongest in cases where the place serves a symbolic role: "Topophilia is not the strongest of human emotions. When it is compelling we can be sure that the place or environment has become the carrier of emotionally charged events or perceived as a symbol."¹⁰⁴ Kaiyuan represents just such a case.

The value of Kaiyuan's pagodas as symbols of Quanzhou has been made that much clearer in the wake of our present media revolution, which has placed image processing and print technology within reach of the masses. Wherever one finds a website or tourist brochure promoting Quanzhou, one will find an image of Kaiyuan's

¹⁰³ It should be noted that the general public sometimes lumps together Kaiyuan's twin pagodas along with the stone statue of Laozi on Mount Qingyuan 清源山 and Qingzhen mosque 清真寺 as symbols of old Quanzhou, "starting point of the maritime silk route." This view has tirelessly been promoted among the population since the 1980s as part of Quanzhou's plan of opening and economic development.

¹⁰⁴ Tuan 1972:93.

twin pagodas. What today is manifest so prominently in these visual media has in some degree long existed in the hearts and minds of the people of Quanzhou expressed in the old saying: "Stand up like the east and west pagodas; lie down like Luoyang bridge(立如东西塔，卧如洛阳桥)."¹⁰⁵

The civic pride of Quanzhou locals is also evident in a folk tradition that survives from the fourteenth century.¹⁰⁶ I first encountered this tradition in the name of a hotel near Kaiyuan, the Carp City Hotel—"Carp City" (*Licheng* 鲤城) is an old nickname for Quanzhou, but what does it mean? I later learned more about the Carp City name when I was talking to the owner of a small restaurant opposite the main gate of Kaiyuan. She told me that the city of Quanzhou was shaped like a great fish, a carp and that Kaiyuan's east and west pagodas were its eyes; I could see this, she informed me, if I looked down at the city from Mount Qingyuan. The carp is a Chinese symbol of upward mobility and prosperity earned through perseverance or skill. A local legend attributes the great prosperity and success of medieval Quanzhou to the excellent *fengshui* or geomantic properties of the city demonstrated by its carp-shape. This legend was apparently taken seriously enough by the founding emperor of the Ming Dynasty, Taizu/Hongwu, and he, seeking to contain the energy of the great city, sent the general and geomancer Zhou Dexing 周德兴(14th century) to reconfigure Quanzhou's *fengshui* so as to contain the

¹⁰⁵ Both the pagodas and the Luoyang bridge are massive Song dynasty stone structures that remain celebrated not only for their grace and longevity, but also as engineering marvels. Luoyang bridge is bounded at both ends by Buddhist stupas, Buddhist stupas and sculptures are also found at points along the length of the bridge as well. As mentioned in chapter two the bridge was built under the supervision of a Kaiyuan monk. This only serves to further the notion that Quanzhou is a "Buddhist kingdom" 佛国 and that Kaiyuan monastery is at the heart of Quanzhou and its treasures.

¹⁰⁶ Wang 1999: 154-178.

carp!¹⁰⁷ Garrison towns were built and other structures and administrative units devised in an effort to net the carp. Kaiyuan's two pagodas, however, remained, piercing the net. Zhou Dexing is said to have attempted to burn them down in the late fourteenth century, his plans, however, were foiled by a heaven sent downpour of rain.¹⁰⁸ Thanks to Kaiyuan's pagodas, the carp remained un-netted and free.

This folkloric interpretation of actual historical events of the early Ming has been passed down for centuries and remains part of Quanzhou's folk identity. After the coast of Fujian was opened to foreign investment in 1979 many administrative reforms were set in motion, among them was the changing of Maoist era place names. Local historians charged with the later task proposed the borough of Quanzhou (not the city) to be renamed "Carp City."¹⁰⁹ This recommendation reflects local pride in the history of Quanzhou to produce so many capable individuals and so much prosperity and some kind of faith in the potency of the twin pagodas, which are attributed with tearing holes in the imperially cast net and freeing the carp to swim free and prosper. Kaiyuan's pagodas, then, form part of the folk imagination of the city of Quanzhou as geomantically powerful forces that work on behalf of the city and contribute to its prosperity. To be proud of the carp city is to value and take pride in the pagodas which, according to local lore, variously serve as its eyes and keep it free.

Despite the preponderance of secularly-oriented praise for Kaiyuan's cultural properties (historic, cultural, scientific and economic), there remains a segment of the

¹⁰⁷ A national folktale relates how a carp jumped over the dragon gate and was able to become a dragon. The founding emperor of Ming feared a Quanzhou local "jumping over the dragon gate" and becoming a challenge to the new regime and thus set about reconfiguring the auspicious fengshui of the city (Wang 2009: 31-34).

¹⁰⁸ Quanzhou's story of the carp is recorded in Wu Zaoting. 1985 [1940]. *Quanzhou minjian chuanshuo ji* (A Collection of Quanzhou Folk Tales). Fuzhou: People's Publishing House, pp. 1-5. See also Wang 2009: 30-33.

¹⁰⁹ Wang 2009: 28.

population that values Kaiyuan's cultural properties as objects of Buddhist value or spiritual power (*ling*).

Reverence

Kaiyuan's religious supporters while recognizing the historic value of the monastery, are generally more focused on the restoration of the Sangha and the maintenance and preservation of monastic properties as a place for religious practice. They speak of Kaiyuan monastery as a sacred place (*shendi*), as a place of spiritual efficacy (*ling*), as a place for the accumulation of merit (*gongde*) and the receipt of blessings (*zhufu*). The language of these supporters is thus imbued with unmistakably religious notions. These "religious" supporters characteristically view cultural properties with an attitude of reverence distinct from the civic pride of non-religious. When Kaiyuan's cultural properties are approached with a dispositional attitude of reverence they are transformed into devotional objects. As devotional objects they are most properly addressed by forms of obeisance, especially offerings of incense and prostrations. The uniquely religious property that devotional objects possess, in the view of many religiously-motivated supporters, is spiritual power (*ling*), which is thought to be accessed by making offerings and simple gestures of obeisance. Others, especially among members of the sangha, value Kaiyuan's cultural properties for their connection with the Buddha or the dharma; it is for this that they are venerated. Their veneration, especially the ritualized veneration of monks and nuns, is performed with a notion of self-cultivation.

Visitors typically offer incense to the Buddhas in the main hall. Many others offer incense to Guanyin at the back of the main hall, Weituo in front of the ordination

platform and Lossana on the ordination platform. All of these worshiped statues are protected relics from the Qing and Ming dynasties. While the pagodas do not have a censor to collect incense, religious visitors occasionally toss sticks of incense, coins and even fruit through the gated doorways of the pagodas as offerings. Such individuals who approach Kaiyuan's cultural properties as objects of devotion do so along a spectrum of behavior found in ritualistic acts that runs from perfunctory to pious. I aim to capture the disposition expressed by these monks, worshipers and laypersons with the term "reverence," an attitude which is characteristic of such devotional acts [Figures 21-22, 57].

Paul Woodruff, in a book of moral philosophy titled *Reverence: Renewing a Forgotten Virtue*, identifies reverence as a virtue which entails feelings of awe, respect and shame.¹¹⁰ Woodruff draws on the important Confucian virtue *li* 礼, meaning "ritual" or "propriety" as an ancient example of the idea of reverence.¹¹¹ *Li* indicates doing things in the proper manner and it forms part of the modern word "manners" (*limao*). Reverence is not limited to expressions in a religious context, but it is a characteristic emotion found in individuals who are in the presence of objects they hold as sacred. Kaiyuan's worshipers, lay Buddhists and monks all carry varying degrees of reverence with respect to Kaiyuan's Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and other cultural properties. Kaiyuan's librarian prostrates to the shelf of sutras before he opens it; worshipers prostrate themselves before Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in Kaiyuan's halls and countless other protected properties throughout Kaiyuan.

¹¹⁰ Woodruff 2001

¹¹¹ Stephen Angle examines Woodruff's use of *li* as a form of reverence; see Angle 2005.

As mentioned earlier, people occasionally toss offerings of coins or incense into the pagodas. These are acts of devotion and when they are performed most sincerely they are accompanied by a sense of reverence directed toward the object of one's devotion. Such reverence can be detected in the language of devotees, heard in prayers mumbled or observed in the movements of those engaged in acts of devotion.¹¹² Reverence also accompanies the ritual acts of monastics such as prostrations, which are designed to cultivate selflessness or the surrendering of egoism.

While reverence may be manifest through actions, as Woodruff suggests, it is more fundamentally a feeling or complex of feelings. The feeling I have in mind, largely follows what Woodruff has mapped out, but I emphasize the “respect” dimension. It is a feeling of deep respect and may also include some degree of love or awe. What is the source of reverence that people feel towards Kaiyuan's cultural properties? Worshipers typically believe that the cultural properties discussed here are embodied with spiritual power (*ling*). According to Chinese folk understanding, spiritual power as manifest in objects is not generic; that is to say, worshiping one statue of Guanyin is not the same as worshiping any other statue of Guanyin. Although each statue may manifest the presence of Guanyin, each statue has its own history and special properties and reputation of efficacy or lack of efficacy—its own spiritual trajectory.¹¹³ Spiritual power is thus concentrated and localized in objects and places.¹¹⁴ Kaiyuan enjoys a reputation as a

¹¹² The relationship between reverence and outward speech and behavior is one reason why monks have traditionally laid such stress on deportment, appearance and speech—these project a proper image to which lay persons will respond, but at the same time it inculcates what may be described as a sense of reverence, a sense of focus or concentration; which is to say non-distraction from one's keeping of the precepts.

¹¹³ This is the common belief among believers in China. See also Kieschnick 2003:80. While it is a common belief it is not necessarily the view of the Buddhist clergy, some of whom recognize it has a form of folk belief not strictly in-line with Buddhist teachings.

¹¹⁴ This notion of one statue being more spiritually powerful than another or one pagoda being more powerful than another is generally a boon to monasteries, especially those that possess properties with a

place of spiritual efficacy which may be accessed through worshiping in its halls or sponsoring ceremonies to be performed in one's name. When people enter Kaiyuan they are not especially reverent as one might be upon entering a church, but as worshipers they assume reverential attitudes as they prostrate themselves before images or circumambulate the halls or pagodas.

The belief in the spiritual power of objects is part of the religious habitus of Kaiyuan's worshipers. Scholars interested in material objects or visual culture have theorized the power of inanimate objects in other, non-Chinese contexts. In *The Power of Images* David Freedberg has explored the power of Western visual art to generate *responses* in the beholder (Freedberg 1989). Alfred Gel has theorized that humans habitually "abduct" agency to material objects; that is, we attribute to objects (icons, idols, cars and computers) the power to will, intend or act (Gel 1998). A group of scholars have used Gel's ideas to examine whether or not the mass production of religious statues in Vietnam limits their perceived spiritual efficacy; in other words how commercialization impacts the relationship between the worshiper and the commodified statue.¹¹⁵ In short, they found that commodification weakened *ling*, but did not eradicate it.¹¹⁶

In the religious context of Kaiyuan, the agency attributed to Kaiyuan's cultural properties is formalized and legitimized by the sheer weight of tradition—a tradition that Chinese modernizers and revolutionaries have attempted to eradicate but have failed. The robust sale of mass produced statues of deities for domestic shrines in Quanzhou suggests

reputation for spiritual efficacy; it supports the belief that one cannot simply buy one of the readily available images and put it in one's home and have access to the same spiritual power that is available at a venerable monastery. This notion will be developed in the following chapter.

¹¹⁵ Kenall, Tam and Huong 2010.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

that commodification has not enervated their perceived *ling*. Scholars of Chinese religion have identified *ling*, variously translated as “spirit,” “efficacy,” “numinous,” “magical power” (Sangren 1987) and “magical efficacy” (Chau 2006), as a central feature of Chinese popular religion. Among Kaiyuan’s worshipers the fact of spiritual efficacy is simply a given and the crowds that gather on special days and lunar twenty-sixth are taken as evidence of the efficacy of Kaiyuan and its material properties.

There are, however, those who do not subscribe to the notion of spiritual power inhering in statues, images or pagodas, but who nonetheless treat these objects with reverence. These include some monastics, some lay Buddhists and individuals who are generally younger or more educated and have an interest in religion or Buddhism but do not subscribe to “the weight of tradition.” Even Kaiyuan’s specifically non-religious visitors typically treat statues inside Kaiyuan’s halls with some measure of respect. If questioned they will cite the age, artistry or uniqueness of Kaiyuan’s cultural properties as the source of their interest—this non-religiously motivated type of interest falls under my rubric of civic pride.

Two Circuits of Activity

I hold that these two dispositional attitudes, civic pride and reverence, influence perceptions of cultural properties and lead to specific patterns of behavior with respect to cultural properties. These patterns of behavior form two circuits of activity: 1. The civic pride-cultural treasure-tourism circuit and 2. The reverence-devotional object-worship circuit.¹¹⁷ These two circuits of activity may be thought to originate in the different ways in which cultural properties are viewed by individuals. These dispositional attitudes (civic

¹¹⁷ I use the word “worship” for lack of a better alternative, but I would like to point out that pilgrimage serves as a close analogue with the activity I have in mind.

pride and reverence) act as the central conduit in the circuit of activity that runs between cultural properties and individuals. These dispositional attitudes may also be called motivational attitudes because they act as the motivating factor bringing about positive action with respect to Kaiyuan. Those positive actions are the actions associated with tourism and heritage preservation on the one hand and with worship and religious revival on the other. Both sets of actions and their corresponding attitudes have encouraged patterns of protection, preservation and promotion.

When approached with an attitude of civic pride, cultural properties appear as historic and cultural treasures that must be preserved and made available to the public; individuals with this attitude participate in activities which fall under my broadened concept of tourism. When approached with an attitude of reverence, cultural properties are seen as objects of spiritual power or representations of the Buddha or dharma that must be preserved and made accessible to devotees for worship.

It is within the civic pride circuit that scholars, artists, amateur historians and even musicians take an interest in and offer support for the monastery and its cultural properties. Groups of musicians and scholars who study the traditional Nanyin music of Quanzhou regularly visit Kaiyuan temple to view and study the apsaras and kalavinkas holding traditional instruments in the main hall and in the hall of the ordination platform. Cultural enthusiasts regular view and inquire into the Hindu sculptures in front of and at the rear of the main hall. Arborists take an interest in Kaiyuan's magnificent banyans, grand bodhi trees and mystical mulberry. Scholars from China and abroad have taken an interest in its art and architecture from the first investigations of Ecke and Demiéville in the 1920s to the more recent investigations of Wang Hanfeng (1992 etc.), Chen-shen

[Ellen] Wang (2008) and Risha Lee (currently writing a dissertation on the Indian sculptures in Quanzhou and Kaiyuan at Columbia). In all of these cases, secular interests dominate and the pursuant actions vary from visiting and study, to protection and preservation. All of these activities form part of the civic pride-cultural treasure-tourism circuit as I envision it and all of them contribute in some fashion to the protection, support or promotion of the monastery. The difference between this support and that portrayed in the MS *Vinaya* is that there the support, though inspired by material culture, was offered by laity to clerics. Here, monastic property inspires support, but not from laypersons, or even individuals interested in supporting the clergy.

The reverence circuit, on the other hand, is part of a traditional or religious worldview in which certain objects, places or persons are seen to possess sacred qualities or power. Individuals operating within this paradigmatic dispositional attitude are less concerned about the historic value of Kaiyuan's cultural properties than with their spiritual efficacy or their connection with the Buddha or dharma. The thousands of devotees who turn up on the twenty-sixth day of every lunar month to offer incense, prostrate, eat noodles and *nianfo* (recite the Buddha's name) are not focused on questions of heritage, but on questions of receiving blessings, eradicating bad luck and earning merit which may benefit oneself, one's family or one's ancestors; a minority may have more specific ideas about self-cultivation. Their ritualistic actions, which I subsume under the rubric of "worship," support the preservation and continuance of a religiously active environment. Their donations directly support the sangha, whereas the entry ticket purchased by tourists and tour groups is shared by the sangha and the non-monastic temple administrative commission. Without significant numbers of such religiously

motivated individuals, temples in China become museums rather than places of religious practice. For now, it is important to recognize that the individuals whose dispositions toward cultural properties are marked by reverence contribute to the protection and maintenance of Kaiyuan as a place of religious practice. The greater significance of their support in fending off museumification is part of what is indicated by the notion of synergy. The way in which they interact with the temple and its properties enhances Kaiyuan's reputation as a site of spiritual power and a place of the dharma and therefore draws more pilgrims from greater distances, some of whom spend large sums of money on rituals to eliminate ill fortune.

Individuals possessing this religious sensibility typically understand the civic pride dimension but do not consider it of paramount importance. At the same time, those who tend to emphasize the civic pride perspective which lauds cultural and historic value over the religious may be found going through the motions of offering incense or engaging in forms of obeisance and worship. In other words, the two circuits of activity are not as exclusive and their boundaries are not as clearly demarcated as the models have heretofore suggested. When dispositional attitudes are mixed the resultant actions are correspondingly mixed. The monks and laypersons whose dominant attitude toward cultural properties is one of reverence and devotion will, for example, most often carry a measure of civic or cultural pride directed at the age and artistry of the pagodas or the longevity of Kaiyuan's ancient mulberry tree. These Buddhist supporters invariably recognize the cultural and historical value of the site and the need for its protection based on its religious as well as historic and cultural values. As visitors they not only prostrate themselves before images of Buddhas but they will also pose for photos in front of the

main hall and pagodas. In such cases the neat line of demarcation between the actions of worship or pilgrimage and tourism becomes blurred. Similar slippage occurs when camera-toting historical materialists follow the stream of worshipers in burning incense in front of images of Buddhas or bodhisattvas. While recognizing that such slippages occur I maintain the usefulness of identifying these two paradigms as a means of sorting out two fundamentally distinct types of visitors and supporters of Kaiyuan, the religious (revivalists) and the secular (curators). The importance of distinguishing these two types of supporters will become more clear as we examine how these parties compete and negotiate with one another in chapter eight. For now, we simply want to see how each group contributes to the protection, maintenance and promotion of Kaiyuan monastery based on its possession of cultural properties which, due to their multivalence, each group values for its own distinct set of reasons, one motivated religiously, the other, secularly.

Two Circuits of Synergy

All Buddhist monasteries have what may be called cultural properties such as gates, halls, statues, paintings, calligraphy and so on. Such cultural properties were not enough to halt an onslaught of vandalism and destruction at most monasteries throughout China including dozens of temples in Quanzhou. What made Kaiyuan different? The role played by mayor Wang was instrumental, but what compelled the mayor to rush to Kaiyuan's protection? After all, he failed to protect countless other temples, including Chengtian Monastery, one of Quanzhou's most important, located about a mile from Kaiyuan. This chapter has argued that Kaiyuan's cultural properties played a crucial role in both drawing mayor Wang to its defense and providing him with a basis for his persuasive arguments (legal and civic/cultural value). What makes Kaiyuan's cultural

properties different? Kaiyuan is genuinely in possession of cultural properties markedly different from other monasteries, above all the Purple Cloud Twin Towers. What makes these pagodas different from hundreds or thousands of other pagodas throughout China?¹¹⁸ People say that they are the tallest pair of stone pagodas in all of China, but that is not their only unique value. I would say that their uniqueness lies in their combination of age, superb construction, artistry, symmetry, representation of Buddhist scripture and history and overall visual impact. Other pagodas or pairs of pagodas may have two or three of these features, but none have as diverse an array of these features and Kaiyuan's pagodas truly remain in a class of their own. This litany of characteristics by itself, however, remains incapable of effecting positive action - what is necessary is a community receptive to the special significances of the pagodas or other cultural properties.

I want to use the notion of synergy to further describe how the relationships between members of the community and Kaiyuan's cultural properties have served to protect and restore Kaiyuan. In order to simplify this discussion we will focus on the pagodas, which are the most visible and important of Kaiyuan's cultural properties. The pagodas alone, however, in the absence of a human community, are merely stone towers, perhaps a good place for nesting bats and rodents, but in the eyes of locals the towers take on a host of added meanings and values. The way in which these meanings and values are added and multiplied is what I intend to denote by multivalence and "synergy."

¹¹⁸ One can find many other tall pagodas throughout China that have survived from the Ming, Qing and earlier. While these pagodas have survived, the monasteries to which they once belonged typically did not. One thus finds throughout China dozens of old pagodas standing next to newly rebuilt halls. There are countless examples of this, prominent examples include several temples in Xi'an such as Da Cien Temple 大慈恩寺 and Dajianfu Temple 大荐福寺 the homes of the Big and Small Wild Goose Pagodas (大雁塔, 小雁塔) respectively.

We have already examined the civic value of the pagodas and how they figure in the folklore of the city, but how else are they viewed by the community on a day to day basis? In the eyes of the surrounding community these pagodas evoke many significant associations: they are Buddhist monuments, they are links to ancestors, they are survivals from the age of their city's glory days and in this they are points of local pride. They were built 750 years ago by locals using local stone in a local style using local technology. Since that time they have survived a mighty earthquake that toppled many newer structures, they have survived dozens of powerful hurricanes that have damaged other buildings and they have survived dozens of wars and rebellions. Their age gives the pagodas not only a venerable quality but also, in the eyes of the surrounding community, a certain reliability. Adrift on a sea of uncertainty, humans often long in vain for something fixed, certain and reliable, but for the community of Quanzhou, while buildings, walls, arches and harbors full of ships have come and gone, these stone pagodas have remained, rising prominently above the rest of the city, as something constant and dependable—virtual pole stars for the community of Quanzhou. They have reliably stood their ground under the gaze of one's grandparents, great-grandparents, great-great grandparents and so on for seven hundred and fifty years. The strength and constancy which the pagodas represent to the people of Quanzhou is encapsulated in a popular local saying: "Stand up like the east and west pagodas; lie down like Luoyang bridge." To lose them, mayor Wang implied, would be to lose Quanzhou.

Despite our best efforts to evaluate the pagodas on their "own" merits, in spite of our habits of mind to speak of objects of art as having some life of their own, objects of material culture exists in a shifting communion with their human observers. The value of

material culture lies in the eyes and minds of the observer. The people take pride in them and they revere them through a process that invests them with a kind of greatness, if not inviolability. In accumulating these cultural values the pagodas, in addition to being Buddhist structures, become cultural treasures and even national treasures. The accumulation of these values and valences is what I seek to evoke with the use of “synergy.”

Deployed in the service of economic development, civic or national heritage, tourism or religious revival, cultural properties take on added value and significance through interaction with members of the community through a process that is synergistic. In the synergistic exchange between observers and Kaiyuan’s cultural properties, the properties assume a greater meaning and value than the mere sum of their stones. Because they are valued as cultural treasures, they have been protected and maintained. Because they are known to have been protected and maintained by the community and at state expense Kaiyuan and its properties take on additional value and meaning. As Kaiyuan has assumed a higher profile, it has been visited by a stream of elite visitors (such as Jiang Zemin in 1994) and its status becomes even more exalted. This continual cycling back and forth between cultural properties/monastery and the community leads to increasing visibility and increasing prestige for Kaiyuan monastery and its cultural properties. The dynamic cycling back and forth that I have described here is what makes this process a “circuit” and it is the increasing expansion of value and significance that I seek to capture with the term “synergy.”

Tourism and worship and the energy and money deployed in their service have made Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery what it is today— a dual institution that is both a

Buddhist monastery and tourist attraction. The example of Kaiyuan monastery demonstrates that having features which can be co-opted by larger socio-cultural forces, especially non-religious forces, can prove beneficial to survival and success.¹¹⁹ Just as the artwork of the Jetavana monastery in ancient India may have encouraged donations, it was the artistry of Kaiyuan's Song dynasty pagodas and other cultural properties that in large measure enabled it to survive under the stresses that destroyed dozens of other temples in the immediate vicinity. Kaiyuan's ability to appeal to a diverse group of patrons (religious and non-religious) may be seen as a conscious strategy, one common to Buddhist monasteries in China and beyond. Susan Naquin writes:

In fact, at Tanzhesi diversification seems to have been pursued as a strategy of survival, and even prized. ...For a place like Tanzhesi, to rely on a single integrated community, even had it been possible, might have been much less effective than promotion of many versions of the monastery and many patrons.

While this dissertation is focused on a single monastery, by developing a general description of this phenomenon I hope to have shed light not only on the role played by cultural properties at this monastery, but also to have provided models of interaction between cultural properties and individuals that may be used to analyze the role of cultural properties at other religious sites and in other contexts.¹²⁰ The two models developed here are a somatic and immediate response to material culture, followed by a disposition-based response.

A monastery cannot be reduced to the schedules and activities of monks and visitors. Nor can it be reduced to a description of the physical plan, structures and properties. Both of these dimensions, the people and their activities and the structures

¹¹⁹ Naquin 1998: 207.

¹²⁰ I hope to broaden the comparative compass of this work in future research. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation, however, to bring in detailed data from other temples or other traditions.

and their functions are essential to the identity of a monastery. This is true whether the monastery is a training ground for monks or a museum with no clergy; in both cases, the monastery can only be understood by recognizing the contributions of myriad factors and conditions to the identity of the monastery. Kaiyuan's material properties, its pagodas, buildings, stupas, statues, steles and trees, not only provide the setting for the experience of visitors and the lives of monastics, they also frame, condition and evoke the religious experiences of visitors and monks alike; and can contribute to its success and longevity. Subsequent chapters expand this purview of the monastery to include additional multivalent factors and conditions such as the memorialization of auspicious events and eminent monks in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Auspicious Events and Eminent Monks: Sanctifying and Branding Space

The Purple Cloud has always been considered a famous temple. Could it be the best in all of Fujian from its gorgeous buildings with ornate eaves alone? Rather it is from having so many extraordinary and precious distinguished men having nurtured their virtue and expressed their talents at this place.¹

-Yuanxian (1643)

Eminent monks, auspicious events and cultural properties are among the central elements in the representation of Chinese monasteries in historical records such as gazetteers and inscriptions. The *Monastery Record* contains chapters on eminent monks and monastic structures and each chapter contains details about preternatural and auspicious events associated with the monks and the buildings of the monastery. Such material is typical among local sources as well as larger compendiums such as the collection of biographies of eminent monks (*Gaoseng zhuan*) by Huijiao 慧皎 (497-554) and Daoxuan (seventh century).² Noting a distinct focus on this type of material, several scholars have remarked upon the dearth of information pertaining to the specifics of religious life at monasteries in monastic records and other historical documents. In reference to monastic gazetteers, Timothy Brook notes that “curiously perhaps, material pertaining to strictly religious matters is more the exception than the rule. These books attend to monasteries less as centers of religious practice than as cultural sites favored by

¹ *Sizhi* I.20b.

² Kieschnick 1997; Robson 2010b; Naquin 1998.

devotees of Buddhism, landscape and local history.”³ James Robson, examining other documents of local history echoes these findings: “Indeed, what is absent in those sources, namely details of religious practice, speaks loudly to what was considered important in the representation of monasteries.”⁴ If religious practice is not a focus of these texts, then what is?

Susan Naquin, examining documents from the eighteenth century related to Tanzhe Monastery, writes: “In all these works, information about the monastic community was usually excluded, and the temple cast as a site for history, for imperial and literati visits, for the individual but not the group, for the marvelous and poetic experience but not the devotional one.”⁵ Robson points out that while elements of wonder, culture and history are prominent in the representation of monasteries they have not adequately entered our scholarly purview:

One of the main elements found in those sources was a (sometimes quite detailed) treatment of the special qualities, or anomalous elements, of the natural setting, the connections with eminent monks who resided there, and accounts of miracles that were connected with the site and their sacred possessions. Those accounts could demonstrate that a monastery was an efficacious place for a monk or nun to pursue their calling and may have had profound effects on the future viability and economic success of monasteries, due to their ability to attract both pilgrims and patrons. As visible as these resolutely anti-modernist themes are in local monastic records, they have remained topics that have largely been occluded from the ken of those who have studied Chinese Buddhist monasteries.⁶

Robson emphasizes three features prominent in the representation of monasteries in local sources: 1. special qualities of the *natural setting*, 2. *eminent monks* who resided at the site and 3. *miracles* associated with the site or its material culture. Since Kaiyuan is

³ Brook 2005: 178.

⁴ Robson 2010b: 49.

⁵ Naquin 1998: 202.

⁶ Robson 2010b: 59.

an urban monastery, the natural features are less important (Robson's materials deal with monasteries in mountain settings), but tales of eminent monks and auspicious or miraculous tales are well represented in the literature associated with the monastery.

While Brook, Naquin and Robson are all writing about the representation of Buddhist monasteries in pre-nineteenth century documents, I have observed the features they mention (cultural properties, the presence of eminent monks and records of auspicious events) as the most prominent monastic features in, not only historical documents, but also in contemporary presentations of the monastery. My reading of archival materials and my conversations with monks, worshipers, enthusiasts and officials have all pointed to the centrality of Kaiyuan's buildings, its legendary founding and eminent monks in making it a place deserving the interest, protection and patronage of the public and devotees alike. This chapter focuses on the roles played by the memorialization of eminent monks and auspicious events in the religious and institutional life of Kaiyuan. In short, I propose that such memorialization and related discourse contributes to religious life by sacralizing the grounds and shrines of the monastery and to the institutional life through branding. The two processes will be explored following an examination of Kaiyuan's memorialization of eminent monks and auspicious events.

Eminent Monks

The passage cited at the head of this chapter is taken from the chapter on Kaiyuan's eminent monks in the *Monastery Record*. Yuanxian states that what truly accounts for Kaiyuan's greatness is not the magnificence of its physical plant (which was examined in the previous chapter) but rather the monks who have infused it with greatness as teachers, practitioners or builders. While this could be read as a *de rigueur*

nod to the monastic virtue and talent that any great monastery should be able to boast, I hold that it is more than a rhetorical flourish and argue that some genuine charismatic power, emanating from monks of the past through discourse and cultural artifacts, has contributed to the monastery's reputation and to patterns of patronage. While they lived, eminent monks attracted monastic and lay followers as well as the support of patrons.⁷ In addition to the direct material support attracted during their lifetimes, memories of particular monks were passed down and built into a repertoire of narratives about Kaiyuan that have enhanced its reputation for spiritual power, thus contributing to patterns of devotional activity and institutional support.

An eminent monk exhibits excellence, but what kind of excellence? A monk may exhibit exceptional learning, be a master of meditation, follow the regulations of vinaya with scrupulous attention, be a master of ritual, possess a moving chanting voice, be a talented poet or essayist, have supernatural abilities (*shentong* 神通), be a great manager of the monastery or a tireless fundraiser or builder. In short, there are many ways in which a monk may prove his virtue.⁸ In other words, there is no single, paradigmatic eminent monk marked by a single or fixed set of virtues. “Eminent monk” (*gaoseng*) is a multivalent designation and Kaiyuan’s eminent monks over the centuries have possessed a range of diverse virtues.⁹ The most orthodox virtues a monk may possess are those that correspond with one of the three trainings that encompass traditional Buddhist practice: mastery in discipline, doctrine and meditation. To these most traditional virtues we must

⁷ As narrated in chapter two, many buildings were constructed by patrons in order to house eminent masters and their disciples—this was especially prominent during the interregnum and the Northern Song periods.

⁸ Jonathan Silk has explored, for example, the importance granted to monks involved in administrative service in Indian Buddhism (Silk 2008).

⁹ All of the above varieties of excellences are demonstrated in the biographies in the *Monastery Record*.

add the skill in Sangha building and management. These latter virtues are exhibited in fundraising and in the closely-associated activity of building or rebuilding monasteries or in the running or managing of a monastery—activities which include mastering relations with monks, lay persons and the powers that be.

As for numinous powers, within the Buddhist tradition, they are an expected attainment (*siddhi*) as one advances in meditation, but an ability, according to canonical literature, the adept should dismiss as a possible sidetrack on the path to awakening.¹⁰ The *vinaya* ultimately forbid monks from making miraculous displays before the laity.¹¹ Despite this canonical view, supernormal powers form an important part of the hagiographic literature of eminent monks. They are so prominent, in fact, that in his study of biographies of eminent monks in Chinese literature, Kieschnick makes the thaumaturge one of three types of monks eulogized, the others being scholars and ascetics.¹² Buddhist literature preserved accounts of the numinous powers of monks in order to promote the prestige of the monastic community and earn them the support of the state and the elite.¹³ One of the more frequently depicted types of preternatural event associated with monks is the provocation of sympathetic or correlative responses in nature.

Extraordinary Correlative Responses

Since the Han dynasty, before Buddhism had penetrated the Chinese cultural sphere, the Chinese have believed that the presence of a sage evokes wondrous responses

¹⁰ Canonical literature lists six kinds of powers, including magical powers (*ruyi*) (Kieschnick 1997: 70).

¹¹ Davis 1998: 13.

¹² Kieschnick 1997: 67-111.

¹³ One way that support was earned was through the ability to successfully prognosticate future events of concern to leaders (Kieschnick 1997: 71-76).

(*ganying*) from nature.¹⁴ After Buddhism penetrated China, extraordinary correlative responses in the natural world are commonly used as evidence of a monk's eminence. In his study of biographies of eminent monks written from the sixth through tenth centuries Kieschnick observes that "when a sage appears, one can expect a spontaneous, correlative response from Nature, whether it be changes in the weather, new configurations of the stars, or the appearance of prodigious plants and animals."¹⁵ The biographer Huijiao recorded many of these types of events in his *Preliminary Collection of Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Gaoseng zhuan chujì* 高僧传初集)¹⁶ which he categorized as divine wonders (*shenyi* 神异).¹⁷ Daoxuan, in his *Continued Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Xu gaoseng zhuan* 续高僧传), called the same type of phenomenon spiritual resonance (*gantong* 感通).¹⁸

The *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas* and the *Monastery Record* both contain many accounts of preternatural responses in nature elicited by Kaiyuan's monks. These sources relate a full range of preternatural responses from nature including animal, vegetable, mineral, liquid, celestial, sonic and olfactory responses. Apart from lotus-blooming trees and purple clouds, examples from the *Monastery Record* include amrita

¹⁴ The Han dynasty belief is articulated in the *Huainanzi*. See Le Blanc 1985; Kieschnick 1997: 98 and Company 1996: 367-368.

¹⁵ Kieschnick 1997: 98. For more on such miraculous occurrences during the Han see Loewe, Michael. 1982. *Chinese Ideas of Life and Death: Faith, Myth and Reason in the Han Period (202 BC-AD 220)*. London: Allen and Unwin, pp. 80-90. David Chappell also notes the early non-Buddhist presence of this notion in Chinese thought: "In the tradition of correlative thinking from the Han dynasty, the formless ultimate was seen as responsive to human morality; exceptional spiritual achievement would naturally manifest itself in external natural wonders." See Chappell 2005: 61.

¹⁶ Also known as the *Liang Biographies of Eminent Monks* (*Liang Gaoseng zhuan* 梁高僧傳).

¹⁷ Huijiao's *Gaoseng zhuan*. See Kieschnick 1997: 99

¹⁸ *Daoxuan lushi gantong lu*, T 2106, v. 52; *Luxiang gantong zhuan*, T 1898, v. 45. I follow Kieschnick, following Birnbaum, in translating *gantong* as "spiritual resonance." See Kieschnick 1997: 98-101. *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 续高僧传 See Kieschnick 1997: 88-89.

that fell on the place where the ordination platform would be built¹⁹ and mysterious lights, music and fragrances have been associated with such events as the births of masters or their chanting of scripture.²⁰ To give one of the more colorful examples, red lotuses are said to have turned white while the fragrance of cinnamon (cassia) flowers filled the air when the interregnum monk Xicen 栖岑 lectured on the *Xifang guan shangsheng Sutra* 西方观上生经, a sutra relating to rebirth in the Western Paradise of Amitabha.²¹

Responses in the animal world include doves listening to sutras (to be discussed below).²² The most recent example of a correlative response in the natural world to the presence of eminent monks is said to be the phenomenon of “peach trees blooming red lotuses” when Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu entered Kaiyuan to initiate the Republican Period revival in 1924.

This kind of miraculous display is structured so that it is not in violation of the vinaya because the sympathetic resonance of the environment to the presence of a sage appears to be an involuntary relation. In other words, the monk does not will the purple cloud or other sights or sounds into existence, they are spontaneous reactions to the presence of excellence. Just as the Buddhist notion of karma operates as a kind of natural law, so does the correlative response or spiritual resonance between virtue embodied on the micro-level of the human body naturally relate to the larger cosmos on the macro-

¹⁹ *Sizhi* I.3a-b.

²⁰ Benguan's 本观 (d. 1100) mother, for example, dreamed a golden figure who gave her a white lotus before she discovered she was with child and when he was born there was a purple aura around his head and strange light is said to have filled the room (*Sizhi* I.34b). Daozhao 道昭, who lived during the interregnum, was also born with a purple aura around his head (*Sizhi* I.24b). The monk Benyuan 本源 while traveling in Zhangpu 漳浦 sat on a rock beside the path and every night thereafter the rock is said to have glowed. *Sizhi* I.45a.

²¹ *Sizhi* I.29b-30a.

²² *Sizhi* I.40a.

level.²³ This occurs in Chinese thought because there is unity between the human body and the larger world; there is no dichotomy between matter and spirit.²⁴

The examples of correlative responses to excellence in the *Monastery Record* and *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas* are different than the kinds of *gantong* in other collections such as the *Record of Manifestations [Resulting] from Recitation of Guanyin Sutras and Mantras* (*Guanshiyin jingzhou zhiyan ji*) compiled by layperson Zhou Kefu 周克復 in 1659. The stories in this collection and others were examined by Chün-fang Yü in her study of Guanyin (Yü 2001) and all reveal the response, not of an impersonal heaven or cosmic force, but of Guanyin Bodhisattva's intervention in the lives of the faithful.²⁵ Though informed by the idea of correlative response, it seems that such stories are more properly referred as examples of efficacious response (*lingying*) of the Bodhisattva to distinguish them from the more impersonal or naturalistic conceptions of the entity responding. These two different conceptions of the cosmos, anthropomorphic and naturalistic, have been evident in China since early on.²⁶

The Chinese conceptualization of what in a Western context would be called “miracles” merits a brief comparison with this Western notion and its conceptual framework to clarify, more precisely, the nature of the auspicious events under consideration. The word “miracle” is derived from the Latin *miraculum*, “to wonder.”

²³ This was how early Buddhists in China adopted the idea of karma to Chinese thought; the only major difference was the idea of rebirth (Campany 1996: 369).

²⁴ The Chinese non-dualism, as I understand it, is thorough and accounts for salient characteristics of Chinese religion. It contrasts with the traditional perception in the Western world of a dichotomy between matter and spirit and body and mind. Though the Chinese view suggests monism it remains attached to notions of hierarchy.

²⁵ Many such miracle tales are examined in Yü 2001: 158-194.

²⁶ Robert Sharf notes this and literati efforts to combat more personalist or anthropomorphic versions of cosmic forces (Sharf 2002: 95). It seems to me that more naturalistic approach reflects a preference in the Zhou dynasty to speak about Heaven (*tian*) rather than Shangdi (“Lord on High”) as cosmic arbiter. For a good overview of the many ways that *ganying* cosmology applies to important traditions of Chinese thought and practice including folk, Confucian, Daoist and Buddhist see Sharf 2002: 77-133.

Noting this, Thomas Aquinas defined a miracle saying, “A miracle is so called as being full of wonder, in other words, as having a cause absolutely hidden from all. This cause is God. Therefore those things which God does outside the causes which we know are called miracles.”²⁷ The conception of miracle expressed by Aquinas is a common notion in Western societies, an unexplainable phenomenon caused by God. To understand how this contrasts with the Chinese notion we must understand what is meant by God and contrast that with Chinese thought.

The Christian God is a being of ontological transcendence, he is wholly other. Just as a dichotomy is erected between matter and spirit, so is there a dichotomy between the human and the divine. In short, none of this thinking is operative in the traditional Chinese context. There are gods, ghosts and spirits in China, and they are distinguishable from humans, but they are not ontologically transcendent; they are not of some wholly other substance or being. There is a line of continuity that runs between humans, spirits and gods. While humans in traditional Chinese thought are believed to have souls, *hun* and *po*, they are not immaterial. They are rarified forms of energy, a subtle form of matter.²⁸ This profound difference places the Chinese on radically different religious and philosophical footing.²⁹ This difference, I will later argue, enables the Chinese to reinterpret their auspicious events in more scientific terms without them significantly losing their power.

²⁷ Aquinas *Summa Contra Gentiles* CI (1258-1264); translation by Pegis (Aquinas and Pegis 1945:980); briefly discussed in Davis 1998: 5.

²⁸ See Schipper 1993: 41. Another difference is the notion of miracle as an intentional act by God. In the naturalistic notion (not the anthropomorphic) of sympathetic response there is no intention; it is a natural or spontaneous response to the presence of stimuli. Anthropomorphic agents of response are, however, also common. It is not possible to claim that lack of intention is a common feature to all phenomena associated with *ganying*.

²⁹ “Transcendence” in the Chinese context is something like “rarification” rather than what it means in a Judeo-Christian context.

Auspicious events of the correlative response variety, then, are responses within a bounded cosmos, within the organism of the world. Miracles in the Judeo-Christian context are intrusions from beyond the world, into the world. It is also contact with the wholly other God, beyond this world, that makes something holy according to the Bible.³⁰ These ideas of wholly other transcendence are foreign to the Chinese view, where the world is perceived as an organic whole.³¹ Despite these ontological differences, correlative responses of the kind we are considering are accepted as signs of great attainment, they are also thought to imbue the place where they occur with their numinous presence.

Places that serve as the site of such wondrous displays are, through such association, rendered sacred (*shendi*). As sacred places they are considered to possess numinous power or efficacy (*ling*). The amount of perceived spiritual efficacy is a crucial determinant in the success of a temple in folk and Daoist traditions. Chau writes: “The believed in degree of efficacy or ‘efficacious response’ (*lingying*) is the most important determinant of a deity’s ranking in the local world of spiritual power.”³² Efficacy also plays a crucial role in winning popular support for a Buddhist monastery.

During the imperial era, spiritual efficacy also served as a key factor in determining the level of elite and state support. Just how numinous power was related to institutional support during the imperial period of China’s history is revealed in an intriguing article by Judith Boltz which points out that Chinese historical literature is full of references to officials and their relationships to supernatural forces. In particular, there

³⁰ Japhet 1998: 57-58. Sara Japhet points out that it is only contact with or connection to God that makes something holy in the Bible. Association with saints, holy people or their relics are not means of making something sacred that occur in the Bible (*ibid*).

³¹ On the Chinese universe as an organism see Needham 1951.

³² Chau 2006: 241.

are many accounts of how officials in imperial China strove to suppress spirits (*shen*) that were considered threatening through ritual means or through the closing or destruction of shrines.³³ The Song Dynasty chronicler Hung Mai 洪迈/邁 (1123-1202) in his *Yijian zhi* 夷堅志 explained that the shrines which commanded respect were those that were spiritually efficacious (*ling*), numinously manifest (*ling xian* 灵显) or spiritually responsive (*ling xiang* 灵相).³⁴ During purges, the only shrines that had a hope of survival were those considered effectively numinous, spiritually powerful or *ling*. To give an example from the eleventh century, the magistrate Jiang Jing (earned *jinshi* in 1079) of Yixing 宜兴, Jiangsu ordered the destruction of three hundred shrines considered “excessive” only sparing the one temple considered the most powerful, a temple dedicated to a certain General Liu.³⁵

The relationship between officials and what they perceived as the numinous realm provides an important window into factors contributing to the patronage of religious sites such as Quanzhou Kaiyuan over the centuries. Longevity, to a great extent, has often boiled down to being tolerated by the state, which has always seen the regulation of religious activity and institutions as part of its duty. The Chinese bureaucracy, educated in the Confucian tradition, has often been influenced by skeptical and cautionary tendencies in the Confucian tradition; it has, at points throughout the imperial era, held Buddhism, Taoism and folk practices at arms length and has participated in the regulation

³³ Boltz 1993.

³⁴ *Yijian zhi*; Boltz 1993: 247. For more on the the *Yijian zhi* its author, themes and social context see Inglis:2006. Edward Davis has used the *Yijian zhi* and other texts in his *Society and the Supernatural in Song China* (2001).

³⁵ *Yijian zhi jia*:1.2; Boltz 1993: 247.

and suppression of religious forces deemed unhealthy or unorthodox.³⁶ Confucian ideology has been replaced by Marxist historical materialism, which considers religion an instrument of exploitation. As a consequence, the current generation of Chinese bureaucrats continues in a long tradition of officials who perceive religion as something that requires close regulation and restriction.³⁷ While other temples and monasteries have come and gone in Quanzhou, Kaiyuan has remained because political forces over the centuries have supported its continued existence. There is no one reason that Kaiyuan has survived purges or has been the first to be rebuilt over the centuries; but its reputation as a place of spiritual power, and, more recently, its possession of valuable cultural properties, have been contributing factors.

Kaiyuan's perceived numinous power attracted the patronage responsible for the final imperial-period restoration of Kaiyuan's buildings (prior to the restoration carried out by Yuanying and Zhuandao during the 1920s). The restoration was carried out by the commander general Bai Yude in the early nineteenth century. Why was this non-local general moved to restore Kaiyuan's halls? Dispatched to fight pirates in the region, he went to Kaiyuan and prayed for rain to end a terrible draught in Quanzhou. When his prayer was answered, that very night, he committed to restoring Kaiyuan's halls.³⁸ Bai Yude, we must infer, turned to Kaiyuan because locals had informed him that it was a place of merit and spiritual power. Even if they did not, the commander perceived this to be the case himself and it was his experience with Kaiyuan's perceived spiritual efficacy

³⁶ For Ming attitudes about regulating Buddhism and Daoism see Brook 2009.

³⁷ See Yu 2005; Brook 2009:40.

³⁸ *Chongjian Kaiyuansi beiji* 重建开元寺碑记 (“Stele Record of the Reconstruction of Kaiyuan Monastery”).

that moved him to have the monastery restored. Similar acts of patronage are a common feature of Chinese religion.

How then, has Kaiyuan promoted an idea of spiritual efficacy? A common means for temples to set themselves apart has been through their founding narratives. Some temples are founded by eminent monks without need to refer to preternatural signs, such as the founding of Xi'an's Ci'en Monastery built for the great Tang dynasty master and pilgrim Xuanzang. Others are founded around a sacred relic or image. Many such stories are related by Daoxuan in his *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* (T. 2106:52) about "miraculous images" that may be said to be associated with the founding or legitimization of monasteries.³⁹ Kaiyuan became established as a place of spiritual efficacy when the mulberry tree is said to have bloomed lotus blossoms; an indication of efficacy that was reiterated when an auspicious purple cloud descended when the main hall was being built.

Ever since the ninth century when Huang Tao memorialized Kaiyuan's legendary founding marked by lotus-flowers and purple clouds, the monastery has continued to memorialize auspicious events and eminent monks associated with its founding, which mark Kaiyuan as a place of numinous power.⁴⁰ Almost all subsequent treatments of the monastery, including records from the Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties and recent guide books, relate the legends of Kaiyuan's auspicious founding and thus reinforce its reputation for spiritual efficacy. More than six hundred years ago a list of auspicious events associated with the monastery and its masters was inscribed on a wall bounding

³⁹ *Ji shenzhou sanbao gantong lu* (T. 2106:52.404-435); Shinohara 1998.

⁴⁰ Huang Tao's 897 *Quanzhou Kaiyuansi fodian beiji* 泉州开元寺佛殿碑记 ("Stele record of the Quanzhou Kaiyuan Monastery Buddha Hall") collected in the *Quan Tang wen* 全唐文 ("The Collected Works of Tang Literature") and in Dean and Zheng 2003:4-6, Inscription #4.

the main gate; the same auspicious events are recalled by tour guides today and found in temple publications and guide books. Monks of the past and auspicious events associated with their names have been passed down in unbroken succession to the present; these auspicious events have become integrated into the fabric of Kaiyuan's identity and have served to distinguish it as an outstanding place of merit and spiritual power. These acts of memorialization, especially of the events associated with Kaiyuan's founding, serve to bring distinction to the monastery, validate it as a place of spiritual power and a place of the Dharma—qualities valued and sought by Kaiyuan's patrons past and present. While the reputation for spiritual power would have helped attract state support and protection during the imperial period, this has changed in the modern period. The previous chapters have stressed the importance of cultural properties in winning state support in recent decades. Although spiritual power is no longer a field of discourse that speaks to the state, it is a field of discourse that continues to attract worshipers and tourists.

Kaiyuan's *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodisattvas* and *Monastery Record* both catalogue miraculous correlative responses in nature that are said to have occurred at Kaiyuan and in connection with eminent monks. While these events are said to have happened in the past, they are widely thought to imbue the land, its buildings, trees and statues with a residue of their charisma and spiritual power in the present. Standing in the main courtyard one day I was speaking to a lay Buddhist about the mulberry tree that bloomed lotus-blossoms and, with a big smile on his face, he said, with visible pride, "This is holy ground (*shendi* 神地)." On another occasion I was asking a monk about the auspicious stories associated with Kaiyuan and if they had any influence on the monastery and he said that they inspire people, monks as well as visitors. This same

monk told me that a type of aura had been detected over temples in China, a phenomenon he associated their sacred power.

While the notion of auras over temples may neither be widespread nor well documented, the notion that temples possess sacred power which visitors can access is. If a temple can document a record of auspicious phenomena associated with it, its monks or properties, then it can promote its reputation as a site of spiritual power and increase the number of devotees eager to contribute to the temple in hopes of receiving its blessings and protection (*baoyou* 保佑). In addition, if properties exist, be they mineral, vegetable or animal, which are associated with such preternatural events, these attract not only believers, be they pious or opportunistic, but also curiosity-seekers with no particular religious pretensions—like other factors they are multivalent. As examined in the previous chapter, visitors, be they Buddhists or worshipers (revivalists) or “tourists” (curators), contribute to a temple’s maintenance, preservation and devotional life. We now explore how auspicious events are memorialized at Kaiyuan today.

Kaiyuan’s Auspicious Past Remembered

When Wu Hengchun 吴亨春 penned the Republican Period preface to the *Monastery Record* in 1927 he lauded Quanzhou Kaiyuan as the best among a forest of Chan temples by referencing its eminent monks and auspicious events as follows:

The auspicious sign of the mulberry tree which bloomed lotus blossoms expresses delight at the magnificent spread of the dharma realm (*xi fajia yi hongkai* 喜法界以宏开). Fragrantly flowing amrita celebrates the exalted religious ethos. Manjushri descended and wrote a sutra; arhats entered a dream.⁴¹ Venerable masters of the three teachings- meditation, doctrine and discipline- have arisen one after another, too many to count, they are truly capable of effecting changes in customs and traditions (*yifeng yisu* 移

⁴¹ These are references to well known stories about Kaiyuan temple; they are related below.

风易俗), helping the world and giving direction to people so that a seaside city of Confucius became a solemn land of Buddha.⁴²

In celebrating Kaiyuan's greatness Mr. Wu focuses on the great masters of the past and auspicious events associated with Kaiyuan. Lotus-blooming mulberry, amrita, Manjushri and the dream of arhats are all code words that point to Kaiyuan's auspicious past. The recollection of auspicious phenomena is a means of invoking the numinous past and remembering eminent monks that have passed through Kaiyuan's venerable halls, which is, in turn, a means of praising and promoting Kaiyuan's reputation. Guidebooks and other forms of contemporary literature also invoke auspicious events or reproduce lists of them.

Eight Auspicious Phenomena and Six Unique Sites

While Kaiyuan has long recalled the two auspicious events associated with its founding, an additional level of self-reflexivity emerged toward the end of the Yuan dynasty in the first half of the fourteenth century. It was then that Dagui (a.k.a. Mengguan) wrote the *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas* recorded dozens of auspicious events associated with Kaiyuan's eminent monks. It was also at this time that lists of eight auspicious phenomena (*ba jixiang* 八吉祥) and six unique sites (*liu shusheng* 六殊胜) were inscribed on walls outside the main gate.⁴³ These lists have been passed down since that time and were most recently reproduced in 2005 in a promotional book published by Kaiyuan monastery. The book features many color photos of Kaiyuan's cultural properties and includes the Yuan dynasty lists of eight auspicious phenomena and six unique sites. The eight auspicious phenomena are: 1. Purple clouds

⁴² *Sizhi* p2.1a.

⁴³ They were erected in 1327. Chan master Muan wrote poems for the six and the eight in the seventeenth century, these poems are recorded in Shen Yushui 沈玉水 1990: 73-75.

covering the land (*ziyun gaidi*, 紫云盖地), 2. Mulberry trees blooming lotus blossoms (*sangshu bailian*, 桑树白莲), 3. The courtyard that doesn't grow weeds (*fancao busheng*, 凡草不生), 4. White doves listening to a sutra (*baige tingjing*, 白鸽听经), 5. Dream of the arhats (*yingmeng luohan*, 应梦罗汉), 6. Eminent monks of branch cloisters (*zhiyuan gaoseng*, 支院高僧), 7. Manjushri's handwriting (*wenshu moji*, 文殊墨迹) and 8. The mummy of the bare-shouldered monk (*tanbo zhenshen*, 袒膊真身). The six sites are: 1. Stone-arisen peony (*shisheng mudan* 石生牡丹), 2. Purple Cloud twin pagodas (*ziyun shuang ta* 紫云双塔), 3. Silk-burning furnace (*fenbolu* 焚帛炉), 4. Imperially-bestowed Buddha image (*yuci foxiang* 御赐佛像), 5. Amrita Ordination Platform (*ganlu jietan* 甘露戒坛) and 6. Ancient dragon eye well (*gu longyan jing* 古龙眼井). Of the six unique sites only one of them was reviewed above, while the others were reviewed with the other cultural properties in chapter six.

With the exception of “eminent monks of branch cloisters,” a collective reference to the many eminent monks of Kaiyuan as a whole, recognizing that they as a group have generated an auspicious energy or charisma that remains accessible at Kaiyuan, the eight auspicious phenomena are all directly related to particular monks. The unique sites, on the other hand, are not.⁴⁴ Of the eight auspicious phenomena, five are still represented at Kaiyuan and of the six unique sites only the dragon eye well is no longer represented. The pagodas, ordination platform and silk-burning furnace all remain extant and were described in the previous chapter. The imperially-bestowed Buddha is no longer extant,

⁴⁴ While the stone-arisen peony is a preternatural event it is not associated with the virtue of a particular monk. Hence it is considered unique and perhaps freakish, but it is not classified as auspicious, at least in the list of eight.

but its replacement is present.⁴⁵ Of the five auspicious phenomena with a presence at Kaiyuan three are said to exist in their original form while two are made present through inscriptions or sculpture; each will be described below. Just as these auspicious events and unique sites enhanced the monastery and its reputation during the fourteenth and preceding centuries they continue to do so in the twenty-first century, contributing to its appeal to the pious and the curious alike.

As we review the eight auspicious events we will note how they are or are not represented at the monastery today. The first two on the list (purple clouds and lotus blossoms) are already known and will be examined at length below. The third item on the list is the large stone courtyard said to have been auspiciously free of weeds—an auspicious event for anyone who’s had to weed a large courtyard! The *Monastery Record* notes, however, that it was invaded by weeds as early as the Yuan Dynasty.⁴⁶ The monastery, nevertheless, makes an effort to keep the courtyard weeded and it remains mostly free of grasses.

The fourth auspicious phenomenon is the dove that listened to sutras. This is reference to one of the more unique stories about Kaiyuan’s eminent monks; it concerns Chan master Jiehuan 戒环 whose story begins at Kaiyuan in his previous incarnation as a dove. This particular dove is said to have visited Kaiyuan’s Thousand Buddha Cloister (*qianfo yuan* 千佛院) daily to listen to the head monk chanting the *Lotus Sutra*. One day

⁴⁵ The Buddha is also represented by an inscription. A stone inscription reading “imperially-bestowed Buddha image” is set above the central door of the main hall. The inscription refers to the Buddha statue donated by emperor Xuanzong in 738, which is no longer extant, but which has been replaced by the current Buddhas in the main hall. The age of this stone inscription is uncertain, though locals say it may date from the Yuan dynasty. Given the presence of so many other stone sculptures dated to the Yuan at the Main Hall this is perfectly feasible. Adding to this is the fact that the four character phrase is the same as fourth unique site of the Yuan Dynasty list of five. It is an elegant inscription, superbly decorated and it seems quite possible that all five unique sites were labeled with such inscriptions during the Yuan Dynasty.

⁴⁶ *Sizhi* I.30b-31a.

the dove didn't come and that night the head monk dreamed someone told him, "I am the dove and through the power of your chanting I have been reincarnated as a human." The person in the dream described where he was born and asked the head monk to find him, indicating that he could be positively identified by a white feather under his arm. The head monk followed the directions and found a baby boy with a white feather under his arm. His parents agreed to let him become a monk and after he grew up—he became the head monk's disciple and was given the name Jiehuan.⁴⁷ The story of the dove that was reborn as the monk Jiehuan is symbolically represented at the monastery today through small wooden sculptures of white doves on the roof of the main hall. With so many impressive sights to compete for their attention, most visitors fail to look up and notice these small wooden doves, and few guides mention them for the same reason. Yet they remain as subtle reminders of a dove reincarnated as a Chan master for those initiated into the lore of the monastery with the leisure to seek out all of its minor charms.

The fifth auspicious phenomenon is the dream of the five hundred arhats. One evening, Yuan dynasty abbot Miao'en dreamed of five hundred monks asking to be his disciples (*yizhi* 依止). When he awoke the next morning he learned that the hall of five hundred arhats at Hangzhou's Nanshan temple 南山寺 had burned; he then built a hall of five hundred arhats at Kaiyuan to serve as their home.⁴⁸ While this was an elaborate addition to Kaiyuan's monastic complex, it was lost at some unspecified point in history

⁴⁷ *Sizhi* I.40a; I.17a.

⁴⁸ *Sizhi* I.42a; I.6a. Such phenomena continue to happen. In 1982, for example, a woman dreamed that gods came to her and communicated that they were homeless and therefore suffering and asked for her village to build them a home. This woman shared her experience, the village rallied around the cause and within eight months a temple had been built, three gods enshrined and a regular schedule of festivals honoring these gods was inaugurated (Guo 1985; Feuchtwang 2001:148).

and was not rebuilt. Today there are no references to or memorialization of this particular member of the list.

The sixth auspicious phenomena is a reference to the many great masters that lived at the monastery during the Song dynasty when it had expanded to include one hundred and twenty cloisters. Hongyi's calligraphy of Zhuxi's verses about the streets of Quanzhou, the Buddha country, once being full of sages may be considered an indirect reference to this. Guides and guidebooks regularly mention the history of Kaiyuan's one hundred and twenty branch cloisters, but no effort is made to elaborate on the diversity of doctrine and practice represented by those cloisters.

The handwriting of "Manjushri," the seventh phenomena, is neither extant, nor memorialized on the grounds. It refers to a once prized work of calligraphy by one of Kaiyuan's monks, Daozhao 道昭. The *Monastery Record* narrates the story of a pilgrim who, on his way to Mount Wutai 五台山 to pay homage to Manjushri, met an old man who asked him where he was going.⁴⁹ The old man said, "In the Arhat Pavilion (*luohan ge* 罗汉阁) at Quanzhou's Kaiyuan Monastery there is one copying the *Weishi lun* (Xuanzang's *Treatise on the Theory of Mind-Only*),⁵⁰ he is Manjushri."⁵¹ The auspicious appearance of this old man was instrumental in directing the pilgrim to Kaiyuan to find the "real" Manjushri. This pilgrim traveled to Kaiyuan and indeed found the monk in question; it was master Daozhao whom posterity has remembered as an emanation of

⁴⁹ Mount Wutai has long been an important pilgrimage site in China. See Gimello 1992 and Stevenson 1996.

⁵⁰ *Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi-śāstra*

⁵¹ *Sizhi* 1.24b-25a.

Manjushri, the bodhisattva of wisdom.⁵² Apart from mention in the list of eight phenomena, this story is not memorialized.

The eighth auspicious phenomenon is the mummy of Zhiliang. Zhiliang was a monk thought to be from India because he wore his robe with one of his shoulders bared and because he begged for food (an ascetic practice from Indian Buddhism that was never embraced by the Chinese). He is reputed to have had the ability to bring sun or rain as requested.⁵³ He is said to have had wild tigers at his side when he lived at Mount Daiyun.⁵⁴ With respect to the mummy of Zhiliang the *Monastery Record* states:

His disciples encased his corpse in mud and placed it in a hall where it became a source of prosperity (*fu*) for the people of Quanzhou. ...A man named Chenze 陈则 from Jinjiang 晋江 one night dreamed the master spoke to him, ‘Change your name when taking the exam and change your place of birth to Yongchun 永春 then you will succeed.’ Mr. Chenze did as instructed and it came to pass.⁵⁵

Today there is a small lacquered figure enshrined in the Patriarch’s Hall that is said to contain the full body relic (*quanshen sheli* 全身舍利) of Zhiliang [Figure 60].⁵⁶ Mummies have been effective in attracting patronage in Chinese Buddhism since as early as the Sui Dynasty when the mummy of master Zhiyi 智顓(538-579) attracted the attention of the imperial court.⁵⁷ By the time of Zhiliang, mummies had become a

⁵² See biography #9 in *Sizhi* I.24b-25a for more treatment of this episode and Daozhao’s indignant reaction to the earth god for revealing his identity.

⁵³ *Sizhi* I.22a-b.

⁵⁴ *Sizhi* I.22a-b.

⁵⁵ *Sizhi* I.22a-b.

⁵⁶ The technique of covering mummies with lacquer developed in China as early as the seventh century. Daoxuan in his *Xu gaoseng zhuan* describes the mummy of Daoxiu 道修 as being covered with a cloth soaked in lacquer (Ritzinger and Bingenheimer 2006: 66-67). As the Tang dynasty wore on the use of lacquer to cover mummies became more the rule than the exception; it was protective and lightweight and made the mummies more easily transportable (Ibid:70-71).

⁵⁷ Ritzinger and Bingenheimer 2006: 62-69. For more on the tradition of mummies, perhaps better distinguished as “whole body relics,” see Justin Ritzinger and Marcus Bingenheimer’s article “Whole-body relics in Chinese Buddhism” (*The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 7, 2006). This article provides an overview of research on the subject as well as an excellent historical sketch of the practice in

relatively common strategy to bring a monastery fame and patronage. The fact that a lacquer figure said to be Zhiliang's mummy has been preserved for so many centuries and recorded in Kaiyuan's list of eight auspicious phenomena indicates the value historically placed on this item by the monastery. Buddhist mummies at other monasteries have been said to have protected their monasteries from the raids of military marauders.⁵⁸ As a property of spiritual value, Zhiliang's mummy may have played a similarly protective role over the centuries, but such a role has not been documented. Traditionally it would have been both a spiritual and economic asset, but today the figure receives little attention by monks or the public. Furthermore, while the pious believe it to be authentic, skeptics hold that the figure is too small and light to contain a complete mummy.⁵⁹ No effort is made to draw attention to this relic today, but the monks do regularly pay obeisance to the images in the Hall of Patriarchs, including the figure of Zhiliang. For the many who are aware of its presence, the mummy of Zhiliang adds a distinct layer of spiritual significance to Kaiyuan.

Regarding the six unique sites, it is recorded that during the Tang dynasty, a peony was found growing from one of the columns of the main gate.⁶⁰ The story of the stone-born peony is represented by a peony that is painted on the wooden beams just above one of the stone columns in the main gate. It is similar to the wooden doves on the main hall in that it is an iconographic representation, it is small, it is well above one's

China. See also Faure, Bernard. 1991. *The Rhetoric of Immediacy*, pp. 148-78, and Scharf, Robert. 1992. "The Idolization of Enlightenment: On the Mummification of Ch'an Masters in Medieval China," *History of Religions* 32 (Aug. 1992): 1-31.

⁵⁸ Stories of this kind are associated with Chan master Chu'nán 楚南 (813-888) (T50, 2061: 817 c28-a01), Faqin 法钦 (714-792) (T50, 2061: 765a08-10) and Wuzhuo Wenxi 無著文喜 (821-900) (X80, 1565: 193c2-6). See Ritzinger and Bingenheimer 2006: 79.

⁵⁹ I have not made verifying the authenticity of this mummy my task, but it is a task awaiting anyone who wishes to make it theirs.

⁶⁰ The story is related in *Sizhi* I.9b.

head and it is only noticeable to one specifically informed and looking for it.⁶¹ The location of the dragon eye well is not known, but it is likely associated with Kaiyuan's famous Dongbi dragon eye (longan) fruit trees. There are some dragon eye fruit trees in the northeast corner of the monastic grounds, but people say there are no more Dongbi longans. The well is not marked or memorialized in any fashion, except as a member of the list of five sites.

Kaiyuan's auspicious past is made alive by clues planted throughout the monastic grounds, symbolic and verbal clues, as well as through properties said to date from the time of those auspicious events such as the mummy and the mulberry tree. In addition to these "on the ground" clues are references to these events in publications and in the discourse of tour guides. The current abbot, for example, has overseen the publishing of the aforementioned commemorative volume celebrating the heritage of Kaiyuan temple which introduces the Yuan dynasty list of eight auspicious phenomena and six unique sights.⁶² In addition, Daoyuan has had large walls constructed to flank the main gate inscribed with references to two auspicious events one from the monastery's founding, the other from the Republican period restoration under Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu. Visitors entering by the main gate find themselves bounded by four large characters on each side, one set commemorating the auspicious founding the monastery, "Dharma World of the Lotus[-Blooming] Mulberry Tree" (*sanglian fajie* 桑莲法界) and the other invoking the auspicious Republican period restoration, "Lotus[-Blooming] Peach Tree Manifests the Auspicious" (*taolian yingrui* 桃莲映瑞) [Figures 49-50]. The two numinous events span thirteen centuries of the monastery's history and suggest to the

⁶¹ One should look for it on one of the first columns to the right as one enters the main gate.

⁶² Daoyuan et.al. 2005:18-19.

visitor that he or she is entering a sacred site whose spiritual efficacy has been verified for over a millennium.

Kaiyuan's Legendary Founding

When I have asked monks at other temples in Quanzhou about auspicious stories associated with their temples, they say they have them, but I have found none as central to their identity as they are at Kaiyuan. Kaiyuan, it seems, has been more successful than other monasteries in the region in memorializing its auspicious past, especially its legendary founding. This is true in the present as well as in the historical record. I have perused the sections on temples in Fuzhou and Quanzhou in the early Ming gazetteer of Fujian (*Bamin tongzhi*) compiled by of Huang Zhongzhao 黄仲昭 (1433-1508) and found that no other Buddhist temple among the 1,907 listed had as colorful or elaborate a foundation story as Kaiyuan's tale of Huang Shougong and his mulberry orchard.⁶³ The Jinjiang county section, in which the city of Quanzhou lies, includes information on forty-six Buddhist monasteries (寺), ninety-eight "cloisters" (*yuan* 院) and fifty convents (*an* 庵), making a total of 194 Buddhist sites. Most accounts are very simple statements of when they were founded, only Quanzhou Chongfu mentions special features at or predating its founding, namely, four strange pine trees which grew there during the Jin dynasty (*jinshi song sizhu zhi gan teyi*)—auspicious, perhaps, but hardly a supernatural event of the scale of Kaiyuan's mulberry trees.⁶⁴ I have counted 1,288 Buddhist institutions in the Fuzhou county sections. Of these there are two temples with legends of dragons that once lived in caves on the site where temples came to be built; the very important Gushan Yongquan Monastery was built to quell a dragon and the lesser known

⁶³ *Bamin tongzhi* 75-77:1089-1129, 1160-1173.

⁶⁴ *Bamin tongzhi* 77:1160-1167.

Lingfeng Monastery 灵峰寺 was simply built in the area where a dragon had been spotted.⁶⁵ While stories about dragons add to the lore of these sites, they are considerably less remarkable in Chinese literature than Kaiyuan's lotus-blooming mulberries. The gazetteer also records that Putian's Guanghua Monastery was founded when the land was given to a white-haired sage, but no further details are provided.⁶⁶ These were among the very few temples to included details about their founding and none of the stories achieves the same measure of dramatic quality and wonder as the dream of Huang Shougong and the lotus-blooming mulberries. The fact that Fuzhou's Gushan and Putian's Guanghua monasteries are, along with Kaiyuan, among the select few temples to have any details about their founding persevered in this early Ming gazetteer supports the thesis that Kaiyuan's foundational stories have served to enhance its reputation and thus contribute to its success and survival, for these two monasteries were also among the first to be restored in Fujian and are among the most important in the province, each boasting large numbers of monastics.⁶⁷

The most prominently memorialized auspicious events and eminent monks, apart from Hongyi, are those associated with Kaiyuan's founding and the Republican Period restoration. Attention is focused on these two sets of events before one enters by the main gate (in the south). Standing before the gate, one is effectively surrounded on four sides by literary references to three different auspicious events. Facing the main gate, to one's back is a large wall known as a reflecting screen (*zhaoqiang* 照墙) or spirit wall. The wall is plain except for a large stone inscription from the sixteenth century that has been

⁶⁵ *Bamin tongzhi* 75:1089-91.

⁶⁶ *Bamin tongzhi* 79:1213-14.

⁶⁷ In 2007, I was told by monks at Gushan that there were about 100 monks then living there. Guanghua Monastery has even more monks due to the presence of an active Buddhist seminary. I don't have precise numbers, but there may be as many as 200 monks there.

inserted into it reading, “Purple Cloud Screen” [Figures 51, 53]. To one's front, hanging above the entrance, is a name board bearing two characters that have been a nickname of the monastery since the Tang Dynasty: "Purple Cloud" [Figure 52]. Finally, there are the two walls mentioned above, erected by Daoyuan in 2002, referencing the auspicious mulberry and peach trees and like the promotional book, demonstrate the current leadership's use of auspicious events to represent and promote Kaiyuan as a place of legendary spiritual power. The words “Dharma World of the Lotus-Blooming Mulberry” found outside the temple are found again, inside the grounds, inscribed on a huge horizontal wooden plaque that hangs above the central doors of the main hall. These words are positioned so that they make their way willy-nilly into every photo of the main hall taken from the large open courtyard [Figures 48, 72]. Similarly any photo taken of the main gate from outside the monastery will include the name-board reading “Purple Cloud” that hangs above the entrance and most likely one of the inscriptions on the bounding walls. In this way, and in the relating of the story of Kaiyuan’s founding by every tour guide and guidebook, the story of the lotus-blooming mulberry trees and the purple cloud are repeated visually and orally and have become identifying features that serve to brand Kaiyuan monastery. In addition to the memorials is the existence of an ancient mulberry tree said to be one of the original trees left from Mr. Huang’s original land grant.

This mulberry tree, said to have bloomed white lotus blossoms more than 1,300 years ago, is, after the stone pagodas, Kaiyuan’s most well known attraction. The mulberry is the only property at Kaiyuan protected by a barrier and kept under lock and key [Figure 68]. It is arguably the most sacred property in the whole monastery. It is

closed to the public and is a preferred location for distinguished guests to take pictures with the abbot—several such photos are displayed in the abbot's audience hall. I have been allowed to enter the gated mulberry tree area on two occasions (2006 and 2009) and each time I felt as though I were being granted a rare privilege to pay my respects to the tree rather than, say, inspect or photograph it—the tree is large and unwieldy, however, and not amenable to being photographed [Figures 54-55]. It sprawls over the corridor that extends between the tree and the main hall as it stretches east and south towards the dragons and doves that decorate the roof of the main hall. The tree also extends toward the ordination platform in the north and towards the west pagoda in the west thus stretching out in three directions. Its leaves have a surprisingly vibrant and healthy appearance while its bark, which it appears to be shedding, like a snake does its skin, is dark and crumbling. Tea made with its leaves is reputed to have special healing properties and older locals may be seen picking them up from the stone pavement between the main hall and the hall of the ordination platform.

The story of Mr. Huang's mulberry trees is manifest at Kaiyuan not only by the lone surviving mulberry or the prominently displayed inscriptions inside and outside the monastery but also by enshrined figures of the event's two protagonists. Behind the Dharma Hall and Sutra Library lies the Patriarch's Hall in which is enshrined a figure of Kuanghu, the monk said to have received the land grant from Mr. Huang.⁶⁸ The small statue of Kuanghu sits just behind the "mummy" of Zhiliang [Figures 59- 60]. Mr. Huang is himself enshrined to the east of the Patriarch's Hall in the Donor's Ancestral Hall

⁶⁸ A small figure is seated just in front of the figure of Kuanghu, this figure is said to contain the mummified remains of the Tang Dynasty bare-shouldered monk Zhiliang. In addition to these two statues the hall contains images of Republican Period masters Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu and from the post-Mao period, Guangjing.

(*tanyue ci*) where a portrait of Mr. Huang, Kaiyuan's original benefactor, is hung in one hall and a small statue of him is enshrined in another [Figures 56-58]. Both Mr. Huang, who gave his orchard, and the monk Kuanghu, who received it, are thus formally enshrined and receive offerings. While Kaiyuan has survived many changes and transformations, including expansions, contractions and changes of name, it has never forgotten the events and figures associated with its founding narrative. It is a remembrance that has helped the monastery to distinguish itself and attract the patronage of the Huang family in particular from the Ming dynasty down to the present.

I like to understand the story of the mulberry trees that bloomed lotus blossoms as a metaphor for the blossoming of Buddhism in South China where lotus blossoms represent the dharma and mulberry trees, which are used to cultivate silkworms, represent South China, home to the most famous centers of silk production. There is no way of confirming that such was the conscious intention behind the story, but it remains, nevertheless a reading that adds a layer of possible meaning.

I would like to add a further layer of reference, a reference to the founding of Buddhism's iconic monastery the Jetavana, used by the Buddha and his disciples. According to the *Dharmaguptakavinaya*, when Anāthapiṇḍada found the park of Prince Jeta and determined to purchase it for the Sangha, the owner, Prince Jeta, was reluctant and said that the land's price was the amount of gold required to cover the park in its entirety. When Anāthapiṇḍada began to do just this and had nearly finished Prince Jeta was duly impressed, stopped him and covered the remaining area with his own gold. It was thus that Anāthapiṇḍada acquired the land that was given to the Buddha and the early Sangha.

Structural parallels that obtain between this story and that of Huang Shougong's donation of the mulberry orchard immediately come to mind. Like Prince Jeta, Mr. Huang was reluctant to give up his land, but rather than flat out refusing, both made what they considered to be prohibitive conditions. In both cases, however, their outrageous conditions were met (the land was to be covered in gold and the mulberry trees were covered with lotus blossoms), the land-owners were duly impressed and the land was transferred to the Sangha.

A further addendum to the Huang donation story, most likely added during the Ming dynasty, claims that when Mr. Huang asked the monk Kuanghu how much land he needed, the monk said only as much land as covered by his robe's shadow. Mr. Huang, perhaps relieved, agreed, at which point Kuanghu removed his robe and tossed it high into the sky so that it blocked out the sun and produced a shadow across Mr. Huang's entire orchard. The robe, however, had a hole in it, which let the sun shine on a small patch of the orchard; it was at this spot, according to the legend, where a shrine was built to honor the donor, Mr. Huang. This story, which was likely invented by members of the Huang family during the Ming or Qing dynasty, nevertheless, offers a further parallel with the donation of the Jetavana.⁶⁹ Recall that a small piece of land was not covered with Anāthapiṇḍada's gold, but rather with Prince Jeta's. Thus in both cases the donor retained a symbolic measure of interest in the land defined by a parcel that had been left "uncovered" by the one requesting the land.

Further examination of these structural parallels is beyond the scope of this study, but it leaves us with a sense that Quanzhou Kaiyuan's founding story bears a structural affinity with one version of the founding story of the quintessential Buddhist monastery

⁶⁹ A parallel story is associated with Mount Wolf 狼山 Temple in Jiangsu.

at Jetavana and the exemplary donor Anāthapiṇḍada. These are parallels worth noting for the archetypal overtones they give the founding narrative of Kaiyuan, iconic overtones that may have contributed to the success of the founding narrative.

Although many, if not most people, do not literally believe that mulberry trees bloomed lotus-blossoms, they still venerate the surviving mulberry tree as a very old tree and believe something happened which provoked the land to be donated to Kuanghu. Not wishing to abandon the story as baseless, they have searched for more “scientific” explanations of the perternatural story. The most popular explanation comes from an edition of the “Huang Surname Genealogical Records” which claims that in the year 686 Southern Fujian had rain that lasted forty-nine days. It has been suggested that under these unusually warm and humid conditions Mr. Huang’s mulberry trees may have grown white wood ear fungus which from a distance could have looked like lotus blossoms.⁷⁰ This is an explanation that I have heard from monks and laypersons and is one that is circulated by some tour guides. I contribute its popularity to the influence of the historical materialist ideology and anti-superstition campaigns that have created a fashion for finding natural explanations for supernatural phenomena.⁷¹

A similar development has taken place to make the Republican period miracle more consonant with a scientific understanding. A monk at Kaiyuan who takes an interest in such stories informed me that there were then peach trees at Kaiyuan and they bloomed large blossoms; they were so large that people, taking some artistic license,

⁷⁰ Zhang 2003: 23.

⁷¹ Hiking with a guide in the Wuyi mountains of Fujian in 2006, I was amused by the striking discrepancies between the oral account of the mountains provide by our guide and the written accounts posted on signs along the trail—the former were mythological tales of deities full of love and betrayal, the latter were full of details of geologic stratification and shifts that would bore anyone but a geologist. The signs suggested the presence of the state and an attempt at de-enchantment, secularization and re-education.

referred to them as lotuses. When people circulate such explanations I wish to point out that they are not, it seems to me, dramatically damaging the overall force of the stories and their ability to sacralize the grounds. Those who proffer such explanations still maintain that *something unusual* happened. This “something unusual” is the hallmark of spiritual power. The nature of the unusual has been reigned in considerably in these retellings, but it remains sufficiently anomalous, remarkable and, most certainly, an auspicious sign. As discussed earlier, there is no radically other agent involved in these auspicious manifestations. Thus one can lower the drama element (mushrooms not lotuses) without thereby eliminating the source of power—conditions came together under the influence of a sage and produced an auspicious sign. The fundamental structure and elements of the event have not changed; Chinese cosmology provides a means of making such a readjustment without sacrificing the logic of correlative response. Furthermore, the desire to make these adjustments suggests a desire not to abandon, but to preserve for posterity these auspicious stories by articulating them in an idiom appropriate to the present generation.

It is one of the virtues of Chinese cosmography that such a redescription is possible without unhinging an element of mystery—a mainstay of religion. Robert Campany, in his ground-breaking survey of strange tales (*zhiguai*) compiled in medieval China over several centuries (Six Dynasties, Sui and Tang), has argued against the thesis that these stories of anomalies are a form of early “fiction” writing.⁷² Rather, he argues, they constitute a genre concerned with cosmography, which sees itself as historiographic

⁷² Campany 1996. The thesis that they were a kind of fiction writing developed under the famous author Lu Xun (1881-1936) and was supported by scholars such as DeWoskin 1977. Alister Ingliss has carried forward Campany’s thesis in his study of Hong Mai’s *Yijian zhi* (Ingliss 2006).

in nature.⁷³ Many of these tales are concerned with magical responses like Kaiyuan's lotus-blooming mulberry. The effort to explain Kaiyuan's auspicious events in more scientific language suggests, in consonance with Campany's view of medieval *zhiguai* accounts, that they are not perceived as fiction, but as a form of historiography which requires glossing. If they were simply fictions there would be no reason to find an explanation for them apart from debunking them as fictitious. One monk who holds the view that white mushrooms grew on the trees instead of lotuses has said that the authors of the early records used artistic license to describe the unusual phenomenon. In other words, something unusual happened and in order to draw attention to it, a more colorful description was used—an auspicious, anomalous event was not invented.

Regardless of what actually happened or what adjustments are made, the monastery's founding story is told in guidebooks and by tour guides every day and the events are memorialized in inscriptions and shrines throughout the monastic grounds so that most every visitor is exposed to these auspicious founding legends. These auspicious events, especially the story of the lotus-blooming mulberry trees and the purple cloud, influence the experience of visitors and the reputation of the monastery. How this influence plays out differs according to the disposition of the one learning of the story or its presence at the monastery. While, for the religionist, these stories enhance the monastery's reputation of spiritual efficacy, for the tourist they mark Kaiyuan as unique place of historical interest. In this multivalent fashion they serve to both sanctify and brand.

⁷³ Campany 1996.

Branding

Branding is a phenomenon fundamentally tied to the marketing of products. Its application has been broadened in recent years in literature dealing with the branding of place and the branding of cities in the interest of harnessing the economic potentials of tourism.⁷⁴ While Kaiyuan monastery has by no means hired or considered hiring a marketing agent, it has followed a long tradition of promoting its special features as a means of setting itself apart and attracting patrons. The special features that have been promoted from the very beginning are the auspicious events associated with the founding of Quanzhou Kaiyuan during the Tang dynasty.

The surviving mulberry and Kaiyuan's memorials to auspicious events serve to distinguish the monastery from other Buddhist monasteries, particularly those that may have old buildings or pagodas, or share the name "Kaiyuan."⁷⁵ Visitors who take little or no religious interest in Kaiyuan, but who are attracted to its historic and cultural properties will nonetheless learn of these associations with auspicious purple clouds and the legend of the lotus-blooming mulberry. For these visitors, the stories may not mark Kaiyuan as a sacred place, but they nevertheless mark it as a unique site, distinguishing it from countless other Buddhist temples in China and throughout Asia.

The "purple cloud" and "dharma world of the lotus-blooming mulberry" are thus deployed much like trademarks that participate in the promotion of Kaiyuan as a tourist attraction by giving it distinctive and attractive nicknames. Tourists in China inevitably

⁷⁴ For place branding as it related to tourist sites see Morgan et al. 2004. For study of the branded city in Asia (esp. Hong Kong and Shanghai) see Donald and Gammack 2007. For a "guide" to place branding see Olins 2004.

⁷⁵ Recall that every prefecture was to have a Kaiyuan temple during the Kaiyuan period of the Tang Dynasty and many of these Kaiyuan's still survive in one form or another. Within Fujian, for example, Fuzhou Kaiyuan still exists, it is significantly smaller than Quanzhou Kaiyuan, however, and houses only a handful of monks and receives a very small number of tourists.

find themselves visiting Buddhist temples. A popular description of sightseeing in China is “See temples during the day, sleep at night”—it’s much catchier in Chinese: *baitian kanmiao, wanshang shuijiao* 白天看庙晚上睡觉 (it’s balanced and it rhymes). All but the most intrepid historians or pious Buddhists are likely to tire of visiting temples which share many similar features, and so when the guide on the bus announces to his or her group that they will tour Kaiyuan Temple, the group will not be nearly as enthusiastic as one that is told they will visit the “Purple Cloud,” home of an ancient mulberry tree that bloomed white lotus-blossoms during the Tang dynasty! These are colorful and imagistic tags that Kaiyuan has actively promoted for centuries; their deployment has enhanced Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s brand and contributed to its success as a tourist site, as well as a place of worship or pilgrimage.

Other temples and monasteries also develop their “brand.” The famous Baima or White Horse Monastery in Luoyang may be said to have seized upon the image of the white horse as a means of branding. Baima Monastery is proclaimed to be the first Buddhist monastery established in China. It shares with Kaiyuan a founding story associated with an auspicious dream, in Baima’s case the dream was by the Han emperor Ming 汉明帝 (r. 58-75 C.E.) who dreamed of a flying golden figure. His advisors informed him that his dream referred to the Buddha, a sage in the West. The emperor sent envoys who returned after several years with two Indian monks, the *Sutra in Forty-two Sections* and a white horse. The emperor is said to have had White Horse Monastery built for the monks.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Story is considered legend by modern scholars. See Zürcher 1975:22.

Today a statue of a stone horse stands outside the monastery and serves as a symbol of the monastery and its legendary past. Baima may be seen to have deployed the image of the white horse associated with its founding in ways similar to Kaiyuan's promotion of Purple Cloud, both serve as memorable imagistic names. The monastery also promotes a list of six sites (*liu jing* 六景) traced to a Qing dynasty monk who carved them on the wall, the inscription can be seen today.⁷⁷ Its properties of cultural heritage include a Jin dynasty pagoda, stone statues from the Song, a gate from the Ming and statues from the Yuan. Similar to Kaiyuan's famous dragon eye fruits, the Baima boasts a famous large pomegranate the "Baima sweet pomegranate" (*baima tianliu*). Baima's array of cultural properties and effectively memorialized founding story are points it has in common with Kaiyuan, points that have contributed to each of their success.⁷⁸

Kaiyuan's founding legends in their continual repetition, both visually and verbally, serve as poetic substitutes for Kaiyuan that suggest a unique, even exotic, identity. It is this continual repetition of auspicious events that I consider a form of branding designed to rhetorically distinguish Kaiyuan from other (competing) monasteries and temples. Kaiyuan's association with auspicious events and eminent monks not only serve to brand it as unique, they also reinforce its reputation as a place of spiritual power.

⁷⁷ The six sites at Baima si are the Pure and Cool Platform (*qingliang tai*) rebuilt in the Ming, Burning Sutra Platform (*fenjing tai*) now in ruins, Midnight Bell (*yeban zhong*), Tenglan Tombs (*tenglan mu*) from the Han, Rise into the Clouds Pagoda (*qiyun ta*) and the broken words stele (*duanwen bei*). The bell tower and bell have been rebuilt along with the drum tower. All seem to be present today, if in a ruined state (such as the Burning Sutra Platform).

⁷⁸ Shaolin Monastery has effectively promoted its "brand" focusing on its reputation as the home of Kungfu; it is also the site of a cave where Bodhidharma is said to have meditated and a forest of pagodas.

Sanctification

In addition to being imagistic substitutes, Kaiyuan's auspicious events are also, and more fundamentally, sacred markers, indicating a place that is to be distinguished, not only from other temples, but from the rest of the mundane world. Before the monastery was established, the land it inhabits was part of the mundane world—it was a mulberry orchard. As a mulberry orchard it had two distinguishing features: land and trees. Both land and trees were marked by auspicious appearances that effectively signaled the blossoming of a place to practice Buddhism in China: the trees bloomed lotuses and land was covered by a purple cloud. It was as if the land and the trees themselves spoke up and said, yes, this is where a monastery should be built. Such is the import of these two legends—the monastery's location is not arbitrary, it was mandated by the appearance of auspicious signs, marvelous correlative responses in nature. And, literally, since that time, it has been the place where a Buddhist monastery has been. This is a point made by the pair of inscriptions bounding the main gate which reference the earliest and most recent auspicious events.

Yuanxian, in writing the *Monastery Record*, suggests that Kaiyuan's auspicious heritage has been a condition for the cultivation of monastic excellence. It is a condition that existed in the past and one, Yuanxian states, that must also exist today (in the seventeenth century):

After writing these biographies of bodhisattvas, I am amazed at the great number of worthies the Purple Cloud has had. How could this be so, if it is not an auspicious place of singular merit (*jixiang shusheng* 吉祥殊胜)? It has almost been a thousand years since the appearing of the auspicious sign of the lotus-blooming mulberry tree. So it was in ancient times, so it remains today.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ *Sizhi* I.45b-46a.

Kaiyuan's memorialization of auspicious events and eminent monks serve to mark the monastery as an auspicious place of singular merit, as a place manifestly numinous. Recollection of these auspicious events supports the sanctification of Kaiyuan, particularly in the minds of those receptive to such associations (Buddhists and worshipers). As preternatural events they point toward the spiritual power of master Kuanghu, Kaiyuan's founding master, and, in more recent times, to the charisma of Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu. The charisma of Kuanghu was sufficient to convert a mulberry orchard into a Buddhist monastery that became one of the largest and most important monasteries in a province full of large and important monasteries. Kuanghu's legendary founding charisma drifts through the ages and is awakened by the words "purple cloud" and "lotus-blooming mulberry" and is manifest in the survival of a small, awkward statue that now sits behind glass in the Hall of Patriarchs. The Hall of Patriarchs is situated on the highest elevation of the monastery and the statue of Kuanghu and the portraits of Republican period monks gaze south towards the central axis of Kaiyuan, overlooking the sutra library, the ordination hall, the main hall and the pagodas. In short, Kuanghu and the Republican period monks occupy a place of honor physically and spiritually. From the words "Purple Cloud" across the street from the main gate as well as above the door of the main gate itself to the far back of the monastic complex in the hall of Patriarchs, founding patriarch Kuanghu is remembered. His enshrinement and the memorialization of auspicious acts associated with Kaiyuan's founding, which are planted throughout the length of Kaiyuan's central axis, are a formal reminder of Kaiyuan's auspicious beginning, setting Kaiyuan apart from both the mundane world as well as from other Buddhist monasteries.

Occupying a similarly prominent place along Kaiyuan's central axis are the Republican Period masters Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu. These masters are represented in the large inscription just outside the main gate announcing that the "Lotus[-Blooming] Peach Tree Manifests the Auspicious" and in the three portraits that hang in the Hall of Patriarchs. Four portraits hang above and behind the figures of Kuanghu and the bare-shouldered "mummy" of Zhiliang; from left to right they are masters Yuanying, Zhuandao, Zhuanwu and Guangjing [Figures 59, 61]. While Guangjing was the general manager (*jianyuan*) of Kaiyuan during the early 1950s⁸⁰ and active in the most recent period of restoration, the other three were instrumental in the Republican Period restoration and their portraits in the Hall of Patriarchs draw attention to this fact by affixing the phrase "restorer of this temple" (*chongxing benshi* 重兴本寺) to their names. Furthermore, at the very rear of Kaiyuan's central axis, behind the hall of patriarchs are two stupas enshrining the remains of the monks Zhuanwu and Guangyi. From the portraits hanging in the Hall of Patriarchs, past the buildings they oversaw built during the Republican Period (the hall of merit and the former dharma hall) all the way to the inscription just outside the main gate, traces of Kaiyuan's Republican Period restorers also mark the central axis of the monastery and reinforce the religious identity of Kaiyuan and its dedication to the Sangha.⁸¹

Although there are no particular preternatural events associated with master Hongyi's presence at Kaiyuan, the master Hongyi memorial hall is an additional point of reference to the Republican Period restoration and most certainly a memorial to an eminent monk. The recollection of master Hongyi and his association with Kaiyuan

⁸⁰ According to Huang Yushan he served in this post from 1950 to 1954.

⁸¹ The importance of this identification with the monastic vocation will become more evident in the following chapter.

enhances Kaiyuan's reputation today and deepens and updates Kaiyuan's legacy as the host of eminent monks and a place for religious virtuosity. Along with the memorials to masters Yuanying, Zhuandao and Zhuanwu, the Hongyi Memorial Hall serves to bring Kaiyuan's auspicious past and association with eminent monks into the twentieth century. The Republican Period referents paired with the references to the Tang dynasty founding honor Kaiyuan as a monastery with a millennium of auspicious history inspired by the presence of eminent monks up to the time of Hongyi and Yuanying.

Memorials to modern Buddhist masters such as Yuanying, Zhuandao and Hongyi serve to identify Kaiyuan as a place for the cultivation of Buddhist monastics. Such a place is by extension a field of merit (*futian* 福田) to be accessed by laypersons who support to the sangha. Memorials to auspicious events, similarly, reinforce Kaiyuan's identity as a place of spiritual power and thereby sacralize the monastery in the eyes of those who accept the notion of spiritual power. Those responsive to these cues perceive Kaiyuan as a sacred place (*shendi*), a field of merit or simply as a place of spiritual power, and they are Kaiyuan's primary supporters. Kaiyuan's worshipers and Buddhist patrons alike perceive Kaiyuan as a place where one may effectively call upon the assistance and blessings of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Those seeking such assistance make small donations and if their petition has been received they will return and repay the kindness of the bodhisattva with an additional donation (*huanyuan*). This is a very important source of support for the monastery and an important role that it plays in the community; it is a place where one can go to seek help in affairs (financial, family, health etc.) that are not amenable to easy fixes.

Having a reputation for being spiritually efficacious remains an important factor in the success of a temple. Such a reputation ensures popular appeal, and, during the imperial period, generated state support as well. Kaiyuan's auspicious events have been recorded and memorialized from as early as the ninth century and this careful preservation of Kaiyuan's numinously rich heritage has contributed to Kaiyuan's success over the centuries. Given the traditional role of officials as managers of religious sites and the tradition of allowing at least the most spiritually powerful to survive, Kaiyuan monastery has very effectively promoted an identity as the most spiritually powerful site in Quanzhou, as the king of *ling*—as Yuanxian suggests, “No one eats the great fruit.” While the perception of spiritual efficacy was important for state support only in the past, it remains important in attracting popular support in the present. The following chapter will reveal what interests the current state has in the affairs of Kaiyuan and other monasteries.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Curators and the Revivalists: A Quest for Greater Autonomy

On a winter morning of 2002, Kaiyuan's abbot, Daoyuan, returned to his monastery after attending a meeting of the municipal people's congress. Upon arriving at the main gate of his monastery, Daoyuan, a small man who was then in his sixties, met a security guard with whom he had had disagreements in the past and another argument broke out between them. The abbot repaired to the monks' living quarters and summoned the monks to attack the security guard. Some twenty or more monks, armed with knives and blunt objects, did just that. Two co-workers of the unfortunate guard came to his aid and were also assaulted. From here, the main gate or "Hall of Heavenly Kings," the monks advanced to the office of the administrative commission, which employed the security guards, and proceeded to trash it. No one was seriously wounded in the fray, but the security guard was hospitalized for treatment and released.

This event, witnessed by picture taking tourists and devotees alike, had been preceded by months of tension between the monks and an entity known as the temple administrative commission (寺院管理委员会 *siyuan guanli weiyuanhui*). Disputes between the abbot and members of this group had been growing at least since the previous winter when the abbot had monks attack the vice director of the commission after an argument regarding New Year's decorations. It was back in August that relations with the front gate security crew had reached a critical point. One of the security guards had parked his car in the Hall of Heavenly Kings and refused to move it when asked to do so by the abbot. The abbot called together a group of more than ten monks who threatened

to damage the car if it were not promptly removed. It was then that the monks with their abbot vowed to have the temple administrative commission and its employees removed from the temple within two years. Two years have since come and gone, by the end of this chapter you will learn the fate of Kaiyuan's administrative commission and the monastic's quest for greater autonomy.

This chapter discusses two interested parties, “curators” and “revivalists,” who possess different visions of what temples should be in contemporary China and examines how these parties have negotiated an identity for Quanzhou Kaiyuan. In short, the curators are interested in protecting cultural relics and charging the public a fee to visit temples and view their cultural properties, while the revivalists seek to reestablish temples as places devoted to religious practice. The term “curator” functions, somewhat incidentally, as an euphemism for specific organs of the state that have varying degrees of jurisdiction over Buddhist temples in China. These organs are present in various configurations and differ from temple to temple. When a temple becomes designated an Important National Cultural Heritage Protected Site (全国重点文物保护单位) or a AAAA National Tourist Attraction (*guojia dengji lvyou qu* 国家等级旅游区), for example, certain government entities, in addition to the Bureau of Religious Affairs, become associated with the temple in various capacities of oversight, management and exploitation. These include bureaus and committees that deal with tourism (*lüyou ju* 旅游局), culture (*wenhua ju* 文化局), heritage (*wenwu ju* 文物局) and temple management (*guali weiyuan hui* 管理委员会). These are the curators who, in line with the Communist Party's ultimate view on religion, seek to frame religion as an artifact of the past rather than a living phenomenon with a

future. The revivalists, on the other hand, are the monastics, lay Buddhists and worshipers who are eager to recover monastic spaces and restore them to religious use.

A dominant theme in the study of religion in contemporary China has been the issue of relations between state and religion.¹ Many studies, especially earlier studies, have portrayed revival, in varying degrees, as a popular struggle against a monolithic state.² Ashiwa and Wank (2009), as well as David Chau (2006), have recognized the inadequacy of portraying the revival of religion as a battle between a monolithic and hegemonic state and religion or society. They have proposed, instead, a more nuanced analysis of what Chau calls the “the state-society interface.”³ Chau argues that:

Too much emphasis on communal resistance diverts attention from other important aspects of popular religious revivals such as the actions of the local state and the power claims of local elites, and the frequent mutual accommodation, negotiation, and collusion between local state agents and local elites. In the local world, state and society are completely imbricated.⁴

While there is conflict between curators and revivalists at Kaiyuan, there is also cooperation and collusion. Furthermore, those whom I have labeled “curators” are not synonymous with “the state.” They are low level officials and state employees working for a state which is much larger than they. In order to contextualize their relation to the central state, it should be recalled that Zhao Puchu, while he was still alive, effectively represented both Buddhists and the state against such lesser entities.⁵ So while at times in the analysis to follow, it may seem that the curators are standing in for the state, I want to

¹ Yang Fenggang 2006; Ashiwa and Wank 2009; Mayfair Yang 2009; Jun Jing 1996; Flower and Leonard 1997; Gladney 1991; Madsen 1998; Eng and Lin 2002 etc.

² Anagost 1994; Feuchtwang 2000; Jun Jing 1996; Mayfair Yang 2004; Wang Mingming 1996:70, 76; Overmeyer 2003; Potter 2003.

³ Chau 2006: 8.

⁴ Chau 2006: 8.

⁵ Ashiwa and Wank 2006: 350-351.

caution against such an oversimplification from the beginning. The state is not monolithic and although, generally speaking, it seeks to regulate religion, on a local level it often accommodates and promotes religious revival.⁶ The agencies referred to as curators in this chapter are minor bureaucrats and state employees and represent individuals like them all over China whose duties bring them into contact and into conflict with religious entities such as clerics or organizers of popular religious festivities.⁷ While these two parties, the curators and revivalists, are distinct, their goals are not absolutely antithetical.

While it is true that curators, strictly speaking, support the cause of tourism over religious revival, one should recall that Buddhist monasteries have long hosted those in pursuit of leisure, culture, beauty and history as well as those in search of religion. I suspect that the sentiment expressed in the popular saying used to describe travel in China, “tour temples during the day and sleep at night,” is not one of modern invention.

Tourism and Buddhist Monasteries

Often located in beautiful mountain settings, Chinese Buddhist monasteries have attracted tourists and pilgrims for centuries. The association between natural mountain settings and Buddhist monasteries is revealed in such terms as Chan forest (*Chanlin* 禅林) to designate a Chan monastery or, more generally, the phrase "Mountain Gate" (*shanmen* 山门) to indicate the main gate of a monastery, even one in a flat, or relatively flat, urban area such as Quanzhou Kaiyuan. Visiting monasteries in China, even those in urban areas, is analogous to climbing a mountain with the front gate at the lowest elevation and the back hall at the highest. Visiting these monasteries requires climbing successively higher

⁶ See, for example, Yang and Wei 2005 for state support of Hebei Bailin Monastery.

⁷ For relations between authorities and popular religious festivities see Dean 1993 and Chau 2006.

tiers of steps as one reaches the back hall, often enshrining an image of Guanyin. Tourists have long visited monasteries in China, not only for their fine views, fresh air and distance from the "dust of the world" but also for the art and architecture they might possess.

The sixth century *Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang*, an important historical document and work of literature, contains much information about early monasteries in China. Its descriptions of monasteries and pagodas in particular are remarkable, however, for their praise of aesthetic features rather than any religious significance or power they may have. The Yongning Pagoda of 516, for example, is described as having nine roofs hung with a total of 120 golden bells with doors painted vermilion and accented with gold nails. The description goes on:

In addition, the doors were adorned with knockers made of golden rings. The construction embodied the best of masonry and carpentry. The elegance of its design and its excellence as an example of Buddhist architecture was almost unimaginable. Its carved beams and gold door-knockers fascinated the eyes.⁸

The tradition of pagodas as the pride of monasteries and cities alike, as sights to behold, as marvels that enthrall the eye—what we today call tourist sights—appears to stretch back to sixth and seventh centuries when they began to dot the Chinese landscape.⁹

In the seventeenth century Yuanxian promoted Kaiyuan's reputation by noting that people nostalgic for old things can be satisfied by visiting it. Evidence of self-promotion along these lines occurred at Kaiyuan as early as the Yuan dynasty. Accommodation, and even the encouragement of sightseers, is evidenced by the fourteenth century walls erected at Kaiyuan's front gate bearing characters announcing the presence of "eight auspicious

⁸ Zhou Zumo (ed.). *Luoyang jialan ji jiaoshi*, 1, pp. 20-21. Translation in Wang Yi-t'ung's *A Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Luoyang*, p.16. See also discussion in Kieschnick 2003:39-40.

⁹ Kieschnick 2003: 39.

phenomena" and "six unique sites." We are sure that groups of visitors were visiting Kaiyuan monastery for its scenic appeal during this period for we have an inscription that amounts to a kind of graffiti on the central column of the East Pagoda which was left by a group of visitors in 1349; it describes the pleasant weather and magnificent view from the pagoda, but makes no references to Buddhism nor the monastery:

Today the sun is in the south, the weather is pleasantly warm, ominous clouds are breaking up while the mountains and the city are exceptionally magnificent. It makes us feel that time is passing so quickly and since getting together is so difficult we engrave this stone to remember this trip. ¹⁰

Timothy Brook's *Praying for Power* examines the patronage of Buddhist monasteries by the late-Ming gentry. Brook finds that late-Ming gentry retreated to Buddhist monasteries to escape the hustle and bustle of the world and enjoy cultural pursuits. A Fujian gazetteer describes monasteries as places where gentry retreat "to enjoy the view, drink wine, compose poetry, and cleanse themselves thoroughly of the dust of this world."¹¹ Such motivations were so common in Nanjing at the end of the sixteenth century that Feng Mengzhen 冯梦镇 (1546-1605) complained: "The gentry come just for the sights and no longer understand anything about Buddhist doctrine."¹² There is a growing consensus

¹⁰ *Inscription on the central column of the East pagoda* (1349), author's name not legible. The inscription in full reads: "Third day of lunar November (*zhongdong* 仲冬) of 1349 (9th year of Zhizheng) in the Yuan Dynasty. I accompanied Secretariat Drafter Zhang Bao Bo'ang (*Zhongshu zhisheng sheren* 中书直省舍人章宝伯昂) and Prefectural Supervisor (*Jianjun* 监郡) Xie Yuli Shiyu 楔玉立世玉 came to climb the East Pagoda. Today the sun is in the south, the weather is pleasantly warm, ominous clouds are breaking up while the mountains and the city are exceptionally magnificent. It makes us feel that time is passing so quickly and since getting together is so difficult we engrave this stone to remember this trip." The names of more than fifteen others are listed as present, not including the two previously named. Three of the visitors were from Gaochang 高昌 in today's Xinjiang 新疆 (to the west of China proper); they are surnamed Xie 楔, which is not a Han surname, suggesting they are natives of the country to the west of China which is now dominated by Muslims.

¹¹ *Shouning xianzhi*. 1686, 7:21b. Translated in Brook 1993: 108.

¹² *Jinshan zhilüe*. 1681. I, *tiandi jiue*, 4a. Translated in Brook 1993: 110.

among scholars that such uses of monasteries can be traced back to their earliest manifestations. John Kieschnick observes: “In addition to serving as a dwelling for monks and nuns—the definition of a monastery—modern monasteries also serve as tourist sites and as devotional, economic, and social centers. None of this is new. ... from the beginning, monasteries served as sites of lay as well as monastic devotion, for secular entertainment as well as Buddhist ritual.”¹³

The Economic and Political Role Played by Temples in Contemporary China

While the connection between what we may term tourism and temples can be traced back as far as the Tang Dynasty and the cultural properties of temples were targeted for preservation in the 1950s and early 1960s, the notion that temples and monasteries may play a key role in planned economic development is an idea that has come to prominence only within the past thirty years under such mottoes as “Culture sets the stage and the economy performs” (*wenhua datai, jingji changxi* 文化搭台 经济唱戏). Local elites see their support of temples not as a source of blessings or merit as they once did, but as part of the community’s economic development scheme. A popular temple, whether it boasts historical artifacts, spiritual power or both, can attract tourists or pilgrims from outside the community who contribute to the local economy.¹⁴ Temples also stimulate consumption among locals during festivals or special occasions.¹⁵

A somewhat ironic consequence of this notion about culture serving as a base for economic development is that historical artifacts and sites of historical importance have

¹³ Kieschnick 2003:186-187.

¹⁴ See Lang, Chan and Ragvald 2005; Borchert 2005.

¹⁵ Several studies have mentioned the economic motivations of local officials when supporting the construction or re-construction of temples. See for example, Ashiwa and Wank 2006: 348; Eng and Lin 2002:1271-1773; Fisher 2008:152; Feuchtwang 2001: 246; Lai 2003: 112; Yang and Wei 2005: 74-77.

become recognized as valuable commodities in the modernization of towns and cities.¹⁶ In the summer of 2009 I visited a coastal city north of Shanghai slated to be developed into a thriving international port. We visited the brand new, multi-story, state-of-the-art exhibition hall displaying the development plans for the otherwise underwhelming city of Lianyungang 连云港. The exhibition hall sits on one end of a large plaza just across from the city hall; its high-tech multi-media displays, which introduce potential investors to the city and its development plans, include several exhibits on the ancient history of the area and its significant cultural and historical features. On the other end of the plaza is a brand new museum displaying a modest collection of historical artifacts from the area, as well as local crafts.

What was clear from the exhibits and the language used by the city officials was that the promotion of the culture and history of Lianyungang was an essential ingredient in the plan to develop this city into a modern city and transportation hub. Taiwan's Foguang Shan has secured permission to rebuild a Buddhist monastery in the region; this is no easy task and requires no small amount of political maneuvering. Their success must be attributed in part to the economic development plans of the city officials. The presence of functioning Buddhist monasteries is a reassurance to foreign investors that China has become a more open society that guarantees, in its words, freedom to believe in religion (*xinyang zongjiao ziyou*, 信仰宗教自由). The guarantee of this freedom and the presence of open and vibrant temples tended by monastics is especially reassuring to overseas

¹⁶ This is similar to the promotion and selling of the traditional (“backward”) culture of ethnic minorities in order to develop the economy and enjoy a higher (more modern) standard of living. See Borchert 2005: 93 and Kang 2009: 229. For religion, modernity and identity in Han communities see Jing 1996 and Flower 2004.

Chinese investors who have long been the major source of foreign investment in China, especially investors from Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan.¹⁷ Buddhist monasteries fit into plans to attract investment on the one hand and domestic tourists on the other; as the popular saying goes, “Culture sets the stage and the economy performs.” Buddhist monasteries and their restoration have long served as part of Communist China's regional strategy of diplomatic relations,¹⁸ but have only recently found a niche in China's program of economic development.¹⁹

China's reform-era obsession with economic development wedded to the notion that culture sets the stage for such development has been a boon, in some sense, to monasteries with or without cultural artifacts; it has been the principal strategy used to secure the support of local officials for restoration projects.²⁰ Party officials and monks alike regularly talk about the economic benefits that accrue to a community that restores a temple. When I have asked officials and others how temples benefit the economy, the answer is always tourism. The phrase used by an official in Quanzhou's Bureau of Cultural Heritage (*wenwu ju*) to describe temples such as Kaiyuan is colorful, yet forbidding: he described such tourist sites as “smokestack-less factories” (*wuyan gongchang* 无烟工厂

¹⁷ Lei & Yao 2009: 91; Michie & Smith 1998: 38-39.

¹⁸ As mentioned in chapter three, Buddhist temples from early on in the communist era have been used as a bridge to build relations with countries that share a Buddhist heritage such as Japan and Burma (Welch 1961: 11). More recently, Buddhism has been used not only to build relations with countries sympathetic to Buddhism, but also the larger world community, as a way to improve China's image in the eyes of those who critique the crackdown on Falun Gong and the suppression of other religious groups. The most recent and dramatic example of these uses of Buddhism has been the hosting of two world Buddhist forums by China in 2006 and 2009.

¹⁹ See a survey of temples in Guangdong by Lang, Chan and Ragvald 2005. Borchert notes the economic motives behind religious revival in the Dai-lue region of Yunnan (Borchert 2005).

²⁰ “Culture” certainly includes Daoism and certain folk deities (e.g. Tianhou/Mazu) and they too benefit from the notion that cultural revival promotes economic growth. I know that a group of Daoist and folk temples, for example, have been restored in downtown Suzhou as part of its economic/tourist development scheme. See also Lang, Chan and Ragvald 2005.

).²¹ He was expressing a view that is repeated by government employees all over China that restoring places of historic or cultural interest is an integral part of economic development (*jingji fazhan* 经济发展); that restored temples promote economic development (*cujin jingjifazhan* 促进经济发展). The connection between economic development, cultural preservation and cultural revival on the one hand, and the central place of religion in Chinese culture on the other, has generated a great deal of cooperation between “curators” and “revivalists” in the restoration of temples in China since the 1980s.²²

In addition to the use of culture to develop the attractiveness and quality of life profile of a city in order to attract foreign and domestic investors and residents, historic restoration and cultural revival particularly appeals to overseas Chinese (*huaqiao*) investors. Quanzhou’s foreign investors are drawn primarily from the overseas Chinese who have immigrated to Taiwan or Southeast Asia and who trace their roots to Quanzhou. When these overseas Chinese return to their hometown, apart from visiting any family that may remain, they typically wish to visit the temples where their family once worshiped and if these temples no longer exist they are typically eager to assist in their rebuilding or restoration.²³ As the largest and most central monastery in Quanzhou, Kaiyuan tops the lists of temples that many overseas Chinese (and would-be investors) wish to visit on their

²¹ Personal communication, Wenwu ju, Quanzhou, 9/28/2009.

²² Flower and Leonard 1998; Flower 2004; Eng and Lin 2002:1271-1773; Fisher 2008:152; Wank & Ashiwa 2006. The cooperation between curators and revivalists has, however, over time turned to competition and rivalry. See Kang 2009. Thomas Borchert examined the case of the building of a touristic-oriented temple for the Dai nationality in Southwest China in a paper delivered at the National meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Montreal, 2009.

²³ Kuah Khun Eng has researched the phenomenon of Singaporeans returning to rebuild their ancestral homes in Anxi which is a mountainous region which neighbors Quanzhou in Southern Fujian. See her *Rebuilding the Ancestral Village: Singaporeans in China* (Ashgate, 2000).

trips to Quanzhou.²⁴ The state, by supporting the restoration of religious structures that are important to returning overseas Chinese, is making an investment in economic development.

The role of cultural properties in economic development and overseas investment is somewhat straightforward, but what about nationalism? Nationalism requires the identification of a national ethnic history replete with heroes and cultural achievements. It is in the name of protecting national heritage that sites of historic and cultural value are protected. Kaiyuan's cultural properties and, in particular, the pagodas, represent the skill and ingenuity of the Chinese people and so deserve protection at the national level as properties of value to the nation. The current regime naturally emphasizes the technical and artistic value of such cultural properties rather than their religious value. One might say then, that Kaiyuan and its cultural properties, like other temples throughout China, have been integrated into a secularized national heritage that accords with the disenchanting worldview of the Communist Party. Rather than being obliterated, as was attempted during the Cultural Revolution, these cultural properties are now incorporated into a de-sacralized narrative of national heritage. As part of the national heritage they fit into the construction of national identity and into a related project of developing nationalism as a guard against foreign threats and influence.

When Curatorial Forces Gain the Upper Hand: Museumification

While large famous temples like Kaiyuan have had an easier time with physical restoration and financial support for the Sangha, their position as places of historic and cultural value typically ensures that they will attract tourists. Tourists may bring in income,

²⁴ Other important temples are the non-Buddhist temples of Guandi and Tianhou (i.e. Mazu).

but they destroy the tranquility that is most appropriate for regular, sustained religious practice. Beyond the influence of megaphone-bearing tour guides and their minions is the danger of “museumification.” Museumification is the process by which a temple becomes directed towards display, spectacle and secular education, while, by degrees, being directed away from worship and religious cultivation. Museumification is in evidence when shrine halls have been transformed from places of worship into display rooms for cultural and historic exhibits or souvenir shops. Such places are staffed, not by monks, but by workers, often young ladies in matching uniforms, who introduce visitors to the products for sale.

A spectrum of configurations can be found at Buddhist temples in mainland China ranging from temples that are inhabited by no monastics and are managed by the local bureau of tourism or bureau of cultural heritage, such as Beijing's White Pagoda Temple (*Baita si* 白塔寺) or Yangzhou's Tianning Temple 扬州天宁寺 (a.k.a. the Yangzhou Buddhist Culture Museum 扬州佛教文化博物馆), to temples that host more than a hundred monks and enjoy a high degree of autonomy such as Mount Taimu's Pingxing Monastery 太姥山平兴寺 in Fujian, which has no historic or cultural relics. Those that are directly managed by bureaus of culture, tourism or cultural heritage inevitably possess valuable cultural properties, historic value and/or a natural park-like setting. Monasteries of exceptional historic or cultural value have an easier time attracting the support of officials and Buddhist patrons that is necessary for restoration and upkeep. At the same time, they are more likely to attract tourists and the interest of the government bureaus already mentioned. These bureaus and the noisy tour groups they encourage are the bane

of any self-respecting Buddhist monastery.²⁵ Once one of these bureaus or commissions has the upper hand on management decisions, the temple will exhibit varying degrees of museumification. Museumification is at its most vulgar when a temple falls under the management of a government bureau such as the bureau of tourism or cultural heritage to the exclusion of monastic leadership. In post-Olympic-hosting China, this usually brings benefits to the tourist while at the same time possibly, though not necessarily, attenuating the experience of would-be devotee.²⁶ My experience suggests that this phenomenon is more prevalent the closer one is to Beijing, the political center, and perhaps provincial capitals (which serve as satellites of Beijing). In 2009, I visited three temples that exhibited high degrees of occupation by secular forces all within or near the orbit of Beijing: Hongluo Temple 红螺寺 and Yunju Temple 云居寺, both lying on the outskirts of Beijing, and Longxing Temple 隆兴寺 in Hebei province, just south of Beijing.²⁷

Hongluo Temple is part temple, part park, in the mountains near the Mutianyu 慕田峪 section of the great wall. It has no resident monks, is directly managed by the local government bureau of tourism and staffed by a team of young ladies in white shirts. Although it is more than 1000 years old,²⁸ the temple possesses no cultural relics and is almost entirely reconstructed. The tourism bureau, having no cultural properties to

²⁵ This is something widely attested by laypersons and monks across China. Bailin Temple 柏林寺, the large Chan monastery in Hebei, closed for two months in the spring of 2009 due to disturbances related to the tourist trade upon which people in the neighborhood have attempted to capitalize.

²⁶ What I have in mind here are such amenities that were rare in the past such as multi-lingual signs pointing out directions and introducing buildings as well as benches, new restrooms and manicured landscaping.

²⁷ To these one could add Tanzhe and Jietai Temples, each lying just outside Beijing, as well as Baita (white stupa) Temple within the city of Beijing. I visited these temples, however, before I had identified the key role of the temple administrative commission and therefore did not ask the appropriate questions or make the appropriate observations to determine how they fit into the scheme I present here.

²⁸ It was founded in the fourth century.

promote, has turned instead to the piety/leisure market. Buddhist hymns are played over loudspeakers throughout the temple, incense and other religious paraphernalia are sold throughout the grounds and a steady stream of worshipers offer incense to statues of Buddhas, bodhisattvas and patriarchs as they tour the extensive grounds that rise to hilltops, which afford panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and the smog of Beijing. At the time of my visit no monastics lived at the temple, but there were monks, or otherwise employees with shaved heads and dressed in robes, who reported to work in the morning, tended some of the halls, and returned home at five.

Beijing's Yunju Temple, which boasts the world's largest collection of stone inscribed scriptures, is managed by a temple administrative commission, that is, not by the Sangha. In addition to the more than 10,000 stone sutras, it has Tang Dynasty stupas and an attractive natural setting. Most of the halls of this monastery have been converted into museum-like display halls presenting interpretive exhibits of cultural relics found at the temple such as ceramics and sutras written in blood. Employees in light-blue knit shirts tend the halls and sell items throughout the grounds; the products they sell are primarily religious in nature. When I entered the main hall a young lady who was a member of the staff accosted me, quickly introduced the figures enshrined and immediately suggested I purchase what appeared to be a small plastic temple credit card. She explained that the cards entitled the bearer to the benefits of monks chanting in the hall for a full year. They were available in three grades, 50, 100 and 200 RMB; the 100 RMB (14USD) card would include a banner in the hall and a ritual service, while the 200 RMB card would include a scroll of calligraphy, an alms bowl in a tote bag and two services. The cards and the benefits of each is also explained on large posters that have been placed in multiple shrine

rooms, at the bottom of these posters one can read the name of the entity in charge: the Yunju Monastery Temple Administrative Commission (*yunju si siguanhui*). This is commercialization on top of museumification, two related but different processes.²⁹ Yunju Temple, however, unlike Hongluo, does have a community of eleven monks. I spoke with one of them who had been there for three months and he simply reported that Yunju was not a Buddhist temple, it was a tourist site. I asked what he meant. Expressing a common sentiment among members of the Sangha, he said there weren't enough monks living there; a Buddhist temple, in other words, must be tended by the Sangha—at this temple, management was in the hands of the temple administrative commission.

Hebei's Longxing Temple, also known as Big Buddha Temple (*Dafo si* 大佛寺), is about a three hour drive from Beijing in the city of Zhengding 正定. Longxing is an urban temple that functions primarily as a museum, showcasing a fabulous collection of cultural properties from the tenth century onward, including paintings, statues, buildings and the inevitable oversized Qianlong and Kangxi steles. The abbot of the nearby Linji Temple 临济寺 informed me that the Sangha was working to reestablish itself there. What is likely to happen, however, is something analogous to the situation at Xi'an's Famen Temple 法门寺, which is divided into two halves, one controlled by the bureau of tourism, the other by the monks.

These three temples near Beijing, while they all have their own characteristics, present one end of the spectrum of Buddhism in China today and one that would have

²⁹ Commercialization is less dependent on the presence or absence of state functionaries in management; temples can become commercialized without having any cultural properties to promote. Posting a schedule of fees for ritual services is a basic form of commercialization that one finds in many, if not most, temples.

dominated impressions of visitors throughout most of the Communist period, when only a handful of showcase monasteries were preserved to show foreign visitors.³⁰ The impression of Buddhism as barely alive and in the hands of curators is one that we understandably held for decades of the People's Republic of China; the reality in China, however, has been changing since reforms were inaugurated at the end of 1978. But change has come at different paces to different parts of China. I have made the observation that the closer one is to Beijing (and other centers of political power such as provincial capitals), the more likely one is to find temples that are in the hands of secular authorities and deserve the moniker “tourist temple.” One also finds monasteries free of such museumification—Kaiyuan presents a case of monastics asserting themselves against secular incursions.

Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s Quest for Greater Autonomy

Quanzhou Kaiyuan, which is far from Beijing, not in a provincial capital and in Fujian, a province known for widespread religious participation, presents a different model of how a famous temple full of cultural treasures negotiates with the secular powers that be. While I know of no instance in which an historically important temple in possession of valuable cultural properties has fully escaped the attention of curatorial forces and tourists, Kaiyuan provides an example of how such a monastery may negotiate a degree of autonomy from such curatorial pressures. We have already seen how the abbot of Kaiyuan has handled the administrative commission and its security guards on select occasions. Now we pick up the narrative of Kaiyuan’s post-Mao revival under the leadership of the current abbot, Daoyuan—a path of restoration that led to blows.

³⁰ See chapter three.

As narrated in chapter four, Kaiyuan's recovery began soon after the death of Mao under the small nucleus of monks who had stayed at the temple through the Cultural Revolution and with funding assistance from compatriots in Singapore. While statues were uncovered and re-gilded and worshipers bearing incense began to return, throughout the 1980s the halls remained under the jurisdiction of the cultural heritage management committee and the temple administrative commission. The heritage committee had been established in the 1950s to protect and maintain the temple properties; it went underground during the Cultural Revolution, and, like the monks, re-emerged after the death of Mao and asserted its jurisdiction over Kaiyuan's cultural properties.³¹ Tables staffed by employees of the heritage committee were set up in all the halls containing historic properties. The heritage committee also operated a research center and a souvenir shop located in one of the shrine halls, precisely the kind of shop that devotees consider tacky.

The heritage management committee, however, was not the only government entity with jurisdiction over Kaiyuan. As a tourist attraction and the home of dozens of monastics holding morning and evening devotions, Kaiyuan was seen fit, in the eyes of the government and the Bureau of Religion, to have a temple administrative commission. The temple administrative commission is a product of 1980s reform and opening policy which loosened restrictions against religion and, at the same time, established means of oversight and control of the legally recognized religious groups. At Kaiyuan, the temple

³¹ Many entities and practices that were open to attack by Red Guards went underground for a period of ten years during the Cultural Revolution and then re-emerged after the death of Mao. These entities and practices include all things having to do with religion, not to mention all things perceived to be contrary to the progress of the revolution, which included most literature, art and everyday items like small tea cups—so many things that have become ubiquitous over the past twenty years it bears recalling how they once were not.

administrative commission operates entry and exit gates, sees that the grounds are secure and offers tour guide services; it is self-funded through the sale of entrance tickets and tour services. Members of this commission also operate two small kiosks. One of them sells photo supplies and drinks; he has recently begun selling small souvenirs of Quanzhou and incense. The other kiosk is staffed by a man who writes poems using the characters of one's name—a common form of art found at tourist sites.

The combined effect of these two curatorial forces was to give Kaiyuan the kind of touristy and contested feel that Gareth Fisher, an anthropologist who studies lay Buddhism in contemporary China, has described at temples in Beijing.³² Secular employees working as curators rather than religionists sold tickets, monitored the gates, the grounds and the halls and sold souvenir items, which generally had nothing to do with religion, inside the Donor Ancestral Hall (*Tanyue ci*). While a similar situation prevails today at the temples I mentioned above (Yunju, Hongluo and Longxing Temples) as well as many other temples such as Beijing's famous Tanzhe 潭柘寺 and Jietai temples 戒台寺 or Shanghai's Jade Buddha 玉佛寺 and Jing'an Temples 静安寺, the situation at Kaiyuan began to change in the late 1990s.

The Cultural Heritage Committee and the Temple Management Commission

The situation was able to progress under the leadership of the abbot Daoyuan who, as described in chapter four, was successful in removing dozens of individuals employed by as many as a dozen different entities occupying monastic space. In addition to recovering monastic property, Daoyuan also engaged in many building projects as outlined in chapter four. What his actions suggest in terms of this chapter's theme is his concern, as

³² Gareth Fisher 2009, paper delivered at the 2009 AAR in Montreal, November 7.

a revivalist, for restoration, even if it means rebuilding or replacing, over and above any concern he may have for preservation, which is the organizing concern for the curators. In spite of his many successes, the abbot still had to share authority with two government committees, the cultural heritage committee and the temple management commission.

In 1982, the heritage management committee funded the opening of a stele rubbing and souvenir shop in the Donor's ancestral hall. Rubbings were made of the various stone steles that had been collected at Kaiyuan during the curatorial turn of the Maoist period and sold to visitors.³³ This shop was a visible and prominent contributor to museumification and commercialization at Kaiyuan; it was a classic case of a shrine hall being converted to commercial uses and managed by non-monastics, members of the curatorial forces. It was a sore point that was finally settled by Daoyuan in 2004.

Daoyuan was able to deal with the cultural heritage committee in much the same way that he dealt with the other groups occupying space on temple property: he successfully argued to municipal authorities that the property belonged to the monastery and was therefore illegally occupied and he offered sufficient financial compensation to the affected parties. The financial settlement for the Quanzhou Heritage Stele Rubbings shop (*Quanzhou shi wenwu beituoshangdian* 泉州市文武碑拓商店) was calculated by the relevant municipal authorities, including the Bureaus of Finance and Labor and Social Security, at 106,020 RMB (15,000USD). Daoyuan negotiated that Kaiyuan would pay 70,000 (10,000USD), while the remaining 36,020 would be paid by the Bureau of Finance. The arguments offered for the recovery of this property under monastic control

³³ Ink rubbings on rice paper of historic steles is a relatively common souvenir item where steles have been collected such as the forest of steles in Xi'an.

were that the Donor's Ancestral Hall was an important part of Kaiyuan monastery and an important institution to many overseas Chinese who are Huang family descendants. The city of Quanzhou was then applying to UNESCO for world heritage status as the starting point of the maritime silk route; the return and restoration of the Donor's Ancestral Hall was seen as contributing to Quanzhou's application. The heritage management committee vacated the hall and the remaining rubbings were sent to the city museum; the steles are said to have been distributed to various museums in the area. The Donor's Ancestral Hall, consisting of three small rooms and courtyard lying to the east of the dharma hall, was cleaned up and returned to its state as an ancestral shrine to Huang Shougong, the temple's founding donor. In this way, the hall that had been used as a souvenir shop was restored to monastic control and now functions solely as a shrine. I was fortunate to be in attendance when it was officially reopened in exceptionally grand style in September of 2009. The three day memorial celebration marked the 1,380th anniversary of Huang Shougong's birth and the 1,323rd anniversary of the founding of Kaiyuan Monastery; it was attended by thousands of members of the "Purple Cloud" Huang family from locations stretching from Shanghai to Singapore.³⁴

In addition to the return of this shrine hall the other divisions of the cultural heritage committee, such as the research center, have been removed from Kaiyuan's

³⁴ The platform before the main hall served as a kind of stage where speeches were made by Daoyuan and other distinguished guests in front of members of the Huang family from the Quanzhou region, the Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Shanghai and so on, who were arrayed by point of origin in folding chairs set up throughout Kaiyuan's expansive courtyard. Bands played, a small parade was held and dozens of young ladies in uniform were on hand as greeters and tea servers. The culmination, perhaps, was the grand sacrifice offered to the ancestral tablets of Huang Shougong in the Donor's Ancestral Hall. The Huang family expected to make meat sacrifices, but Kaiyuan insisted the offering be vegetarian; a characteristically Chinese compromise was reached by having animal forms made from vegetarian materials and offered.

property and placed into a newly formed bureau of cultural heritage (*wenwu ju* 文物局) located in an office far from the Kaiyuan. The transfer from curator to revivalist in the case of the cultural heritage committee and their shrine hall souvenir shop has been complete and thorough—a true victory for the revivalists.

The situation with the post-Mao entity known as the temple administrative commission, however, has not been so easily resolved. An *ad hoc* decision or buyout has not been possible because, unlike all the others, the commission is part of reform era national policy as interpreted by the Bureau of Religion. Large, important temples designated as national tourist attractions or important national cultural heritage protected sites will typically have a temple administrative commission on site charged with monitoring activities to make sure that the temple acts in accordance with the law. This system of oversight is a nationally recognized system of religious management sometimes referred to as a “two track management system” (*shuanggui guanli moshi* 双轨管理模式). The “two tracks” are management by the government and management by members of the religious order. The duties of Kaiyuan’s administrative commission include selling tickets, handling security and providing tour guide service.³⁵

After the strong-arm tactics of 2002, the abbot has managed to win concessions and clearly gain the upper hand without being able, nonetheless, to fully dislodge the administrative commission. A concession won by Daoyuan is that security guards are no longer stationed in the gates and no one is allowed to park in front of the main gate,

³⁵ David Wank and Yoshiko Ashiwa have recorded a similar conflict between the monastic leadership and the administrative commission at Xiamen’s Nanputuo Temple. Unlike Kaiyuan, Nanputuo’s commission profited from an array of tourist related business it operated near the temple entrance. Zhao Puchu helped reduce the power of the commission by having it re-designated a business post (*shiwu suo*) rather than a commission with administrative duties. Wank & Ashiwa 2006: 41-42.

including tour buses.³⁶ In addition, administrative commission employees have been effectively removed from all the temple buildings except for the ticket booths in the gates and two small offices; monks are now responsible for monitoring all of the halls. The monks have also begun to take on the task of watching the gates, especially in the evening. From the late nineties to the present, the number of employees of the administrative commission has been reduced by half, from sixty to thirty. The temple has also been able to negotiate to receive 50% of the sales from entrance tickets, whereas previously they had received none of this money.³⁷ According to one estimate this brings in four million RMB to the temple per year. The abbot has said, however, that he would not sell tickets if he were able to abolish the administrative commission.³⁸ The abbot has effectively been able to force the commission to recognize him as their boss and win back a significant level of autonomy on behalf of the sangha at this monastery. As a result, Kaiyuan feels more like a monastery that attracts tourists, than a tourist site where a few monks live.

This last point is quite important because we may be inclined to place all temples that serve as tourist attractions together in the same category, a category that tends to devalue such places as “tourist temples.” The reality, I hope to have demonstrated, is more nuanced. We have seen a sample of the many temples in China which serve as tourist attractions, each with their own characteristics—at one extreme is the temple that has converted into a museum like Yangzhou's Tianning Temple, at the other is Pingxing Monastery which has practically no tourists and is dedicated to religious cultivation.

³⁶ The effect of this change has been so dramatic that business outside the main gate complain that they have lost lots of money since the change. Of five restaurants that were once there, only two remain.

³⁷ During the last conversation I had with the abbot, at the end of 2009, he suggested that the monastery now controlled the money generated from gate tickets and paid out salaries to the members of the temple management group.

³⁸ Personal communication, 2006.

Falling between these extremes are many temples, such as the three temples surveyed near Beijing, which are all managed by curators who have succeeded in presenting them more as museums than as living religious institutions. Quanzhou Kaiyuan offers a contrast with the museumified temples discussed above; the key difference is that it is managed by revivalists, by its monastic leadership, who have invested Kaiyuan with a distinctly religious atmosphere, not agents of the state or curators.

Kaiyuan's monastics are organized according to a system of traditional titles used in Chinese monasteries with the abbot as the head representative and final authority. Just below the abbot is the general manager (*jianyuan*) who handles the day to day business of the monastery as well as public relations; since 2008 or so Kaiyuan has had three co-managers. Below the general manager are several monk officers such as a sacristan (*yibo*) who accompanies and handles the personal business of the abbot as needed, the guest prefect who escorts important visitors and handles many other tasks, and several other monks who head various divisions of the traditional monastic bureaucracy (the heads of various halls and so on). All of the monks answer to the abbot and the abbot (from what I have gathered) makes most decisions about the monastery and its money relatively independently. The provincial level of the Bureau of Religious Affairs has power over him, but, they generally leave the abbot unmolested.³⁹

While the monks of Kaiyuan, generally speaking, may not be learned in doctrine or accomplished in practice, by taking control of the monastic space and dedicating its use to devotional practice, they are contributing to the revival of Buddhism in contemporary

³⁹ The positions that Daoyuan holds in the CBA and in branches of the government have helped position him in this relatively autonomous position; only the provincial level Bureau of Religion could exert control, but Daoyuan maintains good relations with them.

China and fending off the museumification of temple space. Most of Daoyuan's accomplishments have related to physically enhancing Kaiyuan monastery through the recovery and renovation of properties as well as the construction and reconstruction of buildings and the creation of landscaped gardens and stone sculptures and engravings. In 2006, Daoyuan stated that work on the temple since he began to manage affairs had cost more than forty million RMB (about five million USD).⁴⁰ While they include aesthetic enhancements that contribute to the experience of visitors, they also contribute to the revival of Kaiyuan as a place of religious practice. The landscaped areas provide new spaces for contemplation; individual monks walk and circumambulate in these areas and I have seen at least one lay visitor meditating in the new courtyard of the Hall of the Buddha's Life. Some monks at Kaiyuan speak of the current period of restoration as one focused on hardware, which is seen as an important and necessary step in revival. They hope, nevertheless, for a future which allows focus on the software, by which they mean instruction, study and meditation.

Conclusion: A "two-track" management structure

While Daoyuan has managed to gain an upper hand in the management of Kaiyuan's affairs he has not been able to fully dislodge the temple administrative commission which is a feature of post-Mao religious management. While the administrative commission remains in check, it also remains on the grounds at Kaiyuan and in charge of selling entrance tickets and offering tours from a small office on the grounds of the monastery. Some authorities refer to this situation, which is a feature of religious

⁴⁰ Interview, 2006.

administration in China, as the two track management structure. At Kaiyuan the two tracks consist of the management of certain affairs by the temple administrative commission and the management of most other affairs by the monks. This dual system of management at Kaiyuan creates a bi-furcated institutional structure which effectively formalizes the two roles of contemporary Kaiyuan monastery: a place for religious practice and a place for sight-seeing and leisure. The abbot and the monastic bureaucracy oversee matters pertaining to religious pursuits while the administrative commission oversees tourist pursuits. While the monks do not collect entry tickets or provide guide service, they (especially the guest prefect) are sometimes called upon to accompany high profile visitors on their tours of the monastery.

The administrative commission at Kaiyuan is limited to staffing entrance and exit gates, selling tickets, staffing a small office, running a small tour office and manning two small kiosks all on the property of Kaiyuan monastery. In these activities—the selling and collecting of entry tickets, the offering of tour guide service from the grounds of Kaiyuan and the operation of tourist-oriented kiosks—the temple administrative commission is responsible for institutionalizing tourism as a feature of Kaiyuan monastery. Without their presence, there would be thousands of tourists, but the temple clerics would not cater to the tourists in the same way that the fully secular administrative commission does. The abbot has claimed that he would not sell entry tickets and I'm confident that monks would not continue to operate the two kiosks which cater to tourists.

The two-track management system at Kaiyuan—management by the monastics and limited management by the administrative commission—thus creates formal conditions for the dual institution that Kaiyuan is today: Buddhist monastery and tourist site. Tourism

must be carefully managed if it is not to dominate the character of a temple or monastery. Daoyuan's successful bids for greater autonomy have enabled revivalists to set the tone in Kaiyuan's restoration. The following chapter further explores how Kaiyuan manages its dual identity as a Buddhist monastery and tourist attraction.

CHAPTER NINE

Buddhist Monastery and Tourist Site: Negotiating an Identity

Its reputation has not declined, and those nostalgic for things old can still hear about and experience it.¹

-Yuanxian (1643)

Monasteries and tourism, as has been noted, enjoy a long history in China. Furthermore, many monks, before they are monks, visit temples as tourists thus becoming introduced to Buddhism and the possibility of becoming a monk.² Temples open to tourists can, in that capacity, propagate the dharma (the teachings of Buddhism). Tourism, nevertheless, is noisy and inevitably disturbs the tranquil atmosphere most conducive to contemplative practice.³ This chapter examines how Kaiyuan has negotiated between the demand to accommodate tourists on the one hand, and the demands to provide a place for religious devotion on the other. The challenge that Kaiyuan and other religious sites in China faces is neither new, nor entirely one-dimensional.

Since at least the Yuan dynasty, if not earlier, Kaiyuan has attracted people thirsting for a taste of culture, history or refinement. A place that satisfies desires for these finer things, but in a more antiseptic environment, is a museum. Kaiyuan monastery is today, in fact, the home of three separate museums. It houses the museum of an ancient Song dynasty wooden ship that was excavated in Quanzhou harbor in 1974, a museum of Quanzhou Buddhist history and a museum commemorating the twentieth

¹ *Sizhi* I. 1a.

² I have confirmed this in conversation with several monks.

³ Makley 1999:101,152.

century master Hongyi. Despite the presence of three museums, Kaiyuan Monastery itself has avoided the stale museum-like quality that can invade an ancient monastery that receives thousands of tourists every week. It also avoids the tourist park atmosphere that one finds at sites managed by secular authorities such as the temples described in the previous chapter (e.g. Hongluo, Yunju, Longxing etc.). Kaiyuan's population of more than eighty reasonably disciplined monks who regularly conduct morning and evening services, eat vegetarian meals in common and otherwise tend the halls and lead rituals helps contribute to a distinctly religious atmosphere. Nevertheless, tourism is perceived as a problem at Kaiyuan and countless other temples and monasteries in China. Attendant with the problem of tourism is the problem of commodification. This chapter explores Kaiyuan's handling of these two problems as it negotiates a dual identity—Buddhist monastery and tourist attraction.

The Problem of Tourism

Tourism brings money to local economies, it encourages state support for the rebuilding and restoration of religious sites and provides many temples with a much needed source of funds. The *problem* with tourism, voiced by many clerics, is that it 1) damages the quiet atmosphere conducive to religious practice and 2) detracts clerics from religious practice. Ven. Dr. Jing Yin, director of the Center of Buddhist Studies at Hong Kong University, has expressed grave concerns about the commercialization of Buddhist monasteries in China. Regarding tourism he writes, “when monasteries become principally tourist attractions, the danger is that the energy of monks becomes devoted

chiefly to receiving tourists, leaving no time for the sangha or to engage in Buddhist practice.”⁴

The same sentiments have been expressed to me by monks speaking about Kaiyuan and other monasteries where they have lived. Those expressing these thoughts, however, were monks with higher positions or charged with monitoring the main hall or ordination platform. For these monks, their responsibilities keep them busy with the public on a daily basis and they have little time for practice. But these are the monks with positions and specific jobs, not the rank-and-file monks who attend morning and evening services and who are engaged in other rituals, including the twice-weekly *nianfo* sessions. While these rank-and-file monks do not have reputations as learned or advanced practitioners, I argue that they are provided an opportunity to practice and are supported in that by the other monks tending the halls and taking care of other administrative matters. Such a situation has structural similarities, alluded to in chapter five, with traditional monastic training such as that described by Buswell (Korean Zen) and Dreyfus (Tibetan Gelukba scholasticism).⁵ In both cases a small minority of monks was supported in their religious pursuit (meditation for Buswell, study for Dreyfus) by the majority of the monks who had more menial, if relaxed, duties. The difference at Kaiyuan is that the “religious core” is not valorized. Unlike monks with positions, those participating in the daily service did not win a place in this hall, it is the default position for unremarkable monks. Nevertheless, the daily services form the core of communal monastic cultivation. Below I will explore the space of daily services and other spaces and potentials for religious practice that Kaiyuan affords—spaces and potentials which would not be

⁴ Jing Yin 2006: 91-92.

⁵ Buswell 1992; Dreyfus 2003.

evident to a visitor who arrived during the day and spoke to the monks in the main hall. Similarly, I will examine the dimensions of tourist disturbances—we will find that there are disruptions and there is the absence of disruption.

The Problem of Commodification

As for the problem of commodification it will first be necessary to determine to what extent commodification has taken place, if at all. Jing Yin has identified this as another important issue: “Monasteries are now becoming active participants in the process of commodification that characterizes contemporary Chinese economic life...Needless to say, this commodification runs the risk of impairing the ability of Buddhists to concentrate on their fundamental work, which is, in Buddhist terms, to liberate being from suffering and to propagate the dharma.”⁶ To make any determination about commodification, we must first be clear about what it is. “Commodification” as defined by the Oxford English Dictionary is:

The action of turning something into, or treating something as, a (mere) commodity; commercialization of an activity, etc., that is not by nature commercial.

With this definition in mind, I will explore Kaiyuan’s fundraising methods to determine to what extent commercialization may or may not be a problem.

The problems of tourism and commodification will be examined in the context of three fundamental features of Kaiyuan: founding, physical structure and space and function. Kaiyuan’s traditional founding narratives have been explored in chapter seven; this chapter examines the “founding” of Kaiyuan as a tourist site. The examination of physical structure and space that began in chapter six will be extended in this chapter with a focus on the issues of tourism and commodification—how are structures and space

⁶ Jing Yin 2006: 96-97.

deployed to encourage or discourage tourism and commodification? As for function, chapter five described the religious life of Kaiyuan as exhibited in the actions of monks, laity and worshipers. This chapter examines the nature of exchanges between the monastery and its patrons—to what extent have these exchanges become commodified? We begin these critical explorations by considering the experience of visitors entering the monastery.

Entrance and Founding: Setting Expectations

As discussed in chapter seven, memorials to auspicious events and eminent monks, which are visible to visitors entering the main gate, serve to sanctify or sacralize Kaiyuan, distinguishing the monastery and its grounds from the rest of the mundane world as a place of numinous power and dharmic potential. At the same time they also attract tourists by branding Kaiyuan as a place of antiquity and curiosity. In their multivalence memorials may be seen to contribute to Kaiyuan's identity as both a religious site and a tourist attraction.

While inscriptions outside the main gate allude to Kaiyuan's auspicious founding, there are other signs which welcome the sightseer with no religious pretensions, most important in this regard are plaques and inscriptions designating Kaiyuan as an Important National Cultural Heritage Protected Site. An inscription in the main courtyard indicates that Kaiyuan Monastery was designated an Important National Cultural Heritage Protected Site in 1982. Another inscription commemorates its designation in the first batch of important provincial cultural heritage protected sites in May of 1961. Signboards posted in the main gate, introducing the monastery and indicating the 10 RMB ticket price, both repeat this important information, informing visitors that they are visiting a

site of national cultural importance. These inscriptions and plaques are tell-tale indications of a tourist site in China. They convey information that promotes Kaiyuan as a site of interest to tourists and welcomes them. Analogous to Kaiyuan's inscriptions of "Purple Cloud" alluding to the monastery's founding, these others allude to Kaiyuan's *founding* as a site of protected cultural heritage and, ultimately, a tourist site.

The signboard indicating a 10RMB (1.50 USD) entrance fee hangs above a window where tickets may be purchased right inside the main gate where two huge guardian figures are enshrined. Tickets may also be purchased inside a small booth in the newly built gate on the west side of the monastery. The ticket booths at Kaiyuan are much less conspicuous than they are at most temples that are major tourist attractions, nonetheless they are present and visitors who are not recognized as locals will be asked to purchase a ticket [Figure 67]. If the visitor is not recognized, but has a Buddhist I.D. card, the entrance fee may be waved, but without the card they will be required to pay and this can create ill will.

Buddhists who feel they should have free access to the monastery, but who are required to pay feel indignant about the commodification of entrance to the monastery. Technically, what has been commodified is access to Kaiyuan as a site of cultural heritage. Access to the monastery for regulars and card-carrying Buddhists has not been commodified. At temples across China, card-carrying Buddhists are supposed to be allowed in without a ticket, but many pious Buddhists, including foreign monks, do not have the ID cards that gate operators accept and they are forced to pay. Jing Yin express an all too common experience at temples in China:

Certain individuals seem to be running the monasteries chiefly for economic purposes, causing difficulties for Buddhists who have a genuine

religious desire to visit. To give an example from my own experience, in June 1993 I visited the ancestral shrine of Chan Buddhism, the Shaolin Temple on Mt. Song. At the foot of Mt. Song, long before I could see Shaolin Temple, I was asked to buy a ticket at a booth. I attempted to ask for a waiver because I am a monk. The man was very impatient and said, 'You must pay to enter, no matter who you are. That is the regulation.' I considered it a great pity that a monk has to buy a ticket to return to his own ancestral shrine.⁷

One might think that monks would be allowed entrance, but there are fake monks (shaven-headed, robe-wearing scam artists) who would exploit visitors to temples and since these should not be allowed in for free, gate keepers must rely on personal knowledge or official identification. Lacking either of these even a monk might be required to purchase entrance tickets. Presumably more common is the experience of lay Buddhists who are not allowed free entry to temples. This could happen if a) they do not possess or have in their possession proof of taking refuge (*guiyi zheng*) or b) the temple in question is a tourist site (*luyou jingdian*) without monastics. In the latter case visitors will typically be asked to purchase a ticket whether or not they have proof of being a Buddhist.⁸

Kaiyuan, as the home of a monastic community and a functioning monastery, allows lay persons free entry, but only those recognized by gate keepers or with I.D. cards. In the case of a sincere Buddhist who does not have the proper form of I.D., they will feel that entrance to the Dharma World of the Lotus-Blooming Mulberry has been commodified—and for them it has been. Given this the fee is problematic, but I do not consider a modest admission fee to a religious site of historical and cultural value

⁷ Jing Yin 2006: 91.

⁸ Fisher describes accompanying a lay Buddhist with her I.D. (*guiyi zheng*) to Beijing's White Pagoda Temple (*baita si*). She expected free entry, but was required to pay (Fisher's paper at the 2009 AAR conference in Montreal).

inherently wrong. A fee can help insure funds for maintenance and protection of the site as well as help with crowd control.

The question still remains regarding those religiously-motivated visitors who are required to purchase an entrance ticket (because they lack proper I.D.)—is this sufficient reason to abandon the practice of charging admission? The abbot has said he would not charge admission if he could oust the administrative commission and take control of the gate. Unfortunately we do not know if he would follow through with this, but it does provide us with the indication that Kaiyuan’s leadership opposes the perception or fact of commodification that is represented by the admission ticket. While it is not ideal, I feel that it can be justified by recognizing that provisions are made to allow Buddhists free entry in a manner that is different from strictly tourist sites such as Beijing’s White Pagoda Temple, which require every visitor, Buddhist or not, to purchase an admission ticket.⁹

Apart from Buddhists who may be charged an admission fee, what other impact does the temple administration have as gate managers? All visitors during normal hours (4A.M. to 5 P.M.), except insiders who know about the back gate(s), must enter through a gate controlled by the temple administrative commission. This has the unfortunate effect of reframing the visitor’s experience according to *grammar* and *signs* provided by the commission in the liminal space between the city and the monastery. Apart from having to purchase a ticket at a small booth (excepting the exceptions previously noted), visitors will then have to pass through turnstiles which lead out of the east side of the main gate

⁹ Garth Fisher related an experience about the White Pagoda Temple at the 2009 AAR conference in Montreal. When Jing Yin visited Shaolin Temple he was told that everyone had to purchase a ticket.

or the north of the west gate.¹⁰ Those who are recognized as returning Buddhists or those who live or work at the temple (such as myself at the time) are not required to pass through the turnstile, they enter through the “out” side of the gate to the west (to one’s left), where a man sits at a table drinking tea and watching a small T.V. This man is part of the front gate crew, an employee of the temple administration commission. While Buddhists and insiders are able to bypass the ticket booth and turnstiles, they still pass by an employee watching T.V. and smoking—this reminds them that non-monastic entities are controlling access to the monastery. The whole gate operation—ticket booth, turnstiles, plainclothes people asking visitors to buy tickets, monitoring their flow, watching T.V. —is orchestrated by the temple administrative commission. This is what I referred to above as the *grammar* and *signs* of this liminal space. Their presence, including the the ticket booth, the turnstiles and various plaques, competes for attention with the towering Hum Ha generals who stand guard and the pair of verses by Zhu Xi. These sculptures and verses mitigate the presence of the commission, but the commission still structures the experience (ticket booth, turnstile, interaction with non-monastic personnel). If entering by the new west gate, where most tour groups enter, there are no sculptures or calligraphy—in short, there is nothing traditional and the experience is fully framed by the commission. At both entrances the turnstiles, in particular, suggest to the visitor that he or she is entering a site of entertainment value. While clear boundaries serve to distinguish Kaiyuan from the streets and neighborhoods outside (from the mundane world), they also serve, in combination with the ticket booths and turnstiles, to demarcate Kaiyuan as a site requiring a ticket, a site on the itinerary of tourists.

¹⁰ The entry and exit turnstiles are located next to one another on the north side of the west gate.

Entering Kaiyuan by these gates is a *re-framing*, because the physical presence of the monastery asserts itself *before* one enters by either gate. Depending on one's angle of approach, one see the pagodas, halls, inscriptions or simply large trees all of which provide an initial framing for one's visit according to the *signs* and *grammar* of the monastery. This initial, enchanted framing is displaced or modified by that of the temple administrative commission. This is the primary way in which they institutionalize tourism at Kaiyuan—framing visitor experience at gates by attending ticket booths and monitoring turnstiles. They make it clear that Kaiyuan is not only a place for religious practice, but also a site for tourists. Incarnations of this commission is responsible for institutionalizing tourism at temples all over China.¹¹

Physical Barriers: Establishing Permeable Boundaries

One of the most commonly cited complaints about tourism and its impact on monasteries is that of the noisy (in all senses of the word) disturbances that attend tour groups. Monasteries, if they are to be places of religious cultivation, must provide times for disturbance-free practice. Does Kaiyuan do so? As alluded to in previous chapters, yes. While peace and quiet is not a constant at Kaiyuan, it is regular. The regularity of it is guaranteed by Kaiyuan's effective use of buffers between the monastic grounds and the busy streets just beyond the south and west gates.

Although it is in the middle of old downtown Quanzhou the monastery remains clearly demarcated from its surrounding environment. It is bound by stone fencing and a line of trees to the south and west, a wall along most of the east and buildings along the north. In short, the boundaries of the monastery are clearly evident and there is never a

¹¹ See a particularly salient example of this at temples in Sichuan associated with Tibetan religion (Kang 2009).

question of whether one is inside or outside this monastery's space. In addition, the walls, trees and landscaping provide an effective and much needed buffer from the bustle that lies just beyond the monastery's walls to the south and west [Figures 71-73]. The separation from the world outside the gates is less in evidence during the day when tour groups regularly visit, than it is in the evenings when the tour groups and visitors have dispersed, the gates have been closed, the employees of the commission have gone and quiet settles over the monastic grounds.

Entering and exiting the monastery after nightfall is a most distinctive experience; it is made so by Kaiyuan's effective maintenance of boundaries. Inside is dark and quiet. As one approaches the gate to exit the monastery, sounds of traffic slowly grow from a low hum to a dull rumble that breaks into the pops and gasps of motorbikes, the squeaking brakes and engines of buses and the general commotion of commerce that one finds just outside the gate of the monastery. Conversely, the experience of entering the quiet stillness of the monastery from the frenetic street outside is equally striking.

This is a side of the monastery that few people apart from the monks, ever witness. It is the time of day that the quietude that one characteristically expects to find at a monastery finally arrives. There are monks who take advantage of the evenings to engage in contemplative practices that are impossible during the day such as circumambulating the hall of the ordination platform or taking quiet strolls among the grounds. The quietude that allows these practices is ensured by the substantial buffer created by the walls, trees and landscaping along the borders of the monastery. Effective demarcation from the outside (mundane) world allows visitors to feel they are entering a

sacred space during the day (see chapter six) and contributes to an atmosphere of contemplative quietude during the evening.

I visited a small temple in the mountains of Fujian where there was no such demarcation and the atmosphere suffered accordingly. The abbot wished he could buy out the two farmers who owned land on either side of the small temple. Unable to do so, he effectively had to share his property with the farmers, their cows and chickens. The atmosphere was quaint, but it distinctly lacked the numinous appeal of Kaiyuan. It is a lack that could well account for some of the difficulty the young abbot has experienced in attracting patrons.

I have visited urban monasteries in Beijing and Xi'an that have neighboring buildings leaning over and dwarfing their walls. Kaiyuan has no such encroachments, but before Daoyuan had succeeded in evicting the myriad work units and residents from Kaiyuan's grounds, non-monastics encroached on the monastery from all sides, surrounding the east pagoda and engulfing the entire area now occupied by the abbot's quarters. Until control of these properties had returned to monastic hands, Kaiyuan was without the kind distinct demarcation that it now enjoys and it was more like a public park than a place for religious practice. This is a situation that has changed, in part, due to the recovery of properties and the establishing of clear lines of demarcation from the non-monastic world—this is something that Kaiyuan, as an urban monastery, has gotten right.

Space Dedicated to Religious Cultivation

Near the end of the north-south axis is the Dharma Hall and Scripture Library. The Dharma Hall is where a group of about thirty monks holds daily morning and evening services. From the perspective of the monks, it may be considered the religious

heart of the monastery. It is the only center for communal self-cultivation at this monastery, unless one counts the dining hall. Apart from morning and evening services, which form the most basic set of ritual practice today in Chinese monastic Buddhism, there are no other rituals conducted here. Typically, morning service lasts about an hour from 4:30 to 5:30AM and evening service is about half an hour from 5:30 to 6:00 PM; sometimes services are abbreviated (if the monks are busy), sometimes extended (if it is a special day, e.g. Guanyin's ordination). The furnishings of the dharma hall are the simplest of any hall at Kaiyuan and there are no historic or cultural relics [Figures 74, 76]. The lack of activity during the middle of the day and the lack of cultural relics serves to keep visitors away.

While the second floor sutra library (see chapter six) contains many treasures, it is closed to tourists. The sutra library is locked and guarded by a monk who lives there and monitors any would-be visitors with the help of security cameras to which he has access in his private office. He is custodian and, one might say, guardian of the treasures stored above the dharma hall. When I have asked to see the Tripitikas, he has solemnly opened the cases for me with a bow [Figure 38]. He has a basic knowledge of the holdings of the library, but he is not well informed about them nor does he have much knowledge of Buddhist scripture in general. He has made a catalogue at the request of the abbot, but other than this, there is no indication that he is actively researching any of the library's holdings or their significance, nor, for that matter, is anyone else. The library is closed to the public and access is provided only to those with special interest and/or connections. Should Kaiyuan wish to make the library a tourist attraction it could easily do so (blood

sutras are always a draw). The scripture library of Fuzhou's Gushan Monastery, for example, includes a room displaying select texts and illustrations in glass cases.

Kaiyuan's decision to keep the library private contributes to the religious atmosphere at the back of the monastery where the monks conduct morning and evening services, take their meals and live; it does so by effectively keeping visitors, even devotees, confined to the main hall, ordination hall, main courtyard, museums and landscaped areas, all of which are removed from the living and practice quarters of the monastics.

Buildings that actively serve religious functions most certainly contribute to a functioning religious environment. While this is not a point I wish to belabor, it is worth noting because many halls at other Buddhist temples serve only marginal, if any, religious functions. As mentioned in chapter eight, Shanghai's Jade Buddha Temple has shrine halls that have been converted in souvenir shops, Beijing's Yunju Temple has shrine halls that have been converted in museum-style exhibit halls and Yangzhou's Tianning Temple has been fully converted into a museum bereft of any formal opportunities for worship or devotion. Kaiyuan, like an increasing number of monasteries in China, has restored its entire central axis to religious functioning (see chapter five for rituals and devotional activities in the main hall and ordination hall).

The Buddhist Museum and Hongyi Memorial Hall

The only shrine rooms at Kaiyuan that have been converted to other uses are in the former Cundī Chan Temple, which was founded during the Qing dynasty, and is now called "Small Kaiyuan Temple." It no longer enshrines a statue of Cundī bodhisattva, rather, it has become the Buddhist Museum of Quanzhou and contains statues, bells and

other artifacts collected at Kaiyuan (see chapter six). At the rear of this museum is a separate museum dedicated to master Hongyi. These museums are monitored by monks rather than employees of the temple commission; this contributes significantly to the potential for devotional enjoyment of the objects displayed. In addition, tour groups do not bring visitors to these museums, only independent tourists and devotees can be found wandering around this far corner of the monastery.

I consider these museums to be innovative uses of monastic space to educate visitors about Buddhist history and culture and the life of master Hongyi. Although these museums are not sites of religious practice, they are not strictly in the service of secular forces given the work they do to direct attention to Buddhist history, antiquities and culture. Furthermore, there is no vending whatsoever in these museum spaces; the focus is solely on education. In addition, the museums are in the northeastern corner of the monastic grounds, well removed from the central axis where all of Kaiyuan's formal religious ceremonies take place.¹²

The Hall of the Buddha's Life and Courtyard

Adjoining the small Kaiyuan museum area is the newly constructed Hall of the Buddha's Life. Daoyuan's decision to construct the hall of the Buddha's life and courtyard garden surrounded by sculptures of paintings and calligraphy by Feng Zikai and Hongyi has added a large space conducive to contemplation and reflection on the meaning of episodes in the Buddha's life and the virtue of protecting and liberating

¹² As discussed in chapter eight, there are degrees of museumification that occur at temples in China. Although it no longer serves as a shrine hall, small Kaiyuan also does not serve as a place for commercial activity, unlike the situation one finds at other temples in China. There is also a question of who manages the museum-like spaces. In the case of Kaiyuan it is the monks who monitor, open and close these spaces; they "own" these museum spaces. At other temples, such as those discussed in chapter eight, this is not the case.

animals, great and small. There is no program of ritual or religious activity in these spaces, but the space is open to individuals who feel drawn to it. The monk who is the keeper of this hall may be seen quietly sitting at a desk in the corner reading scripture. Another monk, may be seen circumambulating the courtyard in a state of contemplation throughout the day; this monk is from southern Fujian and has impressed me with his steady demeanor of calm and focus, a demeanor we expect from those in the monastic vocation, but one that is all too rare. I have also seen one lay person sitting in meditation in this area in the early morning before tour groups begin to arrive. If this quiet and enclosed space had not been created in the northeastern corner of the compound, there would be less opportunity for these individuals and others like them to pursue these forms of religious cultivation.

The Venerable Tradition of Monastic Wealth

Buddhist monks and nuns were often represented as being poor and socially withdrawn, but we know the reality in Asia was quite the opposite. Throughout East Asia, and particularly in China, the sangha became, among other things, one of the most powerful economic forces in society. Those Buddhist monasteries in the Chinese empire that sought to accumulate wealth increased their chances of institutionalized longevity. A large Buddhist monastery was thoroughly institutional, that is, a social and physical structure that defined, imposed, and maintained sets of social values, and sought to acquire and distribute capital—economic, cultural, or otherwise—in a competitive manner.¹³

Walsh is writing about medieval Chinese Buddhism. How did Buddhist monasteries justify such competitive behavior? Walsh answers, “Promoting the stability and growth

¹³ Walsh 2010: 6.

of a Buddhist monastery was tantamount to ensuring the survival of Buddhism.”¹⁴

Turning from the medieval period to the contemporary one, Jing Yin writes:

From an external perspective, it would seem that monasteries now function as ‘money-making machines’ and compete in the public and private sectors to earn the revenue necessary to continue their operations. From an insider Buddhist perspective, it has been argued that many monks and nuns put too much time and energy into moneymaking and have little or no time to practice and teach Buddhist dharma.¹⁵

Jing Yin’s phrase “money-making machine” reflects the same spirit as the official in the culture Bureau who described temples as “smokestack-less factories.” Regardless of how they are characterized, it is a fact that large, famous monasteries in China do well financially. Quanzhou Kaiyuan, as well as Nanputuo and Fuzhou’s Gushan and many others are all large, financially successful institutions. Walsh makes the legitimate point that the accumulation of wealth was valued by monastics as a means to insure the longevity of the monastic institution and therefore the survival of Buddhism. Jing Yin’s observation, however, questions the ability of monks to practice or teach the dharma if they are preoccupied with accumulating wealth. If Jing Yin’s critique is valid, then preserving Buddhism could just as well be done, it seems, by burying sutras carved on stone such as was done during the medieval period at Yunju Monastery. In other words, if no monks or nuns are able to study and teach or exemplify the dharma through practice, then what need have we for monastics? My sense is that Jing Yin’s critique is valid up to a point. Where it breaks down is in the implication that most monks should be involved in teaching and practicing Buddhism and further assumptions about what practicing Buddhism may or may not entail. I have already suggested that only a minority

¹⁴ Walsh 2010: 7. Walsh’s study focuses on Tiantong Monastery, which, like Kaiyuan was a large well-endowed monastery near a seaport.

¹⁵ Jing Yin 2006: 86.

of monastics at a given site has ever been empowered to be dedicated to practice, study or teaching. Furthermore, who is to say that monks monitoring halls are not “practicing” Buddhism. My research suggests that some are, some aren’t. A hall monitoring monk may cultivate patience, contemplate impermanence or recite the Buddha’s name *while* monitoring.

One of Jing Yin’s central claims is that the focus on accumulating wealth has distracted monks from religious pursuits. My research confirms that monks involved with the managing of money are indeed distracted from religious cultivation. But it may be said that they are sacrificing the opportunity for deeper practice by looking after monastic finances for the good of the sangha. Money, nonetheless, is a sensitive issue. Let’s examine Kaiyuan’s fundraising practices to determine if and how they may be seen to promote the goals of Buddhism.

The Financial Benefits that Can Accrue to Famous Temples

The differences between the standard of living of monks in large high profile urban temples and those in small rural temples are much like the differences between China's *nouveau riche* in the urban centers along the east coast and their comrades in the less developed regions of central and western China. Just as the former can afford to travel while the latter cannot, so do monastics with positions at successful urban monasteries enjoy the benefits of travel and fancy cell phones. Early in my fieldwork I was sitting and talking to a monk at Kaiyuan about his ordination and had with me a Chinese friend who is a school teacher. When we left, the school teacher turned to me with a look of surprise and incredulity: “Did you see the cell phones these monks have?”

They are very expensive!” Fancy cell phones, laptops and designer monk apparel are all part of being a monk with a position at a famous temple in modern China.

What is the source of monastic wealth? The information I have gathered about Kaiyuan makes it clear that although a good amount of money is generated by ticket sales associated with the tourist industry, a great deal more is generated by the prestige of being a famous monastery that attracts greater numbers of worshipers and inspires them to give more to the monastery in the form of offerings and what amounts to fees that are paid to have ritual services performed in one's name.

The Economy of Spiritual Efficacy and the Cash-Merit Relationship

The non-religiously motivated tourist, at minimum, contributes 5 RMB to the monastery when he or she purchases a 10 RMB entry ticket.¹⁶ While Kaiyuan's reputation as a site of history and culture attracts tourists, its reputation as an auspicious place of spiritual power assists in attracting worshipers and Buddhists. Those who come to worship, whether or not they purchase an entry ticket, typically make donations as part of the economy of blessings. Simply put, the economy of blessings is the notion that if one gives a donation with a sincere petition one will receive blessings or generate merit in return. I use the term “economy of blessings,” rather than say “economy of merit,” because Kaiyuan's many worshipers most often speak of blessings and protection (*baoyou*) or give concrete examples such as “peace at home” (*jiating ping'an* 家庭平安) rather than merit (*gongde*). Articulated and enacted in various forms, the economy of blessings is the engine that generates the bulk of the donations received by the Buddhist

¹⁶ According to my informants the remaining ¥5 goes to the temple management commission. This was the case in 2006, in 2009, however, the abbot suggested that the monastery received all of the funds and paid salaries to the ticket sellers and others in the temple management commission. See chapter six.

Sangha throughout Asia.¹⁷ After the dramatic social upheavals of the Republican and Communist periods and the loss of traditional, landed sources of income, the economy of blessings has taken on greater prominence as a means of financial support for Kaiyuan as well as other temples throughout China.¹⁸

While donations are given to monks in exchange for ritual services, much more money is collected from offerings made at collection boxes distributed along the central axis of the monastery, placed in front of statues and halls and, especially on lunar twenty-sixth days. Kaiyuan's auspicious reputation makes it an attractive place for individuals to participate in the economy of blessings, a phenomenon that Gareth Fisher has termed the cash-merit relationship in his study of lay Buddhist patronage.¹⁹ This relationship involves an exchange—visitors make offerings in order to receive blessings or merit. Kaiyuan is considered an attractive site to engage in such an exchange because it has a reputation as a spiritually powerful place.

Kaiyuan's active monastic community also makes it a field of merit, which is of particular value and appeal to lay Buddhists. Lay Buddhists plant seeds (donations) in the Sangha-based field of merit in order to grow merit. Worshipers, meanwhile, are more

¹⁷ People regularly give alms or make a donation at the temple where a given god, goddess, Buddha or bodhisattva is enshrined in order to receive blessings from that entity. This has been the case throughout Asia. For the centrality of transactional exchange in Chinese Buddhism see Walsh 2007. On the importance of merit in the lay-monastic relationship and in Thai society at large see Bunnag, Jane. 1973. *Buddhist Monk, Buddhist Layman: A Study of Urban Monastic Organization in Central Thailand*. London: Cambridge University Press. On the centrality of elite patronage of monasteries in China as well as other factors conditioning such patronage other than merit see Brook, Timothy. 1993. *Praying for Power: Buddhism and the Formation of Gentry Society in Late-Ming China*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

¹⁸ See also Zhe Ji 2004.

¹⁹ Gareth Fisher has written about the widespread belief among layperson in contemporary China that one gains extraordinary merit and blessings in exchange for funding temple construction or rebuilding. He also points out the “cash-merit relationship” that often characterizes the practice of making offerings to temples or monks in exchange for merit (Fisher 2008:148-152 etc.). In funding temple construction and festivals wealth, quite simply, becomes a virtue (See Feuchtwang 2001: 152). For the medieval basis of such beliefs in Chinese Buddhism see Walsh 2007.

attracted to the spiritual power of Kaiyuan and its Buddhas and Bodhisattvas which is likewise accessed through the making of offerings. In both cases, money is offered in exchange for Kaiyuan's cultural capital, which is religious or spiritual in nature.²⁰ Classically, in making a gift to the Sangha there is worldly giving in which one is aware of giver, gift and receiver and supramundane giving in which one should have no thought of gift, giver or receiver.²¹ In my conversations with worshipers and Buddhists I was always informed about the benefits one could expect from making offerings. These benefits were expressed simply as merit (*gongde*) or blessings and protection (*baoyou*), or, more commonly, as peace in the family, financial success and other worldly benefits. When these "goods" are expected in exchange for cash there is commodification. Temples and monasteries in China rhetorically combat this potential for commodification by emphasizing the importance of a sincere heart or mind. Nevertheless, they engage in the commodification of merit and blessings when they post signboards linking donations to such benefits. As mentioned earlier, Kaiyuan does this on special occasions; grand ceremonies will be held and sponsorship is solicited by emphasizing the benefits and merit one can expect by donating. In these and other instances, Kaiyuan may be perceived as a service provider of commodified merit and blessings.

In his study of the Black Dragon King Temple in Shaanbei, Chau draws attention to the service provider aspect of religion. Chau writes:

The service provider perspective points to the undeniable fact that religion is business in addition to involving beliefs and sacred symbols. It also brings attention to analyzing the *social organization* of popular religious enterprises. Of course, temples are not merely business; yet they can hardly survive without a 'business model' (i.e., ways of generating

²⁰ Walsh 2010: 109-119.

²¹ Teaching on *dana* (giving) basic to Mahayana thought. See *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom* I 10.8a-b. trans. Conze 1975:198-199.

income). Recognizing the economic aspects of popular religion should not be seen as economic reductionism or as cheapening the religious experience of my informants; rather, not recognizing them and limiting our understanding of religious activities as purely 'religious' or 'spiritual' would risk another kind of reductionism.²²

Like the Black Dragon King Temple, Kaiyuan's main source of income comes from donations of worshipers at collection boxes.²³ And like Kaiyuan, the success of the Dragon King Temple rests on its reputation for spiritual efficacy.²⁴ Kaiyuan offers access to responsive Buddhas and, especially, Bodhisattvas, who are considered particularly responsive to human requests. One makes contact with these powers through incense, offerings and prostration. One can witness these activities at their most dramatic and frenetic on a monthly lunar twenty-sixth free noodles and *nianfo* day. As related in chapter five, on this day, the public streams into the complex by the thousands bearing offerings of fruit, flowers, incense and cash. The amount of money collected on this day is estimated, by well-placed informants, to be about 500,000 RMB per month (6,000,000 RMB or about 850,000 USD per year), about the same amount that is said to be generated by fifty percent of ticket sales. Tickets are sold on everyday of the year except lunar twenty-sixth and other special days; half of all of that money is approximately equal to the amount collected on just twelve days of free noodles and *nianfo*. An informant has said that about half of the monastery's expenses are met with the money generated each month on lunar twenty-sixth and about twenty percent of the monastery's overall income. It is no secret that this special day is a means of generating income for the monastery;

²² Chau 2006: 9.

²³ Chau 2006: 115.

²⁴ Chau 2006.

that is how the monks perceive it and that is why it has been instituted at temples throughout Quanzhou.

How is so much money generated? In short, this is thought to be an especially auspicious day for visiting the monastery and blessings are said to accrue to those who consume the noodles and make offerings. One month I felt obligated to at least try the treasured fare, which the laity line up for by the hundreds. As I was standing in line for a bowl of noodles, I began chatting with a woman about this custom and its meaning. She, like others I had asked, confirmed that eating the noodles would bring blessings (a peaceful home, a prosperous job etc.). In order to ensure receipt of the blessing, however, I was informed that I would need to make a donation. I subsequently confirmed this notion with other people who had come for noodles. I had not made a donation, and after learning this I began to worry that my bowl of noodles, prepared and served in conditions of questionable hygiene, was not only bland and overcooked, but perhaps free of the blessings for which it is famed. One may be forgiven for thinking that blessed noodles confer their blessings on respectful consumers equally, but this is not what I was told by those who had come to eat them. Apparently there is free lunch, but no free blessings.

The same logic generally holds for other types of blessings that one may receive at temples. This general logic is typically extended to include the notion that one's donation should correspond in some proportion to the blessing or protection one seeks to procure—in other words, there is a correlation between cash and merit. This tradition and the mentality which easily adapts to it combined with a temple's financial exigencies has generated the widespread commodification of ritual services at temples and monasteries

throughout China; one commonly finds price lists for various levels of ritual service.²⁵ At Kaiyuan there is no price list in general, but on special occasions signboards are posted which detail different levels of patronage one might offer with the implication or articulation that higher levels of participation generate greater benefit. During Chinese New Year, for example, a signboard is posted inviting patrons to participate at different levels of support. One may sponsor the event and gain tremendous amounts of merit by donating ten thousand, five thousand or two thousand RMB. Other levels of participation are available for one hundred or five hundred RMB; it is understood that the more one donates, the greater the benefit one will receive.

There is a direct connection between the perceived spiritual efficacy of Kaiyuan and the amount of donations received on *nianfo* days or for commissioned rituals. I have asked Kaiyuan's monks about this relationship and they have all confirmed that people are drawn to Kaiyuan to sponsor rituals because of Kaiyuan's reputation for spiritual efficacy. One of the more remarkable sponsors of ritual services whom I met during my time at the monastery was a group of three Chinese who had illegally immigrated to Western countries and, fearing reprisals or deportation, had returned to China seeking the protection of bodhisattvas. They were brought to Kaiyuan by a broker who apparently specializes in assisting illegal immigrants in multiple ways, one of which is in finding supernatural aid.²⁶ This broker, I was informed, considered Kaiyuan a place of spiritual

²⁵ Stephen Covell explores the commodification of ritual practices associated with funeral services and granting posthumous precept names to the dead and perceptions of it in contemporary Japanese Temple Buddhism (Covell 2005: 165-190).

²⁶ It was an odd coincidence that soon after I had returned to Houston a Taiwanese monk informed me of the efficacy of chanting *namu Guanyin pusa* ("homage to Guanyin Bodhisattva") and gave, as an example, the case of an Hispanic illegal alien who had been pulled over in a traffic stop and began to chant to himself; when the officer asked him for his ID, the officer suddenly received a call on his radio and let the man go. The man and the monk both attributed his "good fortune" to the compassionate intercession of Guanyin.

power as well as a famous monastery, conditions that he considered ideal for the clients he brings to Kaiyuan five or six times a year. For these men and other paying customers, Kaiyuan performs ceremonies to eliminate disasters and solve difficulties (*xiaozai jienan*). These ceremonies involve the recitation of the *One Thousand Hands and Eyes Guanyin Bodhisattva Sutra* (*qianshou jing* 千手经) and the *Great Compassion Mantra* by a small number of monks in order to call upon the aid of Guanyin to remove misfortune and difficulties. For these customers the service could be held in the main hall, for others it is held in the Anyang Yuan. In the performance of such ritual services Kaiyuan takes on the role of religious service provider.

Fundraising and Commodification

In addition to ritual services, many temples and monasteries in China have developed what are called “tertiary industrial activities” as part of their development and fundraising schemes. These economic activities include vegetarian restaurants, souvenir shops, guest houses, food stalls, tea houses and special exhibit halls (e.g. for relics).²⁷ Many of these economic activities exist, for example, at Xiamen’s Nanputuo Monastery. It is famous for its vegetarian restaurant and next to the pond for releasing life in front of the monastery are food stalls, tea shops, souvenir shops and photo booths all catering to Nanputuo’s many visitors both local and non-local (tourists, Buddhists and worshipers). The shops are tended by laypersons, in association with the monastery.²⁸ At some sites, shops may be run by monks.²⁹ Jing Yin suggests that these kinds of economic activities harm the religious atmosphere:

²⁷ See Jing Yin 2006:89.

²⁸ Ashiwa and Wank say these industries brought in 240,000 RMB in 1988 (Ashiwa and Wank 2006: 343).

²⁹ Several temples in the Sipsongpanna area have souvenir shops staffed by monks (Borchert 2005: 105).

From a Buddhist perspective, one can say that the one-sided economic development in many monasteries has made them lose their distinctively Buddhist characteristics. I have accompanied many overseas Buddhist delegates on visits to monasteries in China. In my experience, visitors often feel that despite the proliferation of monasteries, there is a lack of character here. Monasteries commonly operate vegetarian restaurants, guest houses, souvenir shops, and food and drink booths. Some even go to the extreme of running factories and operating companies. The long-term effect is that the market economy is seriously hurting the religious nature of the monasteries.³⁰

Jing Yin's concern is that these monasteries are focusing too-exclusively on economic development with the result that they lose their Buddhist characteristics (meditation, study and teaching). Kaiyuan may be said to have avoided the more crass versions of commercialization that Jing Yin has in mind. Kaiyuan, apart from a small Buddhist goods shop operated by a lay Buddhist, has no tertiary industries such as these. Kaiyuan raises funds from a) its reputation as a place of spiritual power and field of merit and b) its provision of religious services. Even though these activities may be commodified, Walsh argues that this commodification had already occurred in medieval times.³¹ While I believe Walsh is right, I am not prepared to say that the commodification of merit was absolute. I maintain, in other words, that there were and are, potentially and actually, donors and recipients capable of giving without attachment to gift, giver or recipient and monks capable of receiving without selfish and instrumental intentions. For commodification to happen, in fact, non-commodified merit must be thought to have existed in the past. Recall the definition of commodification: the attribution of economic value to something which previously did not have it. And if a non-commodified merit ever existed, I maintain, it necessarily has the potential to still exist.

³⁰ Jing Yin 2006: 91.

³¹ Walsh 2010.

Irrespective of the degree of commodification that exists, these exchanges are still part of a *religious* tradition which Walsh describes as a sacred economy.³² In other words, provisioning religious services and *ling*, even if commodified, are part of Chinese Buddhist tradition. By avoiding the more questionable tertiary industries, Kaiyuan avoids the more dramatic distractions they can bring to religious life.

The Anyang Cloister

Kaiyuan has one religious enterprise which is more clearly commodified than others—the Anyang Yuan memorial hall and mausoleum or Buddha Compassion Final Resting Cloister or (*Foci anyang yuan* 佛慈安养院), established by Daoyuan in 2000 and related post-mortem services. Located in the northwest corner of Kaiyuan, there is a large hall for holding the spirit tablets of deceased patrons and recent masters such as former abbot Miaolian as well as long-life tablets of patrons that will be converted into spirit tablets upon word of their decease. In the middle of this hall is a golden Sakyamuni Buddha in the Thai style. Inside this hall is where the paper houses and other paper offerings that are burned in post-mortem ceremonies are constructed. This is one of the more interesting halls to visit when it is busy with people constructing colorful and elaborate paper mansions equipped with furnishings, servants, strings of working lights, cars and airplanes that have been wired to electricity and fly around in circles when turned on. These paper offerings will be ritually incinerated in a dedicated furnace as part of the *chaudu* ritual for the deceased.

Next to this building is the entrance to the underground mausoleum. Upon entering the mausoleum one enters a hall with an enshrined Dizang bodhisattva,

³² Walsh 2010.

popularly conceived as a savior figure who assists the dead.³³ Passing through this hall one enters a large room with row upon row of shelves for storing ashes. Many shelves are specifically labeled for overseas Chinese and this is one of the important objectives of this institution, to provide a place for the repatriation of the cremated remains of overseas Chinese.³⁴ These halls cater to the religious beliefs and customs of the community; they serve ritual functions related to the afterlife as well as generate income.

Brochures are available that detail prices for a place for one's ashes in the mausoleum. In 2009 prices began at 5,800 RMB (850USD) and went up to 12,800 RMB (1,850USD) depending on the location in the hall (lower rungs are generally cheaper). In addition to the cost of storing ashes there is the cost of the spirit tablet (*paiwei*) at 6,000 RMB. I was told that post-mortem rituals can range in cost from about 3,000 RMB for the most simple (offerings and sutra recitation) to 30,000 RMB for the most complex (which includes a release of burning mouths ceremony).³⁵

Sources indicate that the Anyang Yuan and associated post-mortem rituals generate an average income of 350,000 RMB (50,000USD) per month, about 4 to 5 million RMB per year (around 600,000 USD). Of that amount, about one million RMB is from the post-mortem (*chaudu*) rituals performed. In 2006, the full price for a post-mortem ceremony, including paper house, effects, spirit money, the ceremony, food and flower offerings, was said to be about 14,000RMB (2,000USD). After paying fees to the

³³ See Zhiru 2007 for an account of the history of Dizang in China.

³⁴The Anyang Cloister has taken over the functions of the Republican Period's Hall of Merit, which previously held the spirit tablets of patrons. The Hall of Merit now houses the offices of the Anyang Cloister. There are three rooms; one of which is the office proper equipped with three desks, phones and samples of spirit tablets. Another room of equal size serves as a guest reception area featuring the ubiquitous piece of guest reception furniture in southern Fujian, a tea table. The largest room that once held spirit tablets now serves as a conference room with a large table. This room has never been used as a meeting room in the four years I have been conducting research. When the sutra library and dharma hall was being rebuilt in 2007-2008, the contents of the sutra library were stored in this room.

³⁵ Individuals were said to sponsor about six release of burning mouths ceremonies per year.

monks, the makers of offerings and other expenses, the monastery brought in about 10,000 RMB (about 1,500 USD). If the ceremony is held about 100 times per year, as estimated by my informant, it would bring in a net profit of 1,000,000 RMB (150,000USD) per year. The paper homes range in price from 3,800 RMB (550USD) for the fanciest decked out with lights, moving airplane, boat and car to a modest 380RMB (55USD) for the most simple frame cottage [Figures 88-89]. I was told that there were about thirty monks who know how to perform post-mortem rituals. Multiple sources suggested that most of these monks were poorer monks from villages who have learned how to perform these ceremonies in order to make money. The leader of the service receives 200 RMB while his assistants, which are typically nine in number, receive 100 RMB (15USD) apiece. Menial helpers responsible for clean up receive 50 RMB apiece. The post-mortem ceremony should be carried out within forty-nine days of decease. Forty-nine days is said to be the time between one life and the next, so within that period the departed can be assisted on their journey.

The post-mortem rituals are indeed commodified as they are in cultures around the world. Post-mortem rituals have come to be so prominent in Japanese Buddhism that it has been referred to as funeral Buddhism.³⁶ Approximately forty percent of Kaiyuan's monks are said to be involved in performing post-mortem rituals. This is indeed a significant dimension to life as a monk for these thirty or so monks. The Sangha as a whole benefits from income derived from these rituals, but it should be noted that they bring in less income than donations to merit boxes and half of gate receipts. Buddhism at Kaiyuan, could hardly be called funeral Buddhism.

³⁶ The phrase was used by Tamamuro Taijō in 1963; see Covell 2005: 16.

Cultures around the world have developed rituals to deal with the existential fact of death. Given the practically universal demand for such ritual service, Kaiyuan is serving a social need by offering such services. It may be considered an exercise of compassion on the part of the monks. It may be that they would rather tend to their own cultivation, but the public demands ritual assistance in dealing with the decease of loved ones and they respond to this need. It may also be said that they help to fashion and promote this need and benefit from it economically. When it comes to the commodification of these and other rituals, it seems valid to call it consensual. If it is also valid to call it exploitation, the monks could respond that if they didn't do it somebody else would. This brings us to the notion of competition which many scholars have perceived at work in religion in contemporary China.

Chau writes: "Different temples quite consciously compete with one another in promoting their own deity's magical power, and in the process different ways of provisioning *ling* are invented, modified, or expanded."³⁷ Temples, Chau argues, develop "business models" and aim to increase convenience to increase market share. Chau points out that the Black Dragon King Temple has increased the convenience of receiving divination by having on hand a full time reader/interpreter (previously not available), having divination slips which one can take home (previously they were in a book, not to be removed), providing bottles for divine water, pre-packaging medicine (before it was not) and adding a shrine to the dragon mother to attract people with problems related to fertility or reproduction who might otherwise go to a goddess temple.³⁸ Chau writes that his field site may be considered "a petty capitalist enterprise"

³⁷ Chau 2006: 120

³⁸ Chau 2006: 120-121.

concerned with provisioning magical efficacy “increasingly in a manner resembling convenience stores and one-stop shopping malls.”³⁹

Graeme Lang, Selina Chan and Lars Ragvald have studied a group of popular Daoist temples built by entrepreneurs in Guangdong and Zhejiang and marketed according to business models (2005). One of the more successful temples had been improved with “unusual animal-shaped stones from Guangxi, gardens and trees, and most recently, a stage on a plaza immediately behind the temple for cultural performances” as well as craft shops and children’s activities.⁴⁰ These temples also hired Daoist priests and priestesses to work for them.⁴¹

While Kaiyuan does promote itself as a tourist site as well as a site which is spiritually responsive, it has distinctly not engaged in the kind of market-based diversification seen at the Black Dragon King or the Daoist temples mentioned above. Daoyuan has overseen landscaping efforts and the building of the Hall of Buddha’s Life, but, apart from the An Yang Yuan, he has not added any services or shrines in order to attract more business. In other words, just as there are degrees of museumification, there are degrees of commercialization. Kaiyuan’s lack of tertiary industries and extra services is one of the factors contributing to a more sacred atmosphere at Kaiyuan.

Restricting the Presence of Vendors

In chapter eight we encountered Buddhist temples such as Shanghai’s Jade Buddha and Jing’an temples that have conspicuously converted shrine halls into souvenir shops and we examined how Quanzhou Kaiyuan succeeded in eliminating the souvenir

³⁹ Chau 2006: 122. Robert Hymes 2002 looks at Daoists and others as competing in a religious market, rituals being the commodities they provide; they struggle for market share and Marc Moskowitz 2001 looks at religious consumerism relating to dealing with fetus ghosts in contemporary Taiwan.

⁴⁰ Lang, Chan and Ragvald 2005: 163-165.

⁴¹ Lang, Chan and Ragvald 2005: 164 ff.

shop that had come to occupy the Donor's Ancestral Shrine. While some temples find that souvenir shops generate needed income, such has not been the case at Kaiyuan. It is perhaps true that most temples operate a shop selling religious items and Kaiyuan is no exception. Unlike many other temples, however, Kaiyuan's religious goods shop is hidden behind a row of hedges to the west of the central axis and most visitors never even notice it, much less enter it. At other temples in China, one is corralled into tourist shops either at the entrance or exit. In such cases, one's experience of the site is necessarily colored by entering or exiting the temple in the presence of hawkers selling trinkets. If these hawkers are aggressive or their wares noisy or gaudy, their presence sets the would-be pilgrim up to feel distracted, agitated or annoyed, not spiritually rejuvenated. Kaiyuan does not have such an arrangement; the closest it came to having a shop catering to tourists was the shop established in the Donor's Ancestral Shrine, a shop, if not for the efforts of the current abbot, might still be in operation. It is to the abbot's leadership that I attribute Kaiyuan's relative lack of vending activity that one often finds at temples of comparable fame.

The abbot has been careful in restricting commercial activity to the presence of the nondescript Buddhist goods shop and two small kiosks neither of which is especially obtrusive. Anyone who has visited certain large monasteries around Beijing, for example, will know that vendors at other famous monasteries in China are not nearly so restricted. Similarly, incense is not sold by the monastery as it is at other large monasteries. Recently, however, one of the two kiosk merchants has begun selling incense to those unaware that it is freely available at the entrance of the main hall. This man has no affiliation with the Sangha, but is rather a member of the administrative commission and

somewhat out of the abbot's jurisdiction. This kiosk is owned and operated by Mr. Cai, a photographer by trade and an enthusiast for all things related to Quanzhou and Kaiyuan's history. He is a regular contributor on such matters in the local newspaper. He is thus not a professional hawker and he does not disturb Kaiyuan's visitors, be they tourists or devotees. Kaiyuan is thus dramatically free from the kind of commercial vendors that can erode the pious atmosphere of a temple and this is an important way in which a religious atmosphere is supported at Kaiyuan in the face of pressures to accommodate tourists.⁴²

Features Contributing to Tourism at Kaiyuan

It has been seen how the presence of the temple commission in managing the south and west gates serves to reframe visitor experiences to anticipate a tourist site as they pass through the turnstile, ticket in hand. In addition to the *signs* and *grammar* of the entrance gates, what other features contribute to tourism at Kaiyuan?

The Kylin Wall, the Boat Museum and the Pagodas

The structures which most contribute to Kaiyuan's tourist identity are those which serve as tourist attractions, but are not associated with formal religious activities. Most prominently in this category are the Kylin wall and the Song dynasty boat. These structures contribute nothing to Kaiyuan's religious atmosphere, but they do add to its value as a tourist attraction. Their impact is mitigated, however since they are located on the western and northeastern edges of the complex respectively and therefore well removed from the central axis and the location of formal religious activities.

⁴² The commercialization of ritual and the cash-merit relationship discussed in chapter six is a different phenomenon than the hawking of tourist goods and services; the former, while potentially distracting to some religious pursuits, is part of the larger religious culture and therefore not of the same character as the selling of toys, panda dolls and t-shirts.

Next to and associated with the boat museum, on the extreme northeastern edge of the monastic complex, are two shops that strictly sell souvenir items. Monks have nothing to do with these shops and most visitors don't even see them, but they are there, associated with the boat museum which is operated by the museum of maritime trade and not part of the monastery proper.

Lastly, the east and west pagodas, while an important part of Kaiyuan's identity and an important attraction for visitors, are not incorporated into any formal religious activity. Though they are Buddhist structures and belong to the monastery, the pagodas today garner more interest from tourists than from the clergy or devotees. Their presence contributes to the venerability of the monastery and, in the eyes of many, its spiritual power, but the attention they receive by tour groups and their location on the southwestern and southeastern edges of the complex place them more squarely into service of tourism than of the religious practice. If they did not exist Kaiyuan would receive dramatically fewer tourists.

In addition to cultural properties, there is also a small room which houses a tour guide office run by the temple administrative commission. Most visitors would never know that this office exists, but it does and those who work there provide tours for groups who contact them for such services. The basic tour they offer lasts forty minutes; it covers the main hall, ordination platform, mulberry tree and the pagodas. If they are short on time it can be shortened to twenty or thirty minutes.

The Presence of Tour Guides and Groups

Contributing most to the tourist atmosphere are the tour groups who arrive in matching caps or t-shirts led by megaphone and flag bearing guides. Such groups are

inevitable at tourist sites throughout China and beyond and they remind any would-be worshiper that they are also at a tourist site. More importantly, they disturb what would otherwise be a more tranquil atmosphere through the noise of their sheer numbers, their cameras, their sometimes non-conservative attire and occasionally non-respectful behavior such as shouting, laughing and whistling. Whereas the presence of monks, lay persons and worshipers mark Kaiyuan as a site of religious practice, tour groups brand it a tourist attraction.

Qualities which are Neutral

Park-like Atmosphere

Buddhist temples have traditionally served park-like functions in China and this remains so at temples like Kaiyuan which possess open areas where groups may gather, landscaping where individuals and couples may stroll and tables and benches where people may sit. This is especially true in the early morning, but also throughout the day, as older people gather at benches under the trees to sit and play chess or chat. In the main courtyard and throughout the landscaped areas of the monastery one can find groups of morning exercisers engaged in the kinds of exercise one finds at parks across China, including tai ji, sword “dancing,” other folk dancing and aerobic-type exercises [Figures 69-70]. These individuals are known to the gate keepers and they are allowed to enter without purchasing tickets. While the groups of exercisers may not be engaged in devotional activities, they are participating in what is a traditional role played by temples and monasteries.

I find that these visitors, who leave before 9 AM, neither disturb the monks, nor other worshippers, but their portable stereos and waving of fans or swords detract from

what might otherwise be an environment suitable to contemplative practice. Nevertheless, having the landscaping and spaces that attract these visitors also provides areas conducive to contemplation or meditation when they are not there. Because the park-like atmosphere contributes to Kaiyuan as a site of recreation and a site of contemplation I consider it a neutral factor with respect to the question of tourism and religiosity.

Negotiating a Dual Identity

In the Hall of Patriarchs at Same-Lotus Temple in Quanzhou, photos of Guangjing cover two of its walls. He is shown visiting many places, especially Buddhist sites and temples throughout China. There is even a picture of him reclining on Master Hongyi's bed at Kaiyuan. The photos, most of which looked no different than snapshots of a tourist at famous places, were now part of a shrine in his memory and a testament to his standing as a Buddhist master who had helped to rebuild so many temples in Southern Fujian. Seeing these photos of him smiling and posing at famous Buddhist sites all over China, looking no different than a tourist, is an example of the thin lines between pilgrimage, religious tourism and secular tourism. Quanzhou Kaiyuan straddles these lines and hosts visitors seeking merit and blessings, visitors interested in religious history and material culture and tourists who have signed up for a bus tour with the intention of seeing the local sights (whatever they may be).

On the one hand, Kaiyuan is a functioning Buddhist monastery housing more than eighty full time monks and hosting hundreds of laypersons every day. On the other, it is a tourist attraction that appears at the top of every tourist's itinerary in Quanzhou and hosts dozens of groups that tour the grounds on a daily basis. As a site of valuable historic and cultural properties, Kaiyuan has had little choice but to accommodate

tourists, but there are many directions such accommodations may have taken. One model gives freer reign to non-monastic entities to sell souvenirs, post sign-boards and maps and otherwise regulate the experience of visitors. The model negotiated by Kaiyuan's monks under the leadership of Daoyuan (the revivalists) has been to limit the role of the non-monastics associated with the temple administrative commission and cultural bureaus (the curators)—it has been to fight for greater autonomy. Daoyuan has succeeded in restricting the curatorial forces who cater to tourists to a handful of small spaces on the monastic grounds. By limiting the visibility of the non-monastic forces catering to tourists and supporting a regular ritual calendar including twice-weekly and monthly recitation services, Daoyuan has succeeded in building an atmosphere of religious practice in the midst of a famous tourist attraction.

Dean MacCannell has argued that tourism is a quintessentially modern phenomenon.⁴³ Modernity alienates individuals from authentic life and they seek, as tourists, attractions which enable them to experience authenticity. While it is a fascinating topic, I have not been interested in examining tourism at Kaiyuan from the point of view of what role it plays in the lives of tourists. Nor have I examined the way in which Kaiyuan as a site of culture and history may be considered sacred in those particular capacities.⁴⁴ I have examined the phenomenon of tourism at Kaiyuan from the point of view of how it may or may not distort or disturb religious life at the monastery. I have portrayed Kaiyuan as taking an active role in fashioning its identity in a way that promotes tourism, but not in the same manner as one finds at temples managed by secular authorities. I have attempted to demonstrate that Kaiyuan has successfully protected

⁴³ MacCannell 1976.

⁴⁴ Scholars have become aware of museums, for example, as sacred sites, or repositories of sacred items. See Sullivan and Edwards 2004; Robson 2010c.

degrees of religiosity by maintaining physical boundaries and limiting or eliminating the presence of vendors and tertiary industries. In addition, Kaiyuan maintains a religious identity by housing and feeding monks, holding daily services, conducting twice-weekly and monthly *nianfo* sessions and offering ritual services.

At some temples, monks or Daoist priests are hired to essentially serve as performers in the religious drama that is being marketed.⁴⁵ In some cases, monks take on such performative roles themselves in catering to tourists.⁴⁶ As a tourist site, Kaiyuan's monks are occasionally the object of the tourist gaze and they may be photographed, but they are not radically objectified like animals in a zoo or ethnic minorities in a cultural show. In particular, the morning and evening services are held before tourists arrive and after most of them leave. The ceremonies are conducted in a non-descript hall with no valuable cultural properties near the back of the central axis. In other words, they are not intended as a spectacle for tourist consumption. Furthermore, a monk patrols and shoos away individuals who approach the main hall while the twice-weekly *nianfo* service is occurring. Photos are prohibited. The devotees and the ceremony are not a spectacle for the tourist gaze.

The monks and their religious life, in other words, have not been commodified. Kaiyuan as a site of historic buildings and cultural treasures has been commodified—one gains access to it by purchasing a ticket. This form of commodification has neither been initiated, nor managed by monks; it has been the work of the temple administrative commission. Kaiyuan monastery as a religious service provider may be seen to be involved in the commodification of religious goods (merits and blessings) and services

⁴⁵ Lang, Chan and Ragvald 2005; Kang 2009.

⁴⁶ Borchert 2005: 87-88.

(post-mortem rituals etc.); this is unrelated to tourism proper and is Chinese Buddhism's answer to the loss of landed wealth. I have pointed out that although tourism and administrative duties have distracted many of Kaiyuan's monks from religious cultivation, there remains a core of monks who attend daily services who are not burdened with those duties. These monks are provided the opportunity to pursue religious cultivation somewhat like the elite monks in traditional training monasteries. What is missing is an educational system or meditation training system, but the option to develop such systems remains a possibility.

CHAPTER TEN

Concluding Thoughts: Monasticism, Sacred and Secular

Holmes Welch presented a model of Buddhist Monasticism that he recognized as a kind of utopia.¹ In his conclusion he wonders how he and other scholars could make such dramatically different assessments of Chinese monasticism: “When modern Buddhism is discussed in almost any Western book about China, we find vivid descriptions of the commercialism, illiteracy, and vice, but seldom a word about the piety, scholarship, or discipline.”² The monastery of the present study exhibits a mix of virtue and vice and a combination of secular and sacred characteristics. These dimensions can be examined more systematically by looking at the institutional and religious dimensions that are necessary aspects of any monastery.

Institutional Life

It has been known at least since Gernet’s 1956 study of the economic dimensions of Chinese Buddhism that monasteries are more than sites of contemplative practice. As Robson notes, “Monasteries were, in other words, precisely where the linkage between the religious and the commercial was concretely realized.”³ As institutions desiring self-perpetuation, monasteries have always needed to accumulate economic as well as political capital. In the past, monasteries sought patronage from elites who donated land and supported the maintenance and restoration of buildings. In the present monasteries do

¹ Welch 1967:3.

² Welch 1967:408.

³ Robson 2010b:44

what they can to attract the broadest spectrum of patrons. This dissertation has revealed shifting patterns of financing from the imperial period to the present.

A traditional source of such patronage for Kaiyuan has been the cultivation of ties with the Huang ancestral clan.⁴ Members of the “Purple Cloud” Huang family have supported the restoration of the temple during the Ming, Qing and Republican periods. In the fall of 2009, the Huang family (from Shanghai to the Philippines) gathered by the thousands at the official re-opening of the Donor’s Ancestral Shrine (*Tanyue ci*) which enshrines images and spirit tables for Huang Shougong, evincing a vibrant tradition of clan-based patronage. How common and how important has such clan-based patronage been in Southern Fujian? In other parts of China? These are questions for further research.

Related to the patronage required to keep a monastic community viable is the overall economic health of the community. Quanzhou Kaiyuan’s fortunes rose with those of the city of Quanzhou from the tenth century through the thirteenth. When prosperity left Quanzhou at the end of the Yuan dynasty, so did it leave Kaiyuan monastery. While Kaiyuan continued to attract patronage during the Ming and Qing dynasties, it never returned to the size, scope and vitality that it had enjoyed before the Ming. While other factors are surely relevant, there remains a connection between the prosperity of the city and the prosperity of the monastery that is evinced by their mutually imbricated histories. A link between the economic health of the community and the economic health of the monastery has also been demonstrated over the current period of restoration. During the earliest phase of revival, Kaiyuan relied on funding from overseas Chinese in Southeast

⁴ Such ties have been common in China. The apocryphal *Xiangfa jueyi jing* 像法決疑經 (*Sūtra of Resolving Doubts During the Age of the Semblance Dharma*), for example, warns of the slight merit accruing to individuals who only contribute to building Buddhist edifices connected to one’s family or serving as one’s family sanctuary, which was a common practice in medieval China (*Xiangfa jue yi jing* 1336a). See Gernet 1956: 283.

Asia. As the local economy improved after Fujian became one of two special economic zones, the donations from locals to Kaiyuan steadily increased in tandem with Quanzhou and Southern Fujian's growing prosperity.

An obvious point, but one worth considering, is that money is required to support a large monastery such as Kaiyuan, which maintains almost one hundred monks and more than two dozen buildings on nineteen acres. Such a monastery must generate significant amounts of income to meet operating expenses. To do so, a healthy economy is important, but even more so is the ability of the institution to attract donors. This dissertation has demonstrated how Kaiyuan has done so by promoting its reputation as a place that is both spiritually efficacious (auspicious events) and culturally valuable (material culture). This has enabled Kaiyuan to generate support from both secularly-motivated tourists and officials on the one hand and religiously-motivated worshipers and laity on the other. The former perceive Kaiyuan's monastic signifiers (devotional practice, material culture and auspicious events) as signs of a tourist attraction (traditional culture, cultural heritage and curiosity), the latter as religious signs (religious cultivation, site of worship, site of efficacy). Kaiyuan's leadership understands this process and takes advantage of it. Rather than seeing this as cynicism, it is in line with serving the institutional goals of the monastery which have in sight the greater goal of perpetuating Buddhism.

Another important source of patronage operating during the imperial period as well as today is that of political elites. Several imperial courts had relations with Quanzhou Kaiyuan, conferring it names, bestowing its monks with honors such as the purple robe and sending it gifts. Similarly, local prefects were responsible for supporting

Kaiyuan's expansions during its golden age. While there is no longer an imperial court, there remains a political hierarchy and visits by high ranking officials (e.g. Jiang Zemin and Zhao Puchu) have been an important part of Kaiyuan's restoration; they serve as political capital that legitimizes the current revival. The relationship between political elites and Buddhist monasteries past and present is an area for further research.

More research on such mundane concerns will help bring our perceptions of monasteries in line with reality so that we are less likely to think in terms of "real" and "authentic" versus "fake" or "corrupt" when it comes to gauging matters of monks, monasteries and money. The reality is that monasteries have always needed to generate funds; fundraising methods have been forced to adapt to the loss of land-holdings and monasteries are today experimenting with various means. Rather than automatically assuming all forms of commodification and ticketing as corruptions, researchers should make an effort to understand the culture of temples on a case by case basis. This study, for example, has indicated an important distinction between sites that are managed by the sangha for the sangha and sites that are managed by state agencies and commissions. I have discussed this difference in terms of museumification. Future accounts of the current revival must distinguish between museumified sites run by secular authorities, commercialized sites run by the sangha, sites dedicated to practice with few tourists and sites, like Kaiyuan, that strike a balance in accommodating the secular demands of tourism with the religious goals of the monastery. Kaiyuan does this in part by limiting the amount of commercialization that occurs.

A simple but important point that has been revealed in this dissertation is the place of the minor government office of the temple administrative commission in

institutionalizing tourism at temples all over China. This is a key that has just begun to emerge in research and other scholars will want to pay more attention to the presence or absence of this commission or bureau when they study religious sites in China. The involvement of other bureaus dealing with tourism and cultural heritage are also relevant in understanding how temples and monasteries are being managed and, importantly, by whom.

Religious Life

Welch presented a composite view of what he considered the large public model monasteries. The second chapter of his book is on the meditation hall and the practice of meditation. There are a handful of monasteries in China today that have meditation halls and actively train monks in contemplative practice, but they, as they have been for centuries, if not always, are in a small minority.⁵ At the large public monastery of this study, there is no meditation hall and no training in meditation offered, nor are there any dharma talks or formal study of sutras. As for the presence of discipline and piety, yes, these exist. They are exhibited in regular morning and evening services, regular periods of *nianfo*, daily vegetarian communal meals held in silence and in other small ways. Quanzhou Kaiyuan is not exemplary in terms of meeting Buddhist goals, but it is representative of what a large famous monastery can be if it avoids crass commercialization. Kaiyuan has done this by maintaining a sacred identity in a world of secular tourists and officials.

Five Factors Contributing to the Religious Character of Kaiyuan Today

It looks like a monastery and a large sign in the front gate reads, “Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Monastery,” but a name and a look does not make a place sacred. What

⁵ Welch notes only a few had meditation halls in first half of the twentieth century (Welch 1967:398).

more is required is clear demarcation from the ways and affairs of the mundane world. Many months of on-the-site fieldwork distributed over five years have impressed upon me five qualities that contribute to the sacred character of Kaiyuan monastery and set it apart from temples that have undergone higher degrees of museumification and commercialization. The creation of a space dedicated to religious pursuits is marked by establishing lines of demarcation between mundane and religious domains. These lines of demarcation are drawn along three different axes: foundational, physical and functional. Deployed along these three axes, I have observed five factors operating at Kaiyuan today that serve to demarcate Kaiyuan from the mundane world and promote a religious environment: 1. memorials to auspicious events (demarcating the founding), 2. physical boundaries (walls, demarcating distance from mundane world), 3. ritually significant structures (monastic buildings which serve as the site of regular ritual practice and performance) 4. the pious atmosphere evoked by the presence of religious specialists and devotees (monks and laypersons) engaged in and inviting devotional and ritual activity on a continual basis and 5. restrictions against commercial activities.

The first factor, memorials to auspicious events, falls along the founding axis and has been examined in chapter seven. Second, and in some sense most basic, is having a space that is well defined, through walls and other barriers, from the mundane world beyond (chapter nine). Third is having a well maintained complex of buildings serving recognizably religious functions (chapter six). The second and third factors fall along the physical axis while the fourth and fifth are functional characteristics. The fourth factor, a community of monks who maintain a regular ritual schedule and a body of devoted laypersons is far from common at temples in China (chapter five). Kaiyuan enjoys the

presence of a community actively supporting religious observances (especially twice-weekly and monthly *nianfo* services and regular post-mortem rituals). This community, in synergistic relation to the monastery, generates an atmosphere of active religiosity that is missing from many other temples (large and small). The fifth factor, prohibiting vendors from interfering with the experience of visitors is one of Daoyuan's accomplishments (chapter nine).

These factors serve to limit the influence of museumification and commodification that one finds at many other large temples. As research on the revival of religion in contemporary China continues, scholars will want to remain cognizant of factors, such as those described in this dissertation, which contribute to the revival of religious practice. These factors are typically not open to quantitative analysis (unlike numbers of ticket-bearing tourists) and generally require a level of access to the religious site beyond that which is available to casual visitors.

The phenomenon of temple Buddhism in Japan as studied by Stephen Covell, for example, could benefit from an analysis of the different streams of supporters (religious and secular) to see how temples accommodate each. Covell describes the debate that raged throughout the 1980s between the city of Kyoto, the public and the priests concerning the proposal to levy a tax on top of temple admission fees. The city claimed that most people visited the temples to view cultural artifacts, not for religious reasons and that such a tax was not much different than those levied on museums.⁶ The priests claimed that although people visited temples for sightseeing, they also went to obtain peace of mind (*anshin*) which they considered a religious motivation.⁷ Surveys revealed

⁶ Covell 2005: 157.

⁷ Covell 2005:156-158.

mixed attitudes among the public, but many favored the tax and perceived temples as money-making ventures.⁸ According to Covell's account, the city, newspapers and priests in Kyoto stated their claims regarding the touristic or religious nature of temples based on personal impressions and motivated by personal interests. Covell, himself, only deals with these perceptions and speaks of an "imbalance" between the "religious, economic and cultural aspects" that inevitably form parts of what a temple is.⁹ In other words, he does not engage in the kind of on-site interviewing, data collection and analysis that I have used to demonstrate that Kaiyuan's economic, religious and cultural dimensions are informed by both religious and secular values. Such an analysis would help determine the phenomenological contours of the reality being debated, rather than repeating opinions, accusations and statements of policy.

This dissertation provides a model for examining the functioning of temples that serve as tourist sites without solely relying on the polarized views one often encounters which reduce the site in question to a tourist temple or a place of religion. Large monasteries in China typically serve as tourist attractions, but many of them also serve as sites of religious cultivation for monastics, laity and worshippers. I have argued that Kaiyuan presents a balance of both by carving out time and space for touring (the pagodas, courtyard, main hall, ordination hall, daytime) and time and space for religious cultivation (dharma hall, dining hall, monk dormitories, evening). Buddhist monasteries have long attracted pilgrims and worshippers as well as visitors in search of culture, history and beauty. By providing a detailed account of how one monastery has accommodated these dual identities, religious and touristic, this study contributes to our

⁸ Covell 2005: 159.

⁹ Covell 2005: 163.

understanding of an important phenomenon (historic and contemporary) that is easily misunderstood.

Sacred and Profane in Chinese Thought

The phenomenon, I hold, is easily misunderstood in part due to a habit of dichotomous thinking—a habit that has been bequeathed to religious studies in the form of the dyad sacred and profane. As pointed out in chapter seven, the Chinese do not traditionally recognize a dichotomy between sacred and profane, just as they do not posit a dichotomy between human and divine or matter and spirit.¹⁰ Welch observed this lack of dichotomy as well and had the following to say:

The basic religious question in China, I think, was not how man saw himself in relation to God, but how he saw himself in relation to all the events that overtook him. He was part of a continuum of the human, the natural, and the supernatural. There was no dividing line between gods and men, monks and magicians, the sacred and secular. It would be true to say that the Chinese were a highly religious people as to say that they were secular, practical people. In their case it amounted to the same thing.¹¹

I'm not sure that I agree with his statement word for word—I would alter the first line to read “in relation to humans, deities and the broader world”—but I agree with the essential assessment that recognizes a lack of dichotomy between sacred and secular, human and divine. This profound lack of dichotomy influences Chinese religion and culture in fundamental ways.¹² I believe that scholars of religion must pay greater attention to this

¹⁰ Yet they traditionally have a vast pantheon of deities, fear the presence of countless ghosts and spirits and believe in an afterlife. This brief review of “beliefs” makes it clear that we cannot label the Chinese materialist in any traditional sense of the term.

¹¹ Welch 1967:370.

¹² Exploring this is a project unto itself. I take the emphases on the doctrine of Buddha nature and non-duality in Chinese Buddhism, for example, to reflect this commitment to non-dichotomous thinking.

feature of Chinese religious thought and consider ways to modify the sacred/profane dichotomy (Otto, Durkheim, Eliade).¹³

In the context of this dissertation, this lack of dichotomy suggests a way for us to understand how devotional practice, material culture and auspicious events can not only be interpreted variously as religious or secular, but can in some fundamental sense be both religious and secular for the Chinese. This flexibility or ambiguity between what is sacred and secular has been exploited by revivalists as well as officials to advance their own interests (religious revival and economic development). Every time I've heard officials speak about the rebuilding or restoration of religious edifices, I've heard them praise the project for contributing to economic development. The same project is praised by religionists as religious revival or propagation of the dharma. The project is both. In some cases, it is politically expedient to deny the religious dimension of a project and cast it as one of cultural revival. Although Kaiyuan is a legal site of religious activity and a member of an officially recognized religion, in its communiqués with officials it presents itself as a site of historic and cultural value and in communiqués with its devotees it presents itself as land of the Buddha and field of merit. It is, of course, both.

The multivalence of phenomena such as material culture and auspicious events has been a theme of this dissertation. We have seen how, for example, Kaiyuan's objects of material culture have been perceived variously as objects of devotion or cultural treasures. Material culture, furthermore, enables the most common religious experiences available at Kaiyuan. I have discussed the somatic and cognitive affect of the composite

¹³ It's not clear to me how to reframe sacred and profane and have them maintain their obvious heuristic value in keeping the two realms distinct. It would seem that breaking down the dichotomous interpretation opens up a means for these two realms (sacred and profane) to make contact and mix without there being pollution or corruption or desecration.

material features of the monastery on visitors as well as resident monks; these material features (buildings, pagodas, Buddhas, courtyards, trees...) induce recognition that one is in a different place, most commonly, a place of religion or a tourist attraction depending on one's interpretive filter. This ability for monastic signifiers to be multivalent has contributed to the success of Kaiyuan and other monasteries and temples in attracting diverse sources of support (political, economic, cultural, religious).

Another dichotomy challenged by sites such as Kaiyuan is that between elite and folk traditions. Kaiyuan as a large public Buddhist monastery is a classic example of "elite" religion. And, in fact, most, but not all, of Kaiyuan's monks have a basic understanding of Buddhism as offering a refuge distinct from and more profound than other folk traditions or religions—in other words, an exclusivist understanding. Most of Kaiyuan's worshipers, however, participate in the classic "folk" mode of religiosity at Kaiyuan. Welch describes them as having "used Buddhism in the same way a motorist uses one of the several different brands of gasoline, without any special commitment."¹⁴ Having no special relationship with Buddhism, these worshipers will make offerings to Mazu and Guangong with similar, if not greater, zeal. Their visible presence and contributions to the religious (and economic) life of Kaiyuan marks a distinct intersection between elite and folk traditions. An intersection shared by worshipers and laypersons attracted to Kaiyuan by the promise of spiritual efficaciousness.

State and Religion in China

State intervention in religious affairs (supportive and repressive) was a constant throughout the imperial period and remains a crucial factor in religious life up to the present. While the suppression of the Cultural Revolution was severe and widespread, it

¹⁴ Welch 1967:387.

was structurally consistent with patterns of state-orchestrated campaigns, in other periods of Chinese history.¹⁵ The same may be said for the continuing regulation and interference in religious affairs that one finds in contemporary China. While critique of China along these lines is popular, it is important to recognize that China's conception of relations between church and state is very different than the notion of separation that we value in the United States.¹⁶ While recognition is different than acceptance, when one begins to understand the Chinese position, one begins to not *expect* the Chinese state to behave in the same way that we expect our state to behave. We may not condone their behavior, but we can at least begin to make sense of it. This is an important step in understanding the Chinese position on religion, which has been a source of a great deal of tension in bilateral relations with China.¹⁷

The lack of separation between church and state is most evident in the presence of temple administrative commissions on the property of popular monasteries to ensure compliance with policies. Rather than see this as an all-powerful monolithic state against a group of monks, however, this dissertation has revealed how monks have fought for greater autonomy from such agencies and have achieved partial victories, tacitly supported by other branches of the government. Another example of the inadequate separation between church and state is the Kaiyuan orphanage and school. PRC policy dictated that the school be operated by non-monastics; with the loss of monastic control, the abbot ultimately negotiated the removal of the school. This suggests one way that

¹⁵ Biggest differences may be technological (mass production of red books, radio broadcast...) and perhaps most radical was the turn against not only Confucius but Confucian values of family.

¹⁶ See Yu, Anthony C. 2005. *State and Religion in China: Historical and Textual Perspectives*. Chicago: Open Court.

¹⁷ Kindopp and Hamrin 2004

China's lack of separation between church and state challenges the development of religiously-managed charitable operations and their potential contribution to civil society.

Buddhist History

A theme of more purely historical interest is the post-Tang flowering of Buddhism in Fujian, especially during the Tang-Song interregnum under Wang family patronage. This dissertation introduces the dramatic emergence of Quanzhou Kaiyuan from the ninth to the twelfth centuries as a kind of Buddhist university with more than one hundred cloisters housing masters of vinaya, Chan, Pure Land, Tiantai, Yogacara, Huayen and engineering. How common were such institutions in medieval China? Kaiyuan was described by superlatives in documents of the time and Zhuxi described the streets of Quanzhou as full of sages. This study directs attention to an important region in the development of Chinese Buddhism, especially of the Chan school. While Quanzhou Kaiyuan reflects the strength of Buddhism in Fujian during this period, further studies are required to understand the full import of Fujian Buddhism in the medieval period. The study of more monastery records, inscriptions and local sources would indicate the extent to which monasteries with so many cloisters, for example, were uncommon.

The Future of the Current “Revival”

Recent years have seen the restoration of the ordination platform and the dharma hall. Fortunately, the main hall has also been renovated—It seems like a time of renewal. We should respond to this opportunity at our best even though we don't know whether this recovery will be only partial or more complete. If we are only concerned about old property not being returned rather than practicing virtue, then, even if all the buildings and property were recovered, what would be the point of living here! If we can diligently practice virtue, then even in shabby buildings and old rooms we can still sit cross-legged (i.e. practice/meditate). It goes without saying that one can live like a snail in its shell, in a grass hut which can just accommodate a length of seven feet (i.e. a human body). Moreover, all people have Buddha nature, everyone can shine. Who knows whether or

not another elder Huang may reappear today. It all depends on the self-exertion of you gentlemen!¹⁸

These words, written by Yuanxian at the end of the Ming Dynasty, during a period of renewal, could, with a few changes, be applied to the Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery of today. Again, Quanzhou Kaiyuan, along with the mainland Chinese sangha as a whole, is enjoying a period of restoration and renewal. Once again, it is not known whether the recovery will be partial, piecemeal and compromised or if it will be complete, comprehensive and stable. What is known, however, is that as long as the monks are focused on generating income, recovering lost property, renovating and re-building, they will neither have the time, nor, it is likely, the mood, to diligently practice. Diligent practice requires only the crudest accommodations and such practice itself is traditionally the root of patronage. Yuanxian invokes Kaiyuan's founding patron, elder Huang, as a representative of all those who sponsor the recovery and maintenance of the sangha and suggests that if the monks will do their best they may attract such patronage. Patronage, in other words, material support, was an abiding concern during the Late Ming Dynasty Restoration and remains an abiding concern of monasteries being restored throughout China today.¹⁹

Writing in the seventeenth century Yuanxian cautioned his fellow monks: If we are only concerned about old property not being returned rather than practicing virtue, then, even if all the buildings and property were recovered, what would be the point of living here!" The recovery of property, the rebuilding of halls and the material maintenance of the Sangha have been the focus of Daoyuan and most others during the

18 *Sizhi* I.19b-20a.

19 *Jing* 2006.

current period of revival in China. Some speak of the current emphasis as a phase in which the focus is on “hardware” (building and maintaining the physical plant) and they look, with optimism and hope, to a future where they can emphasize and develop the software (the education of monks, nuns and laypersons).

Kaiyuan’s attention to the restoration and beautification of buildings and grounds has benefited the development of tourism, but has it also benefitted the recovery of religious practice? The previous chapter suggests that some of the improvements to the grounds have generated spaces more conducive to contemplative practice. Such opportunities exist for individuals motivated to find them. Unfortunately, most of the young monks have too little understanding of the benefits and much less knowledge of the techniques of Buddhist contemplative technology. Compounding this problem, education in such matters is currently not available at Kaiyuan, nor most other monasteries. In short, the cost of the attention paid to the material development and welfare of the monastery is revealed in the lack of programs of enrichment for the monks, even monks who desire to study or meditate.

When I consider the future of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery, I believe that it will remain an important center of popular devotional practices as well as an important tourist destination for the foreseeable future. It will thus maintain a dual identity along the lines I have described. The only chance for greater development of the monastic “software” would seem to be in a change of leadership with a different vision of how to develop the talent of the sangha. Examples like Bailin Monastery in Hebei, Pingxing Monastery in Fujian and Gaomin Monastery in Jiangsu indicate that there does exist in post-Mao China, monastic leadership actively cultivating future Buddhist masters. Meanwhile the

rebuilding of monasteries continues apace across China. History will remember this period as one of a massive restoration of religion in China. It will be attested to by thousands of stele commemorating the building of shrine halls bearing the dates of the early years of the twenty-first century.

As China works to restore its temples and monasteries the case of Kaiyuan monastery holds lessons that may be instructive. When a monastery is rebuilt or restored it will exhibit a certain character depending on a variety of disparate circumstances. Among those circumstances are the presence of a functioning monastic community, buildings serving religious functions and a lack of intrusive vendors. I select these factors for special mention because they are factors that I have noticed missing at other temples in China; their presence at Kaiyuan has distinctly contributed to an environment of living religiosity. The extent to which a monastery has properties of historic or cultural value without an atmosphere of religious piety guarded by clerics or laypersons will determine the extent to which it risks becoming a secular attraction rather than a religious site. Quanzhou Kaiyuan has fashioned a way to balance these two demands.

During the day tour groups enjoy the shade of ancient trees, they have a close look at majestic pagodas from the Song dynasty, they see dozens of gilded statues and hear stories of Kaiyuan's purple cloud, lotus-blooming mulberry and 120 cloisters—in short, they get their money's worth. This is a prominent dimension of Quanzhou Kaiyuan and one that most visitors experience. This is the Kaiyuan of tourist brochures.

I have described other dimensions of Kaiyuan such as how tranquil the monastic grounds are in the evening after the crowds have left; this is a time conducive to contemplative practice. Kaiyuan also promotes devotional activities throughout the day

by holding daily services, *nianfo* sessions and other ritual activities. The active religious life of the clergy and laypersons influences the atmosphere of the monastery and enters the experience of visitors, even those who have come as tourists.

It may have been tourist brochures and the promise of cultural treasures that brought a given visitor to Kaiyuan, but once inside the gate, bereft of tacky tourist stalls, presented with monks quietly tending halls or leading lay persons in chanting, while individuals offer incense and prostrations inside venerable halls under the shade of ancient trees, they are overcome with some feeling beyond the instrumental wish to take a picture of the pagodas and check Kaiyuan off their list of sites to see. This feeling drives them to make an offering of incense, make a donation or say a prayer, and, in these acts, they may have another feeling, one of the promise of a transcendent power capable of granting one's wishes, of lightening one's burdens, or of simply being part of something larger. They may feel immediately (and temporarily) relieved of some burden and leave more content than when they arrived. In short, they have been inspired. Maybe they have bought into the notion that this location has a special spiritual power which in turn may grant blessings, or maybe they have simply and temporarily left the mundane details of life behind. By coming to Kaiyuan and witnessing its ties to an ancient tradition, one is awakened to the possibility of ancient traditions remaining present and efficacious.

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APPENDIX I

Cosmopolitan Quanzhou during the Medieval Period

Quanzhou, lying just opposite Taiwan, was perhaps the world's most cosmopolitan city in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Here one could find established communities of Buddhists, Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Manicheans, Confucians and Daoists living in peaceful coexistence and mutual prosperity. A vibrant entrepôt on the maritime silk route which stretched from China to the west coast of Africa, Marco Polo suggested it may have been the largest port in the world. While foreigners had been in Quanzhou as early as the Tang dynasty and substantial communities of foreigners developed during the Song, it was in the Yuan dynasty that foreign populations in Quanzhou reached their peak and included some of the first Europeans to reach China. Marco Polo (1254-1324) is the most well known European said to have lived in Yuan China; he departed China from the port of Quanzhou in 1292 leaving this description:

Now when you quit Fujū [Fuzhou] and cross the River, you travel for five days south-east through a fine country, meeting with a constant succession of flourishing cities, towns, and villages, rich in every product. You travel by mountains and valleys and plains, and in some places by great forests in which are many of the trees which give Camphor. There is plenty of game on the road, both of bird and beast. The people are all traders and craftsmen, subjects of the Great Kaan, and under the government of Fujū. When you have accomplished those five days' journey you arrive at the very great and noble city of ZAYTON [Quanzhou], which is also subject to Fujū.

At this city you must know is the Haven of Zayton, frequented by all the ships of India, which bring thither spicery and all other kinds of costly wares. It is the port also that is frequented by all the merchants of Manzi [Southern China¹], for hither is imported the most astonishing quantity of

¹ Manzi 蠻子, literally "Southern Barbarians," was used by the Mongolians in the Yuan dynasty to refer to South China. Formerly under the Southern Song dynasty, it was the last part of China to submit to

goods and of precious stones and pearls, and from this they are distributed all over Manzi. And I assure you that for one shipload of pepper that goes to Alexandria or elsewhere, destined for Christendom, there come a hundred such, aye and more too, to this haven of Zayton; for it is one of the two greatest havens in the world for commerce.²

A word is in order about the name “Zayton” used by Marco Polo and other foreigners in speaking of the city of Quanzhou during the Yuan dynasty. The appellation "Zayton," spelled variously as "Zaytun" or "Zaitun," was how Arabs referred to Quanzhou and, as they were the dominant trade intermediaries, the name became prevalent among foreigners.³ Although it is not commonly used to refer to Quanzhou these days, the old name remains with us in the word "satin," one of the valued products from old Quanzhou.⁴ Zayton is derived from the Chinese word *citong* 刺桐 which refers to the tung tree which provides tung oil, an invaluable product in seafaring. This tree is native to China and remains prevalent in the city of Quanzhou today, lining the southern perimeter of Kaiyuan monastery.⁵

About two years after Marco Polo had left the great port of Zayton (or Quanzhou) the Franciscan monk John of Monte Corvino (1246-1328) arrived en route to the Mongol capital Khanbalik (Beijing) where he established two Catholic churches.⁶ Friar John was followed by a group of Franciscan friars sent to China by Pope Clement V in 1307, these

Mongolian rule. Marco Polo, in the service of the Mongolian Kublai Khan, apparently adopted this usage. It also appears in English as "Mangi," "Mancy" etc. Haw 2006: 115; Needham 1954: 169.

² Yule 1871: 185-186.

³ "Zaitun" was a sound familiar to Arabs as their word for "olive tree" hence Ibn Battuta's felt it pertinent to mention that there were no olives in Zaitun! Yule 1871: Book II, nt. 2 p.188. Jerusalem was also known as Zaituniya.

⁴ Yule 1871: Book II, nt. 2 p.189.

⁵ I suspect that the “tung” of tung oil and the tung tree is derived from the “tong” of citong but I have not seen this linguistic relation made in any literature.

⁶ Friar John of Monte Corvino did not remain in Quanzhou and traveled on to Khanbalik (Beijing); arriving in 1294, he established two churches and became recognized by Rome as the Archbishop of Khanbalik. After the fall of the Yuan and establishment of the Ming, Christians were expelled from China, not returning until the end of the sixteenth century with the Jesuits. Dawson 1980: xxxi-xxxiv.

friars came to settle in Quanzhou where a second bishopric was established (the first being in Beijing). A church had been built in Quanzhou by an Armenian woman of means and this became the cathedral of the Archbishop of Quanzhou, a post held in succession by Friar Gerard, Friar Peregrine (Archbishop 1313-1322) and Friar Andrew of Perugia (Archbishop 1322-1332).⁷ During Friar Andrew's tenure as Archbishop, Friar Odoric de Pordenone paid a visit to Quanzhou and left the following account of offerings made at a large monastery that may be Kaiyuan:

... I came to a certain noble city which is called Zayton, where we friars minor have two houses ; and there I deposited the bones of our friars who suffered martyrdom for the faith of Jesus Christ.⁸

In this city is great plenty of all things that are needful for human subsistence. For example you can get three pounds and eight ounces of sugar for less than half a *groat*. The city is twice as great as Bologna, and in it are many monasteries of devotees, idol worshippers every man of them. In one of those monasteries which I visited there were three thousand monks and eleven thousand idols. And one of those idols, which seemed to be smaller than the rest was as big as St. Christopher might be. I went thither at the hour fixed for feeding their idols, that I might witness it; and the fashion thereof is this: All the dishes which they offer to be eaten are piping hot so that the smoke riseth up in the face of the idols, and this they consider to be the idols' refectation. But all else they keep for themselves and gobble up. And after such fashion as this they reckon that they feed their gods well.

The place is one of the best in the world, and that as regards its provision for the body of man. Many other things indeed might be related of this place, but I will not write more about them at present.⁹

⁷ Letters have been preserved from Friar Peregrine (1318) and Friar Andrew of Perugia (1326). The account of the bishopric of Quanzhou is based on these letters in Christopher Dawson's *Mission to Asia* (Dawson 1980: 232-237) and his introduction (Dawson 1980: xxxi-xxxv). Friar Andrew of Perugia established a second Catholic church in Quanzhou before becoming Archbishop. The last Archbishop of Quanzhou was James of Florence; he was martyred by Chinese in 1362 in the backlash against foreigners that accompanied the founding of the Ming.

⁸ Odoric had disinterred the bones of the four Friars martyred by Saracens (i.e. Muslims) at Supera / Tana in India (N. of Bombay) in 1321 and brought them to Quanzhou for re-burial. (Letter of Friar Andrew in Dawson 1980: 237, nt.1.)

⁹ Henry Yule (trans. and ed.), *Cathay and the Way Thither; being a collection of Medieval Notices of China* (London: The Hakluyt Society, MDCCCLXVI) Vol. I pp.381-383. The identity of this temple is not made clear and although it may have been Kaiyuan, it could have been another major Buddhist or even Daoist monastery in Quanzhou.

A decade later the Friar John de Marignolli¹⁰ described Quanzhou as "a wondrous fine seaport and a city of incredible size, where our Minor Friars have, three very fine churches, passing rich and elegant; and they have a bath also and *a fondaco* [guesthouse]¹¹ which serves as a depot for all the merchants."¹²

Around 1345, Quanzhou received a visit from the great traveler and "Muslim Marco Polo" Ibn Battuta (1304-1368). The Moroccan born Ibn Battuta set out for Mecca in 1325; after reaching Mecca he kept going and reached Quanzhou in 1345 or 1346.¹³ He described Quanzhou's as follows: "It is a large city, and in it they make the best flowered and coloured silks, as well as satins, which are therefore preferred to those made in other places. Its port is one of the finest in the world. I saw in it about one hundred large junks; the small vessels were innumerable."¹⁴ Ibn Battuta met with Muslim clerics on his visit; an inscription made by Wu Jian 吴鉴 in commemoration of the reconstruction of Quanzhou's Ashab Mosque (a.k.a. 清淨寺) in 1351 claimed that Quanzhou then had "six or seven" mosques.¹⁵

In addition to the accounts of foreign visitors to Quanzhou, there remains in Quanzhou a trove of religious inscriptions and statuary representing a rare diversity of

¹⁰ A.k.a. Friar John of Florence Bishop of Bisignano, sent on one of the Papal-sponsored missions to Mongol China. He left Avignon in 1338 and, traveling overland, reached Peking in 1342 with a warhorse, a gift he conveyed from Pope Benedict XII to Emperor Huizong 惠宗 (Dawson 1980: xxxiii-xxxiv).

¹¹ "[A] factory, i.e. 'a mercantile establishment and lodging house in a foreign country'" West, Andrew. 2006. <http://babelstone.blogspot.com/2006/11/christian-tombstones-of-zayton.html>. See also Yule 1871: Book II, nt. 2 p.188.

¹² Yule 1913-16: 229-230.

¹³ Dunn 1989:1-5.

¹⁴ Recorded in Battuta's account of his travels, translation by Rev. Samuel Lee (Lee 2004:211-212).

¹⁵ Clark 2003:228. Inscription collected in Chen 1984: 1, 15, pl. 21.

traditions.¹⁶ These tombstones and other artifacts, most of which are dated to the Yuan dynasty, were unearthed in the 1940s and are now on display in Quanzhou's Museum of Maritime Trade.¹⁷ This valuable collection includes Islamic inscriptions in Arabic and Persian, Nestorian tombstones, Franciscan tombstones, Hindu sculptures and a copy of Quanzhou's rare statue of Mani.¹⁸ This exceptionally rare sculpture of Mani remains *in situ* at what is said to be the only extant Manichean temple in existence which is now known as Cao'an ("Thatched Hut") temple 草庵寺 at Huabiao mountain 华表山 on the outskirts of Quanzhou.¹⁹ Other finds include a 1281 bilingual Tamil-Chinese inscription that records the dedication of an image of Shiva in a new temple established in 1203. As a bilingual inscription it suggests a degree of communication, if not integration, between

¹⁶ A good overview of the international artistic artifacts in Quanzhou from the Yuan period may be found in Guy 2010.

¹⁷ Wu Wenliang collected these religious artifacts in the 1940s and donated them to start Quanzhou's Museum of Maritime Trade. The finds are catalogued in Wu Wenliang, 1957. *Quanzhou zongjiao shike* 泉州宗教石刻 ("Religious inscriptions of Quanzhou"). Beijing: Kexue Chubanshe; and in the updated Wu Wenliang and Wu Youxiong, 2005. *Quanzhou zongjiao shike*. Beijing: Kexue Chubanshe. For Islamic finds in Quanzhou see Chen Dasheng, 1984. *Quanzhou Yisilanjiao shike* 泉州伊斯兰教石刻 ("Islamic inscriptions of Quanzhou"). Yinchuan: Ningxia Renmin Chubanshe. N.B. Chen's work is bilingual Chinese-English with inscriptions mostly in Arabic and Persian. On the Tamil origin of Hindu finds in Quanzhou see Guy 2001, 2010.

¹⁸ The Nestorian inscriptions are made in various languages. Most common is a mixture of Syriac and Old Turkish. Also represented are inscriptions in the Mongolian Phags-pa script, Chinese and Uighur using Syriac script. A research team from Australian National University lead by Sam Lieu is researching these religious artefacts from Quanzhou. See <http://www.anchist.mq.edu.au/doccentre/Zayton.htm>. For more on the Phags-pa inscriptions see Andrew West's blog at <http://babelstone.blogspot.com/2006/11/christian-tombstones-of-zayton.html>. For the transcript of a 2003 radio interview with Sam Lieu by Rachael Kohn on the Ark radio program see <http://www.abc.net.au/rn/relig/ark/stories/s794442.htm>.

¹⁹ For all of recent memory this Manichean site has been used as a Buddhist shrine with the Mani statue thought to be a Buddha. Several sources claim it is the only Manichean temple in existence such as Pearson et al 2002: 40. On another medieval Asian depiction of Mani see Gulácsi, Zsuzsanna. 2009. "A Manichaeian 'Portrait of the Buddha Jesus': Identifying a Twelfth-or Thirteenth-century Chinese Painting from the Collection of Seiyun-ji Zen Temple." *Artibus Asiae* 69.1: 91-145.

Chinese and South Indian communities.²⁰ There is also a bilingual Nestorian Christian inscription in Chinese and Syriac known as the Arkoun tablet dating from 1313.²¹

Quanzhou's archeological and literary records attest to the presence of communities of Muslims from Arabia and Persia, Nestorian Christians from Central Asia, Franciscans from Europe, Hindus from South India and Manicheans from Central Asia. While the archeological record has thus far failed to provide evidence of a Jewish community in Quanzhou, a contested literary account attributed to a Jewish merchant named Jacob d'Ancona, if proven credible, provides colorful details of Quanzhou at the close of the Song dynasty and an account of Jews in the city.²² Quanzhou's impressive pre-modern cosmopolitanism has earned it the nickname "Museum of World Religions" in addition to its claim as the "starting point of the maritime silk road."

²⁰ Discovered in 1956, it was a Hindu inscription by a non-native writer of Tamil and refers to the dedication of an image of Shiva in a new temple in 1203 (Guy 2001: 295-296).

²¹ A rubbing from this tablet is on display in the Quanzhou Maritime Museum (I examined this piece in the museum in 2006).

²² An English translation of a text said to be written by Jacob D'Ancona in medieval Italian in the thirteenth century was published in 1997 by David Selbourne entitled *City of Light*. In this account Jacob provides a vivid description of his stay in Quanzhou from August of 1271 to February of 1272. To the consternation of scholars, no one else has been allowed to see the original document. The document is said to have been passed down by a Jewish family in secret due to fear of reprisals on the basis of anti-Christian statements made throughout the work. Since the original documents have not been independently verified questions of its authenticity remains unresolvable (D'Ancona 2003).

APPENDIX II

*Translation*¹

[p.1a]

The Record of Quanzhou's Kaiyuan Temple

Wenling kaiyuansi zhi 温陵开元寺志²

Author's Preface by Yuanxian

In olden days, southern Quanzhou (*Quanan* 泉南) was called a Land of Buddha with famous mountains and large temples dispersed like stars, arranged like chess pieces; Kaiyuan monastery was truly best of all. Founded during the *Chuigong* period (685-688) of the Tang dynasty, it has seen the most years. Having as many as one hundred and twenty cloisters (*yuan* 院), it accumulated the greatest number of monks. With flocks of talented masters in each of the three teachings- meditation, doctrine and discipline- standing like a tripod, it has nurtured the greatest number of venerable teachers. The history of such a temple is too vast to document, but how could we let it wash away without recording it? [p.1b]

There is no record of this temple prior to the Tang dynasty. First there was Xu Lie's 许列 *Biographies of Purple Cloud Eminent Monks* (*Ziyun gaoseng zhuan* 紫云高僧传) from the Song dynasty which Mengguan Shi 梦观氏 (i.e. Dagui) in the Yuan dynasty derided as a collection of plagiarism, hearsay, non sequiturs and coarse language that was not worth reading. Mengguan Shi then wrote the *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas* (*Ziyun kaishi zhuan* 紫云开士传). This book exhibits extensive learning,

¹ This is a work-in-progress which I will continue to work on and annotate; I welcome comments, corrections and suggestions.

² Wenling 温陵 is an older name for Quanzhou.

correct views, unique theses and elegant diction; it placed its author amongst the literary elite and may be considered an excellent work of history.

From then until now, though only three hundred years have passed, the Chan ethos has decayed; weakening over time, it seems as though nothing can be written. [p.1a] Although at times flourishing, at times decimated, with some things surviving, and others left in ruins- one also cannot write nothing. In 1596, in the *Wanli* period of the Ming dynasty, Mr. Chen Zhizhi 陈止止 first wrote a record of this temple, but his research was inadequate and people didn't think highly of it. In 1635, in the winter of the *Chongzhen* period of the Ming dynasty, members of the Quanzhou gentry requested that I give teachings at the "Purple Cloud" (i.e. Kaiyuan monastery). In my free time there I looked into the temple's past and acquired two books, the *Biographies of Bodhisattvas* and the *Collected Works of Mengguan* (梦观集). Upon reading them I began to realize how many venerable masters there had been at the "Purple Cloud" and was stirred with great admiration. At that time, Mr. Huang Jitao 黄季弢 asked me several times about writing a record book, [p.2b] but I was then occupied with teaching the *Sūraṅgama Sūtra* (*Lengyan jing* 楞严经) at the request of Mr. Zeng Eryun 曾二云, so I wouldn't dare make any promises.

In spring of 1642, when I returned to Fujian (*Min*) from Zhejiang, I was again requested to preside at the summer retreat (*jiezhi* 结制).³ I was again asked by Mr. Fu Youxin 傅幼心 about writing a record, so I told him I would do it when I had returned to

³ The summer retreat or Jiezhi traditionally begins April 13 or 15 of the lunar calendar and continues until July 15th. (Da Zhuo and Jian Ying 2007)

Mount Drum (Gushan 鼓山).⁴ Venturing forth in spite of my incompetence, I recklessly took up my brush. For the period up to the Yuan dynasty I relied on the *Biographies of Bodhisattvas*, for later periods I consulted old inscriptions and Mr. Chen's record, in addition I collected oral reports and made my own observations; [p.3a] these materials I collated and arranged into four sections. The first is a section on buildings (*jianzhi* 建置) which gives the temple's layout. Second is a section on biographies of masters (*kaishi* 开士)⁵ which reveals their talents and virtues. Third is a section on literature [associated with the temple] (*yiwén* 艺文) which expresses its grandeur. Fourth is a section on income generating farmlands (*tianfu* 田赋) which accounts for its subsistence. These four sections may just outline the worn traces of a temple's thousand years. But how can I write! I'm just a common southerner; failing in my Confucian studies, I turned to the study of Buddhism. Having come to Quanzhou twice at the request of those gentlemen to make empty talk, I'm deeply afraid I cannot repay their trust. [p.3b] Still not realizing my ineptitude they petitioned me to write this record. Am I standing in for a real expert? Impertinent and irresponsible, it is like temporarily filling in for someone absent. If someday another with a fine brush should come then this record can be put away.

Shi Yuanxian 释元贤 from Mount Drum
Meng chun deng festival day (孟春灯节日), 1643
(*Chongzhen* period of the Ming dynasty).

[p2.1a]

⁴ The monastery on Mount Drum lies just outside Fuzhou. Lewis Hodous writing in 1923 describes a trip to Mount Drum in *Buddhism and Buddhists in China*, pp. 15-16.

⁵ *Kaishi* 开士, translated here as "masters" is an alternative Chinese translation term for the Sanskrit term "bodhisattvas."

Preface by Wu Hengchun

The fame of Southern Quanzhou (Quannan), Land of Buddha, has spread throughout the world. If one follows this fame to verify it as fact then it is not only because it has so many venerable monks, but must also be because non-monastics value the teaching of non-action (*wuwei* 无为). Looking back to the Tang and Song dynasties we find a great flourishing of the Buddha Dharma in Quannan with a forest of Chan temples established. Among them, Kaiyuan is an inspiring place producing outstanding people (*diling renjie* 地灵人杰); it is the best of all. The auspicious sign of the mulberry tree which bloomed lotus blossoms expresses delight at the magnificent spread of the dharma realm. Fragrantly flowing amrita celebrates the exalted religious ethos. Manjushri descended and wrote a sutra; arhats came into a dream.⁶ Venerable masters of the three teachings- meditation, doctrine and discipline- have arisen one after another, too many to count, they are truly capable of effecting changes in customs and traditions (*yifeng yisu* 移风易俗); helping the world and giving direction to people so that a seaside city of Confucius became a solemn land of Buddha. A worthy (*xian* 贤) of the past once wrote a couplet for Kaiyuan temple which reads: [p2.1b] "In olden days this place was called a Land of Buddha; Its streets were full of sages."⁷ Pondering these words, the rise and fall of Kaiyuan temple bears a close relationship to the ways of the world and the hearts of men. Thus one should not let this record of the temple be lost!

⁶ These are references to well known stories about Kaiyuan temple; they are related below.

⁷ This couplet is attributed to Zhuxi 朱熹. *Cidi gucheng foguo; Ma jie doushi shengren* 此处古称佛国，满街都是圣人. It is now found on inscribed on pairs of boards (*duilian*) hanging in the Hall of Heavenly Kings and at the entrance to the Main Hall; the calligraphy of these boards is said to be that of Master Hongyi.

It is regrettable that since the time of Qianlong and Jiaqing 嘉庆 sages and worthies (*sheng xian*) have not appeared and the monastic rules have loosened every day. Up to the current Republican period things have heavily deteriorated⁸ but an opportunity has arrived for the dharma to make a comeback. There is master Yuanying 圆瑛 who has mastered the Tripitika and whose fame reverberates throughout our era. While teaching the Mahayana treatises (*dacheng lun* 大乘论) in Singapore he met master Zhuandao 转道 and his dharma brother Zhuanwu 转物. The three of them made a vow to revive this temple and found the Kaiyuan Compassion for Children School (*cier yuan* 慈儿院). Master Zhuandao is from Quanzhou, his secular surname is Huang. He is of the Kaiyuan Huang lineage⁹ and had always had the ambition to revive Kaiyuan temple. Since master Yuanying entrusted him with this mission, he has generously donated tens of thousands of *yuan* which he had received as alms towards the rebuilding of Kaiyuan temple. Master Yuanying and master Zhuanwu entered Kaiyuan temple in the lunar month of September in 1924 (thirteenth year of *Mingguo*). Three days after they began [rebuilding], the peach trees began to bloom red lotuses, an auspicious sign! The people of Quanzhou who saw this event all considered it amazing.

In the lunar month of August 1925 the temple school had its grand opening, but because the rebuilding project was too overwhelming, master Yuanying again had to solicit donations from lay persons. It should be noted that because the elder Huang Shougong 黄守恭 donated the land for the building of Kaiyuan temple, a hall named the

⁸ *bo luo* 剥落

⁹ Reference to Huang Shougong who donated the land upon which Kaiyuan temple was built.

Donor's Ancestral Shrine (*Tanyue ci* 檀越祠) was built containing a sculpture of him and the "Purple Cloud" Huang family was chosen to lead the lay donors. In previous restorations the Huang family had made contributions, so Yuanying together with Mr. Huang Sunzhe 黄孙哲 asked Senior Huang Zhutang 黄祝堂 to write them a letter of introduction. Together they went to Gulangyu in Xiamen to meet three members of Huang family (*san tanyue*), Huang Zhongxun 黄仲训, Huang Yizhu 黄奕註 and Huang Xiulang 黄秀烺 to urge them to contribute funds so that they may gain complete merit.

[p2.2b] Mr. Zhong Xun, with a penchant for poetry and literature, already had a literary relationship with master Yuanying so he took the lead in offering to rebuild the Dharma Hall (*fa tang*) with his brother Zhong Zan 仲讚 and became an advocate for the rebuilding. Mr. Yi Zhu offered to renovate the eastern pagoda, and Mr. Xiu Lang, the western pagoda. These three lay patrons resolutely shouldered the burden of these three special projects. Master Yuanying contentedly returned and hired the engineer Fu Weizao 傅维早 to be the specialist in charge. In the spring of 1926, Yuanying went to Southeast Asia (*Nanyang*) to solicit funds for the Compassion for Children School in hopes that it may endure forever. By 1927 the three projects had been completed in succession. Mr. Zhong Xun also brought out his personal copy of the *Record of Kaiyuan Temple*; since the temple had been restored he felt the temple chronicle should be made more widely available, thus he donated money to master Yuanying to use for woodblock printing and asked me to write a preface. Even though I am not so astute, thinking about Kaiyuan as a place for the enlightenment and teaching of venerable sages, about the source and stream of the whole temple and the excellent artifacts from each dynasty, I certainly could not let it be lost to oblivion and heard of no more. Presently the temple's

record has not been updated but at least the achievements and merits of the three masters and those lay patrons have been mentioned. May this provide future generations with a general outline of recent developments.

Wu Hengchun 吴亨春 from Gutian 古田
On the road to Ningbo 宁波 (Yong Jiang 甬江)
Early lunar August of 1927 (16th year of *Mingguo*)

[1.1a]

The Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple (温陵开元寺志)

Written by the monk Yuanxian from Yong Chuan Chan temple on Mount Drum (Gushan) in Fuzhou.

The Record of Buildings (*jianzhi zhi* 建置志)

Preface

Regrettably, since the establishment of the Buddha Dharma from the West at Baima ("White Horse") Monastery and the spread of ornate temple buildings, if they are not in exceptional places they are usually lost to oblivion and heard from no more. The Buddha Land of Southern Quanzhou is truly full of old temples, but of those existing more than a thousand years there is only one, the Kaiyuan temple—"The great fruit has not been eaten" (i.e. gentlemen respect it, and the evil are afraid to destroy it).¹⁰ Its reputation has not declined, and those nostalgic for things old can still hear about and experience it.

¹⁰ "No one eats the big fruit" *Shuoguo bu shi* 硕果不食 is from the Yi Jing, hexagram 23 (*bo* 剥 "peeling"). It is said that if a gentleman (*junzi* 君子) picks the fruit it would bring good luck; if a common person (*xiao ren* 小人) steals the fruit, this would be bad omen. It follows that common people can therefore not harm this fruit and the implication that gentleman would not bring it harm; thus "no one eats the big fruit" and it

Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Temple (*Da Kaiyuan Wanshou Chansi* 大开元万寿禅寺) was once located outside the West Pure Gate (*xiqing men* 西清门) of Quanzhou city (*jun cheng*). When the city later expanded the temple became located inside the city, in the western section. In lunar February of 686 (the second year of *Chuigong*) in the Tang dynasty, citizen Huang Shougong had a dream while napping. [1.1b] A monk begged to have his land for a temple. Mr. Gong said, "Should my trees bloom white lotuses, I shall concede." Pleased, the monk thanked him and suddenly disappeared. Two days passed and the mulberry trees really bloomed white lotuses. The local authorities considered this an auspicious rumor and asked to build a place for practice (*daochang*). The empress granted permission and named it "Lotus Flower." The monk Kuanghu 匡护 was asked to serve as abbot. In 692 (*Renchen* year of *Changshou*), the name was changed to "Flourishing Teaching Temple" (*xingjiao si* 兴教寺). In 705 (*yisi* year of *Shenlong*), the name was changed again to "Flourishing Dragon" (*longxing* 龙兴). In 26th year of Xuanzong's 玄宗 reign (738), he ordered that every state in the realm should have one temple to be named for the current period (the *jinian*, i.e. Kaiyuan); the local administration complied with the order by changing the name to "Kaiyuan." From the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms up to the Song Dynasty one hundred and twenty neighboring cloisters (*zhi yuan* 支院) were constructed which were separate and independent of one another. In 1285 (*yiyou* year of the *Zhiyuan* 至元 period), the Sangha

can grow ever big. This is the explanation in the *Zhouyi jijie* 周易集解, a Tang dynasty collection of commentaries from Han to Tang on the *Yijing*, cited in Huang Shouqi 黄寿祺 and Zhang Shanwen 张善文. 2001. *Zhouyi yizhu* 周易译注 ("The *Yijing*, Translation and Commentary"). Shanghai: Shanghai Guji Publishing House, p. 202.

administrator (*senglu* 僧录) Liu Jianyi 刘鉴义 reported to the governor of Fujian (*xing sheng ping zhang* 行省平章) Bo Yan 伯颜 who in turn reported to and petitioned the emperor to have the cloisters united as one temple. The emperor dubbed the united complex, "Great Kaiyuan Everlasting Chan Monastery." [1.2a] The following year, the monk Miao'en 妙恩 was invited to become the inaugural¹¹ abbot. As the Chan way spread far and wide, novice monks raced here in droves. The succeeding abbot was Qizu 契祖; during these forty years the temple supported a thousand monks.¹²

The recurring famines and widespread pillaging and plundering at the end of the Yuan dynasty were disheartening to the temple. By 1397 (30th year of *Hongwu*) the temple monks were nearly wiped out in the disaster. Learning of this, officials [reported to their superiors]. The following year, emperor Gaozu 高祖 (i.e. Taizu 太祖, a.k.a. Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋) sent the monk Zhengying 正映 to be the abbot. After arriving he restored buildings and cleared away debris. Due to this, it was not long before the temple was again flourishing. But only two generations later the Chan ethos had weakened. During the *Chenghua* and *Hongzhi* periods (1465-1488) the temple again split apart like clouds. The monastic rules and order became corrupted day by day. From the *Longqin* to *Wanli* periods (1567-1573) the older structures had fallen into ruins and more than half of the shrine rooms and monk's dormitories had been occupied by non-monastics. [1.2b] Even the ordination platform hall had been taken over by gunpowder manufacturers. The intrusion also spread to the Dharma Hall, which was partially occupied. This continued for thirty years until 1594 (*jiawu* year of *Wanli*) when the lay disciple and vice censor-in-

¹¹ *diyi shi* 第一世, lit. "first generation"

¹² literally, "ten thousand fingers usually eating" (*shi chang wan zhi* 食常万指)

chief¹³ Mr. Huang Wenbin 黄文炳 forcefully reported the situation to the Emperor. All those involved in manufacturing were expelled and old properties began to be recovered, but still only about one percent was reclaimed.

The Purple Cloud Main Hall (*ziyun dadian* 紫云大殿) was built by the monk Kuanghu in 686 (the second year of the *Chuangong* period in the Tang dynasty). At that time there was an auspicious sign, a purple cloud covering the ground which is how it got its name. Emperor Xuanzong changed the name to "Kaiyuan" and bestowed upon the temple a Buddha statue which was later destroyed. In 897 (fourth year of *Qianning*), the acting president of the ministry of public works¹⁴ Wang Shengui 王审邽 rebuilt the hall and had four Buddha statues made; already present was a central statue given by the Emperor. The monk Zhaowu 朝悟 brought *pratyekabuddha* relics which were installed in the Buddha statue.¹⁵ In 1095 (the second year of *Shaosheng*) of the [Northern] Song dynasty, the monk Fashu 法殊 [1.3a] renovated the main hall and installed 1000 Buddha statues therein. In 1155 (the 25th year of *Shaoxing*) [of the Southern Song], it burned down and was rebuilt. In the Yuan dynasty, the monk Qizu ordered the monk Bofu 伯福 to pave the main courtyard (*da ting* 拜庭) in front of the main hall with stone. In 1357 (the *dingyou* year of *Zhizheng*), it burned down again and was rebuilt in 1389 (the *yisi* year of *Hongwu*) [of the Ming dynasty] by the monk Huiyuan 惠远. In 1408 (the *wuzi* year of *Yongle*), the monk Zhichang 至昌 repaired the corridors, expanded the platform [in front

¹³ *xianfu* 宪副, i.e. *fu du yushi* 副都御史

¹⁴ *jian jiao gong bu shangshu* 检校工部尚书

¹⁵ In the middle statue. Is it possible that relics were put in all the statues?

of the main hall] and dug two small ponds to the left and right in the front of the main courtyard. He also built several small stupas arranged like wings [along the sides of the courtyard]. In 1594 (the 22nd year of *Wanli*), laypersons taking the lead, together with monastics made repairs. In 1637 (the *Dingchou* year of *Chongzhen*), the provincial administrative vice commissioner ¹⁶ Mr. Zeng Ying 曾樱 and the brigade general¹⁷ Mr. Zheng Zhilong 郑芝龙 rebuilt the main hall, replacing all the wooden columns with stone; making it even more magnificent than before. Providing help was the monk Guanglun 广轮.

The Amrita Ordination Platform (*ganlu jietan* 甘露戒坛) is located behind the main hall. Back during the Tang dynasty, amrita (*ganlu* 甘露)¹⁸ often fell on this place,^[I.3b] so the monk Xingzhao 行昭 dug the amrita well. In 1019 (third year of the *Tianxi* period of the Song), the government promulgated the *pudu* 普度¹⁹, a call for universal ordination, and monks began to construct the ordination platform. In 1128 (the second year of *Jianyan*), because the platform structure was not in line with ancient tradition, the monk Dunzhao 敦炤 rebuilt it according to an ancient illustrated sutra (*gu tu jing* 古图经).²⁰ His platform had five levels, the proportions of their heights, lengths and widths all built according to strict rules. Chong'guan 崇灌 was asked to write a notice recording this

¹⁶ *dacan* 大参

¹⁷ *zongbing* 总兵

¹⁸ lit. "sweet dew" it is also used to translate Sanskrit amrita.

¹⁹ Ordered by emperor Shenzong, the *pudu* would appear to refer to a *pudu sengni* which was a periodic call for "universal tonsure and ordination" that the government might use for celebratory reasons in which restrictions on ordinations were lifted for a period of time. The *pudu* was a policy governing religious ceremonies. Originally it was a strict rule prohibiting such things as commerce (Jiaying 2007 and Dazhou 2007, personal communication).

²⁰ The *Nanshan Jietan Tujing* 南山戒坛图经.

event which was inscribed in stone. The emperor bestowed upon it the name Amrita Ordination Platform; vice minister²¹ Chendang 陈谏 wrote the name board.

In 1357 (*Dingyou* year of *Zhizheng*), the Ordination Hall burned down. In 1400 (33rd year of *Hongwu*), it was rebuilt by the monk Zhengying. Although it was as magnificent as before, the structure was not the same as the previous one by Dunzhao. In 1411 (*Xinmao* year of *Yongle*), the monk Zhichang added-on four corridors. During the *Longqing* period (1567-1572), manufacturers of weapons and gunpowder exploiting their connections (*yin yuan* 夤缘, i.e. *guanxi*), moved in bringing their wives and children. A forge, mortar and pestle and such implements were set up and ash and debris piled-up in mounds. In 1576 (fourth year of *Wanli*), [1.4a] four skilled soldiers²² burned to death. The monks sued the government, imploring to have those manufacturers removed, but the manufacturers loved this place like home, and the government put the case aside. In 1594 (22nd year of *Wanli*), the fire god (Huilu 回禄) appeared in the dreams of neighboring residents disturbing their peace both day and night. Layman Huang Wenbin forcefully reported the situation to the Emperor. All those manufacturers were expelled and Mr. Huang led the people in making repairs. The Ordination Platform Hall again looked new. The one who completed this work was the monk Ruyou 如祐.

The old Tripitika was in a state of disrepair and disarray with only three-tenths remaining. In 1628 (the first year / *Wuchen* year of *Chongzhen*), the monks Ruyou and Guanglun went to Nandu (the city of Nanyang in Henan) and asked the commissioner of the office

²¹ *Shi lang* 侍郎- vice director/vice minister in the Secretariat or the Chancellery (Hucker 1985 426-427).

²² *cai guan* 材官, i.e. "skilled soldier" of the militia (Hucker 1985, 515).

of transmission²³ Mr. Zhou Weijing to be their principal intermediary. They successfully collected a complete Tripitika, which they stored in the Ordination Hall upon their return.

The Dharma Hall (*fa tang* 法堂) is behind the Ordination Hall. It was built by the sangha administrator Liu Jianyi in 1285 (*Yiyou* year of *Zhiyuan*). It was destroyed in 1357. In 1398 (31st year of *Hongwu*), the monk Zhengying came to become the abbot by order of the Emperor. [1.4b] Upon his taking leave of the emperor, the emperor encouraged him with the words, "Keep heart pure and self clean" (*qing xin jie ji* 清心洁己). When Zhengying arrived at the temple, he first completed the rebuilding of this hall and erected an inscribed board reading, "Keep heart pure and self clean" to show he would not forget [the emperors word]s. During the *Jingtai* period (1450-1456), the monk Huilian 惠璉 made minor repairs. In 1548 (*Wushen* year of *Jiaqing*), the prefect (*tai shou* 太守), Mr. Cheng Xiumin 程秀民 donated his salary towards repairs.

Since the *Longqin* period (1567-1572), those [munitions] manufacturers occupying the Ordination Hall as home later broke into the Dharma Hall. There were also some rich and powerful people (*er san haoyou* 二三豪右) who covetously eyed this place. In 1594 (*Jiawu* year of *Wanli*), the government forcibly expelled them and the Dharma Hall began its recovery. And so the old inscribed board was hung back up again.

²³ *tong zheng shi* 通政使. The office of transmission was a central government agency responsible for collecting and registering memorials from throughout the empire (Hucker 1985, 553).

The Chan Hall (*chan tang* 禅堂) is to the right of the main hall. It was built during the *Zhiyuan* period (1279-1294) by the inaugural abbot, Miao'en. It was destroyed at the end of the Yuan dynasty. It was rebuilt by the monk Zhengying. In 1410 (*Gengying* year of *Yongle*), the monk Zhichang made repairs and named it with an inscription board reading, "A Pure Land and Place of Enlightenment" (*lian yuan jue chang* 莲苑觉场).^[1.5a] In 1558 (37th year of *Jiaqing*), the Temple of Water and Land was occupied by the rich and powerful (*hao you*) leaving the monks with no place to live. So the Chan hall was given to the monks from the Land and Water Temple to be their dormitory. It still exists today.

The Twin Cinnamon Tree Hall (*shuanggui tang* 双桂堂) used to be the kitchen.²⁴ It sits to the left of the ordination platform. It was first built when the monk Miao'en became the inaugural abbot. His building had seven rooms. It was repaired in 1279 (*Yimao* year of *Zhiyuan*)²⁵ by the monk Tianquan 天全 and later destroyed. It was rebuilt in 1399 (*Yimao* year of *Hongwu*) by the monk Zhengying and ongoing repairs were made by the monk Yongan 永安. It was again destroyed and given over to non-monastics.²⁶ In 1581 (9th year of *Wanli*), Mr. Peng Guoguang 彭国光, the county head commissioner (*yihou* 邑侯), purged it and reclaimed it for the temple. Soon afterwards it was again sold, [this time] as a school (*shushu* 书塾). In 1624 (4th year of *Tianqi*), Mr. Chen Liangcai 陈亮采, the supervisor general (*zongxian* 总宪), gave money to redeem it. It was used as a place to host visiting monks (*shi fang* 十方). Mr. Chen requested that 47*mu* of fields of

²⁴ *xiang ji tang* 香积堂

²⁵ Is there a mistake here? Miao'en became abbot in 1286, if it was first built then, how could it be repaired in 1279?

²⁶ *min jian* 民间, lit. "common people."

the ruined Chongfu temple be transferred [to Kaiyuan's use] and redeemed 28 *mu* of Kaiyuan temple's fields. Together these were used to cover this hall's hosting expenses, [1.5b] as well as to provide for the incense and lamps in the Ordination Hall. To be used forever as the perpetual abode (*chang zhu* 常住) of visiting monks. The persons administrating this project were the monks Jiehuang 戒瑄 and Daoben 道本. Later, when it was decided by popular vote, they took turns administrating. In 1636 (*Bingzi* year of *Chongzhen*), when Yuanxian, the abbot of Mount Drum, was giving teachings here, it began to be called today's name because two Chinese cinnamon trees planted in the courtyard were in full bloom. In 1641 (*Xinsi* year of *Chongzhen*), the monk Dingxi 定玺 collected funds to redeem temple properties [formerly lost] to the "ten directions."

The Donor's Ancestral Shrine (*tanyue ci* 檀越祠)²⁷ used to be the Shrine to Monastery Protectors (*qielan ci* 伽蓝祠). It lies to the left of the Dharma hall. The monk Miao'en built it during the *Zhiyuan* period (1279-1294). It burned down in 1357 (*Dingyou* year of *Zhizheng*) and was rebuilt by the monk Zhengying during the *Hongwu* period (1368-1398). Over time its walls fell into ruins and it was lost to non-monastics. In 1596 (24th year of *Wanli*), the mayor (*junshou* 郡守) Mr. Cheng Zhaojing 程朝京 recovered it for the temple. The layman and vice censor-in-chief Mr. Huang Wenbin led his clan in building the ancestral hall for making offerings to their ancestor Huang Shougong.

[1.6a]

²⁷Translated as "Temple of the Dānapati" in Ecke and Demiéville 1935.

The Shrine to Monastery Protectors (*qielan ci* 伽蓝祠)²⁸ used to be to the left of the Dharma Hall. Because it had been fallen into disuse [at this location], offerings were shifted to a corridor in the east in the area where the Arhat Hall was formerly located. In the beginning, the inaugural abbot Miao'en dreamed one night of five hundred monks asking him to be their master (*yizhi* 依止). In the morning he heard that the arhat hall at Nanshan 南山 temple in Hangzhou (Wulin 武林) had burned so he built the hall of 500 arhats. This hall was 30 rooms [in area] with a Guanyin for offerings in the middle and 500 arhats at its sides. In 1393 (26th year of Hongwu), the monk Huiming 惠命 repaired it. During the Zhengde period (1506-1521), the monk Fangluan 方銓 rebuilt it. After this it fell into disuse and was sold at a discount (*zhe ru* 折入) to non-monastics. Its old statues no longer exist, only the Qianzhao corridor 前照廊 remains. After weighing the options, the middle of the corridor was converted into the Qielan Hall and the left side became monastic dormitories; the right side is still a school. In 1595 (23rd year of *Wanli*), patrons (*tanyue*) took the lead in buying it back.

[1.6b]

²⁸ *Qielan* is used to translate *Saṅghārāma* or *Saṅghāgāra* meaning a gathering place for monks (i.e. monastery or *vihāra*). In this context it refers to beings who protect the monastery and therefore the Sangha, so I have chosen to translate "Qielan Shrine" as "Shrine to Monastery Protectors." The contents of this hall are not described, but a typical Qielan Shrine would house several figures associated with the establishment and protection of monasteries. Three central figures typically enshrined are the individuals responsible for the establishment of the Jetavana monastery: Anathapindaka, prince Jeta, and King Pasenadi. Along the sides would be 18 protector deities and some halls include a statue of Guangong 关公.

Guangong is sometimes referred to as Qielan Bodhisattva (*Pusa*). Incorporated into Chinese Buddhism in the sixth century, he is based on the historical figure Guan Yu 关羽, a general during the Three Kingdoms period (220-280 CE). Guangong is venerated in Confucianism as Guansheng 关圣 and in Taoism as Guandi 关帝. Some Qielan Halls today only have a statue of Guangong as a representative Sangha/monastery protector.

The Sage King Hall (*shengwang dian* 圣王殿) is behind the east pagoda. It is used for making offering to the Flourishing Compassion Sage King (*ci xing sheng wang* 慈兴圣王). He is the monastic property protector deity for all 120 cloisters. At first, on the first of every month, the head monk (*zhuseng* 主僧) took money from the budget of the main temple, without receiving money from the other cloisters. There were always complaints that name and reality didn't match. When the monk Zhengying became abbot even the gods appeared to take refuge. Since that time offerings were made at the Sage King Hall more diligently. The record of the years of the building's history are lost. In 1591 (19th year of *Wanli*), the local gentry requested this place be used to make offering to the four worthies (*si xian* 四贤).²⁹ In 1596 (24th year of *Wanli*), Mr. Cheng Zhaojing, the mayor, presented papers to the court³⁰ to win back the temple. Offering were again made to the sage king as before. Later in 1608 (*Wushen* year), the government transferred one third of this land to be used as a Jiang ancestor hall (*jiang ci* 姜祠).³¹

The East Pagoda (*dong ta* 东塔) is known as the "Pagoda which Stabilizes the Country" (*zhen guo ta* 镇国塔). The Chan master Wencheng 文僞 first built a five-story wooden pagoda during the *Xiantong*³² period (860-873) of the Tang dynasty.³³ When building it,

²⁹ It is not clear who are the four worthies or sages referenced here. In Quanzhou, four Persians who brought Islam to the city were sometimes called the four worthies (*si xian*). It is not inconceivable that the four worthies here are the same, an intriguing possibility, but requiring further investigation.

³⁰ The woodblock print reads *ji zhao* 给炤 ("offer to shine") which doesn't make sense, so I read it as a misprint for *ji zhao* 给诏 ("present documents").

³¹ More information is not provided about which Jiang this hall was built for. It could be for a local clan. Other possibilities include: the legendary Chinese Emperor Yandi 炎帝 (a.k.a. Shen Nong Shi 神农氏) or the Zhou dynasty National Teacher Jiang Ziya 姜子牙.

³² The *sizhi* has a misprint, stating Xianheng 咸亨 rather than Xiantong 咸通.

³³ According to the *Gazetteer of Fujian* (*Bamin tongzhi* 八闽通志) as quoted in the *Gazetteer of Quanzhou Municipality* (*Quanzhou Fu Zhi* XVI, 19b) the original wooden pagoda was built at the same time as the

he placed a wooden chest at a busy crossroads and waited for people to donate. In the evening, the box would be full of money. [1.7a] The master said to the workers, "The daily salary for all workers is 100 *qian*; you can take it from the box yourselves." It happened that some who took more than their share became lost on their way home. Afterwards, no one dared take more than their due. In 865 (sixth year of *Xiantong*) the wooden pagoda was completed. It was dubbed "Country Stabilizer" *Zhenguo* by the Emperor (i.e. Yizong 懿宗). In 866 (the seventh year of *Xiantong*), Xu Zongren 徐宗仁, an administrator of state granaries³⁴, came from the capital (i.e. Chang'an, today's Xian) bringing Buddha relics to install in the pagoda.

During the *Tianxi* period (1017-1021) of the Song dynasty, it was rebuilt as a thirteen-storied pagoda. It burned down in 1155 (*Yihai* year of *Shaoxing*). In 1186 (*Bingwu* year of *Chunxi*), it was rebuilt by the monk Liaoxing 了性. In 1227 (*Dinghai* year of *Baoqing*), it burned down again. The monk Shouchun 守淳 rebuilt it as a seven-storied brick pagoda. In 1238 (*Wuxu* year of *Jiayi*), the monk Benhong 本洪 began to convert it to stone. He only completed one story. Faquan 法权 continued building up to the fourth story then died. A teaching monk from Tianzhu 天竺 built the fifth story and the pinnacle; it took ten years to complete.³⁵

Western pagoda in the mid ninth century, during the period of Five dynasties, but both the *Quanzhou Fu Zhi* and the *Jinjiang xianzhi* agree with the *Kaiyuansi zhi* in terms of the Tang dynasty founding.

³⁴ *cang cao* 仓曹 - In Tang times there were sixteen military units stationed at the capital, each unit had various support officials. This was one of the officials in the granaries section (*cang cao* 仓曹). Hucker 1985: 427, 520.

³⁵ The identity of "teaching monk from Tianzhu" has caused considerable speculation in Western language publications. Some have thought he was an Indian monk because *Tianzhu Guo* 天竺国 is India. However, this notion was dismissed by Demiéville who suggested, however, that *Tianzhu* might refer to Tianzhu temple near Hangzhou (Ecke and Demiéville 1935, 92). The identity of this monk can rather securely be

At the top is an iron incense burner and a copper treasure cap (*baogai* 宝盖). Iron chains lead from the eight corners of the pagoda [to the treasure cap]. At the very top [extending above the treasure cap] [1.7b] is a gilded bronze gourd (*hulu* 葫芦) which shines like gold.

The middle of every story is the heart of the pagoda; it spirals and is empty (*huan zhuan kong dong* 环转空洞). Every story has eight niches, each containing a stone bodhisattva statue, deities were carved on each side standing guard. Beyond this stood galleries enclosed by stone railings. Ascending the stairway, the color of the sea and mountain peaks in mist appear close at hand.

The first story of the pagoda is 28 feet (*chi*) in height; the circumference is 172 feet. The next story is 2.5 feet less in height and 8 feet less in circumference. The third story is 23 feet, five inches (*cun* 寸) in height with a circumference of 16 feet less [than the bottom]. The fourth story again has a height which is 1.5 feet less and a circumference 8 feet less. The final story is 19 feet in height with a circumference of 146 feet. The spire (*ding gan* 顶竿) is 67 feet tall. The length from top to bottom is altogether 193 feet and five inches.

identified with Tianxi 天锡 (a.k.a. Chuzhuo 樗拙) who is named in three local records (*zhi* 志) as the builder of the top story of the eastern pagoda (a.k.a. *Zhengguo ta*). These records are the *Gazetteer of Jinjiang County*, 1652 ; the *Gazetteer of Quanzhou Municipality* XVI, 20a; and the biographical section of the *Record of Xuefeng Temple* (雪峰寺志 *Xuefengsi zhi*) Li Yukun 李玉昆 泉州晚报海外版(Quanzhou Evening News-Overseas Edition), July 14, 2005. article at http://www.qzwb.com/gb/content/2005-07/14/content_1720739.htm PAGE#. Demiéville noticed the name of Tianxi 天锡 in the *Gazetteer of Quanzhou Municipality*, but thought that Tianxi (天锡) was most likely a misprint of Tianzhu (天竺) since each was preceded by *tian* 天. Tianxi (1209-1263) was born in Yipu 宜莆 into the You 尤 family of Jinjiang, Quanzhou. He built the Xuefeng temple outside Quanzhou on Mount Yangmei in Nan'an in honor of the Qingyuan Chan patriarch Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰义存 (J. Seppo Gisōn, 822-908). (*Record of Xuefeng Temple*)

There are forty large columns and the same number of large beams [1.8a] as well as small beams. There are 192 large capitals (*dou* 斗) inside and out and 440 small capitals. There are 40 ridgepoles, 112 large brackets (*gong* 拱) and 80 small brackets.

Along the base are carved greenstones (*qing shi* 青石). Their magnificent beauty is effortless and sublime (*hua jing* 化境), fine and vigorous. It is supernatural work of divine chisels (*guigong shenfu* 鬼工神斧) that cannot be accomplished through human power.

In 1394 (*Jiaxu* year of *Hongwu*), the spire collapsed; in 1397 (*Dingchou* year of *Hongwu*), the monk Yong'an collected funds to repair it. In 1604 (*Jiachen* year of *Wanli*), there was a great earthquake; stone beams fell from the top of the pagoda, two from the south side and eight from the southeast corner. Some stairs were destroyed by the impact. In 1606 (*Bingwu* year of *Wanli*), the vice minister³⁶ Mr. Zhan Yangbi 詹仰庇³⁷ served as the liaison for the collection of funds for repairs by the two local monks Tongquan 通全 and Hongcha 弘警 and the monk Zhenxiao 真晓 from Tianjie temple 天界 in Nanjing. Hongben 弘本 directed this project.

The West Pagoda (*xi ta* 西塔) is called the "Pagoda of Benevolence and Longevity" (*ren shou ta* 仁寿塔). It was built in 916 (second year / *wushen* year of *Zhenming*) during the

³⁶ *Shilang* 侍郎. Vice minister in one of the six ministries of the central government. Hucker 1985: 426-427

³⁷ A poem which celebrates these two spires by Zhan Yangbi is recorded in the *Sizhi* :III.28a-b.

Liang dynasty of the Five Dynasties.³⁸ At first there was a spring gushing from the earth a few feet above the ground. [1.8b] Some time later, a monk who was drifting on the sea came and stayed at the temple. At that time, the King of Fujian Wang Shenzhi was building a wooden pagoda at his chief military command (*da dudu fu* 大都督府).³⁹ One night he dreamed that a monk spoke to him, "I heard your majesty was building a pagoda in your chief military command. Could you please move it to stabilize the spring." The king was furious and ordered the monk beheaded. When the head fell, the body jumped up a few inches into the air. The king was startled [and when he awoke] he sent a search party to Quanzhou [to find this monk]. The people in Quanzhou said that there was a mad monk but that he was now dead. The king floated the lumber down the sea to Quanzhou to build the pagoda. Building began on the first of April in 916 (second year of *Zhenming*) and was completed on the last day of December. It had seven stories and was called the "Pagoda of Amitāyus" (lit. "infinite life" *wuliang shou* 无量寿.)

On October 10th, 1114 (*Jiawu* year of *Zhenghe*) in the Song dynasty, there was a green and yellow light which emanated from the pagoda high into the clouds. It soon turned to five colors and did not disappear until daybreak. Local officials reported this to the emperor who then dubbed it "Benevolence and Longevity." In 1155 (*Yihai* year of *Shaoxing*), it burned down and was rebuilt during the *Chunxi* period (1174-1189) by the monk Liaoxing. [1.9a] It burned down again and was rebuilt in brick by the monk Shouchun. In 1228 (first year / *Wuzi* year of *Shaoding*), the monk Zizheng began to convert the brick into stone. On top there were installed treasures of gold and silver and

³⁸ *Wushen* 戊申 year appears to be a mistake, it should read *Bingzi* 丙子. (Zhou Shurong 1999a, 42)

³⁹ This would have been in Fuzhou, rather than Quanzhou.

so on. Its structure is the same as that of the eastern pagoda. Its circumference is simply five feet less and its height is fifteen feet and five inches shorter.⁴⁰ They are magnificent erections which look identical. It was completed in 1237 (first year of *Jiayi*), that is, ten years before the eastern pagoda.

In 1401 (*Xinsi* year of *Hongwu*), the heart of the pagoda was damaged and repaired by the abbot Zhengying. In 1588 (*Wuzi* year of *Wanli*), a great hurricane damaged the spire, causing the gilded pinnacle to fall to the ground. A local resident named Fu Mingzhi 傅明智 repaired it. Some lower railings were damaged; all of these were replaced. In August of 1606 (*Bingwu* year), there was another unusual wind which damaged the entire spire, including the copper cap, the iron incense burner, the iron chains and the gilded gourd (i.e. pinnacle) in the whirlwind. In the autumn of 1612 (*Renzi* year), resident monks collected money and made repairs.

[1.9b]

The Pavilion for Paying Homage to his Majesty (*baisheng ting* 拜圣亭) is nicknamed Prostrating with Incense Pavilion (*baixiang ting* 拜香亭). It lies in front of the main hall and is attached to the back of the Threefold Gate. We do not know in which dynasty it was first built. It may have been through concern with bad weather that it was built to convenience those prostrating during a long-life blessing for the emperor. In later times it was altered and rebuilt along the same general lines as the Threefold gate.

⁴⁰ "15 feet" is a translation of one *zhang* 丈 (=10 "feet") and five *chi* 尺.

The Threefold Gate (*san men* 三门) was first built in 687 (3rd year of *Chuigong*) and had an auspicious sign, a peony that grew from a stone column. It burned down in 1155 (25th year of *Shaoxing*) of the Song dynasty and was later rebuilt. In the spring of 1327 (fourth year of *Taiding*) it burned down again and was rebuilt by the monk Guozhao 果炤. In 1350 (tenth year of *Zhizheng*) departmental magistrate (*jianjun* 监郡) Xie Shiyu 偃世玉 wrote the name board reading, "The Buddha Land of Southern Quanzhou" (*Quannan fo guo* 泉南佛国). During the *Hongwu* period (1368-1398) the monk Zhengying made repairs. In the *Wanli* period (1573-1619) the monk Zhenxiao 真晓 made repairs.

The East and West Bounding Structures (*dong xi er fang* 东西二坊) lie outside the Threefold Gate. They were constructed by the monk Guozhao in 1327 (fourth year of *Taiding*). [1.10a] Recording the temple's propitious features, the left reads, "Eight Auspicious Signs" (*ba ji xiang* 八吉祥) and the right reads, "Six Unique Sites" (*liu shusheng* 六殊胜). During the *Hongwu* period (1368-1398) the monk Zhengying made repairs. Before the temple lies a reflecting wall (*zhaoqiang* 炤墙).⁴¹ It was built in 1576 (4th year of *Wanli*) by the vice-mayor (*juncheng* 郡丞) Mr. Ding Yizhong 丁一中. In 1624 (Jiazi year of *Tianqi*), Mr. Chen Liangcai 陈亮采, the supervisor general,⁴² rebuilt it.

The thirteen structures discussed above still exist.

⁴¹ This wall is now referred to as the Purple Cloud Screen (*ziyun ping* 紫云屏). At other temples this structure is referred to as a "spirit wall" (*ying bi* 影壁). See Prip Moller, 7.

⁴² *zongxian* 总宪

The Bell Tower (*zhong lou* 钟楼) used to be located northeast of the main hall. It was destroyed in 895 (second year of *Qianning*) and rebuilt in 897 (fourth year of *Qianning*) by the prefect (*junshuai* 郡帅) Wang Shengui who cast a new bell. It was later destroyed and has not been rebuilt.

The Sutra Library (*jing lou* 经楼) used to be located northwest of the main hall. The vice director (*pushe* 仆射) of the Department of State Affairs⁴³ Mr. Wang Chao 王潮 from Taiyuan 太原 asked monks copy three thousand volumes (*juan* 卷) of the Tripitika (*dazangjing*) to store there. In 895 (second year of *Qianning*) prefect Wang Shengui rebuilt it. It was later destroyed and has not been rebuilt. During the *Xiaosheng* period (1094-1097) it was replaced by the Tripitika Hall (*zangdian* 藏殿).

[I.10b]

The Reclining [Buddha] Hall (*qin tang* 寝堂) was behind the Dharma Hall. It was built in 1287 (*Dinghai* year of *Zhiyuan*) by Liu Jianyi and the executive administrator⁴⁴ Bo Yan 伯颜. It was later destroyed. In 1368 (*Wushen* year of *Hongwu*) the monk Linxiang

⁴³ Wang Chaoyan was the head of the Wang family that ruled Fujian for most of the period between the Tang and Song. He began his political career in Fujian by taking the position of Quanzhou prefect by force. He then moved to the head seat of power in Fuzhou (Clark 1981: 130-136). The Department of State Affairs (*shang shu sheng* 尚書省) was the functioning administrative agency at the executive core of the government. Since the Han dynasty it was headed by a director (*ling* 令), but after the directorship was held by Emperor Taizong 太宗 (r. 626-649), it was managed by two vice directors who supervised the six ministries (*liu bu* 六部) below it (Hucker 1985: 29, 412).

⁴⁴ *pingzhang* 平章 lit. "deliberate and decide." Used as abbreviation for "the most eminent officials of the central government, those who served as Grand Councilors (*tsai-hsiang*, *ch'eng-hsiang*) overseeing all governmental activities in common with the Emperor...all such usages terminated in 1380." (Hucker 1985: 385). Alternatively, a more specific title for a "mid-level executive of the Secretariat (*chung-shu sheng*) and of each Branch (*hsing*) Secretariat..." (ibid.).

麟祥 rebuilt it and had a reclining Buddha statue installed therein. It fell into disuse (*fei* 废) during the *Jiaqing* period (1522-1566) and was occupied by locals. Today we are unable to have it returned.

The Abbot's Quarters (*fang zhang* 方丈) were behind the Reclining [Buddha] Hall.

Behind it was the *huashi* district (*huashi pu* 华仕铺).⁴⁵ Today's street is still called "Behind the Great Temple" (*dasi hou* 大寺后).⁴⁶ Following the disastrous fire of the *Jiaqing* period (1522-1566) it fell into disuse and never recovered. It was eventually absorbed into neighboring residences.

The old Donor's Ancestral Shrine (*jiu tanyue ci* 旧檀越祠) was at the western corridor of the main hall. It was built by the monk Miao'en during the *Zhiyuan* period (1279-1294) of the Yuan dynasty. It was used to make offerings to the virtuous king who was loyal to Fujian (*min zhong yi wang* 闽忠懿王) with auxiliary shrines for Huang Shougong and Dong Si'an 董思安.⁴⁷ Today the ruined property has been sold at a discount and become people's homes.

⁴⁵ *Pu* 铺 was a term designating a municipal administrative district during Ming and Qing times in Quanzhou. At the level of the city was the *cheng* 城 which was divided into four *yu* 隅 (quarters). The four quarters were sub-divided into *pu* 铺 (districts) which were further sub-divided into *jing* 境 (sub-districts). Hua shi district was in the Western quarter and comprised of two sub-districts, *qi shi jing* 奇仕 and *hua shi jing* 华仕境. (Quanzhou History Net- <http://qzhnet.dnscn.cn/qzh57.htm>)

⁴⁶ The street immediately behind the temple retains this name to this day and the abbot's quarters effectively lie on this street (while the quarters do not face the street, the back entrance to the abbot's quarters is from this street).

⁴⁷ Dong Si'an was a military commander and Wang family loyalists who stayed with the Wang's till the end. His undying loyalty to the Wang's who had been great patrons of Kaiyuan and builders of Quanzhou earned him a shrine at Kaiyuan monastery. See chapter two for more on Dong Si'an. The respect he inspired in the people enabled his political career to outlast the Wang's. The final defeat of the Wang family by the Southern Tang in 945 marked the end of a united empire of Min. By 948 only Quanzhou and

The old Hall of Patriarchs (*jiu zu shi tang* 旧祖师堂) was to the right of the Dharma Hall and just across from the Qielan Shrine. It was built by the monk Miao'en during the Zhiyuan period (1279-1294). [1.11a] It was rebuilt by the monk Zhengying during the *Hongwu* period (1368-1398). It later fell into disuse and was sold at a discount and became people's homes. In 1596 (24th year of *Wanli*) the temple monk redeemed the property. Today it is used as a monastic dormitory.

The Eastern Tripitika Hall (*dong zang dian* 东藏殿) used to lie to the east of the main hall. In 1096 (3rd year of *Shaosheng*) the monk Fashu 法殊 offered his hall of residence, thereby establishing this hall. It preserved the Tripitika and Tang Taizong's (founding emperor of the Tang dynasty) imperial handwriting. In 1155 (*Yihai* year of *Shaoxing*) it burned down and was later rebuilt. The Yuan dynasty monk Qizu also made a revolving sutra shelf (*zhuan lun zang* 转轮藏). In 1357 (*Dingyou* year of *Zhizheng*) it burned down again and has not been rebuilt. Later the property was sold to non-monastics. In 1639 (*Yimao* year of *Chongzhen*) it was redeemed and made into a monastic dormitory.

The Western Tripitika Hall (*xi zang dian* 西藏殿) was south of the Amitabha Hall. It was built in 1394 (*Jiashu* year of *Hongwu*) by the monk Huiming. Because the Eastern Tripitika Hall was gone (*fei* 废), it was relocated here. It had two compounds (*zuo* 座), front and back (*shangxia* 上下). It was destroyed during the *Chenghua* period (1465-

Zhangzhou remained independent with Fuzhou under Wu-Yue and Jianzhou and Dingzhou under the Southern Tang. Dong Si'an was made prefect of Zhangzhou while Liu Congxiao was prefect of Quanzhou (Schaffer 2006:53-62).

1487). [1.11b] Today, the land of the front compound and the land of the back compound have been combined by the local gentry to use for dormitories for monks of the Land and Water Temple.

The Meng Hall (*meng tang* 蒙堂) was west of the main hall and behind the Donor's Ancestral Hall. It was built by Miao'en during the *Zhiyuan* period (1279-1294). It served as the off-duty resting place for the general manager (*jian yuan* 监院). At the end of the Yuan dynasty it burned down and has not been rebuilt. Today the land has been sold at a discount to non-monastics.

The preceding nine places no longer exist.

Neighboring Cloisters (*zhiyuan* 支院)

1. **The Venerated Site Cloister** (*zunsheng yuan* 尊胜院) was built in the *Chuigong* period (685-688) of the Tang dynasty by the head patriarch, grand master Kuanghu at the place where the mulberry trees bloomed lotus blossoms. During the Song dynasty it became a public⁴⁸ institute of [Buddist] study (*shifang jiaoyuan* 十方教院). Benguan 本观 first built a Great Compassion Pavilion (*dabei ge* 大悲阁) and made a 1000 armed and eyed Guanyin statue. [1.12a] In 1155 (25th year of *Shaoxing*), it burned down. It had

⁴⁸ "Public" meaning that leadership was not hereditary and study was open to monks of other schools and masters.

changed leaders (*zhu* 主) six times. From the beginning, none of them were fit for the position. In 1198 (fourth year of *Qingyuan*), Faxuan 法瑄 built a different hall. Liang Kejun 梁克俊 and Li Chenshi 李訖实, members of the local gentry, assisted; Chen 訖 recorded this event. When Kezun 可遵, Shouchang 寿长, and Youpeng 有朋 led this cloister; they were all renowned.⁴⁹ The two Chan masters Weishen 惟慎 and Taichu 太初 took refuge here. After the branch temples were united, the abbot Qizu moved this pavilion to another place. It was destroyed at the end of the Yuan dynasty and has not been rebuilt. The land was lost to non-monastics. In 1632 (*Renshen* year of Chongzhen), the monk Jiehuang 戒瑄 redeemed this land, and Mr. Chen Xuankui 陈烜奎, a member of the local gentry, built a pavilion on it.

2. The East Pagoda Cloister (*dongta yuan* 东塔院). During the Xiantong period (860-873) of the Tang dynasty, the monk-sage (*shengseng* 圣僧) Wencheng 文偃 built a wooden pagoda in east of the temple; he then built this cloister. His disciple Hongze 弘则 was known for his strict adherence to the vinaya. Of the decline and flourishing during the Song dynasty we have no records. [1.12b] In 1363 (23rd year/ *Kuimao* of *Zhizheng*), the abbot (*zhushan* 住山, lit. "mountain-dweller [monk]") Kongji 空极 rebuilt it. In the *dinghai* year⁵⁰ [*sic.*] of the *Hongzhi* period (1488-1505), the monk Tingfu 庭敷 made repairs. It was later sold to some scholars (*shi ren* 士人). During the *Wanli* period (1573-1619), the monk Zhengpai 正派 redeemed it and there he resided. The vice

⁴⁹ These three were known for their poetry.

⁵⁰ The year appears to be a mistake for there is no *dinghai* 丁亥 year for the *Hongzhe* period.

minister (⁵¹*shilang* 侍郎) Mr. Zhan Yangpi 詹仰庇 wrote a name board for his residence which read, "Forest of Poetry and Bed of Chan" (*shi lin chan ta* 诗林禅榻). In 1639 (*Yimao* year of *Chongzhen*), the monk Daozhao 道昭 revived it and redeemed its farmland; he built an Amitabha hall at the old address of the pagoda hall (*ta dian* 塔殿).

3. **The Establishing Dharma Cloister** (*jian fa yuan* 建法院) was built in 905 (second year of *Tianyou*) by the prefect (*cishi* 刺史)⁵² of Quanzhou Wang Yanbin 王延彬 as a residence for the vinaya master Hongze 弘则 so that he could administer the precepts and teach the vinaya (授毗尼). His disciple Liangyuan 良苑 also taught the vinaya here. His grand disciples Luoyan 洛彦 and Benfu 本敷 both achieved renown.

4. **The Eastern Vinaya Bare-Shoulder Cloister** (*dong lü tanbo yuan* 东律袒膊院). The temple originally had the Eastern Vinaya Hut (*dong lu an* 东律庵). During the *Dazhong* period (847-859) of the Tang dynasty, [1.13a] the prefect (*tai shou* 太守) changed it to a cloister and invited the divine monk (*shen seng* 神僧) Bare-shoulder monk (*Tanbo heshang* 袒膊和尚) to live here. Generation after generation the vinaya has been transmitted. Later, the mountain Buddha? (*shan fo* 山佛)⁵³ Guozhao 果炤 studied here.

⁵¹ Normally there were two vice administrators in each of the six ministries below the Department of State Affairs. (Hucker 1985: 426-427)

⁵² The head of Quanzhou prefecture, akin to a governor.

⁵³ Earlier references are to the "mountain monk" here it reads "mountain Buddha." Could this be a mistake in the text?

5. **The Old Lotus Sutra Cloister** (*jiu fahua yuan* 旧法华院).⁵⁴ We do not know who was its founder, who has been abbot, nor how many monks it has had. The Quanzhou prefect (*zhou mu* 州牧) Lin Hu 林鄠 changed its affiliation to Chan and invited Chan master Changji 常岌 as its first generation abbot. His fourth generation grand-disciple (*sun* 孙) Shao'an 绍安 and his seventh generation grand-disciple Fashu 法殊 were both well-known vinaya masters.

6. **The Western Arhat Cloister** (*xi luohan yuan* 西罗汉院) was founded west of the temple by the sage-monk Lingyan 令言 in 848 (second year of *Yuji*) during the reign of Tang Xuanzong 宣宗. His disciple Xuanyi 宣壹 was a well known vinaya master and his eighth generation grand-disciple Benguan 本观 was a Chan master.

7. **The Arhat Pavilion** (*luohan ge* 罗汉阁) was east of the temple. The sage-monk Daozhao 道昭 lived there. He was considered an emanation (*huashen* 化身)⁵⁵ of Manjushri. [1.13b] His grand-disciple Weifeng 惟凤 leader of Fuyan 福岩 was a Chan master.

8. **The Pure and Cool Grove** (*qing liang jingshe* 清凉精舍)⁵⁶ was founded by Wang Yanbin, the Quanzhou prefectural governor (*zhoumu* 州牧), as a residence for the master

⁵⁴ 法华 ("Glorious Dharma") is short for the Lotus Sutra, thus my choice of translation. It can also be used to refer to the Tiantai school.

⁵⁵ *Huashen*, i.e. *nirmāṇakāya*, a manifestation or incarnation body (of an enlightened being).

⁵⁶ "Grove" or *jingshe* 精舍 is used to indicate a monastery, an abode of monastics (e.g. the "Bamboo Grove").

of doctrine (*jiangshi* 讲师) Shuduan 叔端. His grand-disciples Shishou 师寿, Quanyong 全勇 and Huicheng 惠成 all achieved renown. In 1175 (second year of *Chunxi*) in the Song dynasty, the monk Benyi was leader of this cloister. In 1155 (25 year of *Shaoxing*) the temple burned down and was rebuilt. A revolving sutra shelf was built and 10,000 Bodhisattvas were carved on Pure and Cool mountain (*qingliang shan* 清凉山).⁵⁷

9. **The Outer Pure Land of White-Robed [Guanyin] Cloister** (*jingtuwai baiyi yuan* 净土外白衣院). The teaching monk Chuqin 楚勤 lived here during the *Tianfu* period (901-903) of the Tang dynasty. His grand-disciples Jurui 居锐 and Miheng 秘亨 were proficient in teaching. Miheng's disciple Kezun 可遵 was a Chan master.

10. **The Dizang Cloister** (*dizang yuan* 地藏院)⁵⁸ was in the temple's Pure Land alley (*jingtu xiang* 净土巷). Zhu Hongxiao 朱弘宵, the Tang dynasty military supervisor (*pan jun shi* 判军事), founded the cloister and bought farmland for the monk Xingzhao 行昭 to live. His grand-disciples Jingbin 景彬 and Yibo 义波 were both well known for performing blessing ceremonies (*xingfu* 兴福).

[1.14a]

11. **The Compassion and Kindness Cloister** (*cien yuan* 慈恩院) was built by the Tang dynasty prefect Wang Yanbin as a residence for Chan master Xili 袭礼. After he died, the monk Chuqin moved here from White-Robe [Cloister].

⁵⁷ It is not said who built these items, nor any further information about Pure and Cool Mountain.

⁵⁸ Dizang [Pusa]- S. Kṣitigarbha bodhisattva, J. Jizo.

12. **The Nine Buddhas Cloister** (*jiu fo yuan* 九佛院). We do not know who founded it.

The Chan master Congyun 从允 became a monk (*chu jia* 出家) here. Later his disciples Xuanying 玄应, Huaiju 怀矩 and Fahui 法辉 were all well known.

13. **The Flourishing Dharma Cloister** (*fa xing yuan* 法兴院). We do not know when it was founded. The old eminent monk Wenzhan 文展 lived here.

14. **The East Golden Body Cloister** (*dong jin shen yuan* 东金身院) was built in 838 (third year of Tiancheng) in the Tang dynasty by Wang Yanbin east of the temple. He invited the Chan master Tingzan 挺赞 to live there. Chen Jingtong 陈敬通, Commissioner of Military Training (*xun lian shi* 训练使), cast a golden statue and donated it, hence the cloister's name. His grand-disciple Yongning 永宁 became abbot of Luoshan 罗山 succeeding Ciming 慈明.

15. **The Pure Recitation Cloister** (*qing yin yuan* 清吟院) was built east of the main hall during the Youzhong period (904-907) by the prefect Wang Yanbin. [1.14b] Master (*fa shi* 法师) Wenchao 文超 lived there. He was excellent at writing poems, hence the name "Pure Recitation." Later, his disciple Wuhui's 无晦 essays were widely known.

16. **The New Lotus Sutra Cloister** (*xin fahua yuan* 新法华院) was founded by Wang Yanbin in the northwest of the temple. Master Shengquan 省权 lived there. It was called [*Fahua*] because Quan was a master of the Lotus Sutra.

17. **The Eastern Heavenly King Cloister** (*dong tian wang yuan* 东天王院). We do not know when it was founded but at the time of the five dynasties (907-960), the eminent monk Xingtong 行通 lived here. Later, there were Ziqi 子琦 and Daoying 道英 who were both Chan masters of wide renown.

18. **The Tranquil Cloistering Hermitage** (*qing yin yuan* 清隐院) was in northwest of the temple. It was founded by the prefect Wang Jichong 王继崇 in 930 (first year of *Changxing*) in the Tang dynasty. He invited Chan master Shiji 师寂 to live here.

19. **The Repaying Kindness Cloister** (*bao en yuan* 报恩院) was in the temple's Pure Land alley. We do not know who founded it. The Tang dynasty master Xicen 栖岑 came from here.

[I.15a]

20. **The Repaying Filial Debt Precept and Rules Cloister** (*bao qu jie lü yuan* 报劬戒律院). During the *Zhenming* period (915-920) of the Liang dynasty, the prefect Wang Yanbin was building this cloister west of the temple but died before it was finished. His son Jiwu 继武 completed his father's ambition and named it "*Repaying Filial Debt*

Precepts and Rules Cloister." He invited the vinaya master Xicen to live here. His grand-disciple Quanpu 全朴 possessed noble conduct.

21. **The Ancestral Offerings Cloister** (*feng xian yuan* 奉先院) was in the northwest of the temple. It was built during the Five Dynasties by the eminent monk Xixia 栖霞.

22. **The Manjushri Eastern Cloister** (*wenshu dong yuan* 文殊东院). The founding date has been lost. Master Fazhou 法周 studied here.

23. **The Western Pagoda Cloister** (*xi ta yuan* 西塔院). In 916 (second year of *Zhenming*) in the Liang dynasty (one of the "five dynasties") the king of Fujian (Min) built the west pagoda. This cloister was then established as a place to invite the famous and virtuous [monks] to live. Afterwards, a truly great number of people came to study. During the *Yuanyou* period (1086-1093) of the Song dynasty, *taishou* 太守 Chen Kang 陈康 changed it to a public Chan temple (*shi fang chan yuan* 十方禅院) [1.15b] and invited great-wisdom Chan master Wenyou 文宥 to be the inaugural abbot. The cloister became dilapidated and was rebuilt by master Zhicong 至聰. Later, Zongyi 宗己 was well-known for doctrine (*jiao* 教), and Qinglao 庆老 was well-known for Chan.

24. **The Shangfang Cloister** (*shangfang yuan* 上方院) was built in 957 (end of the *Baoda* period of the Southern Tang) by the Chan master Qinghuo 清豁 as a place to live. Later, he became the abbot of Baofu 保福 temple in Zhangzhou 漳州.

25. **The Sizhou Vinaya Cloister** (*sizhou lü yuan* 泗洲律院). During the *Zhenming* period (915-920) of the Liang dynasty, vinaya master Zhihan 知瑡 became the first patriarch (*kai shan* 开山). Later, grand-disciples Benzong 本宗 and Youpeng 有朋 became well-known for vinaya and Chan respectively.

26. **The Yushi Cloister** (*yushi yuan* 浴室院). We do not know who founded it. Master Yiying 义英 was from here. His grand disciple Fachao 法超 was a Chan master.

[1.16a]

27. **The Eastern Cloister of the Sixth Patriarch** (*liu zu dong yuan* 六祖东院) was founded during the *Shenguan* period (938-942) of the Southern Tang dynasty by the area commander (*zhou shuai* 州帅) Liu Congxiao 留从效. He invited the Chan monk Ruyue 如岳 to live here. His grand-disciple Zhitian 志添 was also well-known for Chan.⁵⁹

28. **The Medicine Buddha Cloister** (*yaoshi yuan* 药师院). We do not know who established it. During the Five Dynasties the eminent monk Daocen 道岑 became a monk (*chu jia* 出家) here.

29. **The Resting Hermit Chan Cloister** (*qi yin chan yuan* 栖隐禅院). When, during the middle of the *Baoda* period (943-957) of the Southern Tang dyansty, Dong Si'an 董思

⁵⁹ See *Sizhi*:I.38b for the biography of Zhitian.

安 died in Zhangzhou , his wife, Ying Chuajun 颖川君, and son Quanwu 全武 built this cloister as a place to make offerings for his prosperity in the world of the dead. At first it followed the master-disciple hereditary system. During the Song dynasty, minister of Quanzhou (*wei zhou zhi* 为州者) changed it to a public Chan cloister. The two Chan masters Ziran 自然 and Youping 有评 both served as abbot here.

30. **The Bodhi Cloister** (*puti yuan* 菩提院) . We do not know when it arose. During the Five Dynasties period, the Chan master Faqian 法骞 became a monk here. [1.16b] He later became the abbot of Longshou 隆寿 temple in Zhangzhou.

31. **The Tianyou Cloister** (*tianyou yuan* 天祐院) was founded during the *Tianyou* period (904-907) of the Tang dynasty and so received its name. Later, the eminent monk Jisong was a gifted resident (*ying ji* 颖籍) here. His grand-disciple Defeng 德风 was also had exemplary character (*zhi xing* 至行).

32. **The Deep Sand Cloister** (*shen sha yuan* 深沙院). During the Five Dynasties period the eminent monk Weichong 惟宠 first founded this cloister and lived here. His disciple Daohong 道弘 was elegant in speech and his grand-disciples Weiji 惟吉 and Shouzhen 守珍 both had exemplary character.

33. **The Western Shangsheng Yuan** (*xi shangsheng yuan* 西上生院). Its founding origins are unclear. The eminent monk Yuchang 禹昌 lived here.

34. **The Grass Hut Cloister** (*cao tang yuan* 草堂院) was converted from the Dharma-Flower White-Robed Cloister. During the Duangong period (988-989) of the Song dynasty, the Chan monk Dingzhu 定诸 sequestered himself here. His grand-disciple Zong??宗 also possessed his master's manner (*zufeng* 祖风).

35. **The Fourishing Prosperity Chan Cloister** (*xing fu chan yuan* 兴福禅远) was first named the "Congee Cloister" because the head monk (*zhu seng* 主僧) who established it was the head chef preparing congee for 1000 monks at this place. [I.17a] At first it followed the master-disciple hereditary system. During the *Xining* period (1068-1077) of the Song dynasty, the prefect Chenshu 陈枢 changed it to a public Chan cloister and invited Chan master Benguan 本观 to give teachings (*kai fa* 开法) here. Later, the Chan master Youming 有明 continued his leadership (*ji zhu* 继主) here.

36. **The Eastern Sizhou Cloister** (*dong sizhou yuan* 东泗洲院) was founded by Li Wei 李微, a military judge of Quanzhou, in the east of the temple. He invited the eminent monk Puji 普吉 to live here. His grand-disciples Wenshu 文淑 had exemplary character, Shouchang 寿长 was abbot of the Venerated Site Cloister, Chanjiao 阐教 and Zongyong 宗永 were eloquent speakers.

37. **The Thousand Buddha Cloister** (*qianfo yuan* 千佛院). Its founding is unclear. It is said that there was a leader here who chanted the Lotus Sutra everyday and a dove that tamely listened. It was later reborn as the Chan master Jiehuan 戒环.

38. **The Baosheng Cloister** (*baosheng yuan* 宝胜院). Its founding is unclear. Jiehuan lived here; he wrote commentaries on important points of three sutras.

[1.17b]

39. **The Guanzhu Cloister** (*guanzhu yuan* 观主院). Its founding is unclear. The vinaya master Dunzhao 敦炤 lived here during the *Jianyan* (1127-1130) period of the Song dynasty. He is the one who rebuilt the ordination platform.

40. **The Eastern Seven Buddha Cloister** (*qi fo dong yuan* 七佛东院). The date of the initial founding is not clear. The Song dynasty Chan master Sizu 嗣祖 studied here. In the middle of the Jiatai period (1201-1204), he repaired this cloister. He later became the abbot of Chengtian temple 承天.

41. **The Samantabhadra Cloister** (*pu xian yuan* 普贤院). Its founding is unclear. The Song dynasty Chan master Zongda 宗达 lived here. He later became the abbot of Chongfu temple 崇福.

42. **The Cloister of Bliss** (*jile yuan* 极乐院) is west of the temple. During the Chunxi period (1174-1189) of the Song dynasty, the eminent monk Liaoxing and his disciple Shoujing 守净 founded this cloister to use for offerings to the great sage of the West. And so it was nicknamed the Hall of Amitabha. In 1393 (*Kuiyou* year of *Hongwu*), the monk Fajian 法坚 rebuilt it. In 1558 (37th year of *Jiaqing*), the Water and Land Temple (Shuilu si 水陆寺) was seized by some rich and powerful people (*haoyou*); [1.18a] since those monks then had no place to stay this hall was given to them as a place to offer incense and practice.

[The following cloisters are listed by name, no additional information is given.]

Bao fu yuan 保福院, Ren wang yuan 仁王院, Ming lü yuan 明律院, Wan sui yuan 万岁院, Lü xi yuan 律西院, Zi fu yuan 资福院, Yanshou yuan 延寿院, Huayan yuan 华严院, Guang yan yuan 光严院, Xi fang yuan 西方院, Chong jiao yuan 崇教院, Chi ming yuan 持明院, Tianzhu yuan 天竺院, Xi xian yuan 栖贤院, Yin ming yuan 因明院, Kongque yuan 孔雀院, Puguang yuan 普光院, Bao zun yuan 保尊院, Bei chen yuan 北辰院, Chongguo yuan 崇国院, Lü tang yuan 律堂院, Sizhou yuan 泗洲院, Mile yuan 弥勒院, Mituo yuan 弥陀院, Tian gong yuan 天宫院, Ban ge yuan 板阁院, Jing ming yuan 净名院, Dong shijia yuan 东释迦院, Dong guanyin yuan 东观音院, Dong dabeì yuan 东大悲院, Xin luohan yuan 新罗汉院, Xi wenshu yuan 西文殊院, Xin shangsheng yuan 新上生院, Xi da bei yuan 西大悲院, Dong luohan yuan 东罗汉院

[1.18b]

Sizhou dong yuan 泗洲东院, Xin mile yuan 新弥勒院, Xi sizhou yuan 西泗洲院, Dong mile yuan 东弥勒院, Hua dizang yuan 花地藏院, Qi fo xi yuan 七佛西院, Lü shijia yuan 律释迦院, Xi weimo yuan 西维摩院, Hua sizhou yuan 花泗洲院, Puti dong yuan 菩提东院, Pu ti zhong yuan 菩提中院, Puti xi yuan 菩提西院, Lü guan yin yuan 律观音院, Xin guan yin yuan 新观音院, Xi guanyin yuan 西观音院, Puxian qian yuan 普贤前院, Xi shijia yuan 西释迦院, Dong wei mo yuan 东维摩院, Mile dong yuan 弥勒东院, Mile xi yuan 弥勒西院, Mile nei yuan 弥勒内院, Xi dizang yuan 西地藏院, Liu zu zhong yuan 六祖中院, Liuzu xi yuan 六祖西院, Bei tianwang yuan 北天王院, Xi tianwang

yuan 西天王院, Lü dizang yuan 律地藏院, Shen sha xi yuan 深沙西院, Bei jin shen yuan 北金身院, Xi feng xian yuan 西奉先院, Bei sizhou yuan 北泗洲院, Fahua baiyi yuan 法华白衣院, Puti nei baiyi yuan 菩提内白衣院, Jingtū'nei baiyi yuan 净土内白衣院

[1.19a]

Dong tianwang qian yuan 东天王前院, Puti wai bai yiyuan 菩提外白衣院, Tahou dizang yuan 塔后地藏院, Puti dizang yuan 菩提地藏院, Dong tianwang qian dizang yuan 东天王前地藏院, Xifang luohan yuan 西方罗汉院.

The Neighboring Cloisters used to number 117. After being united all these cloisters were abolished (*fei* 废); only their names were left. Dim traces of three cloisters still just exist. These are the cloisters of Venerated Site, Eastern Pagoda and Bliss.

The Mengguan ("Observing Dream") **Hall** (*mengguan tang* 梦观堂) was west of the temple. The Chan monk Dagui built it during the Zhizheng period (1341-1368) of the Yuan dynasty and recorded this himself. In the middle is a the Xijian Pavilion which he also recorded. Today, both are gone (*fei* 废) and cannot be investigated.

The Western Mountain Pagoda (*xi shan ta* 西山塔) was five *li* west of the city. The Inaugural abbot, Chan master Miao'en, first built it during the *Zhiyuan* period (1279-1294). Inside he interred the bones of past abbots in the middle and the bones of monks in the sides. [1.19b] Afterwards, the second abbot, Chan master Qizu, built another pagoda

to the right. Chan master Mengguan built a third pagoda to the left. The tomb of the Elder Huang is also to the left. Beside these was a pagoda hut (*ta an* 塔庵).

Afterword (*lunyue* 论曰)

The old temple of the purple cloud once possessed vast tracts of land and as many as a thousand or more residents. Since the *Yongle* period (1403-1424), there has long been a void in leadership. The Chan ethos has gradually washed away (*min* 泯) and the venerable old monks have dispersed like clouds to the four directions. Those who [have stayed and] guard it like a "chicken rib," see it as an heirloom.⁶⁰ Since there has been a decline in the virtuous, outside donors have stopped coming. While its land is broad, the people are few. Gossip has arisen. Seventy to eighty percent of the temple's former land could not be preserved. Nevertheless, due to its solid foundation of good management (*mianzui* 绵蕞), the sound of sutras and the flame of the Buddha have not been extinguished. Recent years have seen the restoration of the ordination platform and the dharma hall. [1.20a] Fortunately, the main hall has also been renovated. It seems like a time of renewal (*qiri laifu* 七日来复).⁶¹ We should respond to this opportunity at our best

⁶⁰ "Chicken rib" as a small bone with little on it represents something that offers little but people still do not want to throw it away or waste it. It comes from a tale about the period of the Three Kingdoms and is memorialized in the phrase "*wei ru ji lei* 味如鸡肋" ("taste like chicken rib"). In 217 CE, King Cao Cao 曹操 was engaged in a prolonged campaign for Hanzhong 汉中 against the Han king Liu Bei 刘备. One night over a bowl of chicken rib soup he realized that Hanzhong was like a chicken rib that didn't offer him much and so he decided to leave it behind.

⁶¹ *qi ri lai fu* 七日来复 - lit. "returning in seven days" is taken from the 24th hexagram in the *Yi Jing* (Book of Changes) and indicates the return of *yang* after a cycle of *yin*. In this case a return of vitality to the temple after a period of decline.

even though we don't know whether this recovery will be only partial or more complete (*weilin weitai* 为临为泰).⁶² If we are only concerned about old property not being returned rather than practicing virtue, then, even if all the buildings and property were recovered, what would be the point of living here! If we can diligently practice virtue, then even in shabby buildings and old rooms we can still sit cross-legged (i.e. practice/meditate). It goes without saying that one can live like a snail in its shell, in a grass hut which can just accommodate a length of seven feet (*qi chi* 七尺 i.e. a human body). Moreover, all people have Buddha nature, everyone can shine. Who knows whether or not another elder Huang may reappear today. It all depends on the self-exertion of you gentlemen!

⁶² Yuanxian refers to hexagrams 19 (*lin* 临 "overseeing") and 11 (*tai* 泰 "tranquility") to express different ways the renewal may proceed.

The Record of Quanzhou Kaiyuan Temple Chapter Two

The Record of Bodhisattvas (*Kaishi zhi* 开士志) [Biographical Accounts of Kaiyuan's Eminent Monks]

[1.20b]

The Purple Cloud has always been considered a famous temple. Could it be the best in all of Fujian from its gorgeous buildings with ornate eaves alone? Rather it is from having so many extraordinary and precious distinguished men having nurtured their virtue and expressed their talents at this place. 可光我觉皇氏也 (Making the Jueguan Buddha family proud.). Their eminent footprints have not vanished; records from the past can be examined. Today I select the most outstanding and record these "Bodhisattvas."

1. **Shi¹ Kuanghu** 释匡护 is the patriarch of Kaiyuan's Venerated Site [Cloister]. His surname was Wang 王 and he followed the vinaya very carefully. In summer, when he taught the *Shang Sheng* Sutra 上生经 (Sutra of Maitreya's Ascent to Tusita Heaven), thousands of people would attend. In 687 (third year of *Chuigong*) in the Tang dynasty, in the orchard of Quanzhou citizen Huang Shougong, the mulberry trees bloomed white lotus blossoms. Hearing of this, the local authorities² petitioned to have a temple built. The emperor assented and granted it the name "Lotus Flower." The local authorities invited master [Kuanghu] to be the abbot. The place for practicing the dharma was established and where lotuses had bloomed became the Venerated Site Cloister.

¹ Shi 释, is used as the family name for monastics, who have formally left home to become sons and daughters of the Buddha. Śākyamuni Buddha in Chinese is rendered *Shijiamouni fo* 释迦牟尼佛. The first character of the two-character word *shijia* (Śākya), *shi*, became adopted as the surname for monastics.

² *you si* 有司 is used as a generic term for the authorities in an area. Such authorities are commonly prefects or district magistrates (Hucker 1985: 587).

[1.21a]

2. **Shi Wencheng** 释文偈 was from Xianyou 仙游.³ In the middle of the *Yuanhe* period (806-820) in the Tang dynasty, he studied Buddhism in the Xianyuan 仙苑 ("Immortal's Academy ") of his city. He was naturally endowed with knowledge of the way, like a stone that can serve as a utensil without being carved. In 860 (first year of *Xiantong*), the prefect of Quanzhou⁴ upon hearing of his reputation invited him to come. When he arrived he began to build a five-storied wooden pagoda in the southeast of the temple. He put containers at the four gates in which he collected donations; on a daily basis he let donors put money in and workers withdraw their salaries themselves. It happened that some who took more than their share became lost on their way home. Afterwards, no one dared take more than their due. The master's manner was principled (*gao jie* 高洁). Tranquil, he kept society with himself. He never handled money and for thirty years his shadow never went beyond the temple gate. He continually chanted the Diamond Sutra and his room became bright as day [even during the evening]. His wash basin was never dry and the water would turn hot or cold as needed. He passed away in 876 (third year of *Qianfu*). The prefect⁵ attended the funeral service in white.⁶ The master made a final request, "I must be buried at the place where the incense goes out."⁷ A storm blew in and [1.21b] extinguished the incense, and the coffin was lodged in a crack

³ Xianyou 仙游(lit. "wandering immortal") is a district (*xian*) which lies north of Quanzhou and west of Putian 莆田 in the province of Fujian.

⁴ The prefect of Quanzhou from 860-863 was Dou Shigun 窦师袞 (Clark 1981: 381).

⁵ Zheng Gongchuo 郑公绰 served as Quanzhou prefect from 874-877 (Clark 1981: 382).

⁶ As if a member of his "family" i.e. a disciple.

⁷ In other words, the coffin was to be carried until the incense had burned out.

that appeared in the rock jutting out from a cliff like a crescent moon. Still today, no birds will build a nest here. People call this rock *bantou* 板头⁸ pagoda.

3. **Shi Hongze** 释弘则 was from Wenling 温陵 (i.e. Quanzhou) and studied with Wencheng at the Eastern Pagoda Cloister. In 862 (third year of *Shentong*), he took full precepts at Xingshan 兴善 Temple at the capital (i.e. Chang'an). He went to Jianfu 荐福 Temple to study the precepts of the Four-part vinaya (*sifenlu* 四分律, *Dharmaguptakavinaya*)⁹ with vinaya master Chuanzong 传总. In 894 (beginning of *Qianning* period), the prefect (*fuzhu* 府主) Wang Shengui¹⁰ invited this master to administer monastic precepts at the ordination platform. In 905 (second year of *Tianyou*), Wang Yanbin built a cloister named "Establishing Dharma" (*Jianfa* 建法) to serve as his residence and as a place for him to teach the vinaya. Students gathered here and listened respectfully. This master lived simply; keeping nothing extra, he sometimes found himself without enough food to eat. Although noblemen offered him fancy gifts, he would not accept them. Yanbin wrote a prose poem for him which read: "Don't blame me for only prostrating here; [1.22a] there is no one like my master in the temple." This master rarely fell ill. One day, after bathing and shaving, he gave his final admonishments to his disciples, then passed away.

⁸ literally "wooden-board head" pagoda

⁹ These were the standard monastic precepts at this time in East Asia.

¹⁰ Served as Quanzhou prefect from 894-904 (Clark 1981:385).

4. **Shi Zhiliang** 释智亮, his place of origin is not known.¹¹ He arrived at Kaiyuan during the Tang dynasty and lived in the Eastern Vinaya Alley (*Dong Lu Xiang*). With one shoulder bared, he begged on the streets even in the cold and snow so people called him the bare-shouldered monk (*tanbo heshang* 袒膊和尚). He later sequestered himself on Mount Daiyun in Dehua 德化. Some people went to ask him questions and found him sitting amongst debris with a tiger tamely at his side. More and more people sought him out. Whether they asked for sun or rain, they would get it. The prefect of Quanzhou (*zhou shou* 州守) went to him to ask for rain and saw that he was merely an ascetic monk (*tou tuo* 头陀, S. *dhuta*) so without formal obeisance he asked for rain. The monk said, "Sit outside my *liqiao* 丽譙¹² for three days and there should be rain." On the third day there was no rain and the sun was even hotter so the prefect in doubt was even more disrespectful. At noon, clouds suddenly rolled in from the northwest followed by a heavy rain; the water rose three feet. [1.22b] Alarmed, the prefect wanted the rain to stop. The master said, "If the prefect comes, it will be done." When the prefect arrived the rain ceased. The prefect converted the Eastern Vinaya Hut (*an*) into a cloister (*yuan*) to serve as the monk's residence; he lived there for twelve years.

One day he suddenly took out his herbal soup, rose, burned incense, sat down, said his farewells and passed away. His disciples encased his corpse in mud and placed it in a hall where it became a source of prosperity (*fu*) for the people of Quanzhou. During the *Shaoxing* period (1131-1162) the temple burned down and this hall was the only one to survive. A man named Chenze 陈则 from Jinjiang 晋江 one night dreamed the master

¹¹ He is thought to have been from India.

¹² A platform upon which the monk sat when requesting rain.

spoke to him, "Change your name when taking the exam and change your place of birth to Yongchun 永春 then you will succeed." Mr. Chenze did as instructed and it came to pass. Such is his spiritual power (*shen* 神).

5. **Shi Changji** 释常岌 was a disciple of Zhiguang 智广 from Jiuzuo 九座 temple as well as a disciple of Yanguan 盐官 and Wudeng 无等. At first he lived with Guangan 广庵 in Fuyang 富阳. He later moved to Nanshan 南山. One day, while traveling with Guangan, he saw that there were twelve shadows behind him so he rubbed his back and said, "Luckily there is nothing happening. [1.23a] Why did you go in the ghost cave to play with the *jinghun* 精魂 (the yang spirit)?"¹³ Guangan looked back and asked, "What are you talking about?" The master said, "Such a good fir tree shouldn't be here to block the road." Guangan said, "That's not the reason." The master asked, "What is the reason?" to which Guangan replied, "From here to Qingyuan 清源¹⁴ it is three or four miles (*cheng* 程)." The master said, "The thief's body has already appeared." After this his reputation spread.

The Quanzhou prefect (*zhou mu* 州牧) Lin Hu 林鄠¹⁵ changed Kaiyuan's Old Lotus Sutra Cloister's affiliation to Chan and invited master Changji as its first generation abbot.

¹³ Ghost cave is used to represent a dark and dumb state of meditation.

¹⁴ Qingyuan is a famous mountain on the edge of Quanzhou city; it is home to many religious sites such as the tomb of master Hongyi. Its most famous site is a large stone statue of Laozi.

¹⁵ Clark 1981: 382 has Lin Hu 林鄠 serving as Quanzhou prefect from 879-880. The "Hu" character given in the *Sizhi* resembles 鄠, but can not be found in dictionaries, so I consider the *Sizhi* writing a mistake.

6. **Shi Lingyan** 释令言 was from Xianyou 仙游 and his surname was Chen 陈.

When he left home he practiced austerities (*kuxing* 苦行). He later traveled to Yan 燕 and Zhao 赵 propagating the *Lotus* and [*Mile*] *Shang Sheng* Sutras. When he returned he founded a cloister in the western part of Kaiyuan temple called "Arhat." He lived there and often stayed up all night chanting the *Lotus Sutra*. Scholars of those two sutras often crowded around his gate like dust. Upon his death he was buried on North Mountain, but the pall bearers felt the coffin was unusually light. When they opened it to check there was nothing there. People called him the "vanishing-body monk."

[1.23b]

7. **Shi Xuanyi** 释宣壹 was the nephew of Lingyan. At the time of his birth many small white birds gathered in his family's courtyard and the neighbors celebrated this. In his youth he traveled and studied; he mastered the sutras and excelled in writing. Following his uncle Lingyan, he abandoned Confucian studies, shaved his head and took the full precepts. He went to have his fortune read¹⁶ and began teaching the *Sifenlü* 四分律 (*Dharmaguptaka vinaya*), the *Abhidharmakośa* (*Jushe* 俱舍) and the *Nirvana Sutra* (*Niepan* 涅槃) which he had thoroughly studied. Because of this both laypersons and monks took refuge under him. Keeping himself in line with the vinaya (检身以律), he was pure as ice and frost 皎如冰霜. His one room was an oasis of peace furnished with pure water and willow twig 一室晏如,惟清水杨枝而已. In 880, the beginning of the *Guangming* period of the Tang dynasty, the Quanzhou prefect Lin Hu gave the master the position of Sangha administrator (*sengzheng* 僧正). Soon afterwards, Wang Shenzhi, the

¹⁶ *qiu ling zhan* 求灵瞻 lit. "ask the spirit view"

vice-commander-in-chief of Fujian,¹⁷ received permission from the emperor to erect a platform for Tang prosperity (*fu tang* 福唐) and appointed the master to conduct ordinations. Altogether 3,000 people were ordained there. Afterwards, Shenzhi offered him garments of gold and silver, but the master refused them all. After his passing, the prefect Wang Yanbin 王延彬 built a pagoda for him in which he interred the master's body (or relics from his whole body? 葬其全身)

[1.24a]

8. **Shi Shuduan** 释叔端 was from Xianyou and his surname was Chen 陈. When he was a youth¹⁸ he had the ambition to leave the world. He told his parents but they wouldn't listen so he called out Guanyin's name everyday asking for his wish to be fulfilled. Finally they (his parents) listened and he took refuge under vinaya master Weixian at Longhua temple and became a novice. It was not long before he became fully ordained. He left and traveled around Wu-Yue 吴越 studying all the sutras. Plumbing the depths of the ocean of the teaching, there was nothing beyond his grasp. At this time there was an arrogant layperson in Bohai 勃海 whom the master could always defeat in debate, thus his reputation grew. During the *Qianfu* period (874-879), he entered seclusion in the mountains for ten years. The prefect Wang Yanbin heard about his practice and invited him many times to come out of retreat. When the master finally obliged, Yanbin dared not express his displeasure and built the Pure and Cool Grove as his residence and invited him to be the permanent teacher-in-residence at the temple. He bestowed upon him the imperial title Bright Teacher 明教.

¹⁷ Previously Wang Shenzhi was designated the King of Fujian (*Min wang*). see section on Western pagoda.

¹⁸ *cheng tong* - a non-teenage schoolboy

The master was very strict in following the vinaya. He lived his whole life knowing nothing of taverns. [1.24b] He wrote dozens of volumes (*juan* 卷), among them *Yi Yuan Sou Yin* 义苑搜隐 and *Zong Jing Si Yuan* 宗镜四缘.

9. **Daozhao** 道昭 was initially named Daowen 道闻. He was from Jinjiang 晋江 and his surname was Wang. When he was born there was a purple aura around his head. He took refuge, was tonsured and ordained under a master from Kaiyuan temple. Later, he studied the *Shangsheng Sutra* and the *Weishi Lun* 唯识论 under master Shuduan and gathered profound understanding. During the *Tianyou* period (904-907), he met Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰义存.¹⁹ Yicun held his hand and asked, "Do you have parents?" Master replied, "If not, from where is one born?" Xuefeng said, "This boy will be a great dharma master." In 933 (first year of *Longqi*) of Min, the prefect Wang Yanbin reported to the emperor and received the title of *Mingfu* 命服 for the master and changed his name from Wen to Zhao. In 939 (first year of the *Yonglong* period), the *Jun Changli* 郡长吏 Yu Tingying 余廷英 appointed the master as the permanent teacher-in-residence. His teachings showered the land far and wide.

In 945 (third year of *Tiande*), the prefect Wang Jixun 王继勋 received imperial approval for the building of an ordination platform for the bestowal of precepts by the master [Daozhao]. In 950 (eighth year of *Baoda*) of the Southern Tang, he was summoned by imperial edict which read:[1.25a] "Profound scholar of the three vehicles,

¹⁹ Xuefeng Yicun 雪峰义存 (822-908) is an important patriarch of the Chan school. He was originally from the Nan'an district of Quanzhou prefecture. He was the dharma heir of master Deshan Xuanjian. He established Guangfu monastery in Fuzhou located at Snow Peak on Elephant Bone Mountain (Ferguson 2000: 237-241).

outstanding master of Mahāyāna treatises, I have long heard of your reputation. I humbly await your coming." The master declined [the entreaty].

On another occasion, an individual of pure faith was making a pilgrimage to Mount Wutai 五台 to pay homage to Manjushri. Along the way he met an old man who asked him, "Where are you going?" When the faithful one explained his purpose, the old man said, "In the Arhat Pavilion at Qunanzhou's Kaiyuan Monastery there is one copying the *Weishi Lun* 唯识论 (*Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi-śāstra*),²⁰ he is Manjushri. Rather than seeking there you are going somewhere further." The faithful one said, "I will heed your counsel" and returned to look for him. Finding him, he prostrated himself. The master asked, "Why are you bowing to me?" When the faithful one had explained why, the master asked, "Am I Manjushri?" When the faithful one had left, the master said, "My local earth god has loose lips." and threw his statue out. At night, the local residents heard someone crying, "I am the earth god of the Arhat Pavilion. The monk abandoned me. Will you people take pity on me and keep me." The next day, they looked for him and actually found an abandoned statue. They built a shrine for him in a small alley and made sacrifices to him.

The master passed away in the autumn of 951 (ninth year of *Baoda*). [1.25b] His disciples built a pagoda at Mount Futian 福田 in Nan'an 南安 in which they interred his whole body.²¹ The master wrote 80 volumes (*juan* 卷) of commentary on the *Cheng Weishi Lun* 成唯识论. His calligraphy has a Wei 魏 and Jin 晋 style. The prefect Zhuquan 朱侏 wrote a preface for this work which later generations would vie to treasure.

²⁰ "Treatise on the Theory of Consciousness-Only" composed by Xuanzang (600-664) in 659. It was used by his disciple, Kuiji to establish the *Weishi* sect of Yogācāra.

²¹ 全身塔

10. **Shi Xili** 释袭礼 was from the capital at Luoyang 洛阳 and was surnamed Du 杜. He was the vice-director of the Bureau of Waterways and Irrigation²² under emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 of the Tang dynasty.²³ In 901 (first year of *Tianfu*), the Son of Heaven (i.e. Zhaozong) made Zhu Quanzhong 朱全忠 (a.k.a. Zhu Wen 朱温) the king of Liang 梁.²⁴ Liang was cast into a state of murderous anarchy. Its army even violated the imperial residence.²⁵ The master then wrote to the emperor for permission to become a monk. Permission was granted and the emperor dubbed him Huanwai 寰外. He came to Fujian (Min) and asked Xuefeng about practice. With one sentence he was suddenly awakened as if recovering something he had lost. Xuefeng held him in high regard. Taking his leave he went to Qingyuan where he was received by the prefect Wang Yanbin. After some time he built the Compassion and Kindness Cloister at Kaiyuan as his residence. The master, whether dealing with groups or practicing himself, created harmony by being just and impartial. He attracted followers from the four directions. Hearing this, Yanbin [1.26a] had a purple robe and the title the Blithe Great Master 逍遥大师 bestowed upon him. When his body was cremated after his passing his parietal bone²⁶

²² *shuibu yuanwai lang* 水部员外郎

²³ Emperor Zhaozong 昭宗 (867–904) ruled from 889 to 904.

²⁴ Zhu Wen would go on to found the Later Liang 后梁 dynasty that ruled much of Northern China from 907-923. Zhu Wen reigned from 907 to 912.

²⁵ Emperor Zhaozong was murdered under the orders of Zhu Wen; Zhaozong was succeeded by emperor Ai Di the final Tang emperor who was also murdered under the orders of Zhu Wen who then established the Later Liang dynasty of North China in 907. It was during this period of "murderous anarchy" that Xili took leave of the emperor for the solace of monkhood.

²⁶ *dinggu* 顶骨 - the top of the cranium.

did not burn. The Quanzhou prefect Wang Jixun,²⁷ astonished at this remarkable relic, had a pagoda built for it at Lingjiang 临江.

11. **Shi Shengcheng** 释省澄 was from Xianyou and was surnamed Ruan 阮. He became a monk at Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery and traveled to Wu 吴 and Chu 楚²⁸ and visited all the great masters around. When he returned he went to Baofu 保福 temple in Zhangzhou to visit master Zhan 展.²⁹ When he followed the master into the hall, master Zhan pointed to the Buddha statue and asked, "What does it mean for the Buddha to look like this?" The master replied, "Monk, you are also just a flat body 横身." Zhan said, "I keep one peg for myself." The master replied, "Monk, you are not only a flat body." Zhan approved and designated him his successor (*si* 嗣).

During the *Tiancheng* period (926-929) of the Liang dynasty,³⁰ the prefect Wang Yanbin built the thousand Buddha cloister and invited the master to be its abbot. For more than ten years he didn't place one foot over the threshold.³¹ In 944 (first year of *Kaiyun*) of the Jin dynasty, the prefect Huang Shaopo 黄绍颇 moved the abbot to Zhaoqing 招庆 temple. The marquis³² of Min (Fujian) Wenjin 文进 petitioned the emperor who granted the title "brilliant awakening" (*ming jue* 明觉) to the master. [1.26b]

²⁷ Served as Quanzhou prefect from 944-945 (Clark 1981: 385).

²⁸ Wu included parts of present-day Anhui, Jiangsu, and much of Jiangxi, Hunan, and eastern Hubei. The capital was later moved to Jinling (present-day Nanjing). Chu included present day Hunan 湖南 and part of Guanxi 广西

²⁹ Baofu Congzhan 保福从展 (d. 928, J. Hofuku Jūten) was a native of Fuzhou and a disciple of Xuefeng. See Ferguson 2000: 275-278.

³⁰ The years for the period match the Later Tang dynasty rather than the Liang dynasty.

³¹ *nie* 梟 can mean both "threshold" and "rule"

³² A marquis (*hou* 侯) was a noble usually in line after prince (*wang* 王) and duke (*gong* 公). Hucker 1985:225.

Not long afterwards, Quanzhou was in a state of disorder and Zhaoqing temple burned down in a battle.³³ Liu Congxiao 留从效, the military commander of Qingyuan, gave his villa to serve as a temple named Southern Chan (Nanchan 南禅)³⁴ in place of Zhaoqing and invited the master to serve as its founding abbot.

Students of the dharma followed him like a shadow and [where he was] became a great seat of the dharma. At the beginning of the Song dynasty, the imperially appointed governor³⁵ Xu Xiang 徐相 reported to the emperor and emperor Taizu 太祖 honored the master with the title "Truly Awakened" (*Zhenjue* 真觉). In 972 (fifth year of *Kaibao*), the master passed away; the stupa for him is called "Auspicious Light"³⁶.

12. **Shi Congyun** 释从允 was from Jinjiang and surnamed Wu 吴. A student of Buddhadharma from Kaiyuan's Nine Buddha Cloister, he was pure, mindful and free of desires. With extra severity his body was disciplined in the vinaya. Without respite, he memorized the sutras at night and studied their meanings during the day. The prefect heard about this and said, "In the prime of life and so diligent, among Buddhists where can one find such a one?" Each month he put away one *hu* 斛 (10 gallons) of rice, the master closed the door and didn't go out. He rejected outside invitations and the people of the city wouldn't know his face. In 932 (third year of *Changxin*) during the Later Tang dynasty, Chan master Shengxun 省询 was traveling in Fujian (Min). The master paid

³³ This state of disorder ensued the usurpation of the kingship of Min (Fujian) by the marquis Zhu Wenjin in 944. See Schafer 1954: 53-56.

³⁴ Would later become Chengtian temple.

³⁵ The word translated as "imperially appointed governor" is *fan* 藩, which, according to Hucker 1985:207, designates "an unofficial reference to...officials with broad territorial authority delegated from the central government."

³⁶ *rei guang* 瑞光

him a visit and was awakened with one sentence. [1.27a] Xun marveled at this. The master deepened his practice until tightening and loosening were both forgotten. In May of 937 (second year of *Min Tongwen*), he passed away with a brush in hand copying the *Qietuo* 伽陀 Sutra. His cremation produced hundreds of relics.

13. **Shi Xuanying** 释玄应 was the younger brother of Congyun. He followed Yun at an early age and left home to become a monk. After being fully ordained he studied with powerful determination getting his fill of both Confucian and Buddhist studies. His older brother cautioned him to not let his learning obscure his original nature. He left to visit Xi 希 at White Dragon temple.³⁷

Xi asked him, "Do you get it?"³⁸
The master replied, "I don't."
Xi said, "No, you don't, right on!"

He stayed a long while and absorbed all the master's ways (*dao* 道). When he returned he determined through divination to sequester himself at Guihu 贵胡 with Qinghuo 清豁 as his neighbor. In 970 (third year of *Kaibao*), the prefect of Zhangzhou Chen Wenhao 陈文灏 built the Repaying Filial Debt Cloister³⁹ and asked his father the commander of Quanzhou (*quan shuai* 泉帅) Hongjin 洪进 to recruit the master to serve as its abbot. Three times he refused and didn't come. Hongjin summoned his older brother Renji 仁济 and told him, "If he doesn't come, you will have trouble." So Renji took pains to convince him and the master began to set out. Hongjin went out to the edge

³⁷ Chan master Daoxi 道希 at White Dragon 白龙 temple in Fuzhou.

³⁸ *Hui me* 会么?

³⁹ Bao Qu 报劬

of town meet him. [1.27b] He brought him to a very ornate guesthouse; when they arrived the master took his leave and made his way to the guesthouse. He went to sleep without removing his shoes and snored like thunder. Hongjin peeked in on him and said, "This man can be abbot!"

When he arrived at Zhangzhou, Wenhao lead his subordinates (*liao shu* 僚属) to ask him to give teachings. A monk asked him, "What is the ultimate meaning?"

The master replied, "What is the ultimate?"

The monk said, "Students should ask questions, why does the master question us?"

The master replied, "What is the question you just asked?"

The monk said, "The ultimate meaning."

The master said, "You consider this questioning-back?"

The monk asked another question, "Where was the place of practice for the ancient Buddha?"

The master said, "This summer there are five hundred monks in the hall."

After this, Wenhao petitioned the emperor, who bestowed upon the master

the purple robe and the title *Dinghui*. In 975 (eighth year), a white rainbow was seen outside the dharma hall. He left for Wenhao a poem which read:

This year I am sixty-six.
Some lives are short, some long.
Unborn, a blazing fire
There are actions, don't add fuel
Exit the valley, return to the source,
At once all is utterly complete.

[1.28a] 今年六十六,世寿有延促.无生火炽然,有为薪不续.出谷与归源,一时俱備足.

He then passed away. After cremation they collected relics and installed them in a pagoda on the north hill of the cloister (i.e. Baoqu).

14. **Shi Wenzhan** 释文展 - it is not known where he was from. He lived at Flourishing Dharma (Faxing 法兴) cloister at Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery. He rejected involvement in the affairs of the world. He closed his door and sat. He only opened his door when the bell was rung to take his daily meal at which time his disciples would bring him the food that had been offered to the Buddha. He would then close his door. If the food didn't come he went about with an empty stomach.

Quanzhou prefect, Wang Yanbin revered him and invited him to [lead] the North Chan cloister. He declined the offer and went to West Mountain (*xishan* 西山) and lived in a hut in the arhat cave. When he was asked again, the master collected wood for a pyre and burned himself. He had instructed his disciples to throw his bones in the river. As the fire engulfed him, one could observe him calmly sitting, counting beads and chanting the Buddha's name. After the fire had burned the sound of a Chinese lyre could be heard as his relics flew to the river and became stalagmites (*shi xun* 石筍). His disciples, as he had instructed, threw his bones [there].

15. **Shi Tingzan** 释挺赞 was also known as Zhongyue 中岳. He was from Fujian and surnamed Fang 方. He became a monk in his youth at Bell Mountain and was fully ordained at the age of twenty. [1.28b] He visited all the great masters and developed brilliant understanding (*suo wu guang da* 所悟光大). When he returned, Quanzhou prefect Wang Yanbin established a cloister for him in the east of Kaiyuan monastery.⁴⁰ At that time, Chen Jingtong 陈敬通, the Commissioner of Military Training, cast a

⁴⁰ This was in 833 according to the *jian zhi*.

golden statue [for this cloister] which made the cloister famous. Visitors who came empty, left full, no one was dissatisfied.

When Chen Hongjin 陈洪进⁴¹ was governing Quanzhou prefecture he developed a great respect for the master's ethos (*dao* 道) but the master had become too old. He passed away in 972 (fifth year of *Kaibao*). Hongjin hosted one-thousand monks at the cremation ceremony. Relics were gathered and installed in a pagoda on West Mountain.

16. **Shi Xingtong** 释行通 was from Jinjiang and was surnamed Liu 留. His mother dreamed of an old monk when she got pregnant [with him]. When he was born a wonderful fragrance encircled them. When he was young he was never around bloody food. After becoming a monk and undergoing full ordination his life was tranquil and simple. He only took one meal a day. He extensively mastered the sutras and treatises with particular expertise in the Mahayana. Day and night he *jiao guan* 教观 without taking the smallest break. He lived at Kaiyuan's Heavenly King Cloister.

Quanzhou once suffered a great drought. The prefect Chen Hongjin invited the master to summon the rain. [1.29a] He predicted a heavy rain in three days, and it truly did as he had said. Hongjin was pleased and petitioned the emperor who bestowed the purple robe and the title Great Master of Dharma Intellect 法慧大师. He was elected as abbot of the great monastery, but he didn't accept the offer and left. One day he died while sitting, free from disease. Relics were recovered after his cremation and installed in a pagoda at Dayuan 大远 village in Nan'an.

⁴¹ Chen Hongjin 陈洪进 served as prefect of Quanzhou from 962-978. He surrendered to the Song in 978 and he and his sons remained in positions of power (Clark 1981: 141-142; 385).

17. **Shi Shiji** 释师寂 was from Changzhou in Suzhou and was surnamed Lu. He first studied Confucianism, but his ambitions were unconventional. Worried that the ways of the world would corrupt him, abandoning his Confucian studies he took up the study of Buddhism at Chongxuan Monastery 重玄寺.⁴² After his ordination he studied the *Sifen* vinaya and the One Hundred Dharmas⁴³ and mastered them. He recited the *Lotus Sutra* seven hundred times and also read the Dragon Tripitika⁴⁴ one or two times. Upon completing his studies he taught the vinaya and treatises. He knew them as well as the back of his hand⁴⁵ but he still felt they were not the authentic dharma. He left to visit the great masters. When he met Xuefeng 雪峰, Xuefeng held him in high regard as soon as he saw him.

His reputation spread throughout Quanzhou. Chaojie 超觉 of Zhaoqing 招庆 monastery treated him as an important guest. During the Zhenming period (915-921) of the Liang dynasty, the prefect Wang Yanbin invited him to Luyang 卢阳. [I.29b] In 930 (first year of *Changxin*) in the later Tang dynasty, his (Wang Yanbin's) son, Jichong 继崇, succeeded him as prefect and offered him his choice of four monasteries: Shuilu 水陆, Qingguo 清果, Beizang 北藏 and Fengchong 封崇. Refusing them all, the master simply built a room in the north-west of Kaiyuan as his residence. The following prefects, Wang Yanmei 王延美, Yanwu 延武 and Yu Tingying 余廷英 all had the deepest respect for him.

⁴² a monastery in Suzhou.

⁴³ see *Baifa mingmen lun* 百法明门论 - Gate to Understanding the One Hundred Dharmas Treatise

⁴⁴ 龙藏 i.e. 乾隆大藏经 the Qianlong Tripitika

⁴⁵ lit. understand as his fingers and palm

He passed away in 936 (first year of *Tongwen*) of the Min. A pagoda was built on Mount Beiyang 北阳.

18. **Shi Xicen** 释栖岑 was from Tong'an 同安 and was surnamed Chen 陈. He took refuge at Repaying Kindness (Baoen 报恩) Cloister at Kaiyuan. After full ordination he studied the vinaya and the *Abhidharmakośa* examining them inside and out.⁴⁶ During the Zhenming period (915-921) of the Liang dynasty, he began to give lectures. The people came like drops of rain and the master argued as if building a wall brick by brick (*bian ruo jian ling* 辩若建瓴) and enriched the hearts of the people (*wo ren zhi xin* 沃人之心). There was no one who didn't feel fortunate and satisfied. The prefect [Wang Yanbin], wishing there was a larger hall to fit the listeners, soon established a cloister at Kaiyuan to serve as his residence.⁴⁷ He lived there for twenty years without stepping over the threshold. [1.30a]

Once when some burglars broke into his abbot's quarters he calmly sat without moving and told them their fortune (*huofu* 祸福). At this they cast away their weapons, bowed and left.

Liu Congxiao petitioned the emperor who bestowed upon the master a purple robe and the title, Great Master Chan Jiao 阐教. The succeeding prefect, Chen Hongjin, invited him to lecture on the *Xifang Guan Shang Sheng* Sutra 西方观上生经. Moved by his speech, the red lotuses turned white and the fragrance of the cinnamon (cassia) flowers filled the air. The master passed away sitting erect in 972 (fifth year of *Kaibao*)

⁴⁶ xian jiu qi zhuan 咸究其传

⁴⁷ see section for "The Repaying Filial Debt Precept and Rules Cloister." Wang Yanbin died during the construction of the cloister and it was completed by his son Jiwu and therefore given its name.

in the Song dynasty. A pagoda was built on Buddha's Footprint Mountain (Fo Ji Shan 佛迹山).

19. **Shi Xixia** 释栖霞 was the dharma brother of Xicen and had a pure and simple nature while he pursued self-betterment (以道自高). In his early years he traveled wherever there were Chan masters. After returning, he found himself awkward in crowds and withdrew into himself. After awhile he built a small hut in the northwest of Kaiyuan as his residence. The master did lay up stores of provisions, his stores could be measured in pecks and scoops (*dou sheng* 斗升). If he was invited to eat he would refuse and say, "I've already accepted another initiation." The prefect Wang Jixun 王继勋 heard about his harsh and frugal lifestyle and was going to enlarge his home and increase his provisions. [1.30b] He firmly rejected the offer and said, "Don't exhaust the children and grandchildren (i.e. the "taxpayers")."

One evening a person with a bag arrived and asked to stay the night. Looking around at the colorless room, he removed his bag and offered it as recompense. The master placed it under the bed. Seven years later the person returned; the master smiled and said, "The things you gave are still here." He took it out and saw it was covered in dust. The person who gave it to him sighed and said, "This is a man of the Way (*dao*). How could gold pollute him?" He reached down, picked up his old belongings, thanked him and left. Some people asked him why and the master said, "The technique of casting money is not real, using it will bring harm to people." This demonstrates how the master was uncorrupt and intelligent.

[Northern Song]

20. **Shi Fazhou** 释法周 was from Tong'an, self-named Juexian 觉先 and surnamed Wang. He became a monk at Kaiyuan's Manjushri Cloister. He could remain diligent without an idle expression. He always followed the teachings passed down from his master. He plumbed the breadth and depths of the meaning of the teachings. Three times he was summoned by the emperor to lecture on the *Vimalakirti*, *Lotus* and *Śūraṅgama* Sutras; he suitably explained all the essential points. The emperor bestowed upon him a purple robe and the title Master Literary Intellect (Wenhui 文慧). [1.31a]

In 998 (first of *Xianping*), the prefect Su Hanzun 宿翰尊 took refuge under him. One day the prefect came and the master led him in a walk. On the stairs in front of the main hall they saw some grass below, the prefect pointed and asked, "An old saying says that a 'purple cloud covers the floor and ordinary grass doesn't grow.' Why is there some today?" The master immediately answered, "Ordinary grass sometimes grows because visitors bring dirt to the floor." The prefect was fully convinced by this explanation.

He moved to the western outskirts and in 1023 (first year of *Xinglong*),⁴⁸ the pagoda at Stone Gate Mountain 石门山 was completed so the master while sitting, said goodbye and passed away. After the cremation relics were recovered and buried together with his bones.

21. **Shi Zongji** 释宗己 was self-named Zizheng 子正. He was an outstandingly wise debater. His logic and learning were both profound. At first he was abbot of Zisheng 资圣 Monastery. When he lectured in the summer, thousands of people would always

⁴⁸ According to the *Biographies of Purple Cloud Masters*, *Xinglong* should be *Tiansheng*. Zhou 1999b:39.

gather to listen. Cai Xiang 蔡襄⁴⁹ and Lü Jinshu 吕缙叔 appreciated him the most. He moved to Chengtian Monastery to serve as its abbot. Not long after he returned and built a hut at Zisheng. Zhongzhou 中州 (i.e. the imperial capital) requested him again and again to serve as abbot of the Thousand Buddha Baolin 千佛宝林 Monastery [1.31b] because the marquis had strongly recommended him. He passed away in 1066 (third year of *Zhiping*). After his cremation shining relics were collected and buried on West Mountain.

22. **Shi Qinghuo** 释清豁 was a son of the Zhang 张 family in Yongtai 永泰. He took refuge and was fully ordained under master Yan'guo 晏国 on Mount Drum. He attended the summer sitting (i.e. summer retreat) under Fayin 法因 at Zhaoqing monastery. One night he was suddenly enlightened upon hearing the sound of the oil lantern.

With Chongxu 冲煦 he went to visit the hut master 庵主 Qiru 契如在 Mount Xiaojie 小界. They met him out gathering millet. The master asked him, "Where is the hut master?"

Qiru asked in return, "Where did you come from?"

The master said, "I came from the bottom of the mountain."

Qiru asked, "Why did you come here?"

The master asked in return, "What is this place?"

Qiru bowed and said, "Let's go have some tea."

⁴⁹ Cai Xiang (1012–1067) is the Song dynasty scholar-official and famous calligrapher responsible for building the justly famous Luoyang bridge. He is commemorated with a gigantic statue which stands at one end of the stone bridge outside Quanzhou today.

They then realized that he was Qiru and went to his fir hut to visit. That night some wolves and tigers came and tamely interrupted them. The master moved Qiru's residence to Dazhan 大章 Mountain.

He went to see Shuilong 睡龙 ("Sleeping Dragon") Pu 浦 who asked him, "Which famous masters have you visited? [1.32a] Are you enlightened yet?"

The master said, "Qinghuo was enlightened at Dazhang."

Pu gathered a crowd of people and said, "Master Huo, come burn some incense and tell the people how you were enlightened. I, the old monk, will verify it."

The master came out holding incense and said, "The incense has already burned, enlightened is not enlightened."

Pu was very pleased and confirmed his awakening. In 957 (end of *Baoda*) of the Southern Tang, Baofu 保福 cloister was established at Kaiyuan and Liu Congxiao invited him to live there where he began to teach the dharma as Pu's successor.

In 962 (third year of *Jianlong*) of the Song dynasty, he wrote a farewell poem which read:

Gathering together like floating bubbles and drifting apart like clouds,
Gathering together not as company, drifting apart not as separating,
The gentleman once entering the city was me.
Returning to the mountain, today, I am not that gentleman.

While walking along Ning Stream 苧溪 he composed another poem:

People in the world should not say travel is difficult.
The road is like goat intestines which twist and turn every few inches.
Ning stream, take good care of your water,
You will return to the ocean, I will return to the mountain.

When he arrived at Lake Gui 贵湖 he so liked the tranquility there, he stayed to live. [1.32b] He found a dwelling with a thatched roof but an insecure door so thin it could barely block the wind.

The prefect Chen Hongjin petitioned the emperor who bestowed upon the master a purple robe and the title "Empty Nature" (*Xing Kong*). He rejected the honor, saying he was too old. In the winter of 977 (first year of *Taiping Xing'guo*), he requested his disciples to leave his body for the bugs and ants to eat and not to build a pagoda He passed away sitting on a large rock. After leaving him there for seven days his body still looked alive and bugs had not invaded so they burned him and spread his ashes in the wilderness. Three hundred relics were collected.

23. **Shi Faqian** 释法骞 was from Jinjiang and was surnamed Shi 施. He became a monk at Bodhi cloister at Kaiyuan. He received the dharma from Wuyi 无逸 while visiting him at Longshou 隆寿 monastery in Zhangzhou. The prefect Chen Hongjin invited him to teach the dharma at Longshou. Faqian replied, "Today, at Longshou will appear all the Buddhas of the three times arising as limitless apparitions at the same time, with spinning dharma wheels, all at the same moment. Has anyone ever seen this?"

A monk asked, "What are the boundaries of Longshou?" [1.33a]
He answered, "There is not room for you to set one foot."
The monk asked, "How are people inside such boundaries?"
Faqian answered, "It is not known where the boundaries are."

A visitor came to see the master one day and on the next day sought from him the heart essence (*xin yao* 心要). The master said, "Yesterday we met and talked about mundane

things. Today, we meet again and everything is the same, so why are you seeking the heart essence? How can the heart essence be separated [from the mundane]!"

24. **Shi Yuchang** 释禹昌 was a native of Hui'an. His learning was broad and his memory strong. He intensely cultivated concentration and wisdom.⁵⁰ He was sternly temperate and self-vigilant. He stood alone and remained aloof from others. He lived in the Shang Sheng Cloister. His whole room was so clean and quiet that strangers did not dare call on him. His sole visitor was a man named Shengcai 省才. One day he invited Cai to eat with him but he couldn't find the utensils to prepare the meal. Cai came in and together by the fire the chatted until midnight. Cai took out a yam to share with him and he was happy. Cai also tried to give the master two jade rings but he would not accept them. He said, "Don't be vulgar, you tire me!"

When people tried to offer him fine gifts he would say, [1.33b] "If I have such things my disciples and grand-disciples will behave like tigers and wolves." and reject them. In old age he retired to Yangyuan 扬原 Mountain. Among his poetry are included the lines, "When hungry I eat no-name grass. When cold I burn fallen leaves for fuel."⁵¹

25. **Shi Ziran** 释自然 left the secular world and entered Xiyin Cloister at Kaiyuan. He inherited the dharma from Shimen Cong 石门聪.⁵² A monk asked him, "When Sakyamuni (*laohu* 老胡) was born he surveyed the four directions. Monk, when you were born what did you do?"

⁵⁰博闻强识, 力学定慧, 苦节自厉

⁵¹ 饥食无名草, 寒烧落叶薪.

⁵²Shimen Yuncong 石门蕴聪 (965–1032). Shimen 石门 is a mountain in Hubei.

The master answered, "Pure *qi* 气 becomes sky, cloudy *qi* becomes earth."

The monk asked, "How can you pick up things so effortlessly?"⁵³

The master replied, "What does it matter?"

26. **Shi Youping** 释有评 was a dharma successor of Tianyi Huai 天衣怀⁵⁴ from Yue 越 (in modern day Zhejiang). He was the abbot of Xiyin Cloister. He was once asked,

"What is the common *dao* (*ping chang dao* 平常道)?"

The master replied, "Monks place their palms together, Daoist priests raise their fists."

He was asked, "Who is the position-less perfect man (*wuwei zhenren* 无位真人)?"

[1.34a] The master said, "He is faceless."

[Another time] He was asked, "What can be accomplished in twelve hours?"

The masters said, "Get dressed and eat."

He was asked, "Can anything else be done."

The master said, "Yes."

"What?"

The master said, "After eating, have a cup of tea."

27. **Shi Weishen** 释惟慎, his place of origin has not been discovered. He traveled everywhere visiting all the elder [masters]. He received the dharma from Ciming Yuan 慈明圆⁵⁵ during the *Tiansheng* period (1023-1032) of the Song Dynasty. He traveled to the capital [Kaifeng] and set back as soon as he arrived. Ceng Gongliang 曾公亮⁵⁶ said, "There are no Chan friends in the capital, so how can we keep you here?"

The master answered, "I do not dare say that I have too few who understand me.

My nature is like a lonely cloud."

⁵³信手拈来

⁵⁴ Yumen (J. Ummon) Chan Patriarch Tianyi Yihuai 天衣义怀 (J. Tenne Gikai, 993-1064).

⁵⁵ Linji Chan Patriarch Shishuang Chuyuan 石霜楚圆 (J. Sekisō Soen, 987-1040).

⁵⁶ Ceng Gongliang 曾公亮 was a Grand Councilor to the Emperor and a lay Buddhist.

The prefect Lang Jian 廊简 invited him to be the abbot of Guangfu 广福 Monastery on West Mountain, but he refused the offer. At that time Luoshan 罗山 Monastery had recently become a Chan monastery and did not have an abbot yet. The district Magistrate/xian ling of Tong'an Ge Yuan 葛源 dreamed that the god of Mount Luo informed him that Shen could be abbot. Shen did not refuse this offer. He went there with his staff and spread the dharma onto Mount Luo.

[1.34b]

28. **Shi Benguan** 释本观 was surnamed Chen and was also known as Wuben 无本. He was a native of Jinjiang. His mother dreamed a golden figure who gave her a white lotus and then found that she was with child. When the master was born there was a purple aura around his head and strange light filled the room. He left secular life when he was eight under vinaya master De 德. He passed the sutra exam and was tonsured.⁵⁷ After full ordination he studied the *Lotus Sutra*, the *Sūramgama Sutra* and the *Treatise on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana* (*Dacheng qixin lun* 大乘起信论) under Zongji 宗己. One day he said, "This is garbage." He abandoned these studies and went to visit Chan master Fachao 法超. Chao raised a fist and said, "The whole world appears in a speck of dust. In ancient times a finger could be lifted to enlighten people, how about you today?"

The master bowed and Chao asked, "Why did you bow?"

The master said, "The whole world appears in a speck of dust."

Chao said, "You dim-witted monk."

⁵⁷ Monks were required to memorize sutras, such as the *Lotus Sutra*.

The master agreed, "Yes, yes." then left.

During the Xining period (1068-1077) of the Song Dynasty, the prefect Chen Shu 陈枢 converted Congee Cloister to Chan and invited the master to give teachings there. The Vice Grand Councilor⁵⁸ Lü Jifu 吕吉父 repaired the Lotus Sutra Cloister and invited the master to additionally serve as its abbot. [1.35a] He petitioned the emperor who bestowed upon master a purple robe and the title master Yuanjue 圆觉. In 1085 (8th year of *Yuanfeng*), the prefect (*chao feng*) Wang Zudao 王祖道⁵⁹ had him moved to serve as abbot of Dazhong 大中. In 1091 (sixth year of *Yuanyou*), the prefect (*dafu* 大夫)⁶⁰ Chen Kangmin 陈康民⁶¹ invited the master to concomitantly serve as abbot of Chongfu 崇福. After one year he resigned and lived in North Cliff (*Beiyan* 北岩) of Yongyang 永阳. In 1092 (seventh year [of *Yuanyou*]), there was a disastrous famine and the prefect (*taishou*) Chen Shenfu 陈慎夫⁶² summoned the master to help exhort the gentry to lend money for relief; he succeeded. After he left Mount Luo 罗山, honorable ministers (*gong qing* 公卿) invited him many times to serve as the abbot of famous monasteries, but he never accepted. On April, 23 1100 (third year of *Yuanfu*) he passed away sitting erect. He was cremated. The prefect Jiang Gongzhuo 江公着⁶³ attended his funeral with his entourage and built a pagoda for him at Three Sages Cliff (*san sheng yan* 三圣岩). He left behind

⁵⁸ *canzheng* 参政. lit "to take part in governance" Hucker 1985:517.

⁵⁹ Served as Quanzhou prefect from 1084-1087.

⁶⁰ *dafu* 大夫 found as a suffix for many titles throughout Chinese history (Hucker 1985:465). Here it refers to prefect.

⁶¹ Quanzhou prefect from 1089-1091(Clark 1981: 395).

⁶² Clark has his name listed as Chen Dunfu 陈敦夫, he served as Quanzhou prefect 1091-1093 (Clark 1981: 395).

⁶³ Clark has him listed as Jiang Gongzhu 江公著 serving from 1099-1101 (Clark 1981: 395).

for the world a commentary on the Lotus Sutra (*Fahua Jian* 法华笺) and a collection of his lectures.

29. **Shi Kezun** 释可遵 was also known as Xing Zhi 行至. He was a son of the Xu 徐 family of Nan'an. He had studied Buddhism at Kaiyuan with Jurei 居锐 since he was a child. After passing the sutra exam and being tonsured, he went to study with Zhijie 智捷 at Zishou 资寿 monastery and received dharma transmission from him. He left and built a hut (*lu* 庐) beside Hundred Zhang⁶⁴ Rock (*Baizhangshi* 百丈石) on North Mountain (*Beishan* 北山). [1.35b] Several years later he moved to Moon Cliff (*Yueyan* 月岩) at Pure Stream (*Qingxi* 清溪). He was quiet and concentrated in thought and action (*zhi xing jing yi* 志行静一). He disciplined his body and lived in harsh simplicity. *Chao San* 朝散 Huang Yuangong's 黄元功 mother was sick; he dreamed that someone told him to find Cliff-dwelling Zun and make offerings to him and she will be healed. Yuangong invited the master down [to receive offerings] and she was indeed healed. During the Yuanfeng period (1078-1085), the prefect Wang Zudao invited the master to serve as abbot of Venerated Site Cloister. His patrons exhorted others to follow him. Into old age, he remained hale and hearty, diligently practicing without slowing down. He gave all the donations he received to charity.

30. **Shi Ziqi** 释子琦 was from the Xu family of Hui'an. When he first began teaching he could thread many books together; he was especially learned in the *Śūramgama Sutra*

⁶⁴ a *zhang* 丈 is a measure of ten feet.

and the *Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment* (*Yuanjue jing* 圆觉经).⁶⁵ He then began to feel that to not understand the heart and be mired in words and phrases was to self-impose obstacles. So he abandoned teaching and traveled to Jianghuai 江淮 [between the Yangzi and Huai Rivers] where he was called "Religious Man Qi" (Qi Daozhe 琦道者). He visited Cuiyan [Ke] Zhen 翠岩(可)真 and asked what was the great meaning of Buddha Dharma.

Zhen spat on the ground and said, "Where did this spittle fall?"

The master held his hand to his chest and said, "The student today has a spleen-ache." [I.36a]

Zhen laughed and expressed his approval.

He went to visit Jicui Huinan 积翠惠南⁶⁶ and received the true meaning of his teaching (*de qi dao* 得其道). Nan was the leader of Yellow Dragon [Chan] and the master served as his personal attendant (*zuoyouzhi* 左右之). One day Nan sent someone to ask the old monk about the three *guanyu* 三关语.⁶⁷ The master sternly replied, "Why

⁶⁵ The full title is 大方广圆觉修多罗了义经. Zongmi (780-841) wrote several commentaries on this sutra and may be credited with enhancing its popularity. It is divided into 12 chapters discussing meditation. It was a text important in early Chan.

⁶⁶ He is more widely known as Huanglong Huinan 黄龙惠南(1002-69 J. Ōryū Enan) the patriarch of the Huanglong (Yellow Dragon) branch of Linji Chan. Huanglong is the name of the mountain where his disciples carried on his line for 150 years before the school died out. He was from Xinzhou (in modern Jiangxi province) and was a disciple of Shishuang Chuyuan. The Japanese monk Myoan Esai studied with the Huanglong school of Chan. See Ferguson 2000:371-376.

⁶⁷ Three critical questions leading to enlightenment, a method favored by Hui'an and known as Huanglong san guan.

are you worrying about something so distant?" Nan marveled at him even more. When Nan passed away, Wuzu Fayán 五祖法演⁶⁸ assigned Qi to teach in Nan's place.

Lecturing in the hall, the master said, "One man has a mouth but can not speak; who is this person?" Donglin [Chang]Zong 东林常总⁶⁹ heard this and sighed, "Chief Trainee (*shouzuò*) Qi is like 10,000 *ren* ("fathom")⁷⁰ high iron mountain. Alas, the pulse of his speech is difficult to stop (卒难逗他语脉)."

The prefect of Qizhou 蕲州, Qiao Langzhong 乔郎中, thought Kaiyuan should be a Chan monastery and invited Qi to serve as its first abbot. After some years it became a crowded place of practice with people gathering from the four directions like clouds. The buildings and rooms of the temple were renovated and a full collection of dharma instruments assembled. The master became anxious to retire. He was invited to Mount Lu (Lushan 庐山). The prefect of Quanzhou summoned him to return to serve as abbot of Luoshan 罗山 and invited him to open a teaching hall at Xingfu 兴福 monastery [at Luoshan], so he came to Luoshan. [1.36b]

Some few months later he moved to Dazhong 大中 to serve as abbot and then moved again, this time to Chengtian 承天 where he served as abbot and lived there for twenty years. He made changes to the buildings built by [prefect] Liu Congxiao and patrons were so happy to lend assistance its not known what the expenses were.

⁶⁸ Chan Patriarch Wuzu Fayán (1024?-1104, J. Goso Hōen) was also known as Qingyuan and was a disciple of Baiyun Shouduan in the Yangqi line of Linji Chan. See Ferguson 2000:413-416.

⁶⁹ Donglin Changzong 东林常总(1025-1091) was a disciple of Huanglong Hui'nán. He was the teacher of the lay Buddhist and famous Song dynasty poet and artist Su Shi 苏轼(1036/7 – 1101).

⁷⁰ A *ren* is unit of measure about 8 feet in length.

The emperor bestowed upon the master the purple robe and the title Great Master Zhaojue 照觉. He was summoned by imperial edict to move to Changlu 长芦⁷¹ but the master pleaded he should be exempted due to old age. In 1102 (first year of *Chongning*), an imperial edict ordered that every state (*zhou* 州) should build a Chongning 崇宁 temple. The prefect thought that the master should be the first abbot [of the Quanzhou Chongning temple] and built it for him. In 1115 (fifth year of *Zhenghe*), he passed away. Rather large five-colored relics, not to be compared with usual ones, were recovered from his cremation. Neither his skull cap, teeth, tongue nor the beads from his novice ordination were destroyed. A pagoda was built on the east side of Wukong 悟空 cloister. He left the *Collected Sayings of Wuhui* (*Wuhui Yulu* 五会语录) for the world.

31. **Shi Daoying** 释道英 was a native of Hui'an and surnamed Hu 胡. He received dharma transmission from Ziqi. The abbot moved him to Jianfu 荐福.

A monk asked, "How was the Buddha at the time before he came into the world?"

The master said, "A flower in a glazed vase."

The monk asked, "How about after he came into the world?"^[I.37a]

The master said, "Fruit in an agate bowl."

The monk asked, "Are you master (*heshang*) today the same or different?"

The master said, "Kick down the vase, pull down the bowl!"

His collected sayings were widely disseminated.

32. **Shi Youpeng** 释有朋 had the secular name Chengzhi 成之 and was a member of the Jiang family of Nan'an 南安. He began as a notable pupil of [vinaya master] Zongji

⁷¹ Changlu Chongfu monastery, where Bodhidharma had stayed.

宗己. In 1079 (second year of *Yuanfeng*) of the Song dynasty, the prefect Chen Shu 陈枢 invited the master to serve as abbot of the Venerated Site cloister. Patrons enthusiastically gathered in support. A hundred deteriorated things were revived (this could include both physical structures and practices). However, seeing the heart of the school as the roots and the name and appearance as leaves he began to look into the "teaching outside" [the scriptures, i.e. Chan].

One day he paid a visit to Qi 琦 at Chengtian 承天. Qi asked him, "I won't ask you about your morning reading of the *Lotus Sutra* or your evening reading of *Prajnaparamita*, why not make a statement about now!?"

The master replied, "The sun overhead at high noon."

Qi said, "Nonsense! Say something else."

The master said, "Relying upon loyalty and faith my whole life, today I let it be racked by wind and waves." He repeated this from beginning to end five times.

Qi approved.

In 1085 (eighth year of *Yuanfeng*), at the request of the prefect Wang Zudao 王祖道, he became the abbot of Xingfu 兴福 Chan monastery. [1.37b] He was Qi's dharma successor. In 1086 (first year of *Yuanyou*), he received a purple robe. In 1099 (second year of *Yuanfu*), the former prefect (*dafu* 大夫) Jiang Changsheng 蒋长生⁷² invited him to serve as abbot of Qing'guo 清果. In 1105 (fourth year of Chongning), he retired. On September 11, 1124 (sixth year of *Xianhe*) he suddenly grabbed a brush and composed a poem:

⁷² Served as prefect of Quanzhou for a portion of 1097 (Clark 1981: 395).

Mr. Zhang drank some wine but Mr. Li got drunk.
Coming and Going, why rigidly adhere to forms?
Crack emptiness and let out a laugh!
The feet of the guardian kings step on the nose of Indra!

Sitting erect, he passed away. The prefect Zheng Nan 郑南⁷³ attended his cremation, relics appeared like rain.

33. **Shi Fachao** 释法超 was of the Shi family of Jinjiang 晋江. He left worldly life when just a child at Mile cloister [at Kaiyuan]. He passed the sutra exam and was tonsured. After full ordination he began traveling. He visited Zhichao 志超 at Qinghua 清化 monastery in Yuezhou 越州 and received the true meaning of his teaching (*de qi dao* 得其道). He returned and lived in North Mountain studying the Tripitika. He had an iron bowl for cooking and ate once a day. Sometimes he would neglect to notice that the time had passed noon, and he would not eat that day. [1.38a]

He returned home to take care of his elderly parents. He built a hut and lived next to his parents day and night for some twenty odd years. The people of his village offered him alms. A river in the village was an inlet to the sea. During the winter when the tide was low people had to endure walking in the mud. The master gathered donations in order to build a stone bridge about 800 Chinese feet long, composed of 130 sections. Six pavilions stood along the bridge some with Buddha images, others with pagodas all built in stone in order to pacify strong wind and waves. The bridge was named Beiji 悲济 Bridge. Pedestrians remain thankful for his virtuous deed today.

⁷³ Served as prefect of Quanzhou from 1115 to 1116 (Clark 1981: 396).

The master lived very simply with few clothes and plain food. He unceasingly practiced sitting meditation and chanting. He refrained from killing small insects such as mosquitoes, flies, chiggers and lice. At that time, master Zong 宗, religious man Jin 津, and two older masters, Benguan 本观 and Youling 有聆 often came to spend the summer with him. Paying their respects to him, all of them possessed a measure of awakening. If people did not share his ambitions, he would not associate with them and even reproached them to their face. At length, when his parents both passed away he set out again on his travels with his iron bowl on his back. On his return he passed Zhangpu 漳浦, there was a temple to General Chen where people showing disrespect were immediately executed. [1.386] Local people in making offerings here had killed many living beings. The master granted the precepts of a Buddhist monk to the general, which resulted in the saving of many lives.

He peacefully passed away after he arrived at Tong'an 同安. The day following his cremation, a white light emitted from the site. He wrote two volumes of *Treatise on Debates of Virtue and Vice* (*Bian xie zheng lun* 辩邪正论) and one volume of *Collection on Improvement of Practice* (*Xiu jin lu* 修进录) which have spread throughout the world.

34. **Shi Zhitian** 释志添⁷⁴ was the son of Chen family of Yongchun 永春. After he left secular life [by becoming a monk at Kaiyuan] he pursued ideals of happiness, tranquility and freedom from care. He dwelt on a cliff and pursued austere practice. He

⁷⁴ Zhitian 志添 is also discussed in the *Transmission of the Lamp* 建中靖國續燈錄 which can be found in *Xuzangjing* Vol. 78, No. 1556.

was known as a man of virtue (*you dao zhe* 有道者). He went to travel and visited the quarters of Donglin [Chang] Zong 东林常总. He was awakened by [Zong's] blowing on the fibers of a cloth. He wrote a Buddhist verse and submitted it to Zong for verification.

In 1086 (first year of *Yuanyou*), he arrived at the capital [at Kaifeng] where he was summoned before Prince Xu 徐王 who asked him about essential nature (*xin yao* 心要) and he understood. He ordered the four orders of Chan to preside over a Shengzuo 升座 ceremony [for Zhitian] and also sought verification [of his awakening]. The prince hosted one thousand monks at a banquet and held a reading of the Tripitika in celebration. He reported this to Emperor Zhezong 哲宗 who bestowed a *mona* 磨衲 robe upon the master. Prince Duan 端王⁷⁵ wrote a verse inscribed in gold: "Bestowed upon a truly enlightened man of virtue. May we achieve Buddhahood together." He petitioned the emperor who bestowed upon the master the title "Buddha Seal" (*foyin* 佛印), but the master refused to accept it. Members of the court bestowed upon him purple robes more than forty times, [1.39a] but the master petitioned to have them distributed to other Chan and vinaya masters.

He was granted the title Zhenjue 真觉 by Emperor Shenzong 神宗 before the emperor's death in 1085 (eighth year of *Yuanfeng*).

35. **Shi Dingzhu** 释定诸 was a native of Jinjiang. He studied Buddhism and was also well-versed in Confucian thought. During the *Duangong* period of the Song Dynasty

⁷⁵ Prince Duan became the next emperor, Emperor Huizong (r.1101-1125), the penultimate emperor of the Northern Song. A great patron of Song art, he is himself noted as a great artist and the creator of the still popular *Shoujin* style 瘦金体 of calligraphy.

(988-989), his awakening was approved by Deng 灯 of Jiangnan 江南. He returned and lived as a hermit in a thatched hut. The master's nature was quiet and withdrawn as if he had left the bustle of the secular world. Apart from everyday necessities his room was empty. If a guest arrived he would simply sit and drink tea and when they had departed he would face the wall and meditate. Prefects had asked him several times to serve as abbot of large temples, but he refused to accept such offers. His collected works are called Quhua 去华("Leaving Luxury") and contain, for example, his inscription on the painting "Water Obstruction" (*Shuizhang* 水障): "Waves appear where there were no waves before; a single person trying to cross the ocean is worried to death." Another is "Ode to a Parrot": "Beautiful feathers covered by a golden cage, It is clearly rare to find a throat and tongue like yours. You don't need to always follow what people say, you must believe that there is discord in people's hearts." [I.39b]

[*Southern Song*]

36. **Zhouzhu** 粥主("Congee Chief") is known as such because the record of his name has been lost. He lived in Kaiyuan's Pure Land alley. The Sangha administrator appointed him to oversee congee for 1,000 monks. There was a Keeper of Horse Herds (*taibao* 太保) who always used the congee serving utensils to feed the horses. The chief (*zhu* 主) put a statue of the protecting deity [of the kitchen] under the mortar to punish him for not using his power to protect. When the chief was walking one night the god appeared and asked him to return the statue to its proper place. The master (*shi* 师) said, "The congee utensils for monastic use were seized by the official. What kind of protection is that?" The god apologized and promised the utensil's return. In the morning,

the Horse-Keeper hastened over to return the utensils saying, "Last night two horses died." The god asked, as he had before, to the statue return to its proper place. The master smiled and said, "The utensils were our property, it was your duty to have them returned, what merit have you earned?" The god offered to help in the kitchen by keeping the rats and sparrows away. The master then returned the statue to where it was before. To this day people see this god as the king of protection. [I.40a]

37. **Shi Jiehuan** 释戒环 was a native of Quanzhou (Wenling 温陵). He possessed a simple and tranquil nature, untainted by the flavors of worldly life. He was self-nourished on emptiness and isolation and deeply immersed in the subtle path (*dao*). He wrote summary commentaries (*yaojie* 要解) on three sutras: the *Lengyan*, *Lotus* and *Huayan*. He can stand to cut through names, appearances and complex minutia to help people not get lost among the branches and leaves and enable them to know and see the real Buddha [dharma]. He was really one who could discover hidden treasures. Up to now there are many students who follow this model.

Formerly at Kaiyuan's Thousand Buddha Cloister there was an abbot who chanted the Lotus Sutra and a dove that came everyday to listen. One day, he didn't come and the abbot wondered about it. That night he dreamed someone told him, "I am the dove and I receiving power from your sutra I have been reincarnated as a human. I was born at such and such home and can be recognized by a white feather under my arm. Can you pay me a visit?" The abbot set out to follow these directions to see him and really found him. His parents agreed to let him become a monk. After he grew up, he became the abbot's disciple. He was tonsured and given the dharma name, Jiehuan.

[1.40b]

38. **Shi Dunzhao** 释敦炤 closely followed the vinaya and served as a model for others such that people came from everywhere to follow him; he had ten thousand disciples. In 1128 (second year of *Jianyan*) of the Song Dynasty, when he was not teaching he studied the *Illustrated Sutra of the South Mountain Ordination Platform* (*Nanshan jietan tujing* 南山戒坛图经) and lamented that the ordination platform at Kaiyuan was in accord with ancient principles. With his disciple Tiying 体瑛 and others he rebuilt it. It had five levels, the master measured the proportions of widths and heights himself according to the rules and methods outlined in the *Sutra*; no guesswork was involved. Upon completion he remained worried that people might think his platform was inauthentic, so he had Chong'guan 崇灌 write a notice which was inscribed in stone.

39. **Shi Taichu** 释太初 was also known as Ziyu 子愚 and was a native of Wenling (Quanzhou) from a Confucian family. He was an unconventional young man of unusual ambition. His poems and essays were out of the ordinary. He abandoned these pursuits and became a monk at Kaiyuan's Venerated Site Cloister. He disciplined himself with Buddhism and rid himself of his romantic habits. At that time, scholar-officials (*dafushi* 大夫士) held him in respect.

Nanjian's Baoen monastery 南剑报恩 was without an abbot. [1.41a] The prefect Chen Mi 陈宓 invited the master to serve as abbot there. Not long after, Zhen Dexiu 真德秀 also invited him to give teachings at Dawei 大洑. After twenty years he had accumulated a thousand disciples. His enormous breadth of understanding and

knowledge (*qi dao boda* 其道博大) was no less than that of venerable masters of old. The master didn't like to write, but when he did it would be spread by ten thousand voices. For example, the austere manner of "Remembrance of Chengtian's Monks Hall" was studied by monasteries everywhere. The man who criticized Cai Xiang's 蔡襄 "Record of Luoyang Bridge" for having three too many characters is, to this day, promoting the verses of master Taichu.⁷⁶

40. · **Shi Liaoxing** 释了性 was a member of the Huang family of Anxi 安溪. He was a good speaker who's specialty was persuading people to build pagodas and temples to gain prosperity. He never kept funds for himself and always completed his projects such as bridges and roads. He used facts to motivate people so they responded enthusiastically.

The East and West pagodas of Kaiyuan burned down during the *Shaoxing* period (1131-1162) and the master had rebuilt them both during the *Chunxi* period (1174-1189). He was assisted by his disciple Shoujing 守净 who was a good talker and liked to joke; when people saw him alms came pouring in. [I.41b] They had a total of seventeen construction projects; each one was costly, impossible to achieve through human power alone.

[*Yuan Dynasty*]

⁷⁶ The reference here is to the Southern Song author Chen Shan 陈善 (c. 1174-1190) who criticized Cai Xiang's inscription in a large collection of essays, the *Menshi xinhua* 扞虱新话.

41. **Shi Miao'en** 释妙恩 was nicknamed Broken Cliff (Duanya 断崖) and was a son of the Ni family of Quanzhou 全州 (this is a different "Quanzhou," not to be confused with 泉州). He first visited all the famous masters and settled to study under Xuefeng [Ke]Xiang 雪峰可湘. Xiang held him in high regard, letting him share his seat (*fenzuo* 分座). He later withdrew and lived on Mount Shanjian 善见, determined to live apart, concealing his abilities. In 1285 (twenty-second year of *Zhiyuan*), the Sangha administrator Liu Jianyi reported to the provincial minister⁷⁷ who petitioned the emperor to consolidate the 120 cloisters of Kaiyuan into one Chan monastery. In the Autumn of the following year, the master [Miao'en] was invited to serve as the first abbot. Although he declined, he was not allowed to persist his refusal. Arriving at the gate, he said, "The first sentence is the first step. If speech is followed by action, the chiliocosm (*daqian* 大千) will be held in the palm of one's hand." He then yelled, "Don't block my freaking doorway!" (*molai lan wo qiu menlu* 莫来拦我毬门路)

He was installed as abbot. Having inherited Xiang's dharma, he taught the congregation, "My heart is like split bamboo, straight with no curves; [1.42a] hiding nothing at all. Six times six is thirty-six."

Another time in the hall he said, "This dharma can not be understood by reasoned analysis (*siliang fenbie* 思量分别). In both a remote hamlet and at a [busy] crossroads one can find foul language and noisy fighting. All of this can enlighten one's face and help spread the Buddha's teaching. Too bad, those studying this *dao* are like the man

⁷⁷ Boyan 伯言

drawing a dragon, when the real dragon appeared he was shocked.⁷⁸ Why is this so? Those who know the truth are few."

The master's actions were always pure and genuine. He disciplined his body and lived purely and austerely. He worked tirelessly—for forty-two years his ribs never touched the bed. His speech was unaffected, but people were pleasantly and fully persuaded. The monastery's dharma was in decline but he restored it to vigor. In the third month of 1293 (30th year [of *Zhiyuan*]) the master appointed his dharma brother Qizu 契祖 to take his place and died three days later. After his cremation it was as if it had rained relics. They were interred in West Mountain (Xishan 西山) and the emperor bestowed upon him the title Chan master Guangming Tonghui Puji 广明通慧普济禅师. The master composed a commentary on the *Shangsheng Sutra* and his collected talks were left to the world.

[1.42b]

42. **Shi Qizu** 释契祖 was a native of Tong'an 同安 and was surnamed Zhang 张. He first attended Fashi Yuanzhi 法石元智. Zhi marveled at his talent. After he finished his studies he withdrew to a cloister in his hometown. In 1292 (29th year of *Zhiyuan*), Miao'en invited him to assume the high seat (*shangzuo* 上座) in the hall; he loved and respected him very much. When the master was sick on one occasion, Miao'en offered him money for medicine, but he refused to accept it and composed a Buddhist hymn (*ji*) which read, "The master's seat is wasting the people's alms. Born a body to endure this

⁷⁸ Reference to a folk story in which a man named Yegong who loved the image of dragons decorated his home with them. When a dragon in heaven heard about he wanted to pay him a visit, which scared Yegong to death.

circle of iron disaster (*shengshen shouci tiwei yang* 生身受此铁围殃). Having swallowed molten bronze and hot iron, how could one teach people to enter the boiling cauldron (*huotang* 鑊汤)?" Miao'en held his manner (*weiren* 为人) in even higher regard.

In 1293 (30th year), Miao'en let him take his place and continue to carry on the way (*dao*) of master Xiang. Qizu served as abbot for 28 years. High-ranking officials and the elite all bowed to him on their visits. Upon hearing of this, the emperor bestowed upon him the title "Buddha mind, True Awakening" (*Foxin zhengwu* 佛心正悟).

The master was adept at speaking words of dharma, completely natural and uncontrived. On the eighth day of the twelfth lunar month (*laba* 腊八), he said, "At midnight, born from mother, eyes suddenly open. Rush down the mountain. Seems like just a tiny thing. [1.43a] Heaven and earth stirred into one heap. "

On the ninth day of the ninth lunar month (*chongyang*), he said, "Today is the Chongjiu festival. The chrysanthemums at the bottom of the fence are blooming again. Everywhere people are talking about Tao Qian 陶潜 or Meng Jia 孟嘉.⁷⁹ At Kaiyuan we have nothing to talk about; return to the hall and drink tea."

At that time, the head seat Zhen, who was a talented writer of odes, asked the master to write an ode to Puyin. The master wrote, "Since the [sitting and] cutting off [the three times] ([*zuo*] *duan* [*sanji*] 坐断三际) there is no doubt in my breast. How can the ghosts and gods know where I walk or hide? If there is a world hidden in the world,

⁷⁹ Tao Qian (365–427), a.k.a. Tao Yuanming, was a famous poet and hermit who wrote a well-known poem about chrysanthemums. Meng Jia was Tao Qian's grandfather. He lived during the Eastern Jin Dynasty. There is a well known story about him set during the Chongjiu festival. Alcohol is present in both Meng Jia's story and Tao Qian's poem and the festival was a time for drinking; this may be why Qizu says there is nothing for the monks to talk about and that they should drink *tea*. The *Xudenglu* vol. 4 contains a longer version of this story.

it is not yet the time for the antelope to hang their horns.⁸⁰ Zhen sighed and was convinced [of the master's talent].

In the autumn of 1319 (sixth year of *Yanyou*), the master passed away without illness at 90. His whole body was interred in a pagoda on West Mountain.

43. **Shi Ruzhao** 释如炤 was also known as Yuanming and was nicknamed Lonely Room (*Jishi*). He was a son of the Cai family of Jinjiang. He became a monk under Daofu at this temple [Kaiyuan]. He led an austere life of good action (karma). Ruzhao would gather alms for him. When Kaiyuan was united with Miao'en as the first abbot, Ruzhao was his close attendant. Miao'en held him in the highest regard. He later traveled about and his inborn wisdom emerged. [1.43b] He achieved deep understanding. He served as the guest prefect at Xuefeng monastery. He copied the Lotus Sutra with his blood. When he returned to Kaiyuan he also wrote the Flower Ornament (Huayan) Sutra in blood. Miao'en respected him even more. When Miao'en passed away and Qizu succeeded him, he appointed Ruzhao as Tripitika prefect.

In 1304 (eighth year of *Dade*), he became the leader of the back hall (*hou tang*). In 1306 (tenth year of *Dade*), he was transferred to the main hall. When Qizu passed away, the Xuanzheng (Sangha administration) appointed Ruzhao as his successor; he carried on Qizu's dharma. At a talk given on the anniversary of the Buddha's enlightenment he said, "A snow-covered mountain, stars returned to the sky—they are seen at first sight. Why did it take you six years Gautama! Gautama! There is no reason to guide sentient beings into confusion—in the Eastern land wanting to get to the Western

⁸⁰ Antelopes are said to "hang" their horns in a tree as a kind of camouflage to hide themselves.

heaven." He also said, "What a pity to survive being buried alive in a pit of snow. Six years and you have not found the mechanism, but suddenly your eyes opened at the third watch of the night! At dawn you broke through, saw [reality], at once with the morning star, you reached the ultimate. The emperor heard about him and bestowed upon him the title Foguo Hongjue 佛果弘觉 ("Buddha Fruit Great Awakening"). In 1331 (second year of *Zhishun*), he passed away without illness. His bones were interred in the Pagoda for Past Masters (*lidai ta*).

[1.44a]

44. **Shi Dagui** 释大圭 was also known as Hungbai and nicknamed "Observer of Dreams" (Mengguan 梦观). He was a son of the Liao family of Jinjiang. He first studied Confucian texts. When he reached adulthood his father summoned him and said, "I have studied Buddhism but could not accomplish Buddhist goals, so I pledged to offer you to the Buddha. Don't defy me." So the master went to Kaiyuan with Guangxuan as his master. After his tonsure he became the attendant of Foguo (i.e. Ruzhao). He held three different positions up to sharing the abbot's seat. The Sangha Administration appointed him to be the abbot of Chengtian monastery, but he rejected offer. He built a room in the west of Kaiyuan called the Mengguan Hall. His knowledge was broad and his memory excellent.

His essays compare with those of Liu 柳[Zongyuan 宗元]⁸¹ and his poems compare with Tao 陶[Yuanming 渊明]. Wujian 吴鉴⁸² referred to him as the "Flexible

⁸¹ Liu Zongyuan (773–819) is considered the founder of classical Chinese prose and counted among the great masters of Chinese prose of the Tang and Song Dynasties.

⁸² Wujian 吴鉴 (1240—1310) was a well known scholar in Quanzhou at that time; he was the chief editor of a *Quanzhou zhi* 泉州志(*Gazetteer of Quanzhou*). *Quanzhou Wanbao Haiwai Ban* (Quanzhou Evening Newspaper-Overseas Edition).16 June 2005. http://61.131.47.210/gb/content/2005-06/16/content_1685237.htm

Scholar" (Yuanji Zhi Shi 圆机之士) who could bring together Confucian and Buddhist thought. When he passed away his disciples built a pagoda for him on West Mountain. He authored the *Collected Works of Mengguan* (*Mengguan ji* 梦观集) and the *Biographies of Purple Cloud Bodhisattvas* (*Ziyun kaishi zhuan* 紫云开士传).

[Ming Dynasty]

45. **Shi Zhengying** 释正映 was nicknamed "Clean Hut" (Jie'an 洁庵) and was a native of Jinshi 金谿, Fuzhou surnamed Hong. In his youth he entered the Three Peak monastery of Anren 安仁 as a novice. [1.44b] In 1386 (19th year of *Hongwu*), he passed the sutra exam and was tonsured. When walked through the gate to visit Qian 谦 at Linggu 灵谷[monastery in Nanjing] the incense in his robe fell to the ground and he suddenly awakened. He was appointed precentor (*weinuo* 维那) by Qian. When Qian died he went to see Xuexuan 雪轩 at Tianjie 天界 [monastery in Nanjing] who made him the Tripitika prefect (*dianzang* 典藏). At that time imperial decree stated, "The sangha of Quanzhou Kaiyuan monastery, facing disaster, must find a suitable abbot. Through drawing lots Zhengying was chosen and presented to the emperor. The emperor decreed, "He shall go serve as abbot. These days it is difficult to be an abbot. If you are too lenient others will take advantage of you. If you are too strict you will be maligned. Only if you keep a pure heart and clean self can you endure for long. This has been decreed by the emperor (*qinci* 钦此)." Following imperial orders the master came to the monastery. In the sixth lunar month of 1398 (31st year of *Hongwu*), he began to give teachings to a receptive audience of one mind (*zhong zhi xiran* 众志成城). He first

rebuilt the dharma hall, then the Amrita ordination platform. Not long afterwards many things that had been abolished were all repaired or restored. [I.45a] In 1403 (first year of *Yongle*), after returning from the emperor to Fuzhou all the monastics [in the area] proclaimed him the abbot of [Fuzhou's] Xuefeng. He rebuilt the Buddha hall, the dharma hall, the threefold gate, the two corridors and re-dug the Wan'gong pond 万工池 and built the Golden Turtle Bridge (jin'ao qiao 金鳌桥). In 1425 (first year of *Hongxi*), he was made abbot of Linggu by imperial decree. In 1426 (first year of *Xuande*), the Sangha administration appointed him as Sutra Instructor of the Left (*zuo jiang'jing* 左讲经). He passed away at Linggu. His saying were collected in several volumes called *The Ancient Mirror of Secret Knowledge* (*Gujing sanmei* 古镜三昧).

46. **Shi Benyuan** 释本源 was a native a Jinjiang. Since he was little he did not want to be around meat. After becoming a monk he studied sutras such as the *Lotus* and *Lengyan*; he understood their subtle points. Once while traveling in Zhangpu 漳浦 he sat on a rock beside the path. Every night after this the rock would glow. The locals felt this amazing and erected a tablet at Linyan. Not long afterwards a governor (*si* 司) invited him to be abbot of Kaiyuan. In the first lunar month of 1420 (eighteenth year of *Yongle*), [I.45b] he was summoned to the capital by an imperial edict which read, "I have recently heard about this eminent monk and strict adherence to precepts and his extraordinary wisdom which understands the profound meaning of the unconditioned (*zhenru* 真如) and the deep mystery of silent emptiness (*kongji zhi xuanwei* 空寂之玄微). So it is with great admiration that I send a person bearing this edict in the hope that the eminent monk

will come see me and elucidate the subtle dharma thereby glorifying the ethos of the [Chan] school. I am anxiously awaiting to be relieved, with a heart of the most deepest sincerity. Thus this edict."

The master went to the capital and his answers to the emperor's inquiries were right on point. He was often praised by the emperor. After half a year he returned to his home monastery [Kaiyuan].

Afterword

After writing these biographies of bodhisattvas, I am amazed at the great number of worthies the Purple Cloud has had. How could this be so, if it is not an auspicious place of singular merit (*jixiang shusheng* 吉祥殊胜)? It has almost been a thousand years since the appearing of the auspicious sign of the lotus-blooming mulberry tree. So it was in ancient times, so it remains today. Why, in ancient times, did sages and worthies emerge one after another but today they are so scarce, they are no longer heard? [1.46a]

There is a saying that "An excellent feather comes from a *ying* dragon, a phoenix is born of a hundred birds." Kaiyuan's environment must have slowly deteriorated or the fortunes of the dharma have collapsed, and the sages and worthies are in hiding. Today it is not only this temple which cannot reach the level achieved in ancient times! [Sigh!]

But how can this prevent scholars (*shi* 士) with ambition from achieving the way (*dao*)? Only if one relies on the outer elements will the historical moment and its conditions hold one back; if one does not rely on the outer elements, the historical moment and its conditions will not hold one back. For example, even though the Spring and Autumn Period was a time of disaster it could not prevent Confucius. Even though the slum was

so poor, it could not prevent Yanyuan 颜渊.⁸³ Even though Mount Shouyang (in present day Shanxi) was harsh, it could not prevent Boyi 伯夷 and Shuqi 叔齐.⁸⁴ Owing to their determination (*zhi*) they were able to sustain themselves. If one seeks personal benefit and pursues fame, he may work with sustained diligence morning and night but cannot use the historical situation and conditions to cultivate self-serenity. Such people are terribly confused. How sad!

[I.46a]

⁸³ Also known as Yanhui 颜回 (BCE 521- 481) he was one of the top disciples of Confucius. He mentioned in the Analects as being content with the barest of necessities in a slum (lit. "shabby alley", *louxiang* 陋巷)

⁸⁴ Boyi and Shuqi were the first and third sons of the king of Guzhu 孤竹 (in present day Hebei) at the end of the Shang 商. Before the king died he requested he be succeeded by the third son, Shuqi. After he died, Shuqi insisted the first son, Boyi, become king. Boyi, refused to deny the wishes of his father so he left; Shuqi refusing to yield also left, leaving the second son to become king. Boyi and Shuqi found one another and lived as hermits together. When the Shang fell to the Zhou 周, together they vowed to not eat the rice of the Zhou and lived on wild vegetables on Mount Shouyang. The story ends, however when a woman saw them one day and reminded them that even the wild vegetables belonged to Zhou they decided to stop eating altogether and duly starved to death.

APPENDIX III

IMAGES

All photos are taken by the author at locations in Quanzhou from 2006 to 2009 unless noted otherwise. All scenes, sculptures and temple buildings are at Quanzhou Kaiyuan unless specified otherwise.



Figure 1: The main (south) entrance to Quanzhou Kaiyuan (west pagoda in background)



Figure 2: Outside Kaiyuan's main hall (*daxiong baodian*) on a lunar twenty-sixth



Figure 3: Interior of the main hall; four of the five Buddhas can be seen. Note the red cushions used by laypersons during Buddha recitation (*nianfo*).



Figure 4: Central Buddha flanked by Ananda (L.) and Sariputra (R.).



Figure 5: Sheng Guanyin at the back of the main hall (1711).



Figure 6: Kalavinka figures supporting the ceiling of the main hall

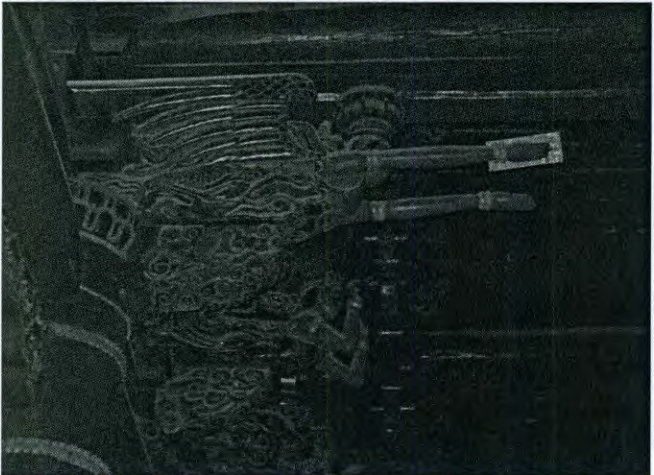


Figure 7: Kalavinka figures supporting the ceiling of the main hall

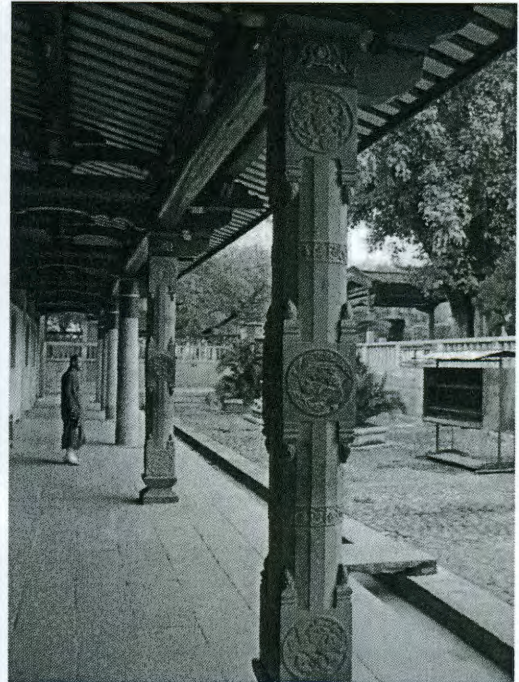


Figure 8: Two sixteen-sided stone columns with Hindu carvings behind the main hall (Yuan dynasty)



Figure 9: Column detail: Krishna, one of twenty-four carvings of Hindu iconography (Yuan dynasty).



Figure 10: Column detail: Shiva (Yuan dynasty)



Figure 11: Gilded Buddhas in the main hall



Figure 12: Seventy-two sphinx figures and lions line the base of the main hall's front platform (Yuan dynasty).



Figure 13: Interior of the hall of the ordination platform; vajra guardians to the left and right



Figure 14: Phoenix figures above Lossana in the hall of the ordination platform

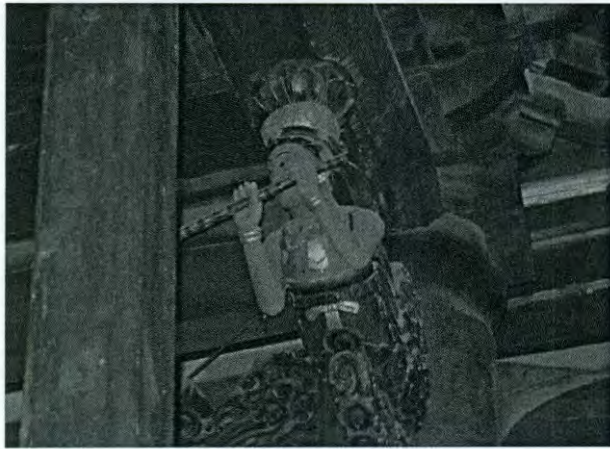


Figure 15: One of twenty-four apsara figures supporting the roof of the hall of the ordination platform



Figure 16: Two of the twenty-four apsara figures supporting the roof of the hall of the ordination platform



Figure 17: Detail of Lossana base (Ming dynasty)

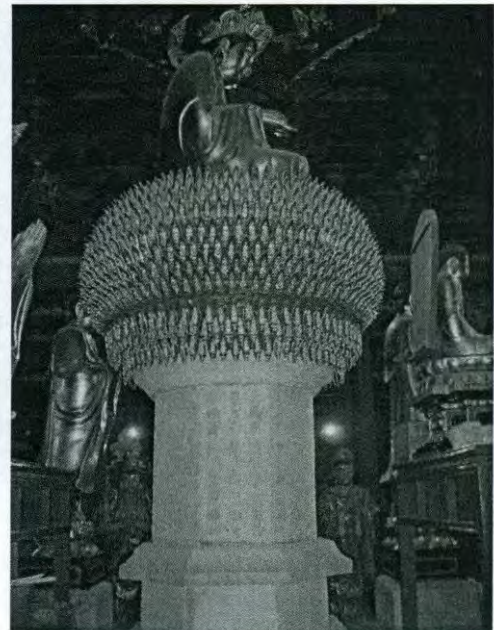


Figure 18: Lossana statue and base (Ming dynasty)



Figure 19: Naturally occurring image of plum blossoms in stone moved to Kaiyuan during the Cultural Revolution.



Figure 20: Kalavinka decorating a monumental column in central Quanzhou



Figure 21: Woman kneeling with incense in front of the main hall



Figure 22: Woman kneeling before the statue of Maitreya Buddha behind the hall of the ordination platform. Stone slab under statue in case blocks amrita well.



Figure 23: Billboard encouraging parents to spend time with their children-- "Through giving birth dreams are transmitted and carried on; care and harmony are mutually supportive."

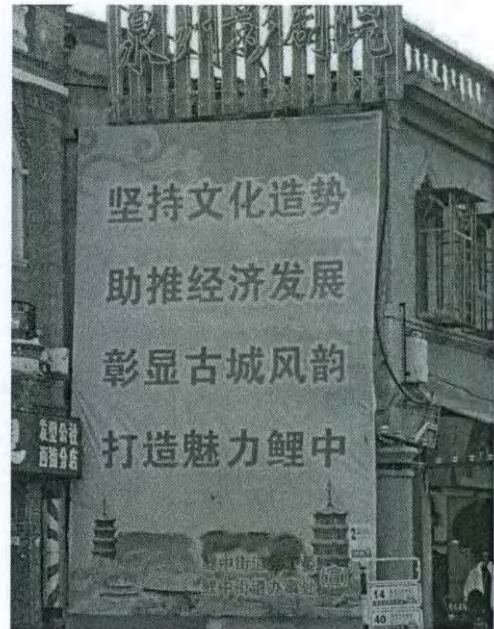


Figure 24: Billboard promoting culture as the key to Quanzhou's economic development.

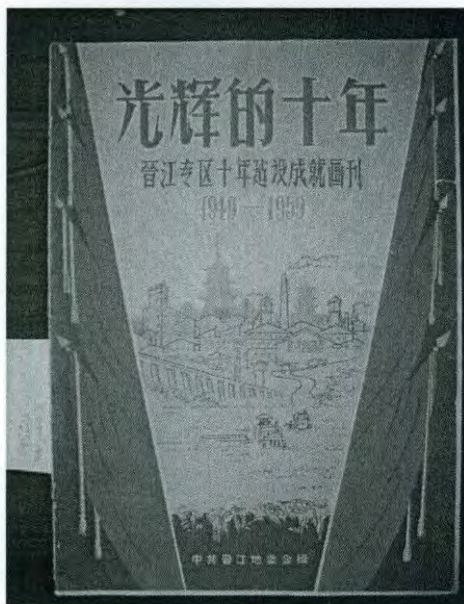


Figure 25: Booklet commemorating the achievements of Quanzhou (Jinjiang) the first ten years after Communist victory (1949-1959). Note the twin pagodas remain behind the new factories.

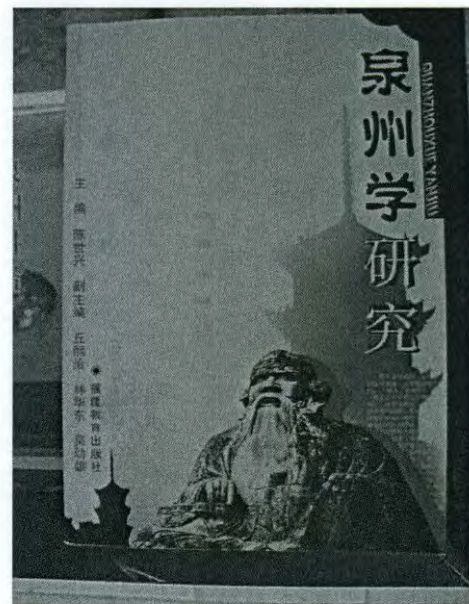


Figure 26: Many publications, such as this, examine features of Quanzhou history and culture. The pagodas are a common decorative motif.



Figure 27: Poster promoting the Quanzhou Electric Bureau with Kaiyuan monastery in the middle of a light bulb surrounded by cranes and skyscrapers.



Figure 28: Pagodas as viewed from West Street , 2009



Figure 29: The west pagoda as seen from the east pagoda; main gate and West St.(Xijie) to the left, 2006



Figure 30: East pagoda as viewed from the west pagoda; roof of main hall to the left, 2006



Figure 31: East (L.) and west (R.) pagodas; photo taken from building across the street, 2009



Figure 32: Sculpture of the monkey king (Sun Wukong) on the west pagoda (1237)



Figure 33: Sculpture of Xuanzang with small monkey figure on the east pagoda (photo by Ecke in Ecke and Demieville1935).



Figure 34: On his first outing Siddhartha sees on old man (east pagoda, 13th century)



Figure 35: The three carts, representing the three vehicles (sravaka, pratyeka Buddha and bodhisattva) as well as the use of skillful means in the *Lotus Sutra* (base of the east pagoda, 13th century)



Figure 36: Dharma Hall (first floor), Scripture Library (*Zangjing ge*, second floor)

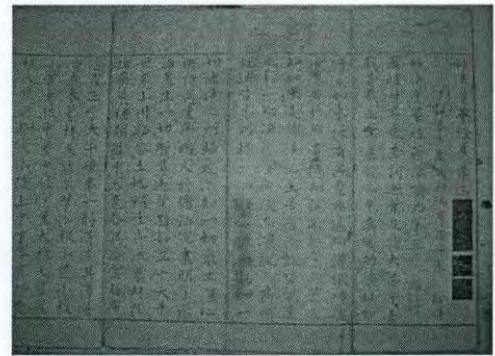


Figure 37: Excerpt from the *Lotus Sutra*, written in blood by Ruzhao during the Yuan dynasty.



Figure 38: Cabinet containing one of the Tripitikas with the custodian monk, 2006

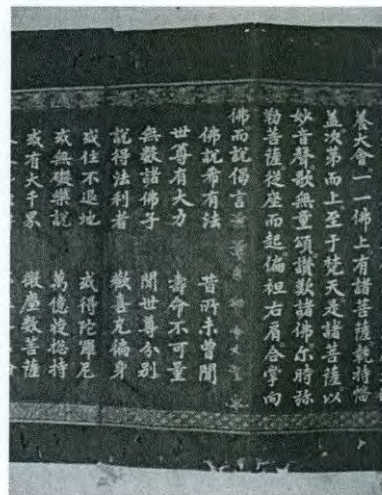


Figure 39: Surviving sections of a Tripitika written in gold by Yiying (10th century)



Figure 40: Kaiyuan's main courtyard lined with banyan trees ranging from 200 to 800 years old. Three Ming dynasty stupas may be seen on the right, 2007.



Figure 41: Southwest dharani pillar (946)



Figure 42: West dharani pillar (1008)



Figure 43: East dharani pillar (854)



Figure 44: One of two stupas erected in 1145 by laywoman Liu Sanniang.



Figure 45: Stupa bearing inscriptions of the three treasures (Buddha, Dharma and Sangha) and a small Buddha on the fourth face (Song dynasty); the character for Dharma is visible.



Figure 46: Benzhi standing next to the Song dynasty silk-burning furnace (*fenbuo lu*).



Figure 47: One of eight Ming dynasty “five-wheel” (*wulun*) stupas.



Figure 48: “Dharma world of the lotus-blooming mulberry” (main hall)



Figure 49: “Dharma world of the lotus-blooming mulberry” erected by Daoyuan in 2002 (east of front gate)



Figure 50: “Lotus[-Blooming] Peach Tree Manifests the Auspicious” erected by Daoyuan in 2002 (west of front gate)

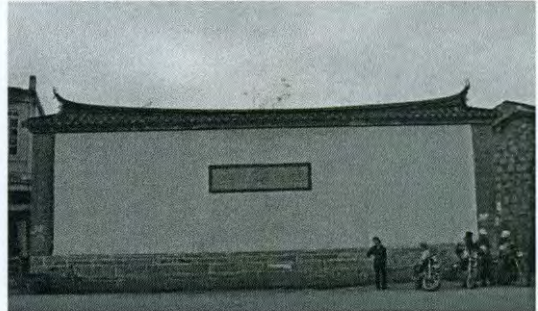


Figure 51: Purple Cloud Screen (opposite main gate); motorcycle taxis wait for riders (see below for inscription).

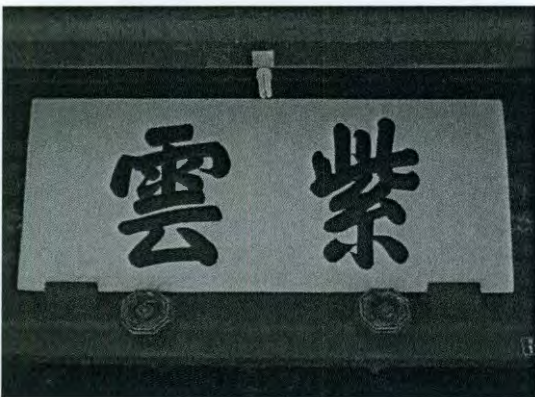


Figure 52: “Purple Cloud” (above main gate)



Figure 53: Detail: “Purple Cloud Screen” stone inscription set within the spirit screen above (Ming).



Figure 54: The famous mulberry tree that has survived more than 1,200 years; it lies west of the main hall, 2007.



Figure 55: The trunk of the mulberry tree , 2006

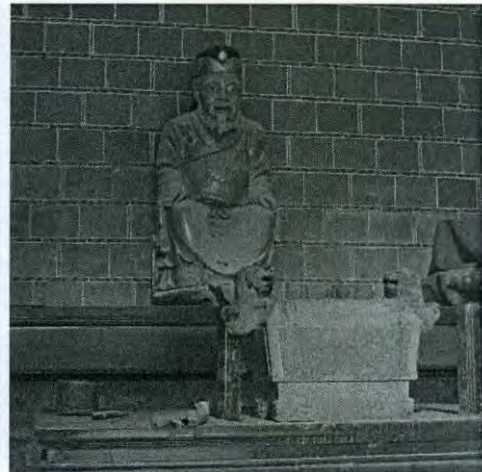


Figure 56: Statue of Huang Shougong in the Donor's Ancestral Shrine.



Figure 57: Worship at the Donor's Ancestral Shrine, 2009.



Figure 58: Portrait of Huang Shougong



Figure 59: Shrine case inside the Hall of Patriarchs containing statues and portraits



Figure 60: Kuanghu (R.) and Zhiliang's supposed full body relic encased in lacquer (L.)



Figure 61: Portrait of Zhuandao in the Hall of Patriarchs; to the left is Yuanying.

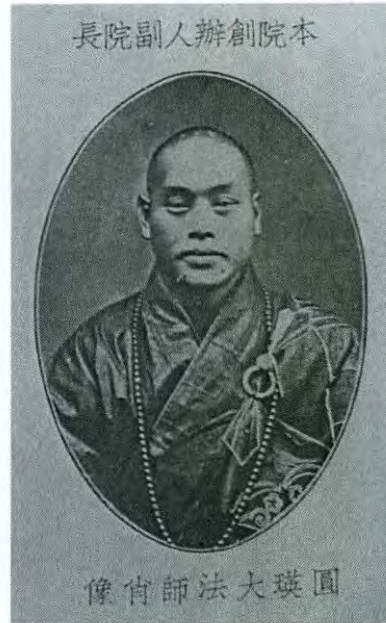


Figure 62: Photo of Yuanying from the Report Book of the Orphanage and School (ca. 1929)

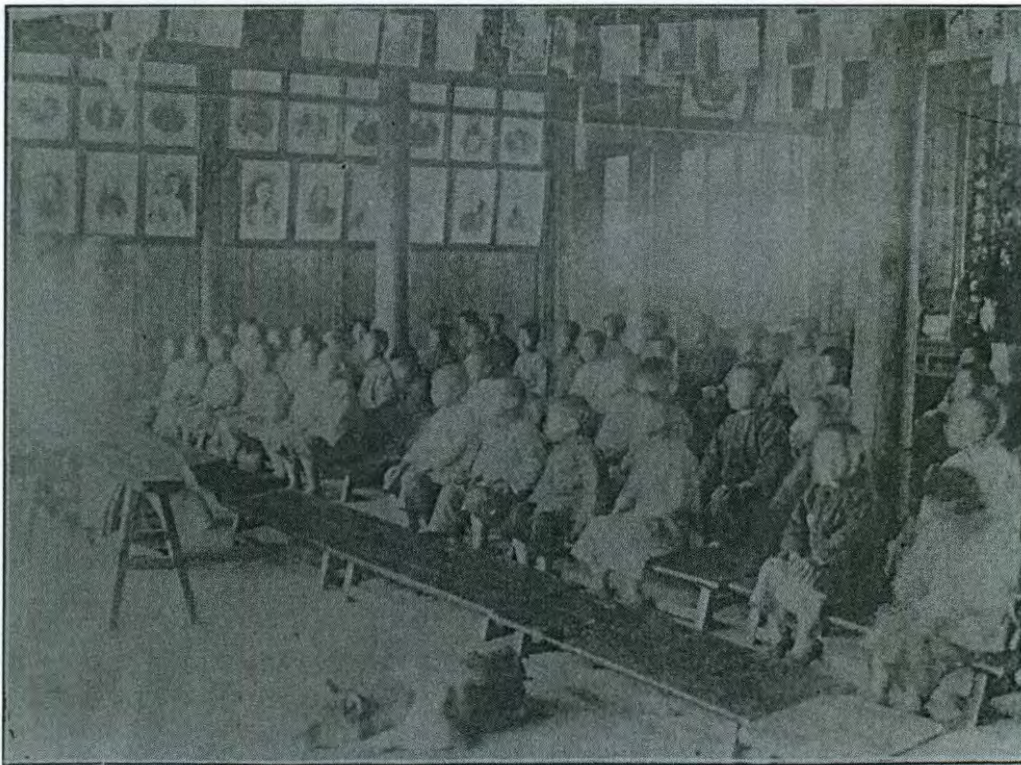


Figure 63: Students attending class at the Kaiyuan school. To the far left a monk is speaking, a dog is lying down in the bottom center (photo from Report Book of the school and orphanage, ca. 1929.)



Figure 64: The author with former mayor Wang Jinsheng and his wife at their Quanzhou home, 2006 (photo by Jamie Zhang).

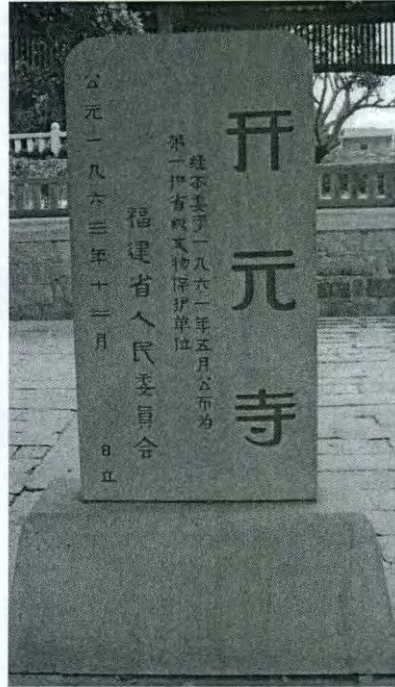


Figure 65: Stele erected in 1963 recording the 1961 designation of Quanzhou Kaiyuan as a provincial level protected cultural relic (front of the main courtyard).



Figure 66: 1982 designation of Kaiyuan as a site of important national cultural heritage (front of Kaiyuan's main courtyard)



Figure 67: Sign posted at the ticket booth in the main gate announcing this is a site of important national protected cultural heritage, admission fee is ¥10.



Figure 68: Tour group examining the mulberry tree from behind the fencing, 2009



Figure 69: Older men enjoy passing time playing cards and chatting at tables near the east pagoda, 2009



Figure 70: Groups of exercisers converge on Kaiyuan every morning; these are practicing *tai ji* in the main courtyard, 2007



Figure 71: stone fencing creates a barrier along the southern perimeter of Kaiyuan, along with the foliage it keeps down noise from West Street.



Figure 72: This monk is keeping the main hall free of disturbances during the twice-weekly recitation service (*nianfo*), 2009

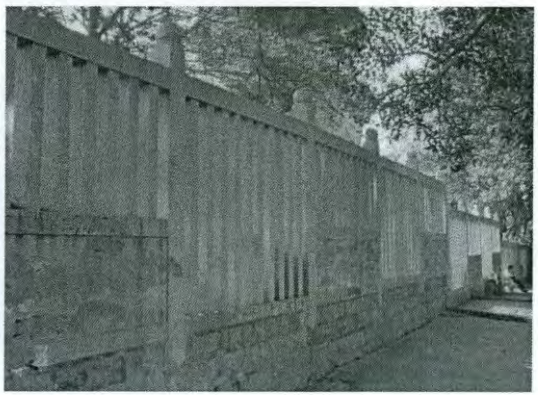


Figure 73: Fencing along the western edge of the monastery.



Figure 74: Daily morning service in the Dharma Hall (thirty to forty monks regularly participate).

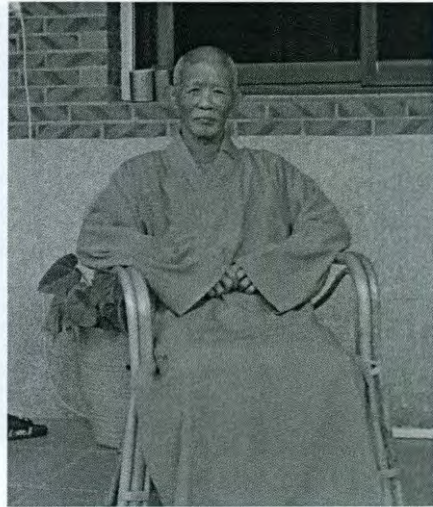


Figure 75: The abbot, Daoyuan, outside his room, 2006

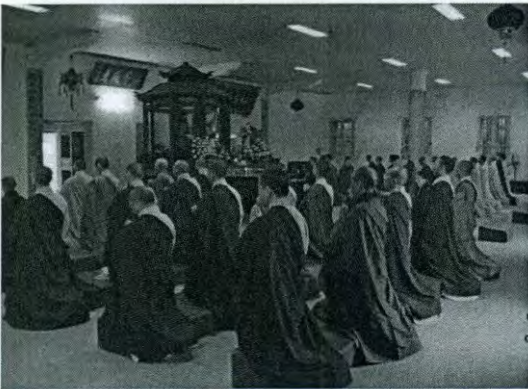


Figure 76: Monks stand, kneel and walk during the morning service.



Figure 77: Laywomen occasionally join the monks during morning service.

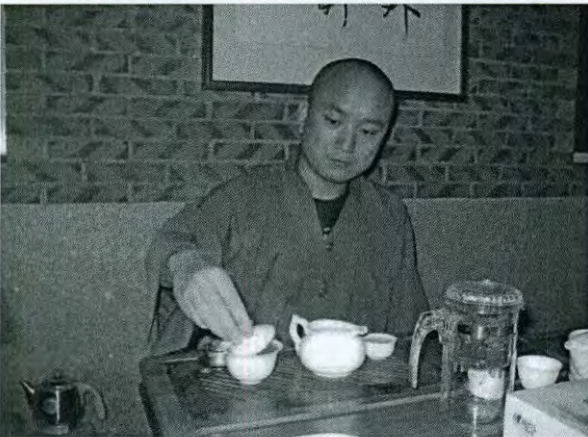


Figure 78: Desheng making tea outside the abbot's quarters.

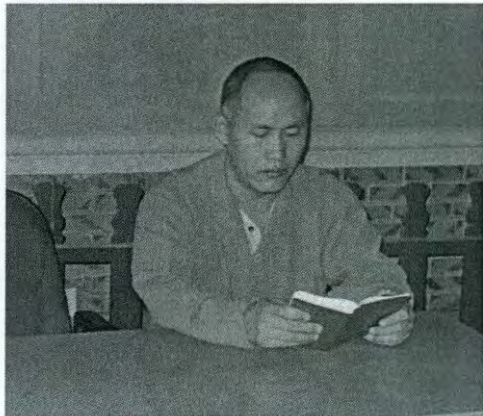


Figure 79: A monk reads scripture while tending the Hall of the Buddha's Life.



Figure 80: About 200 laypersons regularly attend twice-weekly Buddha recitation services (*nianfo*).



Figure 81: Up to 2000 individuals participate in the serpentine walk and recitation in the main courtyard every lunar twenty-sixth of the month. The central gates of the monastery are opened, free bowls of noodles are offered and the day culminates with this afternoon service.



Figure 82: The courtyard fills with devotees in plain clothes on lunar twenty-sixth as well.



Figure 83: Kaiyuan is especially busy (*renao*) on lunar twenty-sixth (in front of the hall of the ordination platform).



Figure 84: Offerings and personal possessions are placed on large tables set up in front of the main hall on lunar twenty-sixth.



Figure 85: Laypersons reverentially participate in special services like the release of living beings ceremony.



Figure 86: Release of living beings (*fangsheng*) ceremony to mark Guanyin's ordination, 2006



Figure 87: The Release of Burning Mouths ritual (*fang yankou*) inside the Anyang Yuan, 2006



Figure 88: Ritual burning of offerings to the spirits of departed kin. Those sponsoring the ceremony are on the bottom right, 2007.

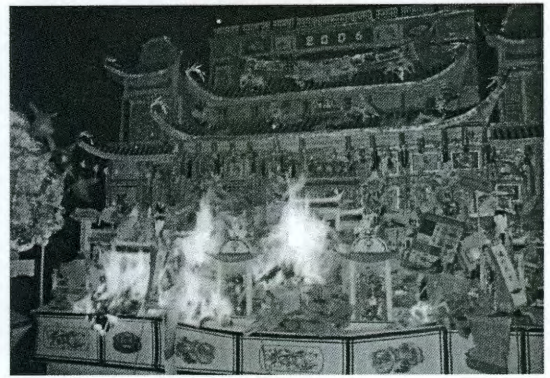


Figure 89: Offerings are burned inside specially made buildings to the east of the hall of the ordination platform, 2007.



Figure 90: With my wife Jamie, our son Charles and a group of Kaiyuan's monks at our favorite vegetarian restaurant, 2006.

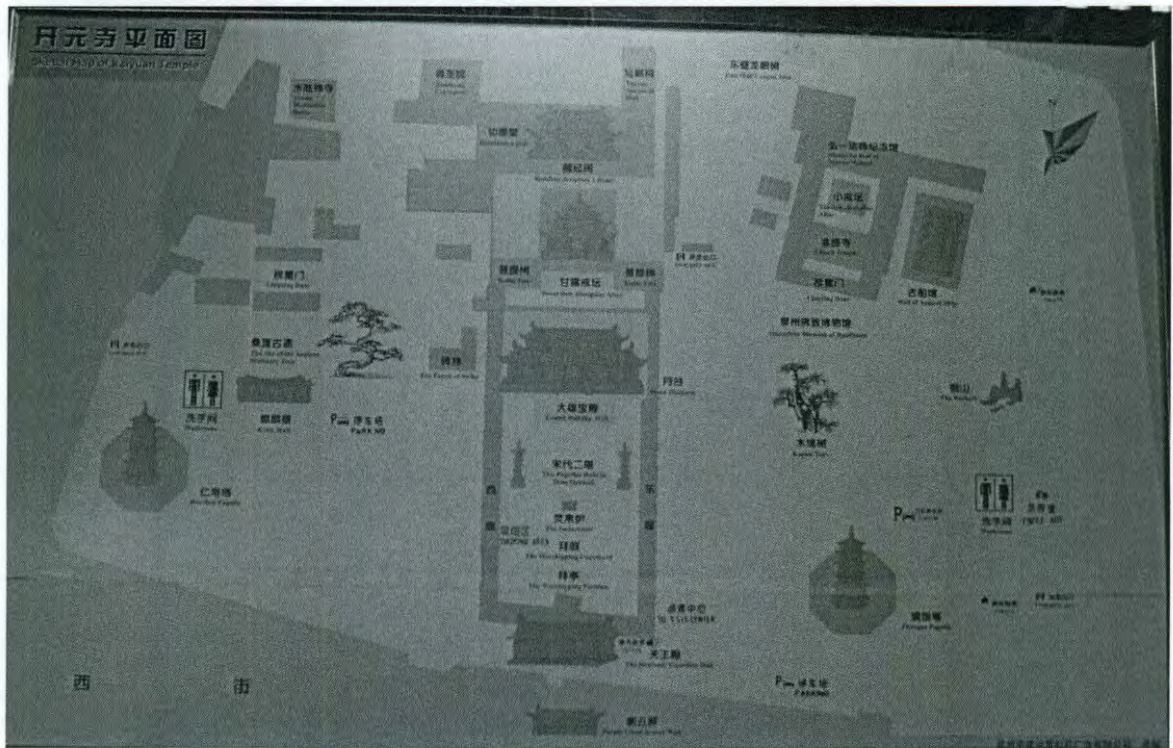


Figure 91: Tourist Map of Quanzhou Kaiyuan (posted in the main gate)